

**ERB BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**
Olsztyn, 3rd September 2004

Meeting Place: Regional Employment Office in Olsztyn, 28 Głowackiego Street.

Participants:

Members of ERB Board

Ms Annelise Molin, Denmark
Mr Bo Lundgren, Sweden
(substitute for ERB Board member, Mr Anders Akesson)
Mr Alexander Mihailov, Lithuania
(substitute for ERB Board member, Ms Virginia Lukosiene)
Mr Armands Puzulis, Latvia
(substitute for ERB Board member, Mr Normunds Niedols)

Secretariats

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen, Denmark
Ms Dalia Makuskiene, Lithuania
Ms Elena Butorova, Russia
Mr Ulf Andersson, Sweden
Mr Erik Ciardi, Sweden
Mr Zdzislaw Olszewski, Poland
Ms Magdalena Szymanowska, Poland
Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski, Poland

ERB Youth Council

Ms Anna Overlund-Sorensen, Denmark
Ms Ewelina Bonar, Poland
Mr Andriey Moshkov, Russia
Ms Suzana Pargan, Sweden
Ms Elina Tyrberg, Sweden

Invited Guests

Mr Andrzej Rynski, Marshal of Warmia and Mazury
Ms Bozena Wrzeszcz-Zwada, Vice-Marshal of Warmia and Mazury
Mr Bogdan Borusewicz, Pomeranian Voivodeship Board Member
Ms Krystyna Wroblewska, Pomeranian Marshal's Office
(representing Pomeranian Marshal, Mr Jan Kozłowski)
Mr Antoni Jaszczak, Pomeranian Voivodeship
(representing Pomeranian Voivode, Mr Cezary Dąbrowski)
Ms Danuta Podlaszewska, Voivodeship of Warmia and Mazury
(representing Voivode of Warmia and Mazury, Mr Stanislaw Szatkowski)
Mr Zbigniew Karpowicz, ERB Council member
Mr Igor Hutnikiewicz, Warmia and Mazurian Marshal Office
Mr Marcin Łyjak, Pomeranian Marshall Office

Interpreter Ms Wanda Stec

Before the meeting ERB Board observed one minute silence to pay respect to the memory of the late Sigurdh R. Petersson, ERB Council member.

1. Board internal matters:

Before the meeting began, on behalf of ERB President, Mr B. Borusewicz excused Mr J. Kozlowski's absence due to other important obligations and asked the Board to appoint Ms A. Molin to chair the meeting. Ms A. Molin agreed and the Board approved the proposal.

1.1 Approving the agenda.

The Board approved the agenda with one additional proposal put forward by Mr E. Ciardi on reporting from an exchange programme of civil servants between the Swedish region of Ljungby and the Lithuanian region of Silute, included as point 11 of the agenda.

1.2 Signing the minutes from the Board meeting on 16th June 2004.

The minutes from the Board meeting on 16th June 2004 were accepted without comments. Due to President J. Kozlowski and Ms G. Butkute's absence the minutes were not signed, and the signing was postponed.

1.3 Appointing persons to co-sign the minutes from the Board meeting on 3rd September 2004

Ms A. Molin and Mr A. Mihailov were appointed to co-sign the minutes from the Board meeting on 3rd September 2004.

1.4 A brief report from the opening of ERB International Secretariat.

Mr Z. Olszewski reported on the opening of ERB International Permanent Secretariat. The Polish party fulfilled its obligations to equip ERB IPS with the premises, furniture, communication facilities (telephone, fax, internet connection, computer and software) and stationery. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski has been employed since 1st July 2004 in the structure of the Polish secretariat. Financial declarations have so far been signed by the Danish, Lithuanian and Swedish parties, and by the Polish region of Pommerania. The Latvian and Russian partners are expected to sign the declarations. Financial contributions have so far been made by the Danish party and the Marshal's Office of Pommerania.

1.5 Signing the Financial Declaration to co-finance the operations of ERB International Secretariat by the representatives of Warmia and Masuria.

The financial declaration was signed at the meeting.

2. Young representatives in the ERB Council.

In accordance with the latest decisions by ERB Board taken at their meeting in Gdansk and following the Council's decision made last year, ERB parties appointed representatives from their respective youth organizations. Ms A. Molin welcomed the delegates from Denmark, Poland, Russia and Sweden and expressed her wish for the youth meeting to bear fruit of concrete cooperation. Then, she made a proposal that the youth meet separately, joined by Mr U. Andersson. Mr A. Molin also

suggested that the young representatives return to the Board and present the outcome of their meeting.

