

Euroregion Baltic
Executive Board Meeting
Klaipeda, Lithuania
11 September 2008



Title	Final Minutes
Submitted by	SDD, International Permanent Secretariat
Summary / Note	This document provides the final minutes of the Board meeting held on 11 th September 2008
Requested action	Subsequent Adoption

Venue: Old Port Hotel, Žvejų g. 20, LT-91241 Klaipėda

Participants

ERB Executive Board

Mr Per Ole Petersen ERB President, Bornholm
 Mr Jacek Protas ERB Vice-President, Warminsko-Mazurskie
 Mr Bernth Johnson ERB Board member, Blekinge
 Ms Marie-Louise Hilmersson ERB Board member, Södra Småland
 Mr Mihail Pluhin ERB Board member, Kaliningrad
 Ms Raisa Minčinauskienė ERB Board member, Klaipeda County
 Mr Roger Kaliff for Mr Åke Nilsson ERB Board member, Kalmar County

ERB Council

Ms Evgenija Demina Youth Board member, Kaliningrad Region
 Ms Karin M. Ekelund Youth Board member, Kalmar County
 Ms Dalia Makuskiene ERB Council member, Klaipeda County
 Mr Karol Sosnowka Youth Board member, Warminsko-Mazurskie
 Mr Evaldas Stonkus Youth Board member, Klaipeda County
 Ms Suzanne Svensson ERB Council member, Region Blekinge
 Ms Anna Wiktorsson Youth Board member, Södra Småland
 Ms Magdalena Zydek Youth Board member, Pomorskie Region

ERB Secretariats

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen ERB Secretariat, Bornholm
 Ms Lisa Anderson Youth Project leader, Region Blekinge
 Mr Ulf Andersson ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland
 Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski International Permanent Secretariat

Ms Marie Fridh	ERB Secretariat, Region Blekinge
Mr Hans Håkansson	Region Blekinge,
Ms Elena Koroleva	Ministry of Territorial Development, Kaliningrad
Mr Victor Koshelev	ERB Secretariat, Kaliningrad Region
Mr PG Lindencrona	ERB Secretariat, Region Blekinge
Ms Victor Romanovsky	Ministry of Territorial Development, Kaliningrad
Ms Kora Stańczyk	ERB Secretariat, Pomorskie Region
Mr Rafał Wolski	Director of Department of International Relations, Warminsko-Mazurskie Region
Mr Piotr Zwolak	ERB Secretariat, Wamińsko-Mazurskie Region

Guests

Ms Kristina Gontier	Head of Marketing office of Klaipeda State Seaport Authority
Mr Nerijus Gricevicius	Planning and development office of Silute district municipality
Mr Edmundas Krasauskas	Deputy Mayor of Palanga City Municipality
Prof. Alfonsas Ramonas	Vice-Rector of Klaipeda University
Ms Asta Raugaliene	Deputy Director of Regional Development Department, Klaipeda County
Mr Vytautas Rinkevicius	Governor of Klaipeda County
Ms Nijole Steponaviciute	Palanga Mayor's Counsellor
Ms Ilona Zubrickiene	Deputy Director of the Institute of Continuing Studies at Klaipeda University

