

Euroregion Baltic
Executive Board Meeting
7 October 2009, 11.00 – 17.00

Brussels: Sctoland House,
Rond-Point Schuman 6



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| Title | Final Minutes |
| Submitted by | SDD, International Permanent Secretariat |
| Summary / Note | This document provides the provisional minutes of the Board meeting held on 7 th October 2009 |
| Requested action | Signing |

Participants

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| Mr Knud Andersen | BSSSC representative, moderator of the debate |
| Mr Niels Chresten Andersen | Head of ERB Secretariat, Bornholm |
| Ms Lisa Andersson | YC 3 Project Manager, Region Bornholm |
| Mr Ulf Andersson | ERB Secretariat, Regional Council Södra Småland |
| Mr Carl-Olof Bengtsson | ERB Council Member, Regional Council Södra Småland |
| Mr Håkan Brynielsson | Chief Executive Officer, Regional Council in Kalmar County |
| Mr Arunas Burksas | ERB Vice-President, Governor of Klaipeda County |
| Mr Erik Ciardi | ERB Secretariat, Regional Council in Kalmar County |
| Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski | Head of International Permanent Secretariat |
| Ms Anna Drażek | EU Policy Officer, Regional Office of Pomorskie |
| Mr Jerzy Drożdż | Deputy Head, Polish Permanent Representation |
| Ms Marie Fridh | ERB Secretariat, Region Blekinge |
| Mr Bernth Johnson | ERB Executive Board member, Chair of Blekinge County |
| Ms M. Kolander-Ninanne | EU Policy Officer, Regional Office of Pomorskie |
| Ms Małgorzata M. Klawiter | EU Policy Officer, Regional Office of Pomorskie |
| Ms Madeleine Koskull | Coordinator, South Sweden European Office |
| Mr Jan Kozłowski | ERB Executive Board member, Marshal of Pomorskie |
| Mr Per Gudmund Lindencrona | Coordinator for EU & Baltic affairs, Region Blekinge |
| Ms Alicja Majewska-Gałęziak | Director, Regional Office of Pomorskie |
| Ms Linnea Malmström | ERB Youth Board Substitute member, Region Blekinge |
| Mr Åke Nilsson | ERB Executive Board member, Regional Council in Kalmar |
| Mr Marek Orzechowski | Director, Regional Office of Warmińsko-Mazurskie |
| Mr Per Ole Petersen | ERB Executive Board member, Bornholm |

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| Mr Jacek Protas | ERB President, Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie |
| Ms Magda Sągin | Assistant to MEP, Jarosław Wałęsa |
| Ms Suzanne Svensson | ERB Council Member, Region Blekinge |
| Ms Krista Taipale-Salminen | Head of Turku-Southwest Finland European Office |
| Ms Victoria Snioliene | ERB Secretariat, Klaipeda County |
| Mr Zbigniew Walczak | Mayor of Gniewno, Poland |
| Ms Małgorzata Wasilenko | Int'l Cooperation Department, Wamińsko-Mazurskie |
| Ms Sofia Westerberg | Head of Attractiveness & Cooperation, Region Blekinge |
| Mr Rafał Wolski | Head of Int'l Cooperation Department, Wamińsko-Mazurskie |
| Ms Krystyna Wróblewska | Head of Int'l Cooperation Department, Pomorskie |
| Mr Piotr Zwolak | ERB Secretariat, Wamińsko-Mazurskie |

ERB SEMINAR

How can regions of Europe best help to strengthen the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region?

11:00 – Welcome
 11.10 *by Mr Jan Kozłowski, Marshal of Pomorskie Voivodeship, Host of the Venue*

Please, find below the text of the speech:

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

As always it is my great pleasure to welcome you here on the premises of the Pomorskie Regional Office in Brussels. The more so, that we are meeting here again to discuss a very important and timely issue of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Euroregion Baltic, as a strong, experienced cooperation body, consisting of self-governments from the Baltic EU member states and Kaliningrad Oblast, is a good and responsible partner in the endeavours to make the Baltic Sea Region more attractive, wealthy, accessible, safe and secure. We well combine working for the Baltic Sea Region within our daily activities, with actively participating in the debates on the best solutions possible for its good future.

