



Euroregion Baltic

Presidency: Bornholm 2003-2004



ANNUAL REPORT 2003

Foreword

*By Mrs Annelise Molin
President of Euroregion Baltic 2003*

As the last of the six ERB parties Bornholm in 2003 had the honour to have the Presidency of Euroregion Baltic (ERB).

During 2003 the ERB organisation became stronger than ever, the number of activities escalated not at least because of the implementation of our Seagull project, and the number of active involved partners in ERB cooperation have doubled several times.

We have managed to increase the visibility of ERB both inside and outside our regions and we have improved our lobbying function.

Initiatives have been taken in order to concretise our cooperation and to involve even more partners from our regions.

Effective joint structures and administrative capacity together with a common long-term development strategy are the key elements in forming our future together.

I want to express my deep thankfulness to all members of Board and Council, the enthusiastic staff in our national secretariats, project secretariats and working groups – and all the partners in our member regions that during 2003 contributed to the ERB cooperation.

Now the Presidency will be handed over to our Polish colleagues, who more than 6 years ago got the great idea of establishing the Euroregion Baltic. I am very confident that the Polish ERB Party will continue the positive development in our cooperation.



Mrs Annelise Molin

A stronger organisation

A main objective for the Presidency has been to strengthen the ERB organisation with a special focus on timely and well prepared meetings, effective chairmanship and follow up on our common decisions. We also want more time for thematic discussions.

The result of these intentions is

- A stronger and closer cooperation between our six national secretariats. Web meetings were introduced in order to prepare agenda and meetings
- Invitations and agendas were for each Board and Council meeting send out in good time, allowing the members to meet well prepared to the meetings
- The agenda for the meetings has been extended including short background information and recommendations, and annexes including more details
- Each Board and Council meeting included 2-4 thematic discussions on subjects like the EU Cohesion Policy, Northern Dimension, Wider Europe initiative, border crossing problems, Maritime Safety and organisational matters like ERB's external role and lobbying function
- In order to improve the visibility and anchor our cooperation the Board and Council meetings were held in Brussels, Bornholm, Kaliningrad, Klaipeda and Elblag.

A common long-term development strategy

A second main objective for our Presidency has been to give the Seagull project a special attention and priority, and to put more efforts in providing the needed co-financing to the project for the participation of the eastern ERB partners.

The results of these intentions are:

- During 2003 more than 80 project meetings, seminars and workshops were organised, involving several hundred of participants
- Co-financing was applied and received for our partners in Latvia, Lithuania and Russia
- In all the five project work packages the situation in ERB was analysed and mapped, resulting in several reports for areas like democracy, regional development strategies, gender equalities, water management, innovative business centres and rural development.
- The first ERB Information and Communication Strategy was prepared and approved by the ERB Council in August 2003. The strategy includes several concrete actions to be taken and the implementation of these actions has started

- The Seagull project management has initiated the creation of a common platform of contact and meetings with other INTERREG III B projects in relation to infrastructure and transport corridors in the Southeast Baltic Sea area
- Seminars have been held in all member regions starting up concrete discussions on the content of a common long-term development strategy for ERB, and a Joint Trans-national Development Programme (JTDP). The ERB Board and Council have discussed the synopsis, main strategic areas and added values of such a common strategy
- Despite some problems in co-financing, linguistic barriers and other barriers the project implementation in general follows the original time schedule, not at least because of the enthusiastic project management, project team and partners involved.

External profile and lobby function

ERB's external profile must be strengthened and we want to improve our lobby function. Especially we need to increase our visibility towards key actors as the European Commission, our national governments and other interregional actors in Europe and the Baltic Sea area.

