

Euroregion Baltic
 Council Meeting
 Ronne, Bornholm, DK
 19 - 20 November 2008



Title	Final Minutes
Submitted by	SDD, International Permanent Secretariat
Summary / Note	This document provides the final minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 - 20 th November 2008
Requested action	Signing

Participants

ERB Executive Board

Mr Per Ole Petersen	ERB President, Bornholm
Ms Anna Gryazova	ERB Board member, ERB Youth Board
Mr Bernth Johnson	ERB Board member, Blekinge
Ms Raisa Minčinauskienė	ERB Board member, Klaipeda
Mr Rafał Wolski	Mr Jacek Protas, ERB Vice-President, Warmia-Mazury
Ms Krystyna Wróblewska	for Mr Jan Kozłowski, ERB Board member, Pomorskie

ERB Council

Ms Cajsja Augustzén	ERB Council member, Södra Småland
Mr Ken Bolmar	ERB Council member, Bornholm
Mr Bo Frank	ERB Council member, Södra Småland
Mr Robert Gajos	ERB Council member, Blekinge
Mr Roger Kaliff	ERB Council member, Kalmar
Ms Evelina Klang	ERB Youth Board member, Bornholm
Ms Amelia Lilja	ERB Youth Board member, Blekinge
Mr Bo Löfgren	ERB Council member, Blekinge
Mr Bo Lundgren	ERB Council member, Kalmar
Ms Bożena Olszewska - Świtaj	ERB Council member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie
Ms Suzanne Svensson	ERB Council member, Blekinge
Ms Anna Wasilewska	ERB Council member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie
Ms Magdalena Zydek	ERB Council member, Pomorskie

Guests

Mr Tadeusz Baryla	European Movement, Warmia-Mazury
Ms Ann-Kristin Erlandsson	Blekinge County Council Administration

Mr Adam Halamski	Ambassador of Poland in Denmark
Mr Jörgen Hammer	European Movement, Bornholm
Mr David Hunt	Baltic Seven Islands cooperation (B7) coordinator
Mr Tage Johansen	European Movement, Bornholm
Mr Niels Jørgensen	European Movement, Bornholm
Ms Rasa Kairienė	Ambassador of Lithuania in Denmark
Mr Bjarne Kristiansen	Mayor, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Mr Wieslaw Lubinski	European Movement, Warmia-Mazury
Ms Therese Nilsson	Baltic Master II Coordinator
Mr Lars Öhrman	Administration of Regional Council in Kalmar County
Mr Karsten Petersen	Chair of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials
Mr Zbigniew Puchajda	European Movement, Warmińsko-Mazurskie
Mr Marek Tomaszewski	European Movement, Bornholm
Ms Malgorzata Wasilenko	Department of Int'l Relations, Warmińsko-Mazurskie
Mr Alexander Wendt	Deputy Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge

ERB Secretariats and Working Groups

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen	ERB Secretariat, Bornholm
Ms Lisa Andersson	ERB Secretariat, Blekinge
Mr Ulf Andersson	ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland
Ms Karen Brandt	Rural Development WG, Bornholm
Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański	International Permanent Secretariat
Ms Marie Fridh	ERB Secretariat, Blekinge
Ms Catrine Frost	ERB Youth Board deputy, Bornholm
Mr Johnny Winther Holbech	Social Dimension WG, Bornholm
Ms Kirsten Juni	Innovation & SME WG, Bornholm
Mr Jon Madsen	Local Community WG, Bornholm
Ms Viktorija Snioliene	ERB Secretariat, Klaipeda
Ms Lena Westman	ERB Secretariat, Kalmar
Mr Piotr Zwolak	ERB Secretariat, Warminsko-Mazurskie

The language of the Council meeting and the accompanying workshops on 19th and 20th November will be English.