Last year in June we met here, to talk about the shape and goals of the Strategy which was then being planned. Now, with the first documents ready and waiting for official launching, representatives of Euroregion Baltic, BSSSC, B7, Union of the Baltic Cities, Baltic Development Forum and CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, meet again to talk how to implement the Strategy in the most effective way and how to work its better shape in the future – having in mind also the future of cohesion policy.

We will all agree, I believe, that the key to success is strong leadership of the EU and its member states' governments in the implementation process. But equally important is as broad as possible, involvement of regional and local partners as well as cooperation structures as ours, interested institutions and organizations, including NGOs. Therefore, we strongly support the dialogue of the Baltic Sea Region organizations which do have a common opinion on the Baltic Sea Strategy and its implementation.

We are aware, of course, that it is for the first time that such a document is being prepared and such a macro-regional approach used. We are not happy

with some of the aspects of its preparation and planned implementation, like lack of funds, not so clear or transparent procedures, etc. But, while looking at it as a learning process for all of us, we will keep on doing our best to make the Strategy a success. As its success means better and more interesting life in the Region for us and generations to come. We do hope that the European Commission and involved central authorities will treat us all as important and experienced partners in all the Baltic Sea Strategy related processes. Only such an approach can guarantee a positive outcome.

Thank you and a very good meeting to all of you.

11.10 –
11.20

Opening

by Mr Jacek Protas, Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship and President of Euroregion Baltic, Chair of the Seminar

Please, find below the text of the speech:

Ladies and gentleman,

I would like to warmly welcome you to this seminar on the future implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Strategy is an innovative concept raising high hopes across the region and aiming at activating its potential which rose dramatically in 2004 with the EU Enlargement. In my capacity of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship and of the President of Euroregion Baltic I will now briefly discuss the importance of the Strategy for the region I represent.

Since its beginnings the Region of Warmia & Masuria has been active in the cross-border and transnational cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. The most evident aspects of our involvement are Euroregion Baltic and a number of projects implemented within the Baltic Sea Region Interreg III B Programme as well as in the current Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 – 2013. We, in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, believe the adoption of the Baltic Sea Strategy will be a major milestone in territorial cooperation and expect it will enable all the cooperating partners to put their efforts together, while the precisely defined objectives will help them be effective.

The Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship wishes to focus on three areas of the Strategy: transport, environment protection and cross-border cooperation. Our region in particular suffers from the incoherent transport networks as well as insufficient transport infrastructures in the Baltic Sea Region, and in consequence, low internal and external accessibilities. Therefore, we plan to actively participate in joint efforts in order to make the Baltic Sea Region an accessible and attractive place. We will take measures in support of the development of sustainable transport networks in the Region which would equally consider their latitudinal and meridian dimensions.

The location of Warmia and Masuria, and its natural values, awarded with the "New 7 Wonders" Contest final nomination, determine our specific concern for environment protection in the Region where nature is its most valuable asset. Therefore, we plan to actively support actions making the Baltic Sea Region an environmentally sustainable place.

Territorial cooperation is an indispensable element of our Warmian and Masurian development strategy. No wonder, almost the whole length of the Polish border with the Kaliningrad Region is at the same time the northern border of our voivodeship. We have always considered this cross-border location a significant growth asset. In addition, situated at the shore of the Vistula Lagoon we feel an equal part of the Baltic Sea Region. We appreciate the fact that this EU Strategy goes beyond the Union itself and reaches out to external neighbours, especially to partners in Russia.

The Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship wishes to take active part in the debate

on implementing and financing systems for the Strategy since we are convinced these elements will be important contributing factors to the success of the Strategy. The failure the Baltic Sea Region cannot really afford!

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region plays a central part in the cooperation of Euroregion Baltic. The Euroregion and its member regions have been intensively involved in the consultation process that the Commission launched last year. Both the member regions and Euroregion Baltic presented their positions to the Strategy to the Commission. The Council of Euroregion Baltic adopted its position on 20th November on Bornholm, highlighting the main aspects of the Strategy pillars: environment, prosperity, accessibility and attractiveness, and safety, but also recommending more efforts in favour of integration and open dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region. Furthermore, Euroregion Baltic Council proposed flagship projects which could be specific implementation exercises of the Strategy. Euroregion Baltic contributed to the joint position on the Strategy with five other Baltic Sea organizations which are represented here today. In the future, Euroregion Baltic will work towards the recognition as a model Strategy implementation area. Next year, we also have a ready project application with the main aim of combating climate change and promoting green businesses.

