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**South Baltic Professionals**  
**Regional and cross-border promotion concept for Lithuania**  
**for employment in the South Baltic Area**  
**Principles, Practice and Action Plan**

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## **I. Introduction. Basic principles of employment promotion in the cross-border framework**

### **1. The task for the analysis as identified in the SB Professionals project**

South Baltic Professionals is a project of the EU South-Baltic Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013. Activity 4.1 of the project Component 4 anticipates developing regional and cross-border promotion concepts for employment in the South Baltic Area. According to the project description, the aim of activity 4.1 is to develop regional cross-border promotion concepts for employment in the South Baltic Area. The target regions are the four cross-border areas of the project partnership network: Rostock (DE), Western Pomerania (DE/PL), Tricity (PL), Klaipėda (LT). In the case of this particular assignment, the particular focus for the analysis and development of the cross-border employment promotion activities is on the target cross-border area of Tricity – Klaipėda.

However, there already exists (although yet unpromoted) cross-border mobility of ship-building specialists from Klaipėda to Rostock, oil and gas extraction and processing experts from Tricity to Klaipėda, as well as the export of health and wellness services from Klaipėda County to Germany (= provision of these services to German tourists in the Lithuanian seaside resorts). Therefore the concerted promotion of the cross-border mobility of ship-building specialists, oil and gas extraction and processing experts, as well as the provision of health and wellness services in the South-Baltic Cross-border Region will be also within the focus of this assignment.

As a result of this assignment, the developed and proposed cross-border employment promotion activities together with the already on-going cross-border employment promotion activities will be incorporated into the cross-border employment promotion concept and action plan for Klaipėda County. Therefore the key task of the assignment is to develop and propose to the Lithuanian project partners concrete measures/tools to attract skilled specialists, to facilitate the cross-border mobility of professionals, particularly in the fields of ship-building, oil and gas extraction and processing, as well as to facilitate the export of health and wellness services in the Polish, German, Danish and Swedish markets, and to promote the South Baltic Area as an attractive work and business environment at job fairs in the South Baltic Area and beyond (e.g. Tricity Labour Fair in Gdynia, PL, International Fairs for International People, SE, etc.).

Summarizing what is said above the key output of the assignment is this comprehensive document. It provides the regional cross-border employment promotion concept to the Lithuanian partners and highlights the most effective possibilities for their participation (especially, of Klaipėda University) in regional events, mainly job fairs promoting job opportunities in Klaipėda County, and, thus facilitating the cross-border mobility of the labour force, which is the task of the South Baltic Professionals project. It should be noted in advance,

that the projected number for the Lithuanian project partners of attending 16 job fairs and other events within the project lifespan is unrealistic, since there are no capacities, neither financial, nor human available to meet this objective. However, the South Baltic Programme allows the 20% reduction of the tangible project outputs. Therefore, we suggest Lithuanian project partners attending 13 job fairs and other events promoting job opportunities in Klaipėda County as well as promoting high-quality health and wellness services in Klaipėda County to the clientele from other EU Member States, particularly, from other cross-border co-operation areas of the South Baltic Area (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity, as well as Western Pommerania (PL), Greater Copenhagen Region (DK), Scania and Blekinge (SE).

## 2. What is employment promotion in the cross-border framework?

Four documents of the European Commission provide the ground for the employment promotion in the cross-border framework and facilitation of the cross-border mobility of the skilled labour force and provision of high-quality services among the EU member states. These documents are:

- The Europe 2020 growth strategy;
- Europe 2020's Agenda for new skills and jobs;
- European Employment Strategy;
- The EU Youth Strategy.

Based on these key documents and their stipulations, we define *the employment promotion in the EU cross-border framework as a comprehensive and concerted process of removing barriers for the labour force, particularly for the young people, to tap into available skilled job and other decent employment opportunities in other EU Member States, and/or to deliver high added-value services to customers in other EU Member States without resorting to physical emigration.*

The key barriers for the cross-border mobility of the labour force and services as identified in the aforementioned EU policy documents comprise:

- differences in employment and social security regulations among the EU Member States;
- language barriers;
- differences in vocational and/or academic qualification recognition and assurance among the EU Member States;
- lack of communication and information on skilled job and other decent employment opportunities in other EU Member States;
- lack of information on the provision of competitive high-quality services in different EU countries and regions, particularly in such key sectors as green economy and energy,

- ICT, maritime, or health, wellness and care sector thus limiting the access for the consumers from other EU Member States to these services;
- lack of user-tailored communication on the quality assurance of services in different EU Member States and their regions, which could strengthen customers' ability and confidence to buy goods and services cross-border;
  - lack of communication and cooperation between the academic and business stakeholders in different EU Member States aimed at facilitating comprehensive and concerted efforts of the employment promotion in the cross-border framework;
  - in particular, lack of communication between the academic and business stakeholders in different EU Member States regarding young people's entry into the labour market through apprenticeships, stages or other work experience aimed at increasing job opportunities for young people by favouring mobility across the EU.