- 09:00 1. **Welcome and opening of the meeting**
09:10
- 1.1 On behalf of hosting party, ERB Board member, Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene welcomed the participants of the ERB Executive Board meeting. She then asked the Governor of Klaipeda County, Mr Vytautas Rinkievicius to address the Board.
- Mr Rinkievicius pointed out that this meeting takes place in the city Klaipeda, one of the seven municipalities that together constitute Klaipeda County. He noticed that the topics the ERB Board want to discuss, e.g. environment, energy and youth are extremely important for the inhabitants of Klaipeda County, and therefore the County intends to be an active collaborator in the ERB cooperation.
- 1.2 Afterwards, ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen opened the ERB Executive Board meeting, presenting the points of attention that will later be discussed. With reference to the continued ERB activities to increase its visibility, Mr Petersen informed that the newly launched EC website on the Baltic Sea Strategy includes a list of 31 BSR actors, including Euroregion Baltic, which is the only Euroregion in the list.
- 09:10 2. **Adoption of the agenda**
09:15
- ERB Executive Board members were asked if there are any additional items proposed to the agenda. Mr Mihail Pluhin asked that point 5 is extended to include the item of a hockey tournament.
ERB Executive Board then approved of the present agenda, with the inclusion of the new point 5.6.
- 09:15 3. **Adoption of 12.06.08 ERB Board Meeting minutes**
09:20
- ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen and ERB Vice-President, Mr Jacek Protas co-signed the minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting which took place in Brussels on 12th June 2008.
4. **Information by the International Secretariat**
- 09:20 4.1 on the second outline of ERB Information and Communication Strategy
09:45
- Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski presented the second draft of ERB Information and Communication Strategy. ERB Executive Board members were then given floor to comment the paper.
- President Petersen complimented IPS for the preparation of the Strategy draft and stressed its implementation will need the cooperation of all the ERB Secretariats. He expressed his hope that all the regions will find resources necessary and be able to help.
- Mr Ulf Adersson said the Strategy is an ambitious plan of actions which will require resources from the regions, and the regions must be aware of what they will have to deliver before adopting it.
Mr PG Lindencrona pointed out that all the member regions have their own communication policies which they implement with already assigned resources. Combining the realisation of the regional and euroregional information strategies could make the job easier.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas expressed the opinion shared and agreed at the internal meeting on 8th September by the Polish Party, saying the Strategy draft is a piece of good work allowing more effective cooperation within ERB. He proposed that the Strategy will have an enhanced lobbying function and thus ERB will not produce a separate lobbying strategy. Lobbying will be direct output of the ERB Information Strategy. The Polish Party, Mr Protas continued, fully supports activities within the Strategy, with particular focus on short information notes. He also appealed that the language of such information notes is free of EU-speak which is often incomprehensible for the ordinary citizen.

ERB Board member, Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene expressed her support to the Strategy draft and pointed out that spreading ERB meetings around all the regions benefits the objectives of the Strategy.

ERB Board member, Mr Mihail Pluhin said he fully agrees with the comments voiced so far and proposed more activities which centre around environmental issues.

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson remarked that the Strategy needs a budget and such budget should be elaborated before the adoption of the Strategy, including possible ways of acquiring extra funds.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas commented that ERB need a plan before it is ready to apply for extra funds. When the plan is approved, there should be no problem getting them.

In relation to one of the activities proposed in the Strategy, i.e. translation of ERB English language newsletter into national languages, ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen informed the Board of the Danish newsletter is already produce. Copies of the recent issue were presented to the participants of the meeting.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen proposed that the target groups defined in Chapter 5 of the Strategy should be extended with members of national and European parliaments, Committee of the Regions, and the Socio-Economic Committee. He also asked for clarification of points: 1.1.5 Activity A, 1.1.6 Activities A and D, 1.4 Activity A, 2.2.2 Activity B.

Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski gave the following response, respectively: 1.1.5 Activity A, in agreement that media should be invited to selected events instead of all; 1.1.6 Activities A and D experts must be involved but also paid, and for that external financial resources will be sought, primarily within projects by the ERB Working Groups; ERB Council should be made responsible for 1.4 Activity A; one email software will be replaced by the same email software in 2.2.2 Activity B.

Mr Victor Koshelev said the Strategy will be a useful and important tool for ERB and that the Russian Secretariat has enough technical capacity to implement it, even though existing personnel problems exist.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by saying the ERB Board recommends that the comments presented are considered and included in the new Strategy draft and that the work goes ahead as planned allowing the adoption of the document by the Council in November. He also requested that the regions explore their possibilities to find resources, money and time which will be necessary to implement the Strategy effectively.