I do hope the seminar today will be an important step into a more efficient implementation of the Baltic Sea Strategy and will bear fruit of valuable conclusions.

Thank you for your attention.

11.20 –
12.30

How can regions and regional networks actively support the implementation of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy

The discussion was moderated by Mr Knud Andersen.

The participants looked for answers to some of the key questions regarding the implementation of the Strategy and possible continuation of the cooperation between the six organisations which launched a common position towards the Strategy last year (these organisations being BDF, BSSSC, B7, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, UBC and Euroregion Baltic).

Is the cooperation between the organisations on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region necessary and possible?

Yes. Based on the so far positive experience of the cooperation, the representatives of the organisations thought it necessary that their joint efforts are continued in the future.

Should the cooperation be formalised and a joint structure established to facilitate the cooperation?

An open formula of the cooperation was suggested instead of establishing any formal body of representatives dealing with the issues related to the Strategy. It was also stressed that the Strategy should remain the key objective of the cooperation.

What could be specific areas for the organisations to focus on in relation to the Strategy?

Firstly, efforts to guarantee the participation of representatives of the territorial governments at the local and regional level in the High Level Group of Member State representatives that the European Commission is about to set up in order

to monitor the implementation of the Strategy. So far, no local or regional authorities are mentioned in the Group composition. Another idea could be to propose one representative of the organisations into the Group.

Secondly, the organisations should continue to promote the governance model which includes the levels of European Commission, Member States, local and regional authorities, and non-governmental organisations providing a wider perspective involving local communities, and creates a horizontal platform for political cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

Thirdly, in the dialogue with the national authorities the organisations will need political support from their member regions, counties, cities and towns, which will strengthen their voice and representativeness.

Fourthly the organisations expressed their concerns about the lack of specific budget line for the Strategy, which could hamper its effective implementation. Hopes were evident that a pool of specially earmarked resources will be available in the new programming period.

Fifthly, the six organisations believe that strengthening of the macro-regional aspect of the cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region should not be made at the expense of existing cross-border and inter-regional programmes. Local and regional actors must be able to continue to make use of these instruments in the new financial perspective.

Sixthly, the organisations will each implement their preferred flagship projects, and no joint project will be implemented by all the six entities.

12.45 –
12.55

Conclusions and Closing

by Mr Jacek Protas, Marshal of Warminsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship and President of Euroregion Baltic, Chair of the Seminar

Mr Protas thanked the participants of the seminar for a fruitful debate and summed up the key messages voiced during its course. He expressed his hopes for the cooperation that would prove crucial in the process of the implementation of the Strategy, as well as its subsequent assessment.

He pointed out that the organisations like Euroregion Baltic provide an effective political platform for cooperation in important areas and issues. The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region will definitely be a key policy area in the coming years, around which a lot of joint initiatives will be implemented, also between the organisations present at the seminar.

In the end, President Protas invited the participants to a conference of the Baltic organisations which will be organised by Euroregion Baltic at the beginning of next year.

ERB EXECUTIVE BOARD AGENDA

13.30 –
13.35

1. **Opening**

by Mr Jacek Protas, President of Euroregion Baltic

Mr Jacek Protas, President of Euroregion Baltic welcomed the participants of the meeting. He referred to the seminar held earlier that day dealing with the

implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. He said that through the participation in the consultation of the Strategy ERB has significantly improved its visibility but must continue its effort to be present in the EU debates. He then opened the ERB Executive Board meeting.

13.35 - 2. **Adoption of the agenda**
13.35

ERB Executive Board approved of the present agenda.

13.35 - 3. **Adoption of 11.09.08 ERB Board Meeting minutes**
13.40

ERB Executive Board members approved of the minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting which took place in Gdansk on 9th June 2009. ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas and ERB Vice-President, Mr Arunas Burksas, placed their signatures on the minutes.