19 NOVEMBER, DAY ONE: BALTIC SEA STRATEGY DEBATE

- 12:00 1. **Lunch at Bornholms Akademi, Snorrebakken 66**
13.00
- 13.00 2. **Welcome Address**
13.05
- Mr. Bjarne Kristiansen, Mayor of Bornholm, welcomed the participants of the Council meeting on Bornholm, addressing in particular the ambassadors of Lithuania and Poland, as well as Mr Karsten Petersen of CBSS.
- Mr Kristiansen highlighted the thematic debate of this meeting, i.e. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, which in his mind constituted the next step in the integration process of the region, initiated in 1989 with the political changes in the Eastern Europe.
- 13.05 3. **Opening and Introduction**
13.10
- Mr. Per Ole Petersen, ERB President, opened the ERB Council meeting, focusing on the key issues to be discussed, and including the ERB position towards the Baltic Sea Strategy, ERB Information and Communication Strategy, preparation of projects by the ERB Working Groups and the establishment of a new working group dealing with the issues of transport infrastructure.
4. **What EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**
- 13.10 4.1 Intervention by Ms Rasa Kairienė, Ambassador of Lithuania in
13.20 Denmark
- Ambassador Rasa Kairienė presented the position of the Lithuanian government towards the Baltic Sea Strategy, summarizing the key messages of the Lithuanian proposal, including issues related to competitiveness, environment and people to people contacts. In order to find out more about the Lithuanian position, please go to: <http://www.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/file106.pdf>.
- 13.20 4.2 Intervention by Mr. Adam Halamski, Ambassador of Poland
13.30
- Ambassador Adam Halamski presented the position of the Polish government towards the Baltic Sea Strategy, summarizing the key messages of the Polish proposal, including issues related to competitiveness, energy and people to people contacts. In order to find out more about the Polish position, please go to the ERB website at: <http://www.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/file103.pdf>.
- 13.30 4.3 Intervention by Mr. Karsten Petersen, Chair of the Committee of
13.40 Senior Officials at Council of the Baltic Sea States
- Ambassador Petersen reiterated the key messages of the declaration taken by the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 2007 (please see: <http://www.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/file80.pdf>) and offered his comments regarding a possible involvement of CBSS in the Strategy implementation process. He pointed out that it would be difficult for CBSS to become an executive body of the Strategy for a

few reasons, e.g. CBSS comprising external partners while the Strategy remains the internal EU policy, or constraints resulting from limited financial and human resources.

13.40 4.4 A discussion followed. Mr Bo Lofgren asked the speakers what is
14.00 expected of EU regions when it comes to the Strategy. Ambassador Petersen said it is ideas that the regions are welcome to provide to make the Strategy effective and practical. Ambassador Halamski pointed out to the fact that regions are very important stakeholders of all processes in the European Union, and the Strategy will not work without them. Ambassador Kairiene said the successful strategy will require active regions, both in presenting their ideas and implementing them. Mr Bjarne Kristiansen said that it is the local and regional authorities that know the existing problems right where they occur, and thus can be most effective actors implementing EU policies. It comes at no surprise then that regions are placed in the very centre of the Strategy.

Some comments were also offered regarding the ongoing financial crisis. In the opinion of the majority of the participants what was announced as a world tsunami has so far proved only to be a storm. Hopefully, that storm will be weathered at no severe cost to the peoples of the region.

14.00 5. **Presentation of work in Euroregion Baltic towards a joint
14.30 resolution on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**

Mr. Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański and Mr. Niels Chresten Andersen presented subsequent steps taken by Euroregion Baltic with the view of adopting its own position paper, and the contents of the position text as agreed so far.

The Council members were positive towards the paragraphs in the general part of the position preceding concrete proposals as to the specific strategy objectives. They also agreed that the five specific parts of the position will be discussed at the workshops which would follow.

14.30 **Coffee break**
15.00

15:00 6. **Workshops**
16.45

As agreed before the coffee break, the aim of the workshops was to agree on the final phrasing for the five specific parts dealing with the areas of focus proposed into the Strategy:

6.1 **Baltic Sea as an Area of Integration and Open Dialogue**

was moderated by Ms. Anna Gryazova, ERB Youth Board Chair and Ms. Lisa Andersson of Region Blekinge, and resulted in a satisfactory resolution regarding both the four proposed activities and the flagship project of a Baltic Sea Region Youth Summit to be recommended by Euroregion Baltic.

6.2 **Baltic Sea as an Environmentally Sustainable Place**

was moderated by Mr. Roger Kaliff, Chair of Kalmar Municipal Council, and resulted in a satisfactory resolution regarding both the five proposed activities and the flagship project of modern water management to be recommended by Euroregion Baltic.