The results of this objective are

- Letters sent to EU Commissioners Mr Michel Barnier, Mr Günther Verheugen and Mr Chris Patten in order to promote ERB in the future to become a status as a INTERREG III A area
- A Board meeting was placed in Brussels 25 – 27 May 2003, including meetings with representatives from the South Sweden Brussels Office, Cooperation of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR), the EU Committee of Regions, the European Commission DG Regio and DG External Affairs



From the Board meeting in Brussels 2003

- At the same Board meeting and at the Council meeting in August 2003 there was thematic discussions on the ERB external relations and lobbying strategy

- Contacts have been made to Assembly of European Border Regions (AEBR), to Union of Baltic Cities (UBC) and to the Siret-Prut-Nistru Euroregion
- ERB was present at the Annual BSSSC Conference in St Petersburg in October 2003, at the CPMR Maritime Safety Conference in Nantes (F) in the same month, and at a Cross Border seminar in Krakow (PL) during November 2003
- Together with SydSam (S) and the Baltic Seven Islands (B7) a Maritime Safety Conference has been prepared. It will be held in Trelleborg (S) 13 – 14 May 2004
- Letter to EU Commissioner Mrs Loyola de Palacio informing about the ERB resolution on Maritime Safety, and to this comes that some of the ERB Parties informed their national governments and other national key actors on the same matter
- Letter to the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Per Stig Möller, recommending to take ERB into consideration as an areas to become a future EU Neighbourhood programme. Also other national governments were contacted with the same purpose
- At the Board and Council meetings representatives from several Ministries, Embassies and General Consulates took part, as well as media representatives.

Cooperation more anchored

Internally we need to continue our effort in anchoring the ERB cooperation in each of our regions and make our cooperation more visible at the political level and among our citizens. More local partners should be involved in our concrete activities.

The results of this objective are:

- Especially the Seagull project has involved much more partners from each of our regions in the ERB cooperation, and involves the politicians more on both local and regional level. But also representatives from business life and NGO's are involved
- The Green Circle School project, which started during 2003, has increased the involvement of schools and hereby underlines the Council decision from August 2003 to put more focus on the youth in our cooperation. In future Council meetings all ERB Parties are allowed to include a young representative in their delegations
- The resolution adopted on the Ronneby Conference in December 2002 recommended involving the municipalities more in the ERB cooperation. This has lead to discussions in the Board on how to integrate existing town twinning and to promote more town twinning in specific fields like business clusters. A big ERB Conference in Autumn 2004 has been agreed, which should also include local representatives with a focus on the municipal level.

Initiatives for more concrete cooperation

A special focus should be put on how we can concretise our cooperation, and in order to discuss this matter the President will visit each Party.

The results of this intention are:

- The ERB President succeeded to visit all ERB regions
 - o 16 May 2003: Elblag in Poland
 - o 8 August 2003: Saldus in Latvia and Klaipeda in Lithuania
 - o 9 August 2003: Baltijsk in Kaliningrad
 - o 12 August 2003: Växjö in Sweden
- The visits and meetings held with key ERB partners resulted in a large number of ideas for concretization the ERB cooperation, especially in relation to business development, young people, culture and social area. Some initiatives have already been taken, such as organising Baltic Youth Games for young people and creation of a network of Author Museums.
- Focus on involving existing town twinning and promoting more town twinning in specific fields like business clusters indicate that ERB cooperation will be even more concrete in future.



*Meeting with Mr. Mc Donald from DG External Affairs,
European Commission, Brussels May 2003*

Resolution

Maritime Safety situation in the South Baltic Sea Region

Euroregion Baltic (ERB) is a political platform for cross-border interregional co-operation with regions from 6 countries in the South Baltic Sea Region. The ERB is active within such fields as tourism, the environment, business, transport and physical planning. It is a central objective of the ERB to develop transports and infrastructures within the area. It is likewise important that this development is environmentally sustainable – taking into account the fragile waters and ecosystems of the Baltic Sea.