Apparently, such barriers as differences in employment and social security legislation, language barriers, or differences in vocational and/or academic qualification assurance among the EU Member States are difficult to eliminate or overcome within the limited period of a three-year cross-border co-operation project. Therefore, the main focus of this assignment is on the effective efforts aimed at the removal of the latter five barriers where the keyword is “communication”.

Hence, in practice, within the framework of the South Baltic Professionals cross-border co-operation project the comprehensive action plan addressing the issues of the employment promotion in the cross-border framework should be considered and interpreted as a comprehensive and effective communication campaign. This communication campaign should be aimed at user-tailored dissemination and provision of the key information to the key stakeholders and target groups on skilled job opportunities, and competitive high-quality services in different EU countries and regions, particularly in such key sectors as green economy and energy, ICT, maritime, or health, wellness and care sector.

### 3. Communication campaign as a tool for the employment promotion in the cross-border framework

An effective communication campaign in the cross-border framework of employment promotion requires systematic thinking and balanced decision-making concerning five basic elements: setting the goal, selecting the target group, determining the message(s), choosing media and methods, and organizing the campaign.

Once the activities have been completed, the entire process has to be evaluated. Developing a communication campaign is an ongoing process in which these elements have to

be combined into a particular plan that is consistent and precise enough to guide communication activities.

In principle some of the key components of a good communication campaign in the cross-border co-operation framework include:

- Clearly defined goals: what do we want to do, how do we want to do it and by when.
- Clearly defined target audiences (these related to both internal and external target audiences). An accompanying analysis of the best media to reach these people and where do they get their information.
- A plan for our media strategy.
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis about our competitive advantages and possible challenges.
- The most important, underlying component of our campaign however is our MESSAGE!!!

**Communicating cross-border labour force mobility and provision of services in the South Baltic Area comprises:**

- Developing effective and efficient communication actions facilitating the cross-border labour force mobility and provision of services in the South Baltic Area;
- Using communication in a more interactive way to establish partnerships and create consensus among different stakeholders.

A good communication campaign as a tool for the employment promotion in the cross-border framework thus will:

- assure that communication involves both academic and business stakeholders, and reaches potential employees and customers in the target countries and regions;
- provide relevant, accurate, consistent information at all times and involving the majority of relevant stakeholders and target groups;
- generate and sustain enthusiasm and support for the employment promotion in the cross-border framework within the South Baltic Area and beyond (with the central focus on Klaipėda County);
- help manage expectations regarding the South Baltic Professionals project as a time-limited and yet bearing a long-term impact activity for the employment promotion in the cross-border framework.

#### 4. Methodology: communicating cross-border employment promotion as an interactive process

Communicating cross-border employment promotion should be based on an interactive methodology. The suggested methodology closely follows the “interactive think-tank” approach, developed by the Dutch environmental network *Milieukontakt Oosteuropa* for the development of communication skills of the Central and Eastern European public-private partnership networks. This interactive communication methodology was successfully applied in many other cross-border co-operation projects involving various academic, business and non-governmental institutions in Central and Eastern Europe.

Communication is by no means a simple transmission of messages from sender to receiver. Thinking of it in these terms will not help to communicate and to promote the cross-border opportunities for employment and delivery of services successfully. It is better to think of communication as an interactive process, during which the participants try to come to agreement about the meaning of the messages being communicated. This process is not a closed circuit – it is influenced by many mental, emotional, social and cultural factors. Ultimately, the meaning of a message is not determined by the words, symbols or gestures used, but by the interpretation it gets in the heads of people.

The basis for interactive policy making is the recognition of mutual dependency. If people recognise that they need others to reach their goals, they will feel the need to communicate. Negotiation is needed if it turns out that different groups have conflicting interests. The aim of organising and facilitating the negotiation process is to produce a better plan or policy that is widely supported by different stakeholders. If this is achieved, implementation of the plan is likely to become much easier.

Once we assume that communicating cross-border employment promotion is an interactive process where people of different backgrounds, affiliations and nationalities have to reach agreement about their perceptions and ideas, we need interactive means and methods that make this possible: not by simple attending of labour fairs or distribution of leaflets, but by an interactive presenting and discussing cross-border labour opportunities with the participants during interactive workshops and round tables. We strongly argue that ***the interactive workshops and round tables in relation to the international labour, trade and tourism fairs should be opted as the most effective means*** for the implementation of the communication campaign and proliferating the message of the cross-border job opportunities conveyed by the South Baltic Professionals project.