6.3 **Baltic Sea as an Economically Prosperous Place**

was moderated by Ms. Krystyna Wróblewska, Director of International Department at Pomorskie Marshal Office, and resulted in a satisfactory resolution regarding both the six proposed activities and the two flagship projects 1) promoting the development of innovative small and medium enterprises and 2) encouraging young entrepreneurship to be recommended by Euroregion Baltic.

Baltic Sea as an Accessible and Attractive Place

6.4

was moderated by Mr. Lars Örhman of Regional Council in Kalmar County, and resulted in a satisfactory resolution regarding both the seven proposed activities and the flagship project promoting and protecting the cultural heritage of the Baltic Sea Region to be recommended by Euroregion Baltic.

Baltic Sea as a Safe and Secure Place

6.5

was moderated by Ms. Therese Nilsson, Baltic Master II Coordinator, and resulted in a satisfactory resolution regarding both the seven proposed activities and the flagship project implementing the Baltic Master Project Action Plan to be recommended by Euroregion Baltic.

16:45
17:00

7. **Closing**

Mr. Per Ole Petersen, ERB President closed the first part of the ERB Council meeting. He requested that the representatives of the regional secretariats prepare the final draft of the resolution which will then be presented to the heads of the delegations before the Council formally passes the resolution on the next day.

20 NOVEMBER, DAY TWO: ERB COUNCIL MEETING

09.00
09.05

1. **Opening and Introduction**

Mr. Per Ole Petersen, ERB President, opened the second part of the ERB Council meeting, asking to postpone the adoption of the ERB resolution on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region until after the coffee break. The Council members agreed to the proposed change.

09.05
09.10

2. **Adoption of 22.02.08 ERB Council meeting minutes**

ERB Council members approved of the minutes of the previous Council meeting which took place on 22nd February 2008 in Elbląg, Poland, and President Per Ole Petersen and Board member, Mr. Bernth Johnson placed their signatures on the minutes.

09.10
09.40

3. **ERB Information and Communication Strategy**

Mr. Niels Chresten Andersen presented the main objectives and activities of the Strategy.

Mr. Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski then introduced the Council to some changes following the comments submitted by the Danish, Polish and Swedish partners. These changes included: 1) introducing the phrase *when available* in Action 1.1.1.F; 2) adding the sentence *Information on WG members, contact information and tasks will be made available on the WG sites* in Action 1.1.1.I; 3) changing *ERB parties will produce* into *ERB parties may produce* in Action 1.1.2.C; 4) deleting Actions 1.1.3.B and 1.1.3.C and rephrasing Action 1.1.3.A so that it will now say *Finalising a discussion on the ERB statistical website: whether needed, in what scope and how updated*; 5) keeping also the Russian version of the info package produced by and for the ERB youth in Action 1.1.4.B; 6) adding *preferably as part of a joint ERB project* in Action 1.1.6.C; 7) adding *preferably in the autumn at the second Presidency Council meeting* in Action 1.4.A and making the ERB Presidency responsible for it; 8) adding new Action 2.2.1.C Organising regular meetings of Youth Board in ERB online room.

A discussion followed. Mr Bo Lofgren asked what relation there will be between this communication strategy and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Ms Krystyna Wroblewska proposed to combine the activity of organising an international conference with the subject of the Baltic Sea Strategy. With the view of conflicting opinions about the languages for the ERB youth info packages, President Petersen asked the Council members for their opinions. Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene and Ms Krystyna Wroblewska both thought the information should be printed only in English leaving more resources for additional activities. The floor was given to the ERB Youth Board which proposed a compromise phrasing. This was accepted by all the Council members, who also approved of the changes described in points; 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 above.

The ERB Council adopted the ERB Information and Communication Strategy. Its full text can be downloaded from the ERB website: <http://www.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/file138.pdf>.

4 **Presentation of the projects to be submitted by ERB Working Groups**

09.40 4.1 **Water Forum** 09.50

Mr. Roger Kaliff made a presentation of the project dealing with modern water management. The key issues were firstly the involvement of local and regional authorities, civil servants and experts in the work of the Forum and the project itself, as well as participation of the associated partners from Russia. More detailed presentation of the project and related information are available at: <http://www.seagull2.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/nfile95.pdf>. The Forum also recommended that the partnership around water issues includes actors from the Ukraine.

President Petersen noted that the ERB Board has already invited partners from the Western Ukraine to take part in the activities of the ERB Working Group, and then turned to the Council asking for possible comments.

