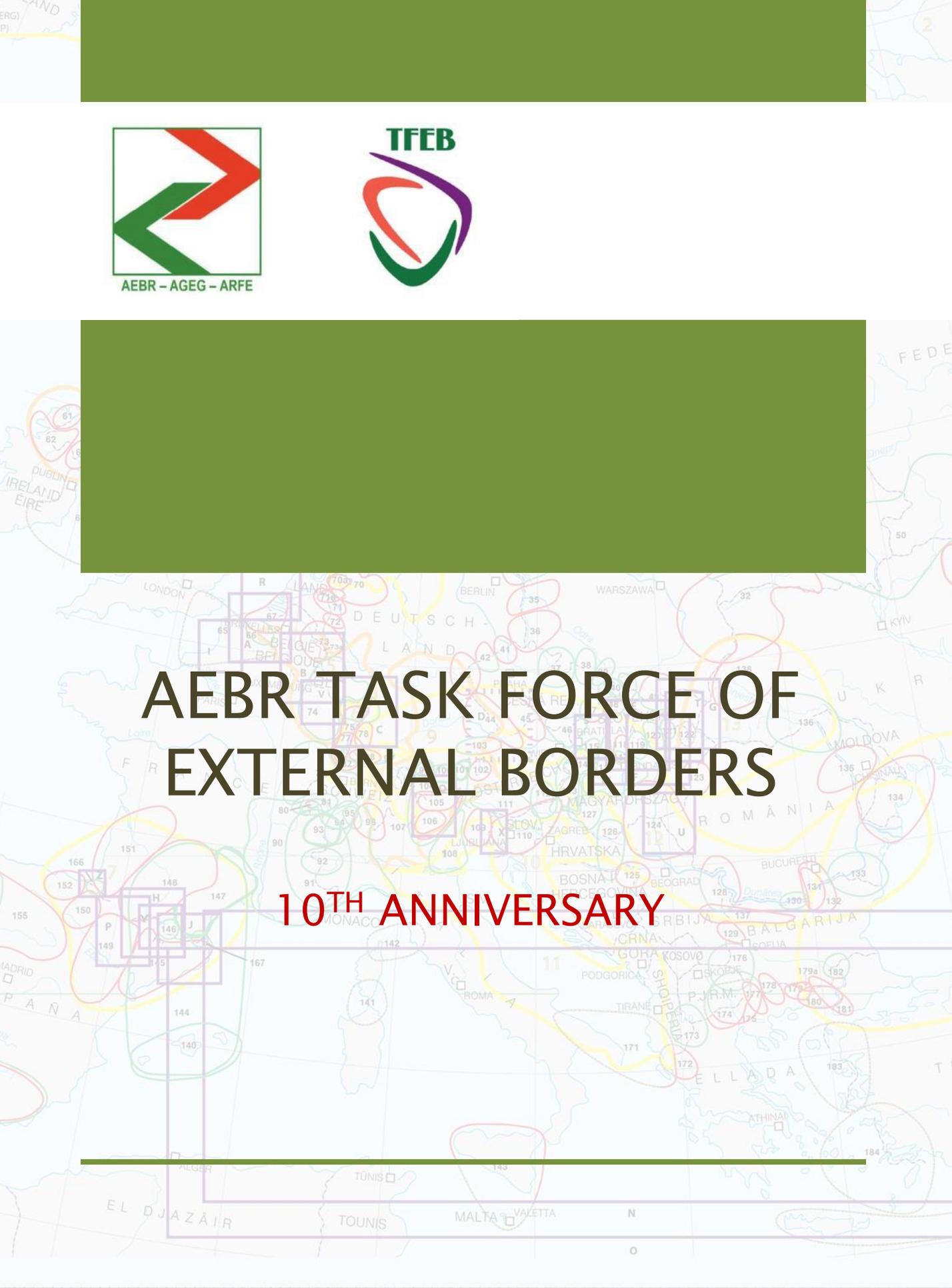


AEBR - AGEG - ARFE



# AEBR TASK FORCE OF EXTERNAL BORDERS

10TH ANNIVERSARY



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Published by: **Association of European Border Regions (AEBR)**  
**Task Force of External Borders (TEFB)**  
*Secretariat General:* Enscheder Straße 362, D-48599 Gronau (Germany)  
e-mail: [info@aebr.eu](mailto:info@aebr.eu)  
**[www.aebr.eu](http://www.aebr.eu)**  
*Projects Office:* Rüdeshheimer Str. 8, D-14197 Berlin (Germany)  
e-mail: [m.guillermo@aebr.eu](mailto:m.guillermo@aebr.eu), [ivy@aebr.eu](mailto:ivy@aebr.eu)  
*AEBR Antenna in Brussels:* Office of Extremadura, Av. de Cortenbergh 89, 2  
B-1000 Brussels (Belgium), e-mail: [extremadura.bruselas@gobex.es](mailto:extremadura.bruselas@gobex.es)  
*AEBR Info Centre in Kharkiv (Ukraine):* [siromed@ukr.net](mailto:siromed@ukr.net)  
*AEBR Centre for Balkans (Serbia):* [ananikolov@gmail.com](mailto:ananikolov@gmail.com)

Editor in-chief: **Johannes Moisia**, Chairman of AEBR TFEB  
For the Publisher: **Karl-Heinz Lambertz / Martín Guillermo-Ramírez / Johannes Moisia**

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Dear readers,

This year, AEBR Task Force of External Borders, founded in September 2007, celebrates its 10th anniversary. During the last 10 years, the Task Force dealt intensively with the situation on Europe's external Borders.

People living in those areas located on external borders of the European Union or the Council of Europe are facing a very special situation every day. Therefore, understanding specific particularities in border regions is one of the major challenges in order to get a detailed overview of our Continent. This work is of particular strategic importance to AEBR.

In its numerous activities, AEBR Task Force of External Borders focused on Youth and tried to get in touch with interesting young people all around Europe. Young People, representing designers of Europe's future, got the opportunity to exchange with their neighbours and to discover all varieties and similarities between friends and companions.

This important work needs to be continued in order to bring and hold Europe together and to strengthen important partnerships to our neighbours.

*Yours faithfully,*

*Karl-Heinz Lambertz  
President of AEBR*



# Task Force “External Borders”

Chairman: **Johannes Moisio**  
e-mail: : johannes.moisio@ekarjala.fi

Headquarters: *Regional Council of South Karelia*  
Kauppakatu 40D, 53100 Lappeenranta (Finland)  
e-mail: johannes.moisio@ekarjala.fi  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AEBRTFEB/>  
**www.aebr.eu**

Regional and thematic groups:

*Group for North Europe*  
Regional Council of South Karelia  
Kauppakatu 40D, 53100 Lappeenranta (Finland)  
e-mail: johannes.moisio@ekarjala.fi

*Group for Central Europe*

*Center for Balkans*  
<https://www.facebook.com/AEBR.Balkans/>  
e-mail: ananikolov@gmail.com

*Group for East Europe*

*Young Leaders for Cross-Border Cooperation*  
<https://www.facebook.com/Young.Leaders.for.CBC/>  
e-mail: ananikolov@gmail.com

*Group for Equal Opportunities*  
GFGZ Gesellschaft zur Förderung der grenzüberschreitenden  
Zusammenarbeit  
<https://www.facebook.com/gfgz.org/>  
e-mail: idasschmid@gfgz.org

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Dear readers,

Some of you were present when AEBR Task Force of External Borders was founded in September 2007. There were indications, that the specific issues of the external borders were often not noted while AEBR was dealing the cross-border cooperation. The focus was on Interreg programmes, which usually are either for internal borders of EU or for macro area cooperation and therefore more-or-less in the hands of national bodies.

