



Co-operation agreement between the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities and the Union of Baltic Cities



Nantes, 2 juillet 2004

Meeting in the framework of the 5th General Assembly of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities

Ms Paz Fernández Felgueroso, Mayor of Gijón (Spain), member of the Committee of the Regions, in her capacity as President of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities (C.A.A.C.),

Mr Per Bodker Andersen, Mayor of Kolding (Denmark), in his capacity as President of the Union of Baltic Cities (U.B.C.),

1. State the aims and objectives of their respective organisations, which are as follows:

C.A.A.C.: The principal objective is the creation and consolidation of an area that enhances solidarity and favours the development of projects. To achieve this, the cities aim to foster synergy between them, develop new cooperation initiatives in areas of common interest, and strengthen their political influence at the European level. The C.A.A.C. works to promote the Atlantic seaboard, the polycentric and sustainable development of the Atlantic area and of the European Union, to defend the European model of urban development and to strengthen cooperation between urban areas, both within and outside the European Union.

U.B.C. : The Union's aim is to promote and strengthen cooperation and exchange of experience among the cities in the Baltic Sea Region, to advocate for common interests of the local authorities in the region, and to act on behalf of the cities and local authorities in common matters towards regional, national, European and international bodies, as well as achieving sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region with full respect to European principles of local and regional self-governance and subsidiarity.

2. Noting that both organisations work towards the goal of allowing the cities to play an ever more active and useful role in the development of their respective areas in the context of the construction of a constantly evolving European Union.

3. Calling for greater recognition by the regional, national and European bodies of the cities and of the European urban model - the strength of its specific features and its geographic and cultural diversity - and for an acknowledgement of the fundamental contribution this model makes to the construction of a competitive, balanced and sustainable European Union.

4. State that their strategic positions are supported by reflections, discussions and studies carried out in numerous fields of significant interest to the cities, as well as their support for and implementation of practical cooperation activities and joint projects developed by their members.

5. Recognising the similarity of their aims and activities, they state their intention to:

- ✓ Develop actions aiming to strengthen these, so that the voice of the cities may be heard and listened to in Europe;
- ✓ Help bring their citizens closer together in solidarity in an expanding Union.

6. They propose to strengthen the links between the two organisation and their cities by undertaking to carry out the following:

- ✓ To look into the possibility of producing joint discussion and position papers when the topics under consideration reflect the concerns of the members of both organisations, i.e. European governance, territorial dialogue, European cohesion policy, etc., or in response to consultation by the European institutions, bearing in mind the constant concern to raise awareness about and defend the interests of the cities and their driving role in the development of their surrounding areas.
- ✓ To promote a better knowledge of the diversity of the urban situations within the two geographical areas and support exchange of information and good practice among member cities.
- ✓ To organise collaboration and exchanges of good practices between the two General Secretariats in order to optimise the information available and the actions to be carried out with other European partners.
- ✓ To promote the implementation of joint cooperation projects between cities that are members of the two organisations. In this way, the cities may solicit their respective organisation for support and guidance in their search for partners and in the development of projects involving cities from the two geographical areas.

7. The list of activities is in no way restrictive. Support may be provided for any other initiative that helps to bring the cities and citizens of the Atlantic and Baltic areas to work together.

8. This agreement does not however establish any binding obligations, nor is it intended to create a new organisation or any formal administration.

The aim is to facilitate and make more coherent the exchanges between the two geographical areas and their joint activities, thus helping to contribute to the creation of a fair, sustainable and competitive Europe in which a leading role is played by the cities, in which the citizens enjoy an increasingly good quality of life.

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