Different communication tasks and responsibilities should be shared by both Lithuanian project partners together with the project partners from other countries on equal partnership principles while arranging and implementing interactive workshops and round tables. Distribution of responsibilities ought to be based on specific expertise, available at every partner organization participating in the activity. Partner having the best competence for arranging and conducting certain activity should be acting as a facilitator for other involved project partners since the promotion of the cross-border employment and delivery of services is a cross-border activity by definition.

Active involvement of the target groups and the stakeholders as the main recipients of the message is critically important as well. Both, project partners as message donors and target groups in other countries as message recipients should be involved into the common communication action, mutually benefiting from the upgraded knowledge and increased awareness on skilled job opportunities and competitive high-quality services in different EU countries and regions, particularly in such key sectors as green economy and energy, ICT, maritime, or health, wellness and care sectors. As a result of their increased understanding of each other's position, values and beliefs, they may be able to create a situation in which they can work together in the process of the project follow-up and continuation.

## 5. Specific problems of communicating employment promotion in the cross-border framework

We tend to divide the world into 'insiders' and 'outsiders', into 'us' and 'them'. Insiders are people that 'know' each other in some way or another. They have similar perceptions of the world (or of certain aspects of the world) and are therefore more predictable to each other in their reactions and behaviour. In the cross-border co-operation project like South Baltic Professionals every single partner and associated organization can be clearly defined as an insider in the group.

We may know something about the outsiders (or at least think we know...), but we are not part of their group, and they are not part of ours. The cooperation within the cross-border co-operation project facilitates building a common communication network where there may be (or yet may not be), common ideas and values shared, but we do not see the world in quite the same way. To make the things more complicated and obscure, in a cross-border co-operation project we even do not speak the same native tongue.

Communication problems are guaranteed, if the project partners, experts or key stakeholders, particularly from the business sphere, think that communication with the potential employees seeking job opportunities across the border, especially young, unemployed and from Central and Eastern Europe should be conducted from a superior position. This means that the

‘Westerners’ or ‘experts’ are supposed to explain the ‘truth’ to the ‘Easterners’ or ‘simpletons’, or even worse, to ‘educate’ them. The latter ones will immediately feel that they are not taken seriously and there is a big chance that they will react in a hostile manner. However unlikely it may seem it is still the case in many communication interactions between different kinds of stakeholders and target audiences in the ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ EU Member States. Frustrations can be avoided by trying to introduce more proactive and imaginative ways of thinking and a collaborative approach to problem solving. Consensus development is a promising new trend that takes into account the interactive character of the internal and external communication process.

If we do not make an effort to find out what the others are really like and how they see the world, there is very little chance that communication can be successful. We should realise that their group language and our group language may be quite different, but most importantly, we should realise that what we think we know about them may be untrue. Quite a few misunderstandings related to the interactions on the labour market occur when genuine interests and aspirations of the graduates and other young people without a sufficiently long professional career record are dismissed by the business people as ‘fantasies of the indolent new generation’. Such misunderstandings prove that rather obvious basic communication principles tend to be ignored quite often in the cooperation and communication context aimed at promoting the employment. These cooperation and communication problems become much more acute in the cross-border framework. Therefore, it is worth-stressing them here once again.

The values, beliefs, knowledge and language of different individuals can conflict but so can their goals in communication. The very first meeting between ‘us’, i.e. the project partners and ‘them’, i.e., the stakeholders and target groups whom we want to convey our message may be seen by the partners as an informal ‘getting to know each other’, an opportunity to lay a foundation for future trust and co-operation. However, as usually happens in the groups with rather diverse goals and outputs, the stakeholders may see it as a formal meeting to present the formalized cross-border employment opportunities and/or possibilities to export services merely ‘for a tick’ by simple distribution of flyers or showing a roll-up. In such a case communication is likely to be difficult: both sides will try to steer the conversation in a certain direction, and there is a good chance that both sides will feel frustrated at the end of the meeting.

Again, more often than seldom such apparent fault spoil good intentions for the communication and conveying of the message.

## **II. Messages**

### **6. Employment promotion in the cross-border framework in Klaipėda County: essence**

A message is a short and truthful statement aimed at persuading your audience to support your intentions and take action in line of that support. Deriving from the above some general characteristics are:

- A message is simple;
- A message is truthful;
- A message is short;
- A message is clear;
- A message is inspiring, and
- A message should convey information on the essence of the employment opportunities in the cross-border framework.