Already on foundation stage, managing of the TFEB was divided into three sections: Southern, Central and Northern Europe. I took personally responsibility on the Northern area as well as the whole task force. This concept remained even though the central and eastern area has received specific elements: AEBR office in Kharkiv, AEBR Info-center in Kharkiv.



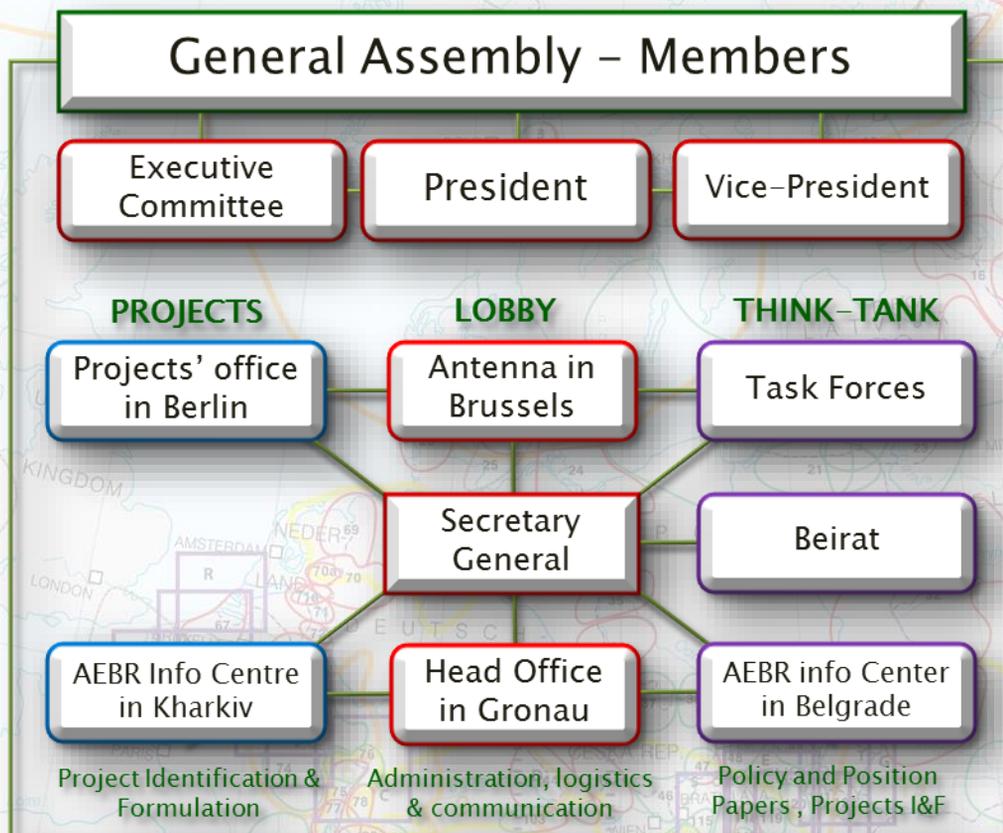
TFEB has by time also grown. Eight annual Youth Forums in 2009-2016 generated first discussion groups in Facebook such as "AEBR-ians 4th generation" and a sub-group of AEBR Young Leaders in Balkans. Recently AEBR family receives a new Task Force "TF Equal Opportunities", which has become also a sub-group of TFEB.

During 10 years of existence, AEBR TFEB has grown to a loose community of over 100 members. These are partly from non-member areas and partly youth from the member regions of the AEBR. AEBR Task Force of External Borders is already well noted. This is the case especially in the eastern neighbours of the EU. However, all the European external borders are in focus even those, which are not EU borders.

This anniversary publication provides you hopefully a good view on what TFEB is doing and has done. I hope, it also brings up good memories for those who have been participating in the events.

*Johannes Moisiu  
Chairman of AEBR TFEB in 2007-2017*

# Task Forces as Practical Tools for Members' Participation in AEBR



*Task Forces are valued as Practical Tools for Members' Participation in AEBR.*

AEBR organizes TASK FORCES on different issues of interest for European border and cross-border regions to which belong representatives of European institutions and political committees, associations and society-relevant groups with an advisory role.

*Get familiar with every petals of AEBR Task Forces Flower!*





Dear colleagues,

Ten years have already passed since we organized our General Assembly and Annual Conference in Lappeenranta. This was the first of these activities organized by me directly with the hosts (South Karelia) as I was elected Secretary General of our Association the year before in Pamplona. It was also the last occasion for Baron Viktor von Malchus to attend our meetings, as he passed away the following year. Baron von Malchus was the Chairman of our Advisory Committee, one of the founders of the AEBR in the early seventies and one of the main pioneers of CBC. I remember very well how he enjoyed the events organized by South Karelia in Lappeenranta, as he told me very enthusiastically. That's why I would like to share these greetings with his memory.

Many things happened in these ten years in Europe, in other continents and, especially regarding cross-border cooperation, and AEBR has been fully involved in most of them. Furthermore, in Lappeenranta 2007 we decided to constitute the first AEBR Task Forces: the Task Force External Borders (TFEB) and the Task Force on Cross-Border Health; and, since then, many other task forces have also been constituted, following the path marked close to Lake Saimaa. TFEB has been particularly active in developing a strong relationship at the external borders of the EU, despite of the very difficult times we have face, particularly during the last years. We can say that this is the only structure which has kept a standing forum to meet experts, academicians, politicians and practitioners from Russia, Ukraine, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Baltic States, Greece, Turkey, the Balkans and other European countries, without any interruption during these years in order to keep a growing cooperation process and peaceful relationships between European peoples.

TFEB has organized many activities in different parts of Europe, within and outside the EU, analysing current trends and proposing new ways for cooperation. Even more, it has actively promoted a Youth Forum which has taken place every year since 2009. This first Youth Forum was organized in the Italian region of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, which also hosted some more, as well as the Euroregion Nestos-Mesta in Greece, South Karelia and the Republic of Serbia. Some hundreds of young people have been able to know more about European cooperation practices and probably have oriented their professional careers towards European issues, mostly related to cooperation, mutual understanding and joint development of European border regions, within and outside Europe. In this sense, I can only have words of thankfulness to the TFEB and, particularly, to his Chairman and his region for their active commitment in promoting sound cooperation in a wider European context.

I wish you many more years of successful work and all the best!

*Martín Guillermo-Ramírez*  
AEBR Secretary General

# How it all started?

It all started 10 years ago at AEBR General Assembly in Lappeenranta (Finland ) On 29. Jun 2007 AEBR Executive Committee make the decision on creation of first two AEBR Task Forces: "External borders" and "Cross-border health". This General Assembly is remembered not only for the start of TFEB but also on a nice dinner in restaurant Wolkoff, trip to Vyborg Russia and a dinner in old-time dancing hall with humppa ("Oompa") music and dancing.

At the First Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders that was held on 14. September 2007 in Lappeenranta (Finland ), Mr. Urpo Johannes Moisio (South Karelia) was elected to be Chairman of TFEB.

TFEB follows the relationship with our neighbours and promotes exchanges of views across the external borders of the EU, particularly between public authorities, civil society organisations and, especially, amongst youth.

Task Force is composed of members of the AEBR as well as representatives of other partner organisations and groups and experts dealing with this subject.

## Task Force of External Borders

Group for  
North Europe

Group for  
Central Europe

Center for  
Balkans

Group for  
East Europe

Young Leaders  
for CBC

Group for Equal  
Opportunities



“It is a big honor for me to represent the Euroregion Nestos - Mesta and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Drama from Greece in the task Force External Borders We worked together for the last 10 years to support the work of AEBR and member organizations in their strife to achieve new levels of cooperation with countries and regions that are not members of the EU.

Our Task Force has also supporter young students from border areas to receive high quality training on issues of CBC. Some of the graduates of our training programmes are now executives in regions who practice these type of activities. The Drama Municipality has once organized a 'summer training programme' and this has been a learning experience also for us.

