

WORK PLAN OF THE BSSSC FOR THE YEAR 2001

In the face of the dynamically changing situation in Europe, ongoing democratization and decentralization processes as well as pending enlargement, the Baltic Sea Region is gaining on a new role. The BSSSC, an organization actively representing Baltic Sea regions since after the Copenhagen meeting in the year 1992, wishes to continue being an important player in the post - Niece Europe which has to build on strong subregions as the BSR.

In meeting this task the overall goals of the BSSSC are:

- help build the Baltic Sea Region – to make it a model European Region;
- participate actively in the transformation processes in Europe which aim at creating stable foundations of peace, freedom, democracy and prosperity;
- be instrumental in strengthening decentralization processes by supporting establishment of strong, efficient and democratic regional authorities.

The BSSSC will work towards those goals by:

- promoting closer co-operation between regions of the BSR;
- being instrumental in formulating a coherent Baltic Sea policy on the regional level;
- representing the interests of the Baltic Sea regions towards national governments as well as European Commission and other European and international organizations;
- participating in the vital discussions on the future shape of the European Union.

To secure best possible effectiveness, the BSSSC, enjoying the status of the CBSS partner organization, will co-operate closely on the working level with other Baltic Sea organizations and institutions, such as: CBSS CSO and WGs, UBC, BSPP, BTC, 7B, BCCA, CPMR, VASAB, Nordic Council of Ministers, Barents Sea organizations as well as other external partners of relevance to the Baltic Sea Region development. Besides, the BSSSC will strive to establish good working contacts with European organizations and institutions whose goals are oriented towards the decentralized level such as: Committee of the Regions, Association of the European Regions, CLARE, etc.

In its work, the BSSSC will take into consideration mainly the following:

Northern Dimension initiative,
eEurope initiative,
good governance initiative,
enlargement
ESDP
VASAB
Agenda 21

The Work Plan for the year 2001 leads towards the annual conference in Riga, which is the crowning point of the project “Strengthening of Regional Co-operation Network – towards the BSSSC Conference 2001”

The main events to contribute to the successful realization of the project and further the goals and initiatives of the BSSSC are:

- preparation of the list of priority projects on Northern Dimension for the CBSS CSO;
- The Northern Dimension conference in Kaliningrad – March 21-23;
- Seminar on Regional development in Riga – April 24;
- Seminar on Northern Dimension – Umea – May;

- Seminar on good governance in Oslo – June;
- Seminar on Structural Funds in Kaunas (Lithuania) - 11th September

Having as its goal the practical approach to the Baltic Sea co-operation the BSSSC, through its regions, will participate in a number of projects to be specified by WGs.

Being aware of the problems hampering the Baltic Sea Region co-operation the BSSSC will support all attempts to improve interoperability between the existing financial instruments, namely Interreg III, Phare and Tacis.

Wishing to increase the intensity of the Baltic Sea Region co-operation the BSSSC will work intensively towards establishment in the BSR of the uniform small project multi-partner fund and will aim at playing an essential role in it once established.

Wishing to increase its visibility and influence on the Baltic Sea issues as well as the developments in Europe and to be a more effective organization for the BSSSC regions, the BSSSC will:

- establish a Brussels antenna;
- establish a close co-operation with the Committee of Regions;
- establish a working contact with the Baltic Joint Co-operation Committee;
- establish a working contact with the Interreg bodies

In its work the BSSSC will concentrate mainly on the following fields:

- I. environment protection
- II. regional development
- III. economic development and co-operation
- IV. tourism
- V. youth and education
- VI. civic society
- VII. quality of life

Having as one of its goal popularization of the BSR co-operation, the BSSSC regions will further work on the so called national platforms.

Looking towards the future, especially in the face of the changes in Europe and the BSR mainly as the result of the enlargement process, the BSSSC will prepare an Interreg financed project which will, on one hand, lead it to the BSSSC annual conference in Norway in 2002 and on the other towards the year 2005 and onwards.