Articulating the essence of the messages considering the employment opportunities in the cross-border framework within the South Baltic Area is a rather complicated issue, since it relies on four different policy documents of the European Commission and has to take into account national peculiarities of countries with different history, traditions, labour ethics and, what is very important, wage levels.

The best description of the essence of the messages considering the employment opportunities in the cross-border framework within the South Baltic Area, in our opinion, could be derived from the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region considering one of the pillars of the Strategy, i.e., strengthening the competitiveness of the BSR (and South Baltic Area as its sub-region) as a 'prosperous place' and as a globally leading and prosperous "Health Region".

It must be emphasized here, that within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region the major objective of the proposed promotion of the cross-border mobility of the labour force and high-added value services is to strengthen the competitiveness of the South Baltic Area as a prosperous place. Therefore, the main focus is on the promotion and facilitating of the cross-border mobility within the South Baltic Area, rather than enhancing the current pattern of the 'East' – 'West' migration, which leads to the depopulation and the 'brain drain' from the entire South Baltic Area (including even the most competitive sub-region within the South Baltic Area, which is Mecklenburg – Western Pomerania of Germany).

In order to be presented and promoted as a 'prosperous place' and as an attractive and competitive region for the cross-border mobility of the labour force and high-added value

services the following key features of the South Baltic Area in general, and of Klaipėda County specifically should be emphasized and communicated referring to the Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region:

- Improving maritime careers and training and qualifications can contribute significantly to increasing Maritime safety, employment, and overall competitiveness of the whole maritime cluster.
- Co-operation on intra-EU mobility could better align labour market demands in both sending and receiving countries to the supply of work force, through linking labour market training, retraining and advanced training in a more co-ordinated way. This is a way to ensure that the region has the trained labour force it needs. There is a great potential in utilising the strengths of the different labour markets in the region, both the more mature and the more dynamic, in particular to meet the needs of especially the growing innovative companies.
- As regards maritime clusters, the mix of economic activities in the different countries around the Baltic, in terms of shipping, shipbuilding, ports, services, equipment supply, maritime works and fisheries, would be able to deliver positive results in fostering internationalization and the competitiveness of SMEs.
- Cooperation between municipalities, regions and Member States is an important way to increase the efficiency of the support instruments through the mutual exchange of experience, analysis of future topics, and on procedures for implementation and comparison of performance.
- The maritime cluster can benefit from labour mobility between land-based and sea-based jobs and careers, as well as a more transparent and higher-level system for qualification for maritime professions.
- Fostering deeper co-operation between job-agencies in the Baltic Sea Region and promoting better links between labour training, retraining and advanced training and the labour market needs in the entire region.
- Further enhanced collaboration between trade and investment agencies in the region would be of benefit for intra-regional trade, as well as for the trade of companies from the region with countries outside.
- The EU-financial instruments of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, as well as the Structural Funds should be used extensively and in an effective way in order to secure finance to SMEs where current market conditions are difficult. The EU-sources for SME-finance should be complemented by national and regional financing.

Hence, the promotion of the cross-border mobility of the labour force and high-added value services within the South Baltic Area and, specifically, in Klaipėda County could be expressed in the following operational objectives:

1. Participation in the job fairs in the South Baltic Area and beyond presenting high added value and well-paid job opportunities as well as attractive living conditions in Klaipėda County.
2. Interactive dialogue with potential job-seekers from other countries particularly in the priority sectors of green economy and energy, ICT, maritime, or health, wellness and care regarding high added value and well-paid job opportunities in Klaipėda County.
3. Participation in international tourism fairs in the South Baltic Area and beyond presenting health and wellness services provided in Lithuanian seaside resorts.
4. Interactive dialogue with the graduates from Lithuanian vocational training and academic education institutions, particularly in the sectors of green economy and energy, ICT, maritime, health, wellness and care, considering the professional mobility possibilities and benefits, as well as career opportunities within the South Baltic Area;
5. Interactive dialogue with the graduates from Lithuanian vocational training and academic education institutions, as well as with potential job-seekers from other countries regarding the attractiveness and competitiveness of Klaipėda, Palanga and Neringa, other South Baltic coastal cities and seaside resorts as places to work and live.
6. Using other available channels (flyers, SB Professionals website and other ICT tools, etc.) for the promotion of the cross-border mobility and the provision of services.

## 7. Employment promotion in the cross-border framework in Klaipėda County: messages

It is safe to state that the message is the heart of our communication strategy. The message is our primary tool to persuade and motivate audiences.

Therefore the message (or several messages) should:

- Present our vision, world outlook and the rationale of our efforts. It also gives the opportunity to link our efforts to the rationale of the entire cross-border co-operation project activities.
- Consider our audience and speak to them in a language that means something to them in their everyday live.
- Connect our vision, world outlook and the rationale of our efforts with our targeted audience, i.e., be able to convey how our efforts relate to them and therefore provide a ground for their support of our work.