We hope the work of the TF External Borders will continue uninterrupted to contribute the specialized services to the border areas of Europe.

*Alkis Papademetriou  
Euroregion Nestos = Mesta, Drama Chamber”*



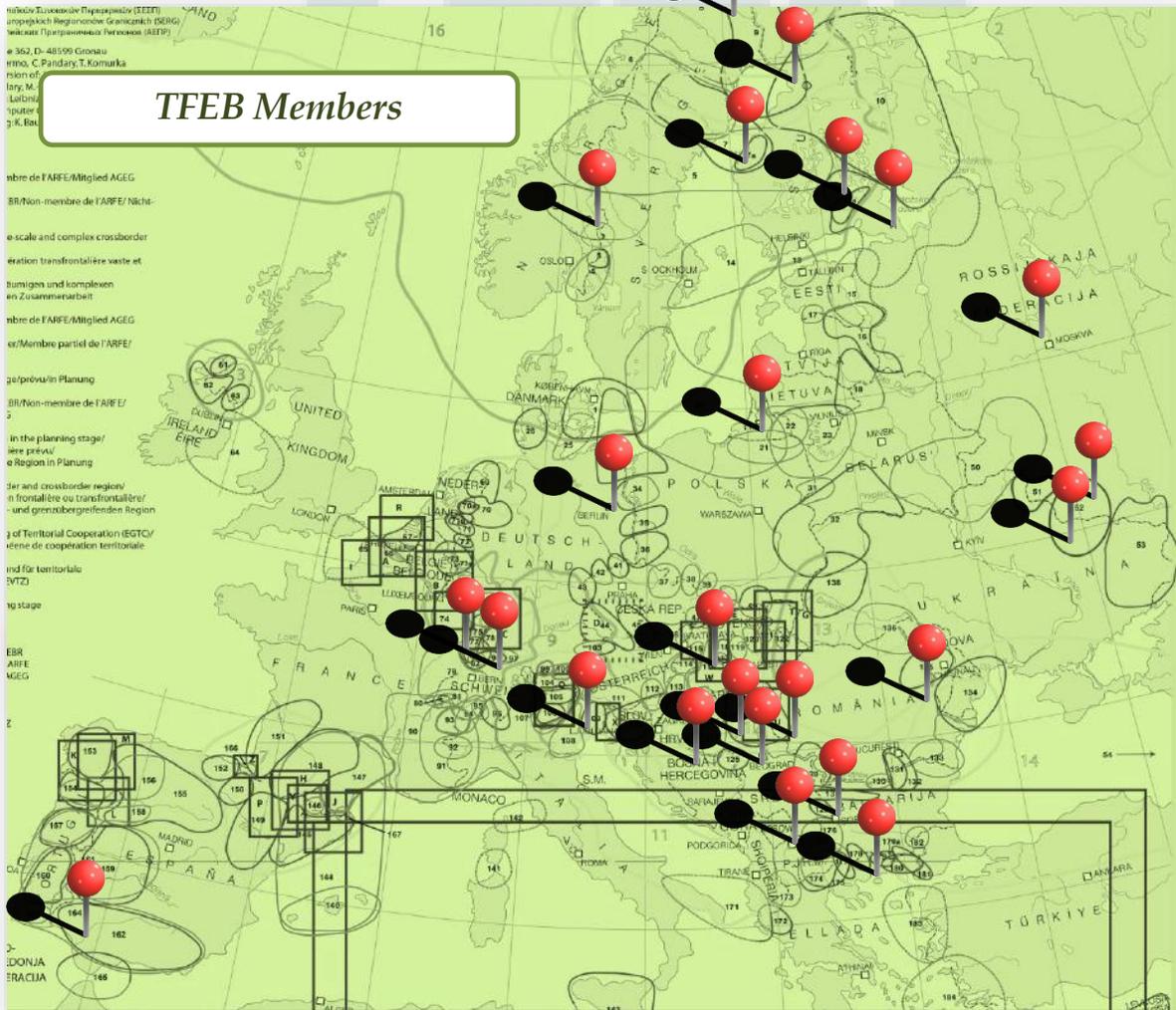
The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) has made significant efforts to introduce the importance of the border regions, euroregions and cross border cooperation all over Europe in the more than 45 years. Thanks for its activity now we have a lot of successful projects supporting cross-border cooperation as well as infrastructural projects at the border area financed by special and different European CBC programmes.

The Carpathian Euroregion is one of the oldest and biggest cross-border associations and has got a huge historical background and experience on cross border cooperation in a geopolitically strategic area of CE covers a long new external border area in the Eastern-Central Part of Europe.

It was a great honor and we are proud to host the Executive Committee Meeting of AEBR and the 1st Seminar of the Ad hoc Task Force “External Borders” of AEBR on 29 November 2007 in Nyíregyháza, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hungary. This time the Carpathian Euroregion (CE) as a member of the AEBR and its Executive Committee was initiating to organize a forum “The Current Questions of the Border Areas at the new EU External Borders” together with the AEBR.

Congratulation to the Task Force of „External Borders” for the huge efforts and great activity and special thanks to Martin Guillermo-Ramírez and Johannes Moisió! I wish further success and friendship through over the borders in Europe!

*Brigitta Majorné László  
former member of the Executive Committee of AEBR  
TFEB coordinator 2007-2011, Carpathian Euroregion*



TFEB membership is free of charge and the task force work with on the basis of hosting and by English language only.

Participation in event is varying locations and co-event organised by the host region or AEBR.



# *Other core persons in the work of AEBR TFEB*

Dear TFEB!

Cohesion of the European continent is impossible without painstaking, daily work on cooperation of adjacent regions. Eastern Europe in the face of global risks must become a vivid example of peace and sustainable development.

The most important role in this belongs to the TFEB team. Success and good luck in this work!

Alexei Kiryukhin  
TFEB coordinator for Group for East Europe



Dear colleagues and friends!

First of all it is my great pleasure to greet wonderful team of Task Force of External Borders with its 10 years jubilee and to greet AEBR - with having such an important group! Your place in European activity is very special and valuable!

Being the friend of AEBR and TFEB , participating and assisting in many events, I have had an unique chance for many years to see your creative developing, to observe your growing activity, how it is becoming more and more important for people and countries ( and not only European ones). Your experience, which you share so generously and dynamicsly is more and more demanded as practical instrument for building the better quality of life of the neighboring regions.

And I want especially to greet international team members of TFEB - highly respected professional people of their countries and regions. They took the responsibility to do their best for making better life for citizens in neighboring regions. I want also to congratulate the Head of TFEB, Johannes Moisio, for his ability of strongly uniting people and ideas for improving neighborhood relationship on external borders. It is a very noble task in our not a simple time, and I am sure that TFEB team will achieve further successes in its work.

Let me wish TFEB all the best!

*Elena Sadovnikova*

Task Force of External Borders in AEBR celebrates the 10th anniversary of the fruitful work that brings results to the daily life policies of the border regions, forming the understanding of the border as an instrument of cross-border cooperation and an instrument for the unity of border values with preserving the unique identity of the regions.

In the first year of its creation, Task Force of External Borders confidently decided to invest in the future, transferring their valuable experience and in-depth knowledge to young people from the border regions. The initiative of the Summer Youth Forums has become a positive tradition of educating agents of change in the border regions. Over the years, many young people were lucky to take part in these youth events and to feel the true spirit of cross-border cooperation.

I would like to express my special thanks to the President of TFEB, Mr. Johannes Moisió. His high professionalism, incredible optimism, combination of sincerity, respect for others and the ability to build trust in the team, mental-intellectual ability to communicate with the widest range of stakeholders allowed to create a large friendly family among the members and partners of TFEB.