13.40 - 4. **Internal Matters**
14.10

ERB Vice-President, Mr Arunas Burksas asked the Board to let him present the information on the administrative changes in Lithuania. Due to the ongoing reform of the structure of the Lithuanian territorial government, county administration units will be dismantled as of 1st July 2010. Klaipeda Regional Development Council, with the representatives from the seven municipalities in Klaipeda County, will continue but no second-level administration will be in place until 2014 when fewer and stronger Lithuanian regions are expected to be established. Mr Burksas informed the Board that he had been in communication with the Lithuanian Minister of Interior in order to secure further Lithuanian participation in the ERB cooperation. This participation, Mr Burksas stated, will be continued. For practical reasons though, he asked that the order of presidencies should be changed allowing the postponement of the Lithuanian chairmanship only in 2011 or 2012.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed that the Agreement establishing ERB was signed by the Governor of Klaipeda County and all the mayors of Klaipeda municipalities so, at least from the formal point of view, Lithuanian participation is secured. Naturally, he went on, ERB should work towards the agreement with the newly established region in the place of Klaipeda County. A solution of the presidency order could also be, he proposed, that the present chairmanship of Warmińsko-Mazurskie is recommended to the Council to be extended for another year.

ERB Board member, Åke Nilsson, on behalf of the three Swedish regions, expressed his support to the idea of extending the Polish leadership in ERB. He also hoped that Klaipeda will continue its active work in the organisation. He asked about the possibility for Mr Burksas to continue his role as the ERB Vice-President.

ERB Vice-President, Mr Arunas Burksas said he will continue as the Governor until the end of next July and will definitely make sure Klaipeda remains actively involved in the ERB work throughout 2010. He was also content with Warmińsko-Mazurskie extending the chairmanship for another year.

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson commented by recalling the origins of the cooperation between Region Blekinge and Klaipeda in the early nineteen nineties. Since then, he said, such flagship projects as Baltic Master, Baltic Gateway and East - West have been implemented with very good contributions from partners in Klaipeda. The national level in Lithuania should understand that Klaipeda has done a great job, and that the cooperation must

continue.

ERB Vice-President, Mr Arunas Burksas said he will pass the message on to the Minister of Interior, and has no doubt that Klaipeda will continue in the ERB cooperation.

Mr Carl-Olof Bengtsson expressed his stern belief that the reforms in Lithuania will be successful. He was in total agreement that the continuation of the cooperation with Klaipeda will be of benefit for all the ERB partners.

President Jacek Protas suggested writing a letter to the Lithuanian Minister of Interior in order to secure the participation of Klaipeda and its governor in the ERB cooperation. He also hoped that a future, bigger region with its capital in Klaipeda will be a member in ERB.

ERB Board member, Mr Per Ole Petersen said Klaipeda has been an important partner in the ERB cooperation and agreed that President Protas continues for another year. He stressed that it will be important to discuss the issue of the ERB chairmanship in 2011 with the Russian partners.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen proposed that negotiations are held among the ERB partners on the presidency rotation sequence since the Statutes do not regulate the issue. A proposal could be prepared for the November Council meeting.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by thanking everyone for the discussion and the positive feedback to his presidency. Whatever solution is agreed, he continued, it is absolutely necessary that all the regions support it. Warmińsko-Mazurskie will be ready to continue the chairmanship, whether for six or twelve months, but with consensus among the partners. He stressed the importance of a discussion with Russian partners who should be able to have the Vice-President before they would take over in 2011.

14.10 – 4.1 ERB Joint Project
14.25

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented the proposal of the ERB Joint project called supERB – Sustainable Policies for Economic Revival, as discussed and agreed during the ERB Secretariat online meeting on 7th September and the meeting of the representatives of Bornholm, Sodra Smaland and Warmińsko-Mazurskie on 15th September.

ERB Board member, Åke Nilsson said the project will have to be properly anchored in the ERB member regions.

ERB Board member, Mr Per Ole Petersen agreed and asked who will take the role of the Lead Partner of the project.

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson asked about the schedule of further activities related to the project preparation.