In a cross-border co-operation and communication framework, partners, associated organizations, other stakeholders and target groups come from different countries are involved in different activities, although working with similar concepts. They have little or no physical link. Therefore the risk of conveying contradictory messages about the work is great.

Misinterpretation of common values both on project and programme levels is also commonplace. Hence, it is critically important to develop and agree upon a common message (or several messages) to fine-tune all this information and assure that the message(s) were presented in a truthful, harmonised way regardless of who is delivering the message(s) and to what audience. Determining the contents of the message(s) requires careful consideration. The contents of the message(s) should take into account the existing knowledge, the 'everyday life-world' and the experiences of the target group. If we know of resistance and objections within the target group to the proposed actions or their rationale, we should seriously take this into account. If resistance and counter-arguments are ignored, the target group will simply cut itself off from further information. In such situations large-scale one-way communication campaigns will probably not be very effective.

As a result of extensive interactive working sessions with the Lithuanian partners of the South Baltic Professionals project considering employment promotion in the cross-border framework in Klaipėda County, the following messages are suggested for the conveying to the target groups:

- Job and career opportunities in the major coastal cities and seaside resorts of the South Baltic Area are competitive compared with other non-metropolitan regions of the European Union regarding the wage and living cost ratio as well as social welfare, particularly in such priority sectors as green economy and energy, ICT, maritime, health, wellness and care sector.
- Efforts of young professionals to start their own SME or to contribute to and benefit from the dynamic development of other enterprises in the priority sectors are better rewarded and supported in the South Baltic Area than in the metropolitan regions of the European Union through various EU support schemes. In this framework, young people could and should benefit from the innovative and entrepreneurial skills, capacities, openness and high educational level of the society along the South Baltic rim.
- South Baltic coastal cities and seaside resorts are attractive and competitive places to work and live not only due to attractive employment opportunities or business development possibilities but also as vibrant hubs of maritime culture, hosting maritime festivals, sailing and water sports, attractive coastal amenities.

It is important that for the perfection and adoption of these messages the representatives from the whole co-operation network of the South Baltic Professionals project partners, associated organizations, business and academic stakeholders should be actively involved.

### **III. Practice**

#### **8. Employment promotion and communication targets and target groups**

Setting communication targets: What is the goal? What do we want to achieve with communication? Which target groups go with our communication goal? Who are the people we have to communicate with to reach our communication goal? Is this realistic and feasible? Can we achieve our goal by using communication? Can we reach our target group?

It is crucial to specify which target group we want to reach, as this determines how and what we will communicate. When it comes to communicating about the cross-border employment and career opportunities in the South Baltic Area, young graduates from the South Baltic countries will need a different approach than professionals in such fields as ship-building or energy sectors, for whom the relationship of their mobility opportunities with the elimination of existing barriers for mobility and facilitation of the free flow of goods and services within the European Union have much bigger consequences.

By distinguishing different target groups, different communication objectives will emerge as well. We should realise that target groups are not homogenous. There can be differences of opinion, attitudes, and knowledge within a target group. It is necessary to find out whether there is such a diversity. In many cases it can be useful to involve members of the target group in designing a communication activity.

The project communication addresses at least five different target groups in various sectors of interest:

- Vocational school trainees and university graduates, particularly with qualifications in the priority sectors of green economy and energy, ICT, maritime, health, wellness and care.
- Skilled specialists, particularly in the sectors of ship-building and gas and oil extraction and processing.
- Ambitious and business-minded young people interesting in challenging careers in a business-friendly environment.
- Health- and environment-conscious blue and white collar professionals, for whom good living conditions on the South Baltic seacoast present an added value.
- Local, regional and national public authorities, particularly from employment agencies, the staff and key stakeholders of the trade chambers in the South Baltic Area.
- Potential users of health and wellness tourism services in Klaipėda County from Germany, Poland and other EU countries.