Ten years ago, a seed of hope was planted in the work of the Task Force of External Borders, during these years everyone was irrigating with drops of faith in what we are doing, and today with love we are gathering the fruits of our work! Ahead there are still many challenges and new achievements! Our joint work is a sustainable development with the goal of creating prosperity for all border regions.

Dear Members of TFEB! I sincerely congratulate everyone on this special 10-year jubilee and wish you forces, energy, kindness, peace, development and prosperity!

Yours sincerely,  
Elena Itani, member of TFEB.



Dear members and friends,

I am happy and proud to be a part of this wonderful AEBR TFEB family!

TFEB devotion to the youngsters is crucial for creation of future leaders of Europe that will build the bright European future. Working with young people from all over Europe through AEBR TFEB events, seminars, meetings and workshops I strongly believe that our future is in the good hands! Let's continue with helping them to make positive changes across the borders.

I wish you all the best and great success in future TFEB initiatives and projects!

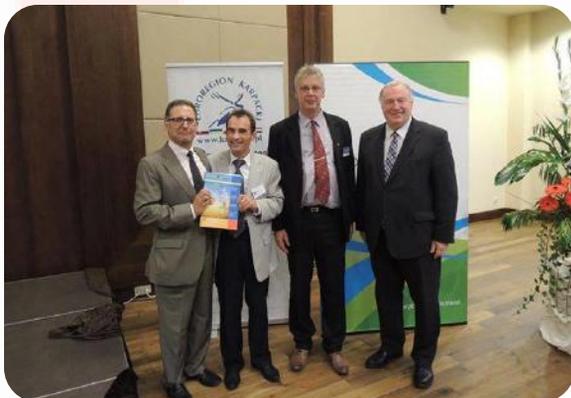
Sincerely yours,  
Ana Nikolov  
AEBR TFEB Balkans attaché





# Thematic Seminars and Meetings

During this ten years many regions hosted the TFEB meetings. So far more than 40 meeting where taking place in Finland, Norway, Italy, Germany, Ukraine, Greece, Spain, Russia, Poland, Belgium, Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Switzerland and other countries. Usually with TFEB meeting seminar, forum or project on cross-border issues are taking place. TFEB organized and participated in the implementation of more than 90 events and projects working on solving the main problems in border regions at the EU external borders and strengthening and improving



Thanks to our Members and our Chairman TFEB was able to make cross-border impact in wide range of issues. Some of main topics that TFEB was dedicated time and expertise was youth, employment, equal opportunity, cultural diversity, peace and security, media, education, environmental protection, infrastructure, spatial planning and many others.

TFEB also gave contribution on raising awareness across the borders on importance and values of cross-border cooperation for sustainable and peaceful development.

connections and interactions between border regions.

During this process many friendships are born and still growing creating, as we like to call it, "AEBR TFEB Family". These friendships are not just business or Facebook friendships, they are created on same values, same dreams, similar sense for humor and joy of life and have strong grounds for lasting for life time.

Every member of TFEB give the unique mark to the diversity of our Family, help us to open our minds more and see things from new and different perspectives.



29.06.2007	AEBR Executive Committee decision on creation of first two AEBR Task Forces: "External borders" and "Cross-border health".
14.09.2007	1st Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Lappeenranta, Finland Urpo Johannes Moisio (South Karelia) is elected Chairman of this Task Force.
29.11.2007	1st Forum of the AEBR TFEB "The Current Questions of the Border Areas at the new EU External Borders", Nyíregyháza, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Carpathian Euroregion, Hungary.
13.03.2008	International Forum of the Region of Sicily in cooperation with AEBR TFEB on "Role of the Regions at the EU borders: the Cross-Border Co-operation in the Mediterranean and EGTC", Taormina, Sicily, Italy
--.06.2008	Summer Seminar of the Task Force in the framework of the Northern Dimension Conference on Logistics Energy and Forest. Main subject: "External Border Regions in change and progress", Lappeenranta, Finland
--.10.2008	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Plauen, Germany
13-18.07.2009	I AEBR TFEB Youth Forum - 1st "AEBR International Youth Forum at the EU External Borders", Udine, Italy
18.07.2009	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Udine, Italy
--.11.2009	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Ghent
18.02.2010	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Oulu, Finland
18.02.2010	Open Forum of AEBR TFEB on "Cross-border response to current regional development challenges across Europe - Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) at the EU External Borders" in Oulu, Bothnian Arc, Finland.
27.05.2010	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Sevilla, Andalucia, Spain
27.05.2010	Seminar on Cross-border cooperation in the Mediterranean area with special focus on Morocco, Sevilla, Andalucia, Spain.
19-23.07.2010	II AEBR TFEB Youth Forum - Summer Seminar for Border Youth, Trieste, Italy
09.09.2010	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Kharkiv, Ukraine
09.09.2010	Seminar on "Logistical Challenges in Border Regions", Kharkiv, Ukraine
21.10.2010	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Dundalk, Ireland
01.12.2011	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Regional Council of Ostrobothnia, Vaasa, Finland
01.12.2011	Seminar on Cross-Border Transport, Vaasa, Finland.
--.04.2011	Meeting with NEEBOR representatives, Brussels, Belgium
03-05.03.2011	Meeting at NEEBOR Annual Conference, Alexandropolis, Greece
08-12.08.2011	III AEBR TFEB Youth Forum - Summer Seminar for Border Youth, Regional Council of South Karelia, Lappeenranta, Finland
15.03.2012	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Imatra, Finland
15.03.2012	Seminar on Cross-Border Migration Routes, Imatra, Finland
06.02.2012	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Kirkines, Norway



When talking about TFEB meetings and thematic seminars one must mention the **First TFEB meeting** that was held in Lappeenranta, Finland, on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2007. On that occasion Mr. Urpo Johannes Moisio was elected as Chairman of TFEB. Also activity plan was created.

Very soon after the First TFEB meeting the **First AEBR TFEB Forum** took place in Nyíregyháza, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hungary, on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Forum was organized in cooperation with Carpathian Euroregion with topic "The Current Questions of the Border Areas at the new EU External Borders".

In 2008 **First Summer Seminar** on "External Border Regions in change and progress" was held in the framework of the Northern Dimension Conference on Logistics Energy and Forest in Lappeenranta, Finland, and **First Youth Forum** took place in Udine, Italy in Summer 2009.





AEBR made a huge effort to strengthen its involvement at the external borders of the EU and far beyond. The cooperation with border areas at the external borders has been further developed. Many meetings with representatives of border regions at the external borders of the EU took place in the framework of the Task Force on External Borders. Moreover, together with its members and partners the AEBR initiated additional activities focusing on the future of cross-border cooperation at the external borders.

As 2007 and 2008 is remembered as "Start", 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 will be remembered as years of "Growing" ..

During this period TFEB was building its membership network and with its activities, meetings, seminars and projects build the reputation as reliable AEBR Task Force active on EU external borders.

Many thematic seminars, forums and meetings was held during this four years. All

of them in their way contributed in building good neighborly relation and intensifying the cooperation between border regions.

Main topics that where in focus these years where: Local and Regional Development Challenges, Logistical Challenges, Cross-Border Transport, Ecology and Border Logistics, Cross-Border Migration Routes, EGTC, Cross-Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean, Youth in Border Regions, European Neighbourhood Programme and Pre-Accession Instrument.

On occasion of TFEB meeting in Lugansk, that was held on 23rd October 2012., a joint letter of intents was signed by TFEB Chairman Johannes Moisio and Vice Governor Anatoliy Vasilievich Repickiy, Euregion Donbass .

This meeting also was focussed on introducing the work of AEBR and TFEB to the Ukrainian and Russian participants, deepening the cooperation of TFEB and Euregion Donbass .