09:45 4.2 a future ERB project
10:00

Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski presented some preliminary input into a discussion whether ERB should start work towards the next common ERB project. Among the arguments quoted in favour of the idea, he mentioned the following: joint projects within ERB are considered to bring the feeling of unity among partners since they centre ERB cooperation around commonly selected areas; joint projects generate extra financial resources through which additional work can be done by partners; increased joint budget eases the consequences of the falling EUR – PLN ratio (which in fact decreases the joint ERB resources). He proposed that a new project could be submitted to the South Baltic Programme within its Priority Axis 1 Measure 1.1, i.e. Entrepreneurial Development, with the specific indicative action recommended to be: testing and dissemination of best systemic and organisational models for the triple-helix concept. The arguments in favour are as follows: relevance to the work of all the ERB Working Groups (triple helix concept); functionality as a crosscutting theme in the areas addressed by all the ERB Working Groups (business environment, transport infrastructure, social dimension, environmental policies); leverage for improving ERB’s visibility among the business world and local communities.

ERB Board member, Ms Marie Louise Hilmersson stated that Södra Småland is positive towards the idea.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas said joint projects open ERB to partners from outside the Euroregion and also to people and organisations within ERB. Therefore, he said he welcomes projects drafted by ERB International Secretariat and Working Groups, and assures Warmińsko-Mazurskie will be participating actively. ERB has proved it is successful in gaining EU funds, and this should continue. Mr Protas informed that the Polish Party fully supports further work on the preparation of a project dealing with entrepreneurial development and triple helix models.

ERB Board member, Mr Mihail Pluhin expressed his support for a new joint project.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by saying that a new joint project is a good idea. ERB Board recommended that work should continue on the more detailed project draft.

10:00 4.3 ERB joint budget
10.15

Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed the Board on the implementation of the ERB 2008 budget until 31st August 2008. He drew the Board’s attention to the following key points: budget implementation has been according more or less to plan on the expenses side (with the exception of little overspending in travel and accommodation and less expenses on Seagull II Tacis project); the income amount has been 86% of the original budget (due to two reasons: falling EUR – PLN ratio effectively decreasing the amount of the last Seagull II ERDF refund, and unpaid 2007 and 2008 membership fees by the Russian Party). There are no threats, Mr Demkowicz-Dobrzanski continued to the basic operations of the International Secretariat if the due fees are paid. One problem is the ERB Youth Board budget. He informed that the Association of Polish Communes is ready to credit a possible deficit but should this be necessary a joint project will have to be a source of returning such a loan to the Association.

ERB Board member, Jacek Protas agreed that the joint budget can be increased with new projects, adding that also new partners within ERB could bring similar effect.

ERB Board member, Mr Mihail Pluhin informed the Board that the Russian Party solved their internal problem and the due membership fees will be paid at the end of September or the beginning of October.

Mr PG Lindencrona referred to the ERB Youth Board budget which is supposed to cover the travel expenses of the Youth Board members to the ERB Council meeting on Bornholm. He proposed that the regions support their youth representatives attending the Council.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by urging the International Secretariat to closely monitor the ERB budgetary situation and asking the Board to consider Mr Lindencrona's proposal.

5. **Status of projects under preparation**

10:15 5.1 ERB SME / Innovation Working Group: 10.45

Project: DISKE (Development of Innovative Systems through Knowledge and Exchange)
Measure: SBA 1.1 Entrepreneurial Development, to be submitted during 2nd call
Objective: To develop cooperation among innovative SME and strengthen their potential through cooperation of science and technological parks, incubators, clusters, academia and local authorities
Lead Partner: Municipality of Elblag
Partners: Videum Science Park
GCI Gdynia
Gdansk Science and Technology Park
Klaipeda Science and Technology Park
Blekinge Institute of Technology

5.2 Project: CELA (Collaborative eLearning Arena)
Measure: although initially thought to be submitted to SBA it is now prepare by the LP as a transnational BSR project
Objective: To create a trans-national platform of distance learning in order to set-up high added-value common distance learning projects
Lead Partner: Blekinge Institute of Technology
Partners: ?