The Council members did not object. Ms Krystyna Wroblewska said

that both Ukraine and Belarus are part of the Baltic Sea catchment area so cooperation with them should be of benefit to everyone. A specific request was made to the Council to back the project by authorizing the Board members to sign the letter of support. Authorization was granted.

09.50 4.2
10.00

Energy Forum

Mr. Ulf Andersson made a presentation of project related activities within the ERB Energy Working Group, including some being made ready for the South Baltic second call (renewable energy around the Baltic sea, and LED for outdoor lightning) and for the South Baltic third call (regional development with energy as a driver and sustainable transport with mobility management).

Ms Raisa Mincinuaskiene congratulated the Group on all the project proposals and said it was pity Klaipeda County was not so active in energy projects.

President Petersen wished Bornholm was much more active in the LED project as street lightning is now discussed by the municipality.

A specific request was made to the Council to back the LED project (find out more about the project and related information at: <http://www.seagull2.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/nfile94.pdf>) by authorizing the Board members to sign the letter of support. Authorization was granted.

10.00 4.3
10.20

ERB Youth Board

Ms Anna Gryazova made a short report on the activities performed within the Youth Board in the last ten months. Ms. Lisa Andersson made a presentation of the project prepared by the Youth Board (<http://www.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/file139.pdf>).

Mr Bo Frank congratulated the Youth Board on their work and said they are a true ERB flagship, a good example of cooperation within Euroregion Baltic which should make everyone proud.

Mr Bo Lofgren asked if it is possible to measure how many young people will be targeted by the project. Ms Lisa Andersson responded saying it will be between 100 and 150 directly involved youngsters and a lot more who will possibly be reached via the internet.

A specific request was made to the Council to back the youth project by authorizing the Board members to sign the letter of support. Authorization was granted.

10.20 4.4
10.30

Social Dimension

Ms. Kora Stańczyk made a presentation of the project prepared within the ERB Social Working Group called BaltNet (find out more at: <http://www.seagull2.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/nfile91.pdf>).

A specific request was made to the Council to back the project by

authorizing the Board members to sign the letter of support. Authorization was granted.

10.30 4.5
10.50

SME / Innovation

Mr. Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski made a presentation of project related activities within the ERB SME / Innovation Working Group, including two project ideas developed for the South Baltic second call: one cooperation project between science parks called DISKE (<http://www.seagull2.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/nfile93.pdf>) and cooperation project on net based learning called CELA BaSe (<http://www.seagull2.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/nfile92.pdf>).

Ms. Raisa Mincinauskiene asked whether the West Lithuania Business College will also take part in the CELA BaSe project, apart from Klaipeda University. Mr. Demkowicz-Dobrzański replied he would check the information with the lead partners of the project.

A specific request was made to the Council to back both the projects by authorizing the Board members to sign the letter of support. Authorization was granted.

Mr. Bo Lofgren asked how the ERB Council will be informed on the implementation of these projects. Mr. Demkowicz-Dobrzański replied that all the ERB Working Groups, and the projects they implement, are continuously monitored by the ERB Executive Board, and based on their comments the ERB Council makes decisions whether the Groups are allowed to continue for another year.

10.50
11.30

Coffee break

11.30 5.
11.50

Expression of gratitude

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen expressed special gratitude to Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene who will be soon leaving her office. On behalf of the Council and ERB member regions, President Petersen thanked her for involvement and commitment in the cooperation.

11.50 6.
12.10

Euroregion Baltic Council resolution on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Mr. Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski and Mr. Niels Chresten Andersen presented the text of the resolution agreed on the previous day during the workshops.

Mr. Alexander Wendt complimented the editing team for the effort of putting the document together and asked for a clear definition differentiating maritime safety and security.

Ms. Therese Nilsson, Baltic Master II Coordinator and moderator of the workshop on **Baltic Sea as a Safe and Secure Place** explained that safety relates to measures aiming at avoidance of catastrophic effects for the environment while security concerns measures aiming at avoidance of unauthorized entry, disclosure, alteration, etc. Both concepts though are treated jointly nowadays.

Mr Bo Lofgren complimented the work done on the paper and proposed the extension of the fourth bullet in the section on **the**

Baltic Sea Region as environmentally sustainable area with: *and negotiating with the Russian Federation, within the IMO framework, the recognition of the Baltic Sea area as a PSSA.*

Mr. Rafał Wolski expressed the support of the Polish delegation to the changes submitted in the drafting process, including the changes proposed by Mr. Bo Lofgren.

