

Baltic Metropolises Network ACTION PLAN 2011 – 2012

Intention/purpose

The ten member cities of the Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) will continue to work together for greater competitiveness and integration in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). The main policy focus areas of the network shall be:

- 1. Innovation as a source of prosperity**
- 2. Competitiveness and cohesion**
- 3. Accessibility and logistics**
- 4. Sustainable development in a healthy/sane environment**

These focus areas constitute the core of the BaltMet cities' vision of an integrated, globally established and competitive Baltic Sea Region, and represent the main directions for metropolitan cooperation in 2011 – 2013.

The joint lobbying efforts of BaltMet will also continue to advocate the interests of the metropolitan cities in the context of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy and the Northern Dimension.

The BaltMet cities will continue to promote synergies and the exchange of best practice in relevant areas of city administration, sustainable development, and cultural and information exchange among the metropolises, in order to foster socio-economic development and the integration of the region.

Background

BaltMet Agenda – from Copenhagen 2002, Berlin 2005, Tallinn 2007 and Stockholm 2009
The Copenhagen Resolution (2002), the founding document of BaltMet, set the main objectives and the focus areas of the Network as innovation and brain circulation and identity building and marketing of metropolises in the BSR. From 2005 to 2007, these objectives have been successfully developed within the flagship project *BaltMet Inno*, as well as the project initiatives *BaltMet Invest* and *BaltMet Exchange*. The recommendations of BaltMet Inno showed how the innovation synergies between BaltMet cities can be further exploited through joint actions in collaboration with universities and the private sector.

The Mayors' Meetings in Berlin and Stockholm (2005) emphasised how an integrated and competitive BSR cannot exist without adequate infrastructure, and that sustainable development and the environment of the Baltic Sea must be integrated into metropolitan cooperation. The *BaltMet Infra* initiative, launched at the Mayors' Meeting in Helsinki (2006), opened the discussion and joint work to advance key pan-Baltic projects within transport infrastructure and the environment.

The Action Plan 2008-2010 followed the priorities set in the previous documents, adding a particular focus on promoting mobility and information exchange among the member cities, in order to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and greater integration among the region's metropolises.

The new action plan 2011-2013 follows the priorities of the previous documents, adding the Northern Dimension Framework Document and Europe 2020 Strategy.

Objectives/implementation framework

The objectives of the network shall be realised through concrete cooperation initiatives among the member cities, summarised in the action points below. Each action point is backed by a coordinating city which assumes the initiative for developing and implementing the actions in cooperation with other BaltMet partners, with overall coordination provided by the Secretariat and the Chair Cities.

BaltMet is a voluntary network offering an umbrella structure for metropolitan cooperation. Each individual project or initiative shall be approved by the cities involved, particularly with regard to costs that may arise. New projects and initiatives can be introduced by member cities during the Action Plan period with the agreement of the other members of the network.

The delegated officials representing member cities in the Network shall continue to play a liaison role with their city administrations. This group of officials shall be entrusted with the task of developing, monitoring and overseeing the projects and initiatives, as well as reporting progress to the Mayors.

A partnership between public administration, business and research institutions is seen as a guiding principle in all actions of the BaltMet structure.

Baltic Metropoles Network activity areas 2011 - 2012

1. Innovation as a source of prosperity

The BaltMet cities will continue to build on promoting a cohesive and competitive innovation environment within the Baltic Sea Region.

- 1.1. BaltMet will undertake activities to facilitate joint cluster development and to support the promotion of science-based entrepreneurship through cooperation between business incubators, the transfer of tools and the exchange of expertise.
- 1.2. BaltMet will promote the strengthening of cooperation among cities and partners in the development of existing – and the establishment of new – science and technology centres.
- 1.3. BaltMet will undertake activities in order to foster the building up of an entrepreneurial and creative environment in the metropolitan areas by sharing best practice on support mechanisms starting from school programmes. Indicators for entrepreneurial innovativeness should be developed, and should be used when benchmarking and for measuring progress.
- 1.4. BaltMet will undertake joint actions to foster the development of creative industries in the metropolises.
- 1.5. BaltMet will explore the possibilities of public procurement in introducing and using new, innovative products and services.

2. Competitiveness and cohesion

BaltMet will foster closer cooperation in marketing and branding the Baltic Sea Region, actively working together with other key regional actors to promote the BSR in Europe and globally.

- 2.1. BaltMet will support events that build the identity of the Baltic Sea Region locally and internationally, as well as promoting city cooperation in the area of marketing, including joint representation at international and global forums.
- 2.2. BaltMet will explore and launch activities for the unified Baltic Sea Region promotion project from a metropolitan perspective.
- 2.3. BaltMet will support rural-urban cooperation development and contribute to planning the European funding measures in order to ensure the competitiveness of the area.
- 2.4. BaltMet will promote a mutual exchange of information and jointly improve information/communication services.

3. Accessibility and logistics

In accordance with the Mayors' Resolution of 2006, BaltMet will continue to play an active part in the development of the common BSR transport strategies. BaltMet will promote cooperation and the exchange of best practices among the city administrators. BaltMet will also explore the possibility of developing a model of staff exchanges between the city administration departments, universities and enterprises.

- 3.1. BaltMet will foster the improvement of the surface transport infrastructure (e.g. rail connections) in the Baltic Sea Region.
- 3.2. BaltMet will promote the exchange of experience in private-public partnership models in the development of modern infrastructure in municipalities.

4. Sustainable development in a healthy/sane environment

BaltMet cities will promote cooperation in the sustainable planning of city infrastructure, incorporating environmental concerns. BaltMet will contribute to protecting the Baltic Sea marine environment and promoting sustainable use of the resources of the Baltic Sea

- 4.1. BaltMet will support the Baltic Sea Environmental Challenge to improve the Baltic Sea water quality by local actions.
- 4.2. BaltMet will explore and promote the opportunities for ports to make sustainable use of the marine environment.
- 4.3. BaltMet will promote cooperation in the sustainable planning of city infrastructure, incorporating environmental concerns.