Mr Ulf Andersson said the project was very much in line with the work of the ERB Energy Working Group.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the Board that the Association of Polish Communes is ready to follow the request made by the secretariats and be the Lead Partner of the project. He agreed that the anchoring process will be crucial, but after the approval by the Board of this overall project idea. The anchoring process will require the participation of all the ERB secretariats who act as liaison between the drafting team and the regions involved. The political

anchoring will start during the November Council meeting and the seminar on climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. He said he hoped for the project to be ready for the fourth call in the South Baltic programme, i.e. 01.04 – 21.05.2010.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by observing that the compromise proposal won everyone's acceptance and the ERB Executive Board approved the supERB project idea as the next joint ERB project.

14.25 – 4.2 ERB Youth cooperation
14.40

The presentation of the Yc³ project was made by the Youth Board member, Ms Linnea Malmström and project coordinator, Ms Lisa Andersson.

Ms Lisa Andersson made an introduction reminding the Board of the project objectives and keywords. She also talked about how the Youth Board so far has managed to influence the EU Baltic Sea Action Plan with their contribution on young entrepreneurship and also the conference for young people regarding the EU Baltic Sea Strategy in Hamburg in February.

Ms Linnea Malmström talked about the project kick-off meeting in Gdansk between 9 and 10 June, where they among other things discussed themes of upcoming meetings, how to communicate in and outside of the project and different responsibilities. The Youth Board agreed on the project communication plan which was handed out together with some other material. The first number of the E-Magazine was also presented containing information on the first theme meeting held in Kalmar between 18 and 19 September. The meeting concerned young entrepreneurship and was very successful.

The project has also made its own graphic identity, including logo, brochure, power point presentation templates, etc. These will be available on the project website intranet. The project is now active on Facebook, Twitter and GG (Polish communicator).

The presentation concluded with Ms Lisa Andersson's information on the budget and partnership agreements. The first progress report will be handed in to the JTS on 9 November together with the partnership agreements signed with the project partners.

ERB Executive Board members were positive to the report presented and congratulated the youth for the progress so far. ERB Council member, Ms Suzanne Svensson asked about some problems related to the signing of the partnership agreements by Bornholm and Warmińsko-Mazurskie. Mr Niels Chresten Andersen from Bornholm and Mr Piotr Zwolak from Warmińsko-Mazurskie informed delays were caused by stricter requirements from the first level controllers who demanded more detailed phrasing of the agreement articles.

In relation to the youth activities Mr Piotr Zwolak presented the information on the Painting & Photography Open Air for the ERB Youth which took place in Olsztyn between 2 and 5th October 2009.

In response to the ERB President's initiative, the Open Air attracted young artists from Bornholm, Blekinge, Klaipeda and Warmińsko-Mazurskie. The painting workshop was run by Ms Barbara Żebrowska, and the photography classes were conducted by Mr Piotr Dowejko. Logistical support was provided institutionally by the Centre of Education and Cultural Initiatives in Olsztyn, and personally by Ms Renata Pugowska and Mr Wiesław Wachowski. Apart from the actual painting and photographic activities around oaks, buildings

and architectural sites in Olsztyn, the participants had also some leisure time, involving visits to the Olsztyn Castle, Nature Museum, Ethnographic Museum and many more. The event concluded with the exhibition of works made during its course and the presentation of the youth with the gifts, films about the Region of Warmińsko-Mazurskie.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas added he was personally very happy that the event took place since he himself was committed to its organisation. He asked the Board for support a similar activity next year.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented and supported the President in the plan to organise a similar event in 2010.

ERB WG projects

14.40 – 4.3
15.00

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski presented some information on the DISKE project, implemented in the framework of the ERB SME / Innovation Working Group. A kick-off conference will be held in Elbląg, Poland between 13 and 14th October. The project website will soon be launched and available also on the ERB website. He also asked the Board to appoint a politician to the project Steering Committee.

The ERB Executive Board took note of the information and informed that Mr Carl-Olof Bengtsson will represent Euroregion Baltic in the project Steering Committee.