On behalf of the Swedish delegation, Mr. Bernth Johnson supported all the changes recommended by the delegations to the Council meeting.

On behalf of the Lithuanian delegation, Ms. Raisa Mincinauskiene supported all the changes recommended by the delegations to the Council meeting, expressing her hope that the resolution will be read with interest by European Commission.

As a representative of the ERB Youth Board, Ms Anna Gryazova expressed their approval of the revised text of the resolution.

Thus, the ERB Council members adopted the resolution expressing ERB position towards the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In conclusion, President Petersen said it was very important to be able to reach consensus, crucial element of the ERB cooperation that should always be present in the joint work. He hoped a similar atmosphere will be shared on 26th November when six Baltic Sea organizations will meet to agree on their joint position on the strategy.

7. **Establishment a new Working Groups within Euroregion Baltic**

12.10 7.1 ERB Transport Infrastructure Working Group
12.20

Ms. Suzanne Svensson, chair of the Group presented the Action Plan, which was agreed in a series of meetings (and can be downloaded from the ERB website at the following address: <http://www.seagull2.euroregionbaltic.eu/downloads/nfile96.pdf>). She said the Group did not only limit itself to the issue of transports of people and cargo but also discussed tourism. Ms. Svensson thanked all the member regions for appointing their representatives.

Ms. Raisa Mincinauskiene informed about a change of a Klaipeda County representative to the Group: Ms Viktorija Snioliene has been replaced by Mr. Arturas Drungilas of Klaipeda State Port Administration.

The Action Plan was approved and the ERB Council members decided to formally establish the ERB Transport Working Group.

12.20 7.2 Regional representatives in ERB Working Groups
12.30

Mr. Ulf Andersson informed the Council of some of the conclusions from the internal meeting of the Swedish regions related to the process of establishing ERB Working Groups. It was earlier declared, he said, also by the Swedish regions, that there should be representatives of all the regions in all the ERB working groups. This has so far prove quite problematic and he proposed that a more

flexible approach is applied whereby the region will have a choice of prioritizing their participation in the groups.

President Petersen said that a good balance between ambition and ability should be kept and proposed that a discussion is held on the subject at the next Board meeting in January 2009.

The Council agreed to support the proposal from the President.

8. **Information from the International Secretariat**

12.30 8.1 ERB budget 12.40

Mr. Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented an outline of the ERB budget planned for 2009 – 2011.

He pointed out to some key elements: 1) some difficulty in planning of the budget due to serious fluctuations in the EUR – PLN ratio (20% changes in the last four months); 2) negative balance at the end of 2008 resulting from the unpaid fees by the Kaliningrad Region in 2007 and 2008; 3) planned decrease in overheads expenditure due to more cost effective agreements with the telephone operators and reduced office rental cost; 4) planned increase on the income side due to the involvement of the International Secretariat in projects by the ERB Youth Board and Social Dimension Working Group; 5) in result, positive balance at the end of 2010 and 2011.

Mr. Niels Chresten Andersen expressed his support to employing some of the finances in the external projects since that was the original idea of generating extra funds with the joint resources.

Mr. Alexander Wendt raised the issue of the unpaid fees. As a result of the discussion, the ERB Council members expressed their concern that membership contribution has not been paid by the Russian partners in the two consecutive years.

12.40 8.2 Next joint ERB project 12.50

Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented a background for a discussion on a new joint project within Euroregion Baltic, noting that the discussion will be continued within the ERB Board before a final proposal will be presented to the Council next year.

The ERB Council members took note of the information presented.

12.50 9. **Closing** 12.55

ERB President, Mr. Per Ole Petersen thanked all the participants for their effort during the two days of the meeting. He observed that not often is so much serious work done during workshops, and quite seldom is so much media attention offered to ERB matters as has been the case this time.

He also expressed his gratitude to Ms Anna Gryazova who will be soon completing her work within the ERB Youth Board. On behalf of the Council President Petersen thanked her for involvement in the cooperation, and wished his best for her new life in Stockholm.

Finally, President Petersen invited the ERB partners to the Board and Council meetings which will be held on 22nd January and 24-26th February 2009, respectively.