05-07.02.2012	Meeting at NEEBOR Annual Conference, Kirkenes, Norway
07.02.2012	Meeting of the AEBR Task Force External Borders, Kirkenes Norway
23.07.2012	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Trieste, Italy
23-27.07.2012	IV AEBR TFEB Youth Forum for Border Youth, Trieste - Udine, Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia, Italy
08.11.2012	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Berlin, Germany
22-23.10.2012	Seminar on "Ecology and Border Logistics" Lugansk, Ukraine
23.10.2012	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Lugansk, Ukraine
22.11.2012	Seminar series on Regional development and CBC in Peru arranged by DG Regio and Peru Ministry of External affairs, Cuzco, Tarapoto and Lima, Peru
26.03.2013	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Kavála, Greece
04-06.09.2013	Seminar on Upcoming regulations on the EU Neighbourhood Programme and new possibilities offered by EGTC, Lutsk, Euroregion Bug
14.06.2013	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Trim/East Border Region.
16.-18.06.2013	Participation in a seminar of the CIVEX Commission as well as the economic forum, Iasi region, Romania
08.03.2013.	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
08.11.2013	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Liège
19-20.09.2013	Participation in IX Annual International Conference "Cross-Border Cooperation: the Russian Federation, the European Union and Norway", Petrozavodsk
21-22.10.2013	Participation in the All-Russia Forum, St. Petersburg, Russia
01.12.2014	Participation in Seminar on cross-border cooperation, Belgorod, Russia
24.02.2014	Meeting with representatives of the Ukrainian and Russian border regions, St. Petersburg, Russia
24.02.2014	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, St. Petersburg, Russia
26.03.2014	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Kavala, Greece
27.03.2014	AEBR Forum "CBC in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Area", Kavala, Greece
24.03 - 05.04.2014	AEBR Study Visit to Cross Border Initiatives in the Balkans
06.06.2014	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Parikkala, South Karelia, Finland
06.06.2014	Seminar on "Situation of Border Crossings at External Borders of the EU", Parikkala, Finland
06.11.2014	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Kirkenes, Norway
18.09.2014	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Brussels, Belgium
10.2014	VI Youth Forum on "New Generation for EU Enlargement.", Belgrade-Novi Sad-Piroto, Serbia
11.09.2014	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Rzeszów, Poland
27.01.2015	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Lappeenranta, Finland



In 2013 and 2014 TFEB is well known Task Force among AEBR member region and other stockholder involved in cross-border cooperation. During this two years main focus of TFEB meeting and seminars where: Youth in Border Regions, Peace and Reconciliation, Border Crossings, EU Enlargement, Neighbourhood Programme and Pre-Accession Instrument.

Besides other events in Lutsk, on 4-6 September, 2013. Seminar on Upcoming regulations on the EU Neighbourhood Programme and new possibilities offered by EGTC. The seminar was held in a crucial period of time, some few months prior to the adoption of the new EU regulations.

Also in St. Petersburg on 24th February, 2014, meeting with representatives of the Ukrainian and Russian border regions was organized. Main subjects of the agenda were, the European Neighbourhood Programme 2014 - 2020 and the 72 hour regulations for the entry into the Kaliningrad Region.

Guided by Mr. Moisiu opinion that the local and regional level may form basis of cooperation across the borders even though the national level has crises in connections. However this should be done according to the governmental regulations and laws as well as openly in order to avoid mistrust between local/regional level and governmental level, TFEB was taking extra effort to boost cooperation between border regions even in the hard times.



2015 and 2016 may be remembered as years of Youth Innovation. During this period seminar and meeting results with creation of AEBR Network of Young Leaders and AEBR Youth Charter for Cross-Border Cooperation. Also these were the years where special focus where given to Entrepreneurship, Equal Opportunities, Women, Youth, Media, Peace and Reconciliation, EU Enlargement, European Cohesion and Spatial Planning,.

The First meeting of Young Leaders for CBC took place in Timisoara on 17-18. February 2017. Also, event initiated by Young leaders "Woman in rural areas and CBC" - towards the celebration of the International Women's Day, was held in Novi Sad on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Event was inspiration for more experienced members to initiate and create Working Group for Equal Opportunities that is operated by GFGZ . Besides this TFEB was working hardly on reestablishment of good neighborly relations between EU and Russia and Ukraine. and Russia. Some of results can be seen in section Agreements and negotiations.

It must be mentioned here that AEBR TFEB also was working on strengthening territorial cohesion on EU external borders since its establishment. Also members of TFEB participated in consultations processes of EU Cohesion Policies and influence of building the better European future for the next generation. .

26.02.2015	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Budapest, Hungary
06.09.2015	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Belgrade, Serbia
07.12.2015	Seminar "Spatial Planning and Cross-Border Cooperation for Local Authorities", Novi Sad, Serbia
07-11.09.2015	VII Youth Forum "Youth as the driving forces of the European Union", Novi Sad, Serbia
12.11.2015	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Brussels, Belgium
01.08.2016	International Conference "Development of Media Literacy and Information in Serbia and Region", Novi Sad, Serbia
02.12.2016	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Belgrade, Serbia
02-03.12.2016	VIII AEBR TFEB Youth Forum on "Young Leaders for Promotion of Careers and Friendly Neighbourship", Belgrade, Serbia
03.12.2016	Workshop on Creation of AEBR Youth Charter for Cross-Border Cooperation, Belgrade, Serbia
07.03.2016	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Banja Luka, Bosnia & Herzegovina
08.02.2016	Meeting in the Russian Federation ministry of Economical Development, Moscow , Russia
08.03.2016	Meeting the Minister of Economic Relations and Regional Cooperation of the Republika Srpska, Banja Luka, Bosnia & Heryegovina
23.08.2016	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Kharkov, Ukraine
23.08.2016	Participation in Round table for regional and local authority reform in Ukraine, Kharkov, Ukraine
22.09.2016	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Görlitz, Germany
24-25.10.2016	Participation in All-Russia Forum, meeting of the General Studies Association and meeting of the AEBR Task Force External Borders, St. Petersburg, Russia
19-20.01.2017	ComUnYouth - project meeting, Kaliningrad, Russia
13.02.2017	Meeting with the Russian Federation Ministry of Economical Development and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow
17-18.02.2017	Meeting of Young Leaders for CBC "Youth Role in Cross-Border Cooperation Context" Timisoara, Romania
18-19.03.2017	Participation in Cross-Border Regions Forum, Pskov
24.03.2017	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Gent, Belgium
06.03.2017	Conference "Women in Rural Areas and Cross-Border Cooperation- towards the celebration of the International Women's Day,," Novi Sad, Serbia
13-22.06.2017	Youth Seminar on " Entrepreneurship - Just do it", Erasmus+ youth mobility, Topola, Serbia
21-25.08.2017	IX AEBR TFEB Youth Forum , Lappeenranta, South Karelia, Finland
08-09.05.2017	AEBR TFEB & GFGZ Seminar on "EU External Borders in the Middle of Europe - Unique but Challenging", Neuhausen am Rheinfall Schaffhausen, Switzerland
09.05.2017	Meeting of AEBR Task Force of External Borders, Neuhausen am Rheinfall Schaffhausen, Switzerland

# Youth Forums

## History

AEBR Summer Seminar for Border Youth started from an idea of a Summer Camp for AEBR members and their children by Martín Guillermo Ramírez, the Secretary General of the AEBR. The idea was developed to a Summer Seminar, later called as Youth Forum. This idea was further developed to the AEBR Youth Summer Forum or Seminar for all young people +18 from the border regions of the whole Europe and outside its borders.

Continuing Mr. Guillermo's idea, the question of creating the Summer Forum for Border Youth was raised by Johannes Moisio, Chairman of AEBR Task Force of External Borders and Head of Operational Unit in the Regional Council of South Karelia, Finland. Mr. Moisio launched a Call for the host region for the Border Youth Seminar in the AEBR Executive Committee in Osnabruck, Germany in November 2008 as part of AEBR Task Force of External Borders Action plan for year 2009.