3. Report from the Conference on euroregions in Vilnius on 1 -2 July 2004

On 1-2 July 2004 a group of ERB representatives took part in a conference in Vilnius, organized by the Lithuanian Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs. The conference concerned the issues relevant to the development of euroregions, especially in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy. On behalf of our euroregion Ms A. Molin presented ERB, discussing its activities, as well as opportunities and threats for its future development (see Appendix 1). At the Board meeting Ms A. Molin gave a brief report on the conference, making a proposal for the Board to recommend a broad ERB participation in such conferences in the future. Mr Z. Olszewski asked the Lithuanian partner to support ERB activities, and the Polish party in particular, aimed at bringing Interreg III A microproject management to the euroregional level. Ms D. Makuskiene informed that the Lithuanian Ministry of Interior invites euroregional representatives to the meetings of the programme's steering committee.

4. Information from ERB IPS on:

4.1 the visit that ERB IPS External Financing Task Force paid to Karlskrona on 29th July 2004

At ERB Council meeting on 4th May 2004 a task force was established to prepare a project applying for external financing for ERB IPS. The Danish partner appointed Mr N.Ch. Andersen, the Lithuanian party Ms G. Butute, the Polish Ms M. Samusjew, and the Swedish Mr . Ciardi. The ERB IPS External Financing Task Force paid the visit in the Interreg III B Technical Office on 29th July 2004 in order to inquire about the 6th application round coming up in September.

4.2 Interreg III B project under preparation

The Task Force had prepared an outline of an Interreg III B project, whose aim is to strengthen ERB institutionally in the follow-up to the outcome of the Seagull project. A presentation was delivered by Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski to the Board of the outline with its general and specific aims, activities by work packages and the budget framework (Appendix 2). A discussion followed after the presentation. Mr N.Ch. Andersen emphasised the transnational aspect of work package ownership. The outline of the project proposed that work packages are led by the Danish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Swedish parties, and the Polish party has an overall coordination of the project. In accordance with the Interreg guidelines the Russian partner cannot manage a work package. Mr Andersen also explained that work package activities directly relate to the Lisbon and Gothenborg strategies. Speaking of the budget he reminded that cash contribution will solely be covered by financial input already declared to support ERB International Permanent Secretariat, and personnel contribution will involve 3 working days from the Danish and Swedish regions each and 6 working days from the representatives of Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. The budget of the new Seagull II will only be one fifth of the Seagull project, predicting participation from maximum 15 people. The project assumed one and a third full-time engagement for the leading partner and a third full-time employment for each party leading a work package. Mr A. Puzulis stated the

Latvian party will declare participate in the project after the concrete results are known. Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski responded by explaining that the project had only been outlined to let all member regions bring their suggestions forward in the programming process. Mr N. Ch. Andersen added that enabling all the partners to participate in the process of making the project was the idea behind setting up the external financing task force. Mr B. Lundgren informed that the three Swedish regions had had a meeting during which an opinion was expressed that submission of the project in the 6th round will be too soon as no concrete results of the Seagull project are known but obligations for three more years are made. Ms A. Molin reminded that the decision to seek external financing was adopted together with the establishment of ERB IPS. Mr E. Ciardi referred to the consultation meeting he had at Karlskrona Office when a suggestion was made by the Interreg team to wait till another application round when Russian participation is probable to be full. Ms A. Molin said we are aware the preparation period was really short. She also informed the Board members there was a possibility to use the Seed Money Facility within Interreg III B, which can subsidize preparatory activities. S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski pointed out that it is not yet clear if Priority 3, which Seagull II is applying to, is going to be included in the Seed Money 6th application round, and we will have to wait till 6th September 2004 when the call opens. Mr B. Lungren supported a proposal to apply for seed money as it could enable a broader consultation of the project in all ERB member regions. Mr U. Andersson congratulated on the good outline of the project made within such a short time. Ms K. Wroblewska also noted that the outline was very well prepared, giving her support to a seed money application. She also suggested that the Board need to think what should be done if not all of the member regions decides not to participate in the project. Ms A. Molin asked if the Board accepts the following procedure:

- submitting a Seed Money application in the 6th round
- submitting an Interreg III B application in the 7th round

Ms A. Molin proposed that the decision be made after a 30-minute break. After the break the Board unanimously supported the procedure.