Shipping around the Baltic Sea is steadily increasing. Every day approximately 2.000 sizeable ships are travelling the Baltic Sea. This includes oil tankers and ships with dangerous and potentially polluting cargoes, oil production platforms as well as passenger ferries. Thus, the Baltic Sea has some of the busiest shipping routes in the world and due to the present speed of economic development in the area the shipping is bound to be further intensified.

Meanwhile, the marine ecosystem of the Baltic Sea is particularly sensitive and vulnerable due to the special features of the Baltic Sea Basin. Oil spills and other forms of pollution therefore have devastating effects on the marine environment in the Baltic Sea.



The Lukoil Terminal in Kaliningrad Region

For the ERB it is a central concern that a safety infrastructure is developed in the area. It is equally important that this safety infrastructure is characterised by co-operation on the international as well as on the interregional level. Local and regional authorities are only marginally involved in issues concerning maritime safety. Nonetheless local and regional authorities are the first to be affected when the existing safety structure fails. Therefore ERB believes that the role of local and regional authorities in the planning, implementation and monitoring of marine safety should be strengthened.

Disasters such as the one outside the coast of Spain in November 2002 or near the port of Klaipeda, Lithuania, in December 2002, further accentuates the need for a comprehensive safety plan in the Southern Baltic Sea Region.

In regard to what has been mentioned above, the members of the Euroregion Baltic, strongly recommend that

- Safety measures will be taken so as to prohibit unsafe oil production platforms, as well as unsafe shipping of dangerous and potentially polluting cargo in the Baltic Sea.
- A transnational safety infrastructure is developed and constructed in the Baltic Sea Region. This should be a decentralised safety plan, involving regional and local authorities.

Adopted by the ERB Council 24th February 2003

Position Paper

EU Cohesion Policy 2006+

This paper forms the common ERB position on the future EU Cohesion Policy, with a link to the EU Northern Dimension and the 'Wider Europe' initiative.

A territorial dimension must be included

The future EU Cohesion Policy must include a territorial dimension to the objective of economic and social cohesion in order to respond fully to the worrying increase in development disparities between and within territories.

In this the polycentrism must remain a key goal of cohesion since it seeks to spread the building blocks of growth across the Community as a whole through transnational cooperation arrangements that offer the synergies and critical mass needed to make the enlarged Union's most disadvantaged areas more competitive more quickly.

Maritime borders with the same status as land borders

For centuries maritime borders in the Baltic Sea was the main communication link in development of the islands and coastal regions. With the enlarged EU and the reestablished between East and West in the Baltic Sea region the maritime links again have got an important role in the cross border cooperation. Therefore the maritime borders in all the future cross border programmes under the EU Structural Funds should have the same status as land borders.

Regionalisation of Interreg

The Interreg Community initiative must not become part and parcel of the national mainstream programmes. It is an independent initiative that adds a great deal of European value to cross-border cooperation projects. As such, it should not be made subject to national rules for regional support. As with Interreg I, therefore, funding should not be allocated on a Member State basis but should be determined by the relevant programmes (strand A) or programming areas/zones (strand B and C).

A key role to Euroregion BALTIC

On the basis of a strong joint cooperation structure and a common development strategy the Euroregion BALTIC recommend itself as a key actor in fulfilling the objectives for not only the future EU Cohesion Policy, but also the main objectives in the EU Northern Dimension and the new Neighbourhood instrument.

Adopted by ERB Executive Board the 31st October 2003

Decision

Enlargement of ERB area

- 1) Euroregion Baltic is geographically located in the Southeast of the Baltic Sea area. Therefore there will be no relevance to include member regions from countries not already represented by the existing ERB member regions.
- 2) If a non-member region in one of the current ERB countries want to become a member, a formal request must be send to the President of ERB.
- 3) When the ERB President has received a formal request, the existing ERB member regions in the country of the applying region will be consulted and recommended to initiate a dialogue with the applying region. The dialogue must seek to introduce obligations and rights of ERB member regions, agreement on representation of the applying region in the formal ERB bodies and practical arrangements.
- 4) After having received the result of the consultations the ERB President put the application on the agenda for the next Council session (deadline 10 days before the date of the session). The applying region will be invited to attend this Council session in order to present the applying region and comment the application
- 5) Approval of a new member region can only be made, if all existing ERB Parties agree and only if formal and practical arrangements have been clarified between the member region(s) and applying region in the respective country.
- 6) If the ERB Council decide to obtain the applying region as a new member region, the accession will be at the Council session, where the Presidency of ERB will change.