In last ten years special attention has been paid to the youth. So far AEBR through its Task Force for External Borders has already organised eight Youth Forums with panel discussions, seminars, round tables, workshops and study trips dedicated to various aspects of cross border cooperation with young participants from all over Europe. Most of the alumni nowadays are CBC activists in their border regions.

As a result of networking of these young people and the coordination of the AEBR Info Centre in the Balkans, a Network of Young Leaders for Cross-border Cooperation (AEBR YLCBC) was established at the VII AEBR Youth Forum in 2015 with the following working groups: Economic Development; Environmental Protection; Spatial Analysis and Territorial Cohesion; Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue; Peace And Conflict Resolution; and Gender Equality. AEBR YLCBC organized several panel discussions and workshops in 2016 and 2017.



# First Youth Forum Udine, Italy



In 2009, the first AEBR Summer Seminar for Border Youth took place in Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia in Udine, Italy, with the idea to promote universities' work in creating international studies together with the promotion of their networking and bench-marking on one hand. On another hand the purpose was to show AEBR's work and activities, and promote the idea of CBC among the young people. The forum gave participants good insight into practical cross-border cooperation and provided a good opportunity to visit interesting institutions, research centres and historic places in the host region.



# *Second Youth Forum Trieste, Italy*

In 2010, the second AEBR Summer Seminar for Border Youth took place from 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> July. The Seminar was organised by the Task Force in cooperation with the region Friuli Venezia Giulia in Trieste.

The aims of this seminar were manifold: To disseminate information on study possibilities abroad in other border regions, to present the principles of cross-border cooperation in European, regional, and local policies, and to encourage the universities in the external borders to be more international and to provide international studies.



# *Third Youth Forum Lappeenranta, Finland*

Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), Regional Council of South Karelia and its universities organised the 3rd Summer Seminar for Border Youth from 8. to 12. August 2011 in Lappeenranta. Seminar was devoted to young people planning for international studies. Participants had lecturers and workshops on: How to plan and make good CBC? , Creating CBC in research, "My region and its neighbours", and "Case Study of generating Cross-Border cooperation projects".



# Forth Youth Forum Trieste, Italy

AEBR Summer Seminar for Border Youth took place upon invitation by the region Friuli-Venezia Giulia between July 23rd and 27<sup>th</sup> 2012 in Trieste.

During the forum, there were plenty of debates on the peculiarities, advantages and limits on cross-border cooperation in the individual border regions. The participants also visited the neighbouring regions of Slovenia and Croatia, and learned the most important tools of cross-border cooperation at the region Friuli Venezia Giulia. An important topic was additionally cross-border cooperation between higher education facilities and research bodies.



*"To me the Youth Forum was something that change the way I think of cooperation can be made, not just between politicians but between just people sharing each other countries culture and ideas just in simple conversations.*

*Well my FB page is still with cover I made from the Forum in Trieste and to be true I don't want to change it, it reminds me all the time about great time I have there. And yes we still have some contact after so many years with other participant, for sure not with all but still with some.*

*I believe that it will be still possible to gather youth around Europe (in wide sense) to show that there i no borders between us, our ideas and our values."*

**Ivan Kesoretskikh**

# Fifth Youth Forum Drama, Greece



In 2013, the city of Drama in Northern part of Greece (Euroregion Nestos-Mesta) organised together with the Democritus University of Thrace and the AEBR the fifth Youth Forum. The forum took place from 22nd to 27th July. In the AEBR Summer Seminar for Youth, the young participants: get information on possibilities of studies abroad, learn to know the work of AEBR, get information on the EU integration process and different cross-border cooperation programmes, and make new friends from different countries.



*"Meeting so many new people from different backgrounds, as well as the friendly collective managing the AEBR and the TFEB, has been an incredibly enriching experience!"*

*I loved the mix of well thought out lectures, group works and debates, alongside with the easy-going evening chats that continue to this day with certain participants with whom I stayed in touch.*

*I am truly grateful to the two youth forums I attended for bringing real CBC closer to me, and making me decide that this is a career I would like to pursue. And it has been a successful decision so far.*

*I hope the youth forums will continue in the future, having a positive impact on many more in the future!"*

**Anita Pribanić**

# Sixth Youth Forum Belgrade, Novi Sad & Pirot, Serbia



The Association of European Border Regions (AEBR), the European Centre for Peace and Development (ECPD) of the University for Peace established by the United Nations and Youth Association of Serbia (OSS) organised in cooperation with the Euroregion Nisava and Euroregion Drina the Youth Forum "New Generation for EU Enlargement". It was held in Serbia (Belgrade, Novi Sad and Pirot) from the 25th to the 30th October.

The forum aimed at providing young people with a deeper understanding of the circumstances in which they live and to enable them to develop common initiatives and projects for assuring a positive prospect for young people in the border regions of Europe.

As a result of this Forum, the AEBR established stronger relations in the Western Balkans, and opened an Information Centre in Belgrade.



*"Belgrade Youth Forum was a life-time experience. I had attended a lot more events before, but it was in a way unique and memorable. First and most important thing that I appreciate in life most is ability to build relations with people. This forum was one of the bests in this regard. It was not only about building relations with the participants, but also organizers. And generally I believe that it totally depends on organizers -what kind of atmosphere they create among the group.*

*I will never forget the "singing session" in the bus, after tiring and long day of meetings. And you know what it the most important? The "session" was initiated and orchestrated by Johannes (event organizer and a great person).*

*I met great people there with whom I still keep in touch and I am sure whenever and wherever me will meet in the future, it will be a "good-old friends meeting" because of the memories we share."*

**Ana Vačadze**



# Seventh Youth Forum Novi Sad, Serbia

The Association of European Border Regions, AEBR Task Force of External Borders, AEBR Centre for Balkans and CЕСSI Balkans organized the VII Youth Forum entitled "Youth as the driving force of the European Union". The Youth Forum was held in Novi Sad from the 7th to the 11th September, 2015 and implemented through a Discussion Forum, Round Table, Seminars and Workshops with focus on following topics: Youth as the driving force of the European Union; The challenges of European integration from the perspective of the new generation; On the way to the European Union - values and possibilities; External and internal borders of the European Union - past and present, Models of cross-border cooperation; Territorial Cohesion of the European Union; The impact of cross-border cooperation to strengthen the territorial cohesion of the European Union; Strengthening cross-border cooperation between the youth of European border regions

At the VII AEBR Youth Forum the Network of Young Leaders for Cross-border Cooperation (YLCBC) was established.



*"Attending the Youth Forum 2015 has been an absolutely great experience. The extensive programme offered a good combination of sessions and social activities. The workshops, seminars and debates provided me with new knowledge of cross-border cooperation, intercultural dialogue and territorial cohesion.*

*However, the best part about the forum were the informal interactions with my fellow participants and making friends. I will never forget how much fun I had with my roomies in Downtown Hostel.*

*Many thanks to the organizers for inviting me to Novi Sad. By bringing together young European representatives you are doing an awesome job in promoting cross-border initiatives and youth leadership. Keep up the good work!"*

**Nathalie Sanglier**



# Eighth Youth Forum Belgrade, Serbia

The Association of European Border Regions, AEBR Task Force of External Borders and AEBR Centre for Balkans in cooperation with New Diplomacy Centre Belgrade and Institute for International and Cross-border Cooperation are organized VIII Youth Forum entitled "Young Leaders for Promotion of Careers and Friendly Neighbourship" supported by National Assembly of Republic of Serbia. Forum was held in Belgrade from 2nd to 3rd December, 2016 and implemented through a Discussion Forum and Workshop with focus on following topics: The Role of Young Leaders in Cross-border Cooperation, Youth Power for Positive Transformation, and Youth Cross-border Friendship for Peace.