5.3 ERB Social Dimension Working Group

Project: BaltNet (South Baltic Networking Development for Labour Markets Integration)
Measure: SBA 1.2 Integration of Higher Education and Labour Markets, to be submitted during 2nd call
Objective: to integrate labour market institutions within Euroregion Baltic and to strengthen cooperation of labour market institutions.
Lead Partner: Office of the Marshal of the Pomorskie Voivodeship
Partners: Regional Labour Office in Gdansk
Employment Centre on Bornholm
Employment Centre in Södra Småland

5.4 ERB Water Forum Working Group

Project: Modern Water Management
Measure: SBA 2. 1 Management of the Baltic Sea Environment, to be submitted during 2nd call
Objective: to work with modern water management, i.e. with river basin based management, with strong participation of local stakeholders, within different pilot areas/river basins in the South Baltic area establishing Water Users Partnerships.
Lead Partner: Regionförbundet i Kalmar Län
Partners: regional authorities in the ERB region as well as pilot area partnerships in Akmena Dane River Basin (Lithuania), Snärje Stream Basin/Kalmar (Sweden), Bruatorp Stream Basin/Torsås (Sweden), Three City Coast (Poland) and Reda River Basin (Poland)

With respect to the Modern Water Management project each member region was asked to delegate a coordinator with 20 working days (over the whole implementation period) that will constitute their financial contribution into the project.

Mr Victor Koshelev informed that Mr Boris Chubarenko will be the coordinator on the Russian side, and proposed to include the River Mamonovka as another pilot area within the project.

ERB Board member, Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene informed the Board of a meeting with representatives of the municipalities of Klaipeda County and Klaipeda University where the project was presented. Response from these possible partners is expected within 20 days, and before the end of September a Lithuanian coordinator will be appointed.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas said only Elblaskie sub-region is eligible in the South Baltic Programme but he will commit himself to finding a relevant partner to the project.

On behalf of the Danish Party, ERB President Mr Per Ole Petersen informed the Board that consistent attempts to find partners on Bornholm were not successful since there are no rivers on the island. Hence, Bornholm will not be an official partner.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by recalling that the remaining partners had already appointed their coordinators to the project, of which the Lead Partner was informed. He also urged those parties who are still in search to promptly delegate their representatives.

5.5 ERB Youth Board

Project: Yc³ (Youth Cross-border Co-operation and Communication project)
Measure: SBA 2. 4 Local Community Initiatives, to be submitted during 2nd call
Objective: to develop and anchor the ERB Youth Board, to integrate the youth perspective within ERB, to promote the Euroregion and the Youth Board in the member regions, and to promote youth integration and

stimulate interest for other regions within ERB.

Lead Partner: Region Blekinge

Partners: regional authorities in the ERB region

With respect to the Yc³ project the ERB Board were asked to respond positively to the following three requests: to support the project proposal for the second call in the South Baltic Programme, to request each ERB member organisation to anchor the project proposal in their administration in order to make it possible to have partnership agreements signed at the ERB Council meeting in November, and to recommend to the ERB Council signing an ERB resolution in support of the project at their meeting in November.

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson asked whether the project idea presented by the ERB Youth Board can be implemented within the South Baltic Programme.

Mr Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski confirmed the project is possible within Measure 2.4 if its budget exceeds 50 thousand EUR. Mr Niels Chresten Andersen agreed and added that the expected amount of ERDF funding within SBA Measure 2.4 would be around 250 thousand EUR (money available divided by the number of project expected at the Programme level). He also encouraged the youth to think of more innovative activities in the project. His advice would be to plan some more spectacular actions which will be attractive to young people, e.g. social events like concerts that really benefit the intercultural dialogue process.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas said that the both Polish regions declare their full support to and active participation in the youth project. He also noted that the youth must develop their project themselves. The regions ought to provide the right conditions for them to work out what they themselves decide to do.