Adopted by ERB Executive Board in Kaliningrad 31 October 2003

Ongoing project:

Seagull DevERB (2002-2005, INTERREG III B)

The Seagull project is cross-sectional and the contents mirror priorities made by the ERB Council and Board. The project aims at deepening and concretising the ERB co-operation through elaborating a joint strategy for long term development and a more concrete Joint Trans-national Development Programme (JTDP) for the region.

The JTDP is planned to contain the most important cornerstones that are considered necessary for sustainable development of the whole ERB in line with the EU objectives of social and economic cohesion as well as environmental sustainability. The JTDP, which is planned to be adopted by the ERB Council and by all the member regions' decision bodies, will form the basis for pre-feasibility studies leading to larger investment proposals and other development activities of utmost importance for the region.

Some sectors will be discussed and studied deeper than others within the project. Those are Water Management, Development and Networks of Innovative Environments (science parks, clusters, etc), and Programmes for Rural development - each of them forming its own work package (sub project). The results of the studies made and actions taken in these three work packages will form important input to the strategy and the JTDP



The project is also containing different supporting activities for developing the ERB strategy and JTDP, such as statistics and GIS support, seminars and workshops about Good Governance, tools for regional development programming and planning, tools for measuring environmental sustainability, the importance of equal opportunities, transparency, etc.

Information and communication activities (a developed website, conferences, publications and info material, etc.) have been considered carefully, and they have been gathered in a special work package.

The ERB co-operation is an arena for long-term political considerations, decisions and concrete actions. The Seagull project should be seen in this context, which is an obvious backbone for follow-up actions including investments and implementation of other project results.

The project partnership contains of 34 organisations and the project management is placed in the Lead partner's office in Kalmar, Sweden.

More information: www.eurobalt.org

Project started during 2003: The Green Circle Schools project

A project for schools in the regions bordering the south part of the Baltic sea. Participating countries are Denmark, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, Latvia and Sweden.

The aim of the project is to set out and evaluate a tool for environmental education which will lead to a more sustainable development.

The green circle consists of ten sectors. The participating schools work, independent of pupils/students age, in the sectors of titles around the circle. To each sector there are a lot of suggestions to thematical work.



Each school must give an account for work with at least seven sectors during three years.

Each school must together with an ERB school (not from the home country) carry out at least one project.

The section called “ Areas worthy protection” is compulsory for all schools. In the future the work with this sector will lead to an edition.

All projects must be reported on the ERB homepage.

Our common working language is English.

The project will involve mostly of the staff on the schools.

Each school also builds a network with schools in the surrounding.

When a school has made all this work they will get a Green circle diploma.

More information: www.eurobalt.org



Competition:

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION OF FINE ARTS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

"FROM THE SEA WE ARE"

Organised by:

Youth Culture Centre Association of Communes of RP of Euroregion Baltic, Elblag

Aims of the competition:

Competition aims are to make more comprehensive development of children and youth personality. Participating in this competition include children and youth into ecological education; teach children responsibility to natural environment.

To this come teachers and instructors experience exchanging, and continuation of interpersonal contacts among children from Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Sweden and Poland.

Age of participants:

4-20 years old

Subject:

The beauty of scenery, the life in the sea, the panorama of harbour towns, the work people of the sea, the environment protection, the legends about the sea, the history and tradition of maritime towns.

Techniques:

painting, graphics tapestry.