With reference to BaltNet Project and further work within the Social Dimension Working Group, Ms Krystyna Wróblewska informed the Board of the current situation in the region of Pomorskie where the budget next year will be significantly decreased. Regional authorities decided now is the difficult time to make financial obligations and therefore withdrew from the task of managing of the BaltNet project.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański said the BaltNet project was successfully submitted to the South Baltic Programme and well received by the Programme evaluators. He asked that the Social Dimension Working Group and the regional secretariats look for a possible new partner to lead the project and re-submit it in the fourth call between 01.04 and 21.05 next year.

ERB Board member, Mr Per Ole Petersen said Bornholm was very interested in the project and wants to continue the effort in the future.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by saying the problem will probably not be solved instantly and asked the regional representatives to send in proposals.

With reference to MOMENT project Mr Erik Ciardi presented some information on the MOMENT project, implemented in the framework of the ERB Water Working Group. A kick-off conference will be held in Gdańsk, Poland between 28 and 29th October. The project website was launched and is now available on the ERB website. He also said that the current challenge within the project is the forming of the political group around the project, the so-called ERB Water Forum.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by asking the Board and ERB secretariats to help identifying relevant political representatives for the Water Forum.

ERB Statistical Database

15.00 – 4.4 Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski related to the tasks of the ERB Information and
15.05 Communication Strategy. He informed the Board that the database of local, regional, national and EU contacts was created and is regularly updated. ERB Newsletter is published every quarter and the third issue in 2009 will be released in October. A new ERB website is also available offering a more modern and refreshed image of the organisation.

He also requested that the ERB Executive Board agrees to discontinue work on updating information on the statistical database. ERB secretariats had earlier signalled this particular activity takes too much of their limited resources and adds little value to the ERB cooperation, especially when some of the statistical indicators are still difficult to compare or are available from other sources.

ERB Executive Board took the decision to stop updating the ERB statistical database.

15.05 – 5. **Preparation for ERB Council meeting in November**
15.25

ERB President, Jacek Protas opened the]is point with some comments related to the future challenges of the ERB cooperation.

Euroregion Baltic has recently undertaken many initiatives involving its structures, member regions, and other organizations operating in the Baltic Sea Region. Some of the ERB Working Groups already launched projects while the others are working on new proposals. ERB Youth Board is implementing its own project, and ERB secretariats are preparing work on another joint project for the whole organisation. In addition, ERB is an active participant in European debates which will probably change the future landscape of cross-border and inter-regional cooperation in Europe: on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, EU Cohesion Policy and the Eastern Partnership. In order to be able to meet these significant institutional and organisational challenges, Euroregion Baltic should carry a broad debate to identify priorities for its future engagement. Such a debate should be an exchange of opinions from the representatives of the ERB member regions, as well as invited experts from the European Commission, European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, as well as independent institutions. We must answer several important questions, e.g.

- what role we want to and are able to play in the Baltic Sea Strategy?
 - whether and how we wish to collaborate with external partners?
 - whether the ERB still aims to apply for its own cross border programme?
- It seem then that ERB needs discussion not only on its priority actions but also on possible organisational improvements. Therefore, ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas proposed that ERB secretariats begin to prepare a debate, which could have a working title of Agenda 2014, and whose first step would be a conference in February 2010 combined with the ERB Council meeting.

Mr Håkan Brynielsson said that the President's thoughts were parallel to what the Swedish partners have been recently discussing. The Swedish regions, he continued, consider ERB an important cooperation platform which brings added value to its member regions and local stakeholders. Challenges in the cooperation relate a varying level of involvement from the regions as well as ERB cooperation ambitions versus its institutional capacities. In the opinion of the Swedish regions, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region should be an arena for very active work within ERB. Another important aspect in the coming

months should be related to the revision of the Joint Development Programme.

Mr Håkan Brynielsson proposed a two-step approach. Firstly, a workshop should be held between high-level civil servants representing the ERB member regions (CEOs and equivalents) during which important issues to the ERB cooperation should be elaborated. Secondly, a top level meeting should follow, attended by presidents of the regions, governors, and other high-ranking politicians, which should aim at anchoring future work in the regions and help ERB regain momentum.

ERB Executive Board welcomed the opinions voiced by the ERB President and the Swedish regions and accepted the proposal made by Mr Håkan Brynielsson of the two meetings. ERB Board members recommended that the ERB secretariats undertake necessary preparations to facilitate the organisation of the two meetings next year: civil servant meeting in January 2010 and political meeting in February 2010.