5. Commission Commission's new proposals on structural funds after 2006, with a certain focus on the draft regulation for an EGCC (European Groupings of Crossborder Cooperation).

Mr N.Ch. Andersen informed the Board of the proposals for future structural funds made by the European Commission on 14th July 2004, as well as a new EU initiative aiming to equip organizations such as euroregions with the status of EGCC, or legal status in other words, which will enable them to manage their own crossborder cooperation programmes (Appendix 3).

At this point the youth representatives returned to the meeting. On their behalf Ms E. Bonar reported the following (also see Appendix 4):

- the young representatives defined barriers hindering cooperation, i.e. visa problems, communication difficulties (insufficient English knowledge), lack of contacts with youths in other regions, ignorance of their interests, lifestyles, etc.
- they confirmed they represent the youth in ERB regions and offered their assistance in already running projects: Green Circle Schools and Youth Olympic Games,
- proposed to make a film on young people in each ERB region to be later edited and shown in English classes.

Mr Z. Olszewski made a proposal to co-finance the film project from the Phare Small Project Fund. The Polish Secretariat could be its beneficiary, with the cas contribution

from ERB IPS. He suggested that Ms E. Bonar should make contact with the secretariat in Elblag. A discussion followed in which various possibilities for the young people to cooperate were presented. Finally, it was decided that the youths should define their own cooperation priorities and present them at the next Board meeting.

6. Information on the current status of the Seagull project by Mr Ulf Andersson

Mr U. Andersson presented the current implementation status of the Seagull project to be completed in one year. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held in Kaliningrad between 23rd and 24th September 2004 with the main focus on anchoring the development strategy in the member regions. Work Packages Nos 2, 3, and 4 finished their activities, and the work continues in WP's 1 and 5. This autumn and next spring a series of seminars are planned to promote the strategy and JTDP. The Lithuanian and Russian parties are still experiencing difficulty participating in the project as no Phare co-financing has been possible yet. A map of Euroregion containing pictures of interesting places, addresses of secretariats, and website address is under preparation.

7. Proposals from each ERB member state on how to follow up ERB Information and Communication Strategy

Mr E. Ciardi informed the Board of the Seagull Work Package No 5 meeting on the implementation of ERB Information and Communication Strategy. Not all of the planned initiatives have been pursued, which requires a new strategy to be developed by WP 5 and present at the next Board meeting.

8. Discussion on the date, location and contents for the joint Seagull / ERB conference.

The Board accepted the proposal to hold the conference on 2 – 3 December 2004.

9. Information on a maritime safety project being prepared by SydSam

Mr E. Ciardi informed the Board that SydSam asked Blekinge Region to prepare a maritime safety conference to be held in spring 2005. Mr B. Lofgren heads the conference preparation working group. Ms K. Wroblewska reminded that at the Trelleborg Conference Gdansk was asked to host this conference, so it would be natural if a Gdansk representative was included in the working group. She also said that a similar conference is going to take place in spring 2005 in Brussels. Mr N. Ch. Andersen suggested representatives from other regions should also be included in the working group. Mr E. Ciardi said he will forward all the comments to Mr B. Lofgren.

10. The Board's decision on locating its next meeting on November 16th.

The next Board meeting will take place on 16th November 2004 in Gdansk. By then proposals as for the time and location of the following Board meeting next year will be ready. The Board asks ERB President, Mr J. Kozlowski to invite EU Regional Policy Commissioner, Ms Danuta Hubner to the meeting next year. ERB IPS will also present a proposal to organize an accompanying exhibition of Euroregion Baltic on the premises of Pommeranian Marshal's Office in Brussels.

12. Report on the civil servants exchange programme

Mr E. Ciardi reported on a programme of exchange between the civil servants of the Lithuanian region of Silute and the Swedish region of Ljungby. He reminded that at

the meeting on 27th February 2004 ERB Council declared to support similar programmes aiming to improve communication among the regions. He promised to send a detailed report to ERB IPS. Ms A. Molin informed the Board that a similar project is under implementation between Denmark and Sweden. N.Ch. Andersen said an exchange programme exists also for volunteers at the age of 18 – 25 who can participate in it for 6 or 12 months. He made a proposal that each ERB secretariat has a candidate who can participate in the programme.

12. Any other business

No other business was attended.

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Annelise Molin

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Alexander Mihailov