The format painting works: A3 (24x30), ~ (82x60); for graphic and tapestry no matter what size.

Description of works on the back of works

Deadline to send in the works is 28 February 2004.

Rewarded winners meeting, exhibition opening, awarding prizes will be in May 2004 in Elblag.

The examining board will perform opinion in the following age categories: 4-6, 7-10, 11-15, 16-20.

Project prepared during 2003, to be applied and implemented in 2004

THE 1st EUROREGION „BALTIC” YOUTH GAMES

1. Objectives

Intercultural integration of young people from the Euroregion „Baltic” (ERB) through sport according to the spirit of European solidarity, tolerance and fair-play.

Promotion of new prospects of development for the local societies in the enlarged EU through the presentation of the cultural diversity and the best solutions in education through sport that are put in practice in the ERB.

2. Project duration

February – September 2004, date of games: 16-18 July, 2004

3. Participants

Competitions: young people – boys and girls - **13-15 years** old from the ERB

Maximum 80 persons from each ERB country

4. Activities, including project duration

Preparatory period

- 4.1 Distribution information about the project
- 4.2 Collection information about the project partners' experiences in education through sport
- 4.3 Selection of young people and teams to participate in competitions and project activities
- 4.4 Preparation, publishing and distribution information about the project and the invitations
- 4.5 Preparation by young people/teams of presentations about their local/regional culture/sport

Realization

- 4.6 Sport competitions organized according to the amount of team and participants
- 4.7 Open seminar and presentation the best practices in the field of education through sport
- 4.8 Meeting of young people (project and games' participants) and open presentation of prepared cultural programs and/or the presentation of specific local or regional sports games
- 4.9 Closing ceremony as event that promotes new prospects of development for the local societies in the enlarged EU according to the spirit of European solidarity, tolerance for other cultures and equal rights for men and women. Prizes and special rewards for participants.
- 4.10 Publishing the final publication (summary) in the order to promote the project' objectives on the territory of the ERB.

More information:

Contact City Hall of Starogard Gdański, Mr Ludwik Szakiel.

E-mail: ludwik.szakiel@um.starogard.pl

Proposal for cooperation between Author houses around the Baltic Sea

The work of the author Martin Andersen Nexø has been translated into more than 50 languages and is therefore read in bigger parts of the world. He included the name “Nexø” in his name when he was young and has hereby made the little town Nexø on Bornholm, in the middle of the Baltic Sea, famous all over the world. His childhood home in Nexø is now a little museum under the name “Martin Andersen Nexø’ House”.

The House is driven by ”The Association Martin Andersen Nexø’s Memorable Rooms”, and the aim is to increase the interest for and knowledge about the author Martin Andersen Nexø. It is a private association which does not get any grants for the running costs from the public authorities, but sometimes receives grants for specific purposes in relation to the running and equipment of the museum.

Andersen Nexø’s House includes collections of the author’s books and effects from his long life. In the House there is a small sale of books and videos. The museum has about 3 000 visitors annually, and is open for public six days a week between the middle of May until the middle of October, 6 hours per day.

For several years we have talked about cooperation with other author houses in the Baltic Sea area. Partly to see how others do their work and partly to establish some kind of common promotion of our houses/museums. On a longer term we could possibly produce leaflets/books with parts of our authors’ literary works, novellas, poems etc. in order to improve a new literary contribution in the tourism, as a strong factor in those areas which the authors were located in, and to meet the increasing demands from tourism to experience the areas.

The literature – provided by the local authors – could be a new and exciting element in this.

We first address ourselves to the Thomas Mann Museum in Nida, Lithuania, and to the Vilhelm Moberg institution in the Emigrant Museum, Utvandrarnas Hus, in Växjö, Sweden. We would like to know if these museum/author houses wish to cooperate about our idea. The idea nevertheless also is that we soon should identify if there are other author houses, which want to take part in the cooperation. 4 – 6 author houses could be suitable for a start, and could include production of a common leaflet for promotion. The precondition is that the museum/house of the author has already been established and is accessible for public.