9. SWOT analysis of the cross-border employment promotion and communication in Klaipėda County and South Baltic Area

**SWOT analysis:**

<b>Internal features</b>		<b>External situation</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Highly professional partnership network committed to the project success	Lack of common understanding of cross-border employment rationale and benefits among all project partners and stakeholders	EU policy and financial instruments facilitate cross-border mobility and export of services across the border within the South Baltic Area	Continuing ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’ from the entire South Baltic Area
High competence of the key project staff	Different approaches towards cross-border mobility promotion in different target regions (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity and Klaipėda)	The priority sectors within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aimed at strengthening competitiveness of the region coincide with priority sectors of the South Baltic Area	Clashing priorities in the promotion and development of different priority sectors in different countries and regions of the South Baltic Area
Strong stakeholders directly interested in project results	Weak capacities of the staff at the Career Center of Klaipėda University	New EU financial instruments supporting entrepreneurship of young people and highly skilled professionals in the priority sectors of cross-border relevance	Ignorance of negative long-term employment and business environment trends by local authorities in coastal cities and seaside resorts of the South Baltic Area

**Strategic actions:**

**How strengths should facilitate opportunities?**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Strategic actions</b>
Highly professional partnership network committed to the project success	EU policy and financial instruments facilitate cross-border mobility and export of services across the border within the South Baltic Area	Launch active communication campaign addressed to the key public and private stakeholders aimed to facilitate cross-border mobility and cross-border export of high-quality services within the South Baltic Area and beyond
High competence of the key project staff	The priority sectors within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aimed at strengthening competitiveness of the region coincide with priority sectors of the South Baltic Area	Focus the communication campaign efforts to facilitate cross-border mobility and cross-border export of high-quality services on the key priority sectors, such as maritime, energy, health, wellness and care
Strong stakeholders directly interested in project results	New EU financial instruments supporting entrepreneurship of young people and highly skilled professionals in the priority sectors of cross-border relevance	Promote and facilitate interactively the entrepreneurship and willingness to participate of young people and highly skilled professionals in the development of priority sectors of cross-border relevance in the South Baltic Area in general, and in Klaipėda County in particular

**How strengths should mitigate threats?**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Strategic actions</b>
Highly professional partnership network committed to the project success	Continuing ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’ from the entire South Baltic Area	Develop contingency plans to ensure sustainability of efforts to promote intra-regional cross-border co-operation and mobility within the South Baltic Area and cross-border provision of high-quality services to other EU regions without resorting to physical emigration
High competence of the key project staff	Clashing priorities in the promotion and development of different priority sectors in different countries and regions of the South Baltic Area	Dedicated and concerted communication of the project partners and key stakeholders towards the national, regional and local authorities responsible for distribution of EU structural funds between different priority sectors in the respective countries, regions and municipalities
Strong stakeholders directly interested in project results	Ignorance of negative long-term employment and business environment trends by local authorities in coastal cities and seaside resorts of the South Baltic Area	

**How opportunities should mitigate weaknesses?**

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Strategic actions</b>
EU policy and financial instruments facilitate cross-border mobility and export of services across the border within the South Baltic Area	Lack of common understanding of cross-border employment rationale and benefits among all project partners and stakeholders	Organizing special sessions with a focus on message development during the routine project meetings aimed to develop a common vision and message shared and promoted by all project partners
The priority sectors within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aimed at strengthening competitiveness of the region coincide with priority sectors of the South Baltic Area	Different approaches towards cross-border mobility promotion in different target regions (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity and Klaipėda)	Project partners from all target regions (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity and Klaipėda) ensure coherence of their respective regional promotion concepts and plans aimed to achieve the best results in the facilitation of coherent and sustainable cross-border labour force mobility and export of services across the border
New EU financial instruments supporting entrepreneurship of young people and highly skilled professionals in the priority sectors of cross-border relevance	Weak capacities of the staff at the Career Center of Klaipėda University	Strengthen capacities of Klaipėda University and other academic partners as facilitators of the promotion of entrepreneurship in the priority sectors of cross-border relevance, and cross-border export of high-quality services within the South Baltic Area and beyond

**How to avoid the coincidence of threats and weaknesses?**

<b>Threats</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Strategic actions</b>
Continuing ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’ from the entire South Baltic Area	Lack of common understanding of cross-border employment rationale and benefits among all project partners and stakeholders	Project partners take additional internal communication efforts to ensure common understanding of cross-border employment rationale and benefits among all project partners and stakeholders aimed to mitigate ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’
Clashing priorities in the promotion and development of different priority sectors in different countries and regions of the South Baltic Area	Different approaches towards cross-border mobility promotion in different target regions (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity and Klaipėda)	Project partners take efforts to ensure that the best practice in the promotion of the cross-border mobility and strengthening of competitiveness of coastal cities and seaside resorts in the cross-border framework is adequately reflected in the follow-up documents of the EU Baltic Sea Region Action Plan
Ignorance of negative long-term employment and business environment trends by local authorities in coastal cities and seaside resorts of the South Baltic Area	Weak capacities of the staff at the Career Center of Klaipėda University	Project partners take efforts to ensure a joint implementation synergy of the regional cross-border mobility promotion and communication plans together in all respective cross-border regions of the South Baltic Professionals project (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity and Klaipėda)