During the VIII AEBR Youth Forum the Draft of Youth Charter for Cross-border Cooperation was created.



*The Youth Forum offered an exceptional occasion for the participants to contribute to those long awaited bridges over the borders.*

*As the cross border cooperation tend to be reduced to a theoretical buzzword, this event brought cross-border cooperation closer to practice.*

*The venue could not be chosen better, as well as the organization and topics left nobody unsatisfied.*

*See you next time!*

**Tamás Illés**

## *Ninth Youth Forum Lappeenranta, Finland*

In 2017, AEBR in cooperation with South Karelia region, Lappeenranta University of Tehnology, Saimaa University of Applied Science organized the 9th AEBR's Youth Forum for the Border Youth. Forum was held in Lappeenranta/Imatra, Finland from 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> August.

In the AEBR Summer Seminar for Youth, theyoung participants: get information on possibilities of studies abroad, learn to know the work of AEBR and Interreg Volunteer Youth, get information on different cross-border cooperation programmes, and make new friends from different countries.

Together with Youth Forum activitie of Mobility Makes Opportunity project took place.



*"As one of the most effective way to meet new people and exchange knowledge, experiences and impressions, I found Youth Forum as the best practice that should exist in the future as well. Not only the new people are coming every year, but seeing someone whom you met before is priceless. Being the part of Youth Forum makes me feeling important, because someone cares about my voice and respect my actions.*

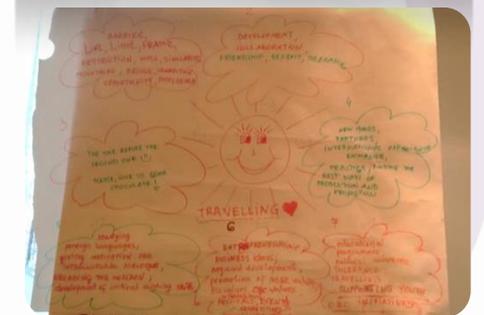
*Hope that future course of TFEB will be to keep the Youth Forum alive and contently still interesting as till now, and youth will for sure respond on that with appreciation and respect."*

**Milena Peralović**

# Invitation for Hosting Tenth Youth Forum

Task Force of External Borders of the Association of European Border Regions opened call for host organization of 10<sup>th</sup> AEBR TFEB Youth Forum for Border Youth.

For applying please contact Mr. Johannes Moio on following e-mail: [johannes.moio@ekarjala.fi](mailto:johannes.moio@ekarjala.fi)



# Network of Young Leaders for Cross-Border Cooperation

At the VII AEBR Youth Forum the Network of Young Leaders for Cross-border Cooperation (YLCBC) was established with following Working Groups:

- Economic Development;
- Environmental Protection;
- Spatial Analysis and Territorial Cohesion;
- Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue;
- Peace and Conflict Resolution; and
- Gender Equality.

The headquarters of the Network were set up in Novi Sad, Serbia. Activities of the Network are implemented through AEBR Centre for Balkans.

Young leaders implemented so far couple of meetings and workshops, started the project "Woman in rural areas and CBC" and they are currently working finalization of the AEBR Youth Charter for the Cross-border Cooperation at the VIII AEBR Youth Forum.

## AEBR YOUTH CHARTER FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

### THREE PERSPECTIVES



What Youth can do for Youth

What Youth can do for Society

What Society should do for Youth

At the VIII AEBR Youth Forum in 2016, a Youth Charter for CBC was created, which is expected to be finalized during the IX Youth Forum and adopted at AEBR General Assembly in October 2017.

*This Charter is created by young people from all over the Europe!*

# Young Leaders opinions on “What is Cross-Border Cooperation for you?”

“CBC is key element of European Policy for international cooperation and development”

Marjana

“I believe in CBC because I won cross-border life”

Štefan

“CBC means a handshake between countries”

Nathalie

“CBC present potential to transform border into area for development”

Jovana

“For me CBC stands for Citizens Becoming Closer”

Bojana

Sharing new ideas and finding joint solutions”

Ivan

“CBC is all about making difference”

Ines

“Building bridges and closing countries gaps”

Bogdan

“CBC for me is opportunity for stability and prosperity for communities from both sides of border”

Marija

“CBC spreads understanding between citizens from the both sides of the border”

Veronika

“Building friendships across the borders”

Ana

“Cross-border cooperation is a way of life!”

Nora

*"Crossing and deleting "the border line" whit knowledge and cooperation."*

*Marija*

*"By crossing the borders, not only the knowledge, but also experience in same fields, best practices and challenges can build wider frame for new opportunities and problem-solving options."*

*Milena*

*"CBC is about overcoming the imagined borders in our minds"*

*Ani*

*"For me CBC is a way to regions can "speak" each other.*

*CBC is like dance, and it can happen only when you have a join vision and you are open for dialog"*

*Ivan*

*"Cross-border cooperation gives you the best view over the imaginary fence"*

*Mario*

*"In a globalised world, I see CBC as essential to overcome barriers to innovation, mobility and growth."*

*Anita*

*"CBC does not only stands for common development, but for the exchange and creation of knowledge"*

*Tamás*

*"For me CBC represents the creation of platform for the exchange of ideas and inexhaustible source of knowledge, potential and readiness to create change."*

*Sara*

*"CBC is for me the exchange of culture, friendship and ideas beyond the borders."*

*Isabell*

*"CBC is an important tool for the development and mutual understanding of border regions."*

*Ana*

*"CBC is a very powerful tool, it can bring nations and people closer, it is an opportunity for long-term partnership, development and friendship."*

*Ervin*

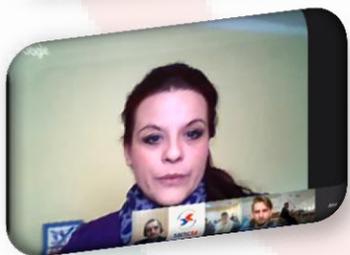
# Video Conferences and Webinars



Kipping track with new technologies more then 50 video conferences and webinars was held in the past five years. In one way new technologies help us to keep in touch even when physical contact was not possible and help with maintaining the interaction in some level in other made education on cross-border cooperation more reachable for undeveloped regions. During this sessions online platform of experts was created for exchanging the knowledge and preparing the projects.



Main topics of videoconferences and webinar where on cross-border issues in the field of Youth Empowerment, Public Diplomacy, Peace and Reconciliation, Social Transformation, Education, Economic Growth, Tourism, Sustainable Urban and Rural Development, and many others.



Countries that where participated at this conferences where: Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Moldavia, Serbia., and others. Besides this couple of time videoconferences connected the group of Youth Forum participants with youngsters from Ukraine and Russia.



This kind of activities as seen as very important in TFEB future work.



# AEBR TFEF in Social Media

## FACEBOOK:

Association of European Border Regions - AEBR / AGEG / ARFE

@AEBR.AGEG.ARFE  
have 685 followers,

AEBR Task Force of External Borders TFEF

[www.facebook.com/groups/AEBRTFEF/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/AEBRTFEF/)  
have 248 members

Informational Center of AEBR at Simon Kuznets KhNEU

[www.facebook.com/groups/755592057849775/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/755592057849775/)  
have 199 members

AEBR Young Leaders for CBC

@Young.Leaders.for.CBC  
have 180 followers

AEBR Balkans

@AEBR.Balkans  
have 120 followers

## TWITTER:

AEBR-AGEG-ARFE

@SocialnetAEBR  
have 944 followers

AEBR Balkans

@AEBR\_Balkans  
have 99 followers

## INSTAGRAM:

AEBR

aebr\_ageg  
have 50 followers

AEBR Balkans

aebr\_balkans  
have 76 followers

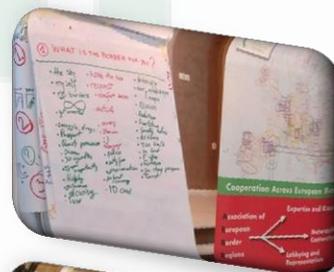
## WEB SITES:

AEBR

[www.aebr.eu](http://www.aebr.eu)

CESCI Balkans - AEBR Balkans

[www.cesci-balkans.eu](http://www.cesci-balkans.eu)



# Participated and Ongoing Projects

Since the beginning TFEB created the Programme dedicated to raising awareness and education on cross-border cooperation at external border regions entitled "Education for Empowering Cross-Border Regions". Majority of events, meetings, forums, seminars, videoconferences and webinars were organized as part of this large ongoing Programme. Besides this 10 years old Programme TFEB participated and organized couple of smaller projects. Some of them we will present below.