Dates, place and topics

- 15.25 – 5.1 Mr Rafal Wolski provided some information on the ERB Council meeting which
15.40 will be held between 5 and 6th November 2009 in Stare Jablonki, Warminsko-Mazurskie Region. Participants are expected to arrive on 4th when already in the afternoon Working Group meetings can take place. The next morning will be an opportunity to attend a study visit to a nearby Iława. After lunch back at the hotel, ERB Council meeting is expected to start at around 14.30 and last till 19.00 latest. During the conference a debate should be held on climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in the context of the COP 15 Conference in Copenhagen and the supERB project by Euroregion Baltic. In the evening a formal dinner will be hosted by the ERB President. On 6th November a joint session of the ERB Council and the General Assembly of Polish Communes of Euroregion Baltic will be organised between 11.00 and 13.00 to discuss European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation.

The participants will cover the cost of their travel and accommodation. The meals, coffee breaks and study visit will be financed by the region of Warmińsko-Mazurskie.

ERB Executive Board members approved of the programme outline.

ERB Statutes

- 15.40 – 5.2 Following the discussion at the Board meeting on 9th June 2009 it was
15.50 proposed that the ERB Executive Board recommends to the Council that the Paragraph 8.1 of the ERB Statutes will have the following wording: *The ERB Executive Board is elected from the members of the ERB Council and consists of one representative from each member region within Euroregion Baltic, one representative of the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic and the Chairperson of the Youth Board.*

ERB Executive Board members agreed to recommend to the Council that the proposed change in the ERB Statutes is approved, and the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic has a full member in the Board and pays membership fee in the amount equivalent to the amount of the other Polish partners.

6. **Information on other events and their implications on the ERB cooperation**

15.50 – 16.10 6.1 Call for proposals for a South Baltic Capacity Building Project

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen informed that the South Baltic Programme is looking for a partner consortium to apply for the Capacity Building Project. Potential members of this consortium should represent umbrella organisations, which are able to cover the whole programme area and which are able to reach out to the target group of the Programme. The consortium should at least have two members from two countries in the programme area. This main objective for a successful project will be to help the Programme better support its target group and raise the capacity for cross-border co-operation at the local level. Therefore, the Programme bodies decided to announce an additional call for a capacity building project to help its target group in better realizing its potential for cross-border cooperation.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed that ERB has been already contacted by two institutions organising a project application to the Capacity Building Call. What should be clarified before any concrete involvement by ERB is of course the scope and competence behind our participation. In addition, limited human resources can be a major obstacle.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information and asked for more information about upcoming Capacity Building Project ideas.

16.10 – 16.20 6.2 Around the Baltic – European Inspirations

Mr Rafał Wolski informed the Board of the event which took place in Ryn between 15 and 17th September, including the communication signed by the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Mr Jacek Protas and the Head of Rivne Oblast Administration in the Ukraine, Mr Victor Matchuk (see the attached document).

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson congratulated the region of Warmińsko-Mazurskie on the initiative of bringing the Ukrainians closer to the European cooperation and proposed that now national government support is sought to these cooperative actions with external partners.

Mr Rafał Wolski said that such support is already looked for and the seminar was attended by a large number of Polish parliamentarians.

16.20 – 16.30 8. **Any Other Business**

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed of the two events. First, he talked about the seminar on territorial cohesion and territorial cooperation organised by the Territorial Cohesion Unit of the DG Regio on 25th September in Brussels where ERB had its presentation alongside other cooperation structures like EGTC Eurometropole Lille – Kortrijk – Tournai, Upper Rhine, and AEFR (to find materials from the seminar, please follow the link below:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/territorial/programme_en.cfm?nmenu=2

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski also invited the ERB partners to participate in the 24th edition of the art competition for youth and children *We Are From the Sea*. The entries can be sent the Youth Culture Centre in Elblag until 28th February 2010 and the closing ceremony will be held on 15th May 2010 (see the attached document).

16.30 9. **Closing**

ERB President Board meeting, Mr Jacek Protas closed the meeting.