## 10. Cross-border employment promotion and communication scenarios and strategies in Klaipėda County and South Baltic Area

### Scenarios

<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>Pessimistic</b>	<b>Realistic</b>
EU policy and financial instruments facilitate cross-border mobility and export of services across the border within the South Baltic Area	Continuing ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’ from the entire South Baltic Area	Any (old and new) EU policy and financial instruments prove to be incapable to retard effectively the ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’ from the South Baltic Area
New EU financial instruments supporting entrepreneurship of young people and highly skilled professionals in the priority sectors of cross-border relevance	Ignorance of negative long-term employment and business environment trends by local authorities in coastal cities and seaside resorts of the South Baltic Area	
The priority sectors within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aimed at strengthening competitiveness of the region coincide with priority sectors of the South Baltic Area	Clashing priorities in the promotion and development of different priority sectors in different countries and regions of the South Baltic Area	Natural development of the priority sectors without much active involvement and support from local, regional and national authorities leads to further cross-border collaboration in maritime sector, as well as oil and gas extraction and processing

**Communication strategy**

<b>Realistic scenario</b>	<b>Communication strategy</b>
<p>Any (old and new) EU policy and financial instruments prove to be incapable to retard effectively the ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’ from the South Baltic Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project partners launch active communication campaign addressed to the key public and private stakeholders aimed to spread the identified communication messages and to facilitate cross-border mobility and cross-border export of high-quality services in the priority sectors, such as maritime, energy, health, wellness and care within the South Baltic Area and beyond</li> <li>• Project partners promote and facilitate interactively the entrepreneurship and willingness to participate of young people and highly skilled professionals in the development of priority sectors of cross-border relevance in the South Baltic Area in general, and in Klaipėda County in particular</li> <li>• Project partners take dedicated and concerted communication efforts towards the national, regional and local authorities responsible for distribution of EU structural funds between different priority sectors in the respective countries, regions and municipalities</li> </ul>
<p>Natural development of the priority sectors without much active involvement and support from local, regional and national authorities leads to further cross-border co-laboration in maritime sector, as well as oil and gas extraction and processing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project partners take additional efforts to ensure coherence of their respective regional promotion concepts and plans, as well as communicated messages aimed to achieve the best results in the facilitation of coherent and sustainable cross-border labour force mobility and export of services across the border</li> <li>• Project partners take additional internal communication efforts to ensure common understanding of cross-border employment rationale and benefits among all project partners and stakeholders aimed to mitigate ‘East’ – ‘West’ migration leading to the depopulation and the ‘brain drain’</li> <li>• Project partners take efforts to ensure that the best practice in the promotion of the cross-border mobility and strengthening of competitiveness of coastal cities and seaside resorts in the cross-border framework is</li> </ul>

	<p>adequately reflected in the follow-up documents of the EU Baltic Sea Region Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project partners take efforts to ensure a joint implementation synergy of the regional cross-border mobility promotion and communication plans together in all respective cross-border regions of the South Baltic Professionals project (Rostock, Western Pomerania, Tricity and Klaipėda)</li> </ul>
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### **Quantitative communication targets:**

- At least three international labour fairs (e.g. Tricity Labour Fair in Gdynia, PL – twice, International Job Fair in Malmö, SE) are attended jointly by the SB Professionals Project partners, and at least 30 participants are involved into interactive round table discussions about job opportunities in the South Baltic Area in general and in Klaipėda County in particular.
- At least four international tourism fairs are attended (e.g., Vivattur and AdventTur in Vilnius – twice) are attended jointly by the SB Professionals Project partners, and at least 40 participants are involved into interactive round table discussions about the opportunities to enjoy high quality health and wellness services in the seaside resorts of Klaipėda County.
- At least three national employment promotion events are attended in Lithuania (e.g., graduate fairs in Vilnius, Kaunas and Šiauliai), and at least 30 participants are involved into interactive round table discussions about the employment opportunities in Klaipėda County within the framework of cross-border professional mobility and possibilities to get engaged in the cross-border provision of Klaipėda County-based high quality services, particularly in wealth and wellness sector.
- At least three specialist-oriented employment promotion events are organized in Klaipėda, and at least 30 participants are involved into interactive round table discussions about the employment opportunities in Klaipėda County within the framework of cross-border professional mobility and possibilities to get engaged in the cross-border provision of Klaipėda County-based high quality services, particularly in wealth and wellness sector.
- The cross-border employment possibilities in Klaipėda County and professional mobility opportunities are regularly highlighted on the website of the South Baltic Professionals project.
- Besides the key actors and target groups, all other stakeholders, particularly business institutions, as well as public and private social partners are invited to take part in the above highlighted promotion events.