We are in close contact with “Euroregion Baltic”, but so far we have no financing behind the initiative. If there is an interest for cooperation, the idea is to identify and search for financing of concrete activities through European funding.

Finn Bræstrup Karlsen
Vimmelskiftet 14
DK-3730 Nexø
Phone: +45 5695 5300
e-mail: f.b.k@mail.tele.dk

Members of ERB Executive Board

Mrs Annelise Molin, President, Denmark
Mr Zbigniew Karpowicz, Vicepresident , Poland
Mrs Virginia Lukoshene, Lithuania
Mr Alexander Kuznetsov, Russia
Mr Bo Frank, Sweden
Mr Normunds Niedols, Latvia

Members of ERB Council (besides the Board members)

Denmark Mr Knud Andersen

Poland Mr Henryk Slonina
 Mr Stanislaw Szatkowski
 Mr Ryszard Kurylczyk
 Mr Andrzej Rynski
 Mr Jan Kozlowski
 Mrs Jadwiga Semmerling
 Mrs Joanna Zielinski

Lithuania Mr Aleksandr Michailov
 Mrs Roma Stubriene
 Mr Rimantas Taraskevicius
 Mr Vaclovas Dackauskas
 Mr Arvydas Jakas

Russia Mr Victor N. Koshelev
 Mr Oleg V. Shlyk
 Mr Victor M. Romanovsky
 Mr Youri Savenko
 Mr Valery Starikov
 Mr Valerian Yourov
 Mr Anton Zouikov

Sweden Mr Gert Wollinger
 Mrs Lillebill Grähs
 Mrs Ethel Duvskog
 Mr Sigurdh R Pettersson
 Mr Ragnar Lindberg

Latvia Mr Modris Eksteins
 Mr Aivars Lacarus
 Mr Talivaldis Bergmanis
 Mrs Sarmite Ozolina
 Mr Ilmars Sekacis
 Mrs Maris Dadzis

Main ERB Secretariat

Regional Municipality of Bornholm, EU Secretariat
Ullasvej 17, 3700 Rønne
Phone: +45 5692 1303
Fax: +45 5692 1301
E-mail: Carrefour@brk.dk
Head of Secretariat: Mr Niels Chresten Andersen

National ERB Secretariats

Poland Sekretariat Stowarzyszenia Gmin Euroregionu Bałtyk
ul. Sw. Ducha 3/4, 82-300 Elbląg
Phone: +48 55 235 55 99
Fax: +48 55 236 10 10
E-mail: sekel@eurobalt.org.pl
Head of Secretariat: Mr Zdzislaw Olszewski

Lithuania Klaipeda County Governor's Administration
Danes g. 17, 5800 Klaipeda
Phone: + 370 46 31 06 67
Fax: +370 46 31 4907
E-mail: giedre@klaipeda.aps.lt
Head of Secretariat: Mrs Sonata Dumbliauskienė

Russia Municipality of Baltijsk
Lenina Str. 6, 238520 Baltijsk
Phone/fax: +7 01145 226 69
E-mail: koshelev@bltfrd.koenig.su
Head of Secretariat: Mr Victor Koshelev

Sweden Kronoberg County Council
Storgatan 14, 351 88 Växjö
Phone: +46 470 58 85 00
Fax: +46 470 58 85 30
E-mail: ulf.andersson@kronoberg.komforb.se
Head of Secretariat: Mr Ulf Andersson

Latvia Kurzeme Region Development Agency
Elizabetes 45/47 – 409, 1010 Riga
Phone: + 371 7331 492
Fax: +371 7331 285
E-mail: zigo.rutkovskis@bjpaa.eunet.lv
Head of Secretariat: Mr Zigo Rutkovskis