## ComInYouth

Combating Unemployment among Youth

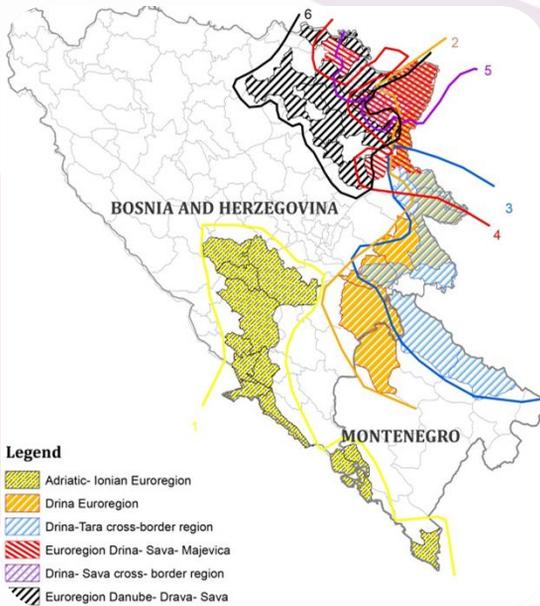
Combating Unemployment Among Youth was implemented in period 2014-2015. Youth Unemployment Project starts with partners' meeting in Tallinn. Because of very successful implementation and significant project results project was continued in 2016-2017. At the Youth Forum "Cross the Border, Grow Your Idea!" organized on 28-30 September, 2016, in Marijampolė, Lithuania representatives of TFEB were part of the teams that won the First and Second Awards!

## STARTUP YOURSELF!

Another two project tickling the same issues were Erasmus+ Project "Start Up Yourself", held on 12-23 August, 2016, in Hódmezővásárhely, Hungary and Erasmus+ Youth Exchange "Entrepreneurship - Just do it!" held on 13-22 June, 2017 in Topola, Serbia. The goals of these projects were to help young people to become entrepreneurs with non-formal methods, by improving their skills and competencies that are necessary for starting up their own businesses.



AEBR TFEB, AEBR Center for Balkans in cooperation with CESCIBalkans implemented the Project on education of local authorities on Spatial Planning and Cross-Border Cooperation. The seminar was supported by the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the AP Vojvodina. More than 120 representatives of Local Authorities were participated in project.



TFEB, AEBR Centre for Balkans in cooperation with CESCIBalkans conducted research project on International Music Festivals and cross-border cooperation during the Exit Festival in Jun 2015 in Novi Sad, Serbia. The aim of the research was to test the hypothesis that Music Festivals support creation of good neighbourly relations, and to examine whether the music festivals are a platform for cross-border and transnational cooperation.

Another Project research entitled “Database of Montenegro and Bosnia & Herzegovina actors involved in cross-border cooperation” was conducted by TFEB, AEBR Centre for Balkans and CESCIBalkans in May 20017.

TFEB, AEBR Centre for Balkans and CESCIBalkans are conducting studies on Cross-border Structures and Strategies in the Balkan Region.

The goal of project is to encourage young researches to develop their research skills and new ideas in the field of cross-border cooperation through internship program. Internship includes training, research and evaluation supervised by Ms. Nikolov. Each intern works on her/his own study, which they are writing during their three-month internship. At the end of one-year research period synthesis of the studies will be conducted.

Publication of generation 2016/17 will be published soon.



# Agreements and Negotiations

During this ten years many negotiations took place also some agreements and memorandums of understanding were signed. Here we will mention some of them.

Letter of intents was signed by Euroregion Donbass and TFEB on 23rd October, 2012, in Lugansk, Ukraine. Chairman Johannes MOISIO and Vice Governor Anatoliy Vasilievich REPICKIY signed a joint letter of intents, aiming to: support projects' development in the Donbass region, improve the relations between Euroregion Donbass and the European Institutions, enhance the development of CBC by exchanging best practises, prepare an action plan which consists of actions in assisting Euroregion Donbass in creating CBC projects, and assist Euroregion Donbass in creation of a Youth Summer School on Ecology. During the Task Force of External Borders meeting, held before signing a Letter of intents, it was also agreed that 2-3 persons from Euroregion Donbass are welcome to the TFEB meetings held in various places in Europe.

Establishment of the Information Centre of the AEBR at the National University of Economics on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013, in Kharkiv. The Secretary General of the AEBR, Martín Guillermo Ramírez, the Vice-Rector of the National University of Economics in Kharkiv, Mykola Afanasiev and the President of the Kharkiv NGO „Euroregion Slobozhanschina”, Eduard Syromolot signed an agreement on the establishment of the Information Centre of the AEBR at the National University of Economics in Kharkiv. As one of the objectives, this AEBR Info Center would coordinate the action of the Euroregions established in Eastern Ukraine and keep regular contact with the Task Force External Borders and the AEBR Secretariat.



Memorandum of cooperation with the Faculty of Geography at the University of Belgrade was signed on 25th October 2014., in Belgrade, Serbia. Mr. Martin Guillermo Ramirez, Secretary General of the Association of European Border Regions, and Ph.D. Dejan Filipović, Dean of the Faculty of Geography, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, which provides, among other things, cooperation in joint research activities, developing of proposals for cross-border cooperation, cooperation on projects, co-organization of lectures, seminars, conferences, summer schools and camps etc.



Memorandum of understanding with Ministry of Economic Relations and Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Srpska was signed on 8th March 2016, in Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Hercegovina. A delegation from AEBR and CESCİ, composed by both general secretaries, Martin Guillermo and Gyula Ocskay, Ervin Erős (Director of CESCİ Balkans), Johannes Moisis (Chairman of the TFEB) and Ana Nikolov (AEBR coordinator for Balkans), met Zlatan Klokić, Minister of Economic Relations and Regional Cooperation of the Republika Srpska and his team in Banja Luka. All participants in the meeting agreed on the values of cooperation, particularly at cross-border level in the Western Balkans, in order to normalize and facilitate relationships between neighbours, which promote the European spirit. They signed a memorandum of understanding with the main purpose of strengthening cross-border cooperation and for a more efficient implementation of the European integration process in the region.



# What is our plan with AEBR TFEB?

Cross-border cooperation is one of the crucial factors that influence reaching the economic, social and territorial cohesion within Europe, especially relating to the borders between the new and the old member states, between the new member states, as well as between the new EU member states and their neighbouring countries. That is why the Task Force of External Border will continue with spreading the good practices and knowledge on cross-border cooperation and implement various of cross-border projects focusing on new generation as well as supporting regional and local authorities, euroregions and other CB structures.

Some of the future projects and activities that TFEB will initiate or participate in will be as follow.

In the next years TFEB will conduct the **Research on cross-border structures on EU external borders**. In order to be able to continue to successfully implement its Educational Programme this kind of research is necessary. It will give comprehensive view on current situation on EU external borders and other external borders of European countries. Research will be followed by project proposals for improving the situation on external borders. TFEB will pay special attention to creation of the **First ECG in Europe!**





**TFEB**

