

Euroregion Baltic

2010 Action Plan

Introduction:

On 21st January 2010 the Executive Board of Euroregion Baltic established a special task force to manage a process of reviewing the priorities of the ERB cooperation. On 5th March 2010 the ERB Council made a decision to adopt the road map of the process which will be finalised with the Council meeting in Autumn 2010. With this in mind, the hereby action plan is proposed to continue activities planned within the ERB 2009 – 2010 Action Plan only until the autumn Council when a new cooperation agenda is specified and approved.

Priority 1:

Strengthening Euroregion Baltic institutional, political, and technical capacities as a result of the strategic discussion on the future cooperation priorities

Strategic focus:

Implementing the ERB cooperation review road map adopted by the ERB Council

Rationale:

Euroregion Baltic has undergone significant changes reflecting the continuous need to make it a modern and efficiently acting organisation. They have all been possible through political support offered by politicians representing the regions – members of Euroregion Baltic, through administrative resources made available by their local and regional offices, and through personal commitment displayed by a number of individuals working with everyday issues on the ERB agenda. Financial assistance of EU programmes has also been instrumental in the process. On 21st January 2010 the Euroregion Baltic Executive Board decided to establish a task force to review the ERB cooperation. The task force will consist of representatives of the member regions responsible for a.o. territorial cooperation and regional development issues. The task force will also be open to other key stakeholders of the ERB cooperation (business sector, knowledge institutions, social partners). The Board decided to start the cooperation review process on 11th February and finalise it at the Council meeting in November 2010. As a result of the first meeting the task force prepared a road map of the ERB cooperation review process which will be presented to the Council for approval at their meeting on 5 March 2010.

In 2010 particular foci should be:

- effective implementation of the ERB cooperation review road map to be finalised in November 2010;
- *subsequent adoption of the ERB 2010 – 2011 Action Plan in the autumn 2010*
- *consequently, preparation of the process of implementing the revised Euroregion Baltic cooperation priorities after the November Council meeting.*

Priority 2:

Improving socio-economic cohesion in Euroregion Baltic through the continued implementation of the ERB Joint Development Programme

Strategic focus:

Effective implementation of Joint Development Programme

Rationale:

The reference networks which were established during the Seagull II project, turned into formal ERB Working Groups. Consisting of politicians, civil servants and experts, they examine possibilities for actors from the ERB member regions to work together within the areas of Joint Development Programme and prepare project applications with the aim of implementing specific recommendations of the ERB Joint Development Programme.

In 2010 particular foci should be:

- for to the Working Groups on SME & Innovation, Energy, and Water to implement projects submitted to the South Baltic Programme in its second call (DISKE, LED and MOMENT, respectively);
- for the Working Group on Rural Development to prepare a second ERB LAG Conference in Pomerania and to further elaborate a joint culinary project;
- for the Environment Protection to a prepare project application to the ENPI Lithuania – Poland Russia Programme related to the elimination of the hotspots in the territory of Kaliningrad Region;
- for the Working Group on Transport Infrastructure to act as a panel of experts assisting the ERB Board and the Council;
- for the Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Region to assess the interest of the ERB member regions in the Baltic Sea Strategy flagship project *Promote the Cultural Heritage and the Unique Landscapes*;
- for the Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Region to assess the possibility of re-submission of the BaltNet project.

Priority 3:

Enhancing cultural and societal integration within Euroregion Baltic through joint activities of local communities and youth

Strategic focus:

Integration of local communities within ERB regions, and of youth in particular

Rationale:

Integration of local communities lays at the foundation of cross-border cooperation and thus remains the core objective within Euroregion Baltic. The Working Group on Local Community Initiatives should provide a coordinative mechanism helping ERB actors to impermanent concrete activities affecting local communities in such areas as culture, education, entrepreneurship, healthcare, sports, and tourism. The involvement of youth shall add value to the integration of local communities and intercultural dialogue within ERB regions. Participation of the Youth Board in ERB decision-making processes is instrumental in both bringing the youth aspect into the ERB agenda and attracting more interest within the regions.

In 2010 particular foci should be:

- for the ERB Youth Board to anchor and promote its activities within the regions. Annual youth events will continue be organised in each ERB region (first was held in Olsztyn, Warmińsko-Mazurskie between 2 and 5th October 2009). In 2010 such an event will be hosted by Klaipeda County and organised within the framework of the YC3 project;
- for the ERB Youth Board to continue the implementation of the YC3 project;
- for the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic to reassess the interest of the member regions in this area of cooperation and prepare a proposal of specific objectives before the Council in November 2010, including
- further work on the Baltic Youth Camp project, aiming to facilitate youth sports events, both around summer and winter games;

Priority 4:

Making ERB more recognisable nationally, in the Baltic Sea Region and in the EU through the implementation of the ERB Information and Communication Strategy

Strategic focus:

Improving internal and external communication activities promoting Euroregion Baltic, as well as enhancing its participatory role in EU debates

Rationale:

This priority will specifically deal with the ERB Information and Communication Strategy which has been constructed in order to address the challenge of building an ERB brand on a number of levels. Firstly, ERB will run activities to make the organisation more familiar to a wide representation of local and regional levels. Another task will be to improve ERB visibility at national levels, both among governmental and parliamentary representatives. Finally, ERB will continue efforts to make coordinated contributions to debates within the European Union.

In 2010 particular foci should be:

- to cooperate with EU bodies such as relevant European Commission directorates. Further development of good contacts with the Committee of the Regions will remain our particular objective. It will also be of crucial importance for ERB to participate in events organised by the Committee of the Regions, with special focus on ones related to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation;
- to take further active part in ongoing EU debates and forward ERB resolutions on relevant EU policies. It is our strong belief that through such a active participation Euroregion Baltic will become more open, prestigious and reliable structure of interregional cooperation to be considered by the EU in their debates on policies;
- to continue organising ERB Executive Board and Council meetings around its member regions; these will subsequently be held in Warmińsko-Mazurskie (4-5 March in Elbląg and 22 April in Olsztyn), Klaipeda County (29 September in Klaipeda), Södra Småland (Autumn 2010 in Växjö).