## 11. Cross-border employment promotion plan for Klaipėda County

<b>Date/ deadline</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Partner in charge</b>
<b>May 2013</b>	Disseminating the draft of the cross-border promotion and communication plan among the project partners	Project partners	EUCC Baltic Office
<b>May 2013</b>	On-line discussion on the project message and cross-border promotion plan	Project partners	EUCC Baltic Office
<b>June 2013</b>	Completing the cross-border promotion and communication plan	Project partners	EUCC Baltic Office
<b>July 2013</b>	Launching cross-border promotion and communication campaign addressed to the key public and private stakeholders	Diverse stakeholders and target groups	Klaipėda University
<b>August 2013</b>	A cross-border promotion event for mobility and services of skilled specialists in Klaipėda, LT is organized, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Lithuanian project partners
<b>October 6, 2013</b>	Days of International Education - Fall 2013 in Vilnius, LT are attended, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions <a href="http://www.universityfairs.com/fairs">http://www.universityfairs.com/fairs</a>	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Lithuanian project partners
<b>October 11-13, 2013</b>	Trade Fair of Beauty and Health Industry in Klaipėda, LT is attended, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Potential users and providers of health and wellness tourism services	Lithuanian project partners
<b>October 16, 2013</b>	International Job Fair in Malmö (European Job Days), SE is attended and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Interested SB Professionals partners
<b>February 6-8 2014</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> International Self-Education, Studies & Career Fair 2014 in Vilnius, LT is attended, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Lithuanian project partners

<b>February 7-9, 2014</b>	International Tourism Fair “Balttour” in Riga, LV is attended by the Lithuanian project partners, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Potential users of health and wellness tourism services	Lithuanian project partners
<b>February 2014</b>	International Tourism Fair “Adventur” in Vilnius, LT is attended and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Potential users of health and wellness tourism services	Lithuanian project partners
<b>February 2014</b>	A cross-border promotion event for mobility and services of skilled specialists in Klaipėda, LT is organized, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Skilled specialists Health- and environment-conscious blue and white collar professionals Local, regional and national public authorities	Lithuanian project partners
<b>March 2014</b>	International Tourism Fair “Vivattur” in Vilnius, LT is attended by the Lithuanian project partners, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions <a href="http://www.expodatabase.com">http://www.expodatabase.com</a>	Potential users of health and wellness tourism services	Lithuanian project partners
<b>March 2014</b>	Tricity Labour Fair in Gdynia, PL is attended and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions <a href="http://www.itp.gdansk.pl">www.itp.gdansk.pl</a>	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Interested SB Professionals partners
<b>March 20, 2013</b>	Days of International Education - Spring 2014 in Vilnius, LT are attended, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions <a href="http://www.universityfairs.com/fairs">http://www.universityfairs.com/fairs</a>	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Lithuanian project partners
<b>April 2014</b>	Labour Fair in Szczecin, PL is attended, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions <a href="http://www.targipracy.szczecin.pl">http://www.targipracy.szczecin.pl</a>	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Interested SB Professionals partners

<b>April 2014</b>	International Job Fair in Malmö (European Job Days), SE is attended, and at least 10 participants involved into interactive round table discussions	Vocational school trainees and university graduates Business-minded young people	Interested SB Professionals partners
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## 12. Evaluation

Finally we would like to stress the need to evaluate the presented above cross-border promotion and communication activity. How can we assess its effects? The number of articles or sent press releases does not tell us anything about the effect. It says something about activities on the part of the sender, but nothing about the receivers. We need to know how many people read the articles or press releases and what they thought of the content. There are several methods to evaluate a communication activity. An in-depth interview with members of the target group is one. Another is to create the possibility for feedback or reactions, for example by including a telephone number or a reply-form within the press releases. To a certain extent, the number and the nature of these reactions will inform us about the effect of the communication.

Here the difficult question arises as to what a positive result actually is. The current idea is that the promotion is effective if concrete and measurable results have been obtained that were accurately and precisely defined beforehand. This changes if we assume that the change in policies facilitating cross-border mobility and cross-border export of services are gradually developed in the South Baltic Area through communication and negotiation between the different stakeholders involved. It would be more realistic to consider all developments that are accepted and supported by all stakeholders as positive results in a gradual, ongoing process leading to a better policy of cross-border mobility and cross-border export of services and more competitive and attractive business and social environment in the South Baltic Area.

### **Recognising additional or new problems**

Many times solutions are accompanied by new problems. Making choices often comes with the feeling of being involved in a dilemma-situation: every option brings about some disadvantages that might become new problems. These problems should not be denied, but recognised and, if necessary, solved.