ERB Board member, Mr Mihail Pluhin expressed his support to the youth project, noting that it is a good example of what a new joint ERB project could be.

Mr PG Lindencrona commented that all the projects developed within ERB present a number of possibilities for the youth to join in.

Upon the recommendation by President Petersen ERB Executive Board agreed to react positively to the requests posted by the ERB Youth Board.

11:00

11.30

Press Conference and Coffee break

11.30 5.6 Hockey Tournament

11.45

ERB Board member, Mr Mihail Pluhin addressed the Board with a request to establish another Working Group that will develop a project enabling the organisation of a youth hockey tournament. He recalled that under the Russian Presidency such an event was made an objective of the ERB cooperation, and two small hockey competitions were held in Karlskrona and Klaipeda. That was when the South Baltic CBC Programme was not yet available and the trilateral Lithuania-Poland-Kaliningrad Programme came to its end. R Pluhin asked whether the Swedish partners still intend to become Lead Partner of a future project and requested support from ERB representatives in the SBA Steering Committee.

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson confirmed that Region Blekinge wants to lead such a project.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas said that the hockey tournament is a good idea and added he likes sports and is in favour of cooperation in sports, particularly when such ideas come from Mr Pluhin. He noted that the city of Elbląg has very basic infrastructure, i.e. only an ice rink.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by calling on the ERB Secretariats to establish a special task force which will work on the preparation of a project of an ERB hockey tournament.

11.45 6. **Information from the remaining ERB Working Groups**

12.30

6.1 ERB Rural Development Working Group

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen reported that the Group had an unexpected halt earlier this year when partners in Södra Småland withdrew from the work on the project establishing the ERB Rural Development Centre. Mr Andersen had some talks with the representatives of Wamińsko-Mazurskie and Region Blekinge in order to find ways of continuing the cooperation. It seems that every country individually has the capacity of applying for funds within the EU Rural Development Programme for crossborder cooperation (Wamińsko-Mazurskie will actually manage a unit dealing with this in their regional administration). It will also be possible for Danish actors (Local Action Groups). Partnership seems possible in Kaliningrad through the Professional Retraining Centre although there are no Lithuanian partners as yet. Mr Andersen also informed there is a close cooperation in the rural development field between Bornholm, Wamińsko-Mazurskie and the Ukraine, financed by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

6.2 ERB Energy Working Group

Mr Ulf Andersson reported on the composition of the Group where there are five representatives appointed. Kaliningrad, Klaipeda, and Wamińsko-Mazurskie have not yet delegated their members. The four areas discussed as possible cooperation fields are electricity, transport, heating, and knowledge enhancement. 2 projects are expected to be submitted next year into the South Baltic Programme, and maybe two more into the BSR Interreg IV Programme. The Group's next meeting is planned to take place on 29th October in Kalmar.

6.3 planned Working Group on Transport Infrastructure

Ms Suzanne Svensson and Mr Hans Håkansson reported on the composition of the Group where the Danish, Russian and Swedish regions appointed one politician and one civil servant each. Klaipeda has only a political representative, while Pomorskie and Wamińsko-Mazurskie have delegated only their civil servants. Following three meetings held in Karlskrona, Bornholm and Klaipeda, the decision was agreed that during October each region will prepare a document specifying prioritised transport objectives, which will constitute the basis for the Group's Action Plan to be presented to the Council in November.

6.4 planned ERB Environment Protection Working Group

Mr Victor Koshelev said that two earlier identified hotspots (Nos 49 and 73; Paper and Pulp Plant in Sovetsk on the River Nemunas on the Lithuanian-Russian border and the Vistula Lagoon on the Polish-Russian border) remain the main points of interest of the Group. He said the

Secretariats will be given more detailed information by the end of this month.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen asked whether the official date is known for the ENPI Poland-Lithuania-Kaliningrad Programme. Mr Victor Romanovsky responded the Operational Programme is now in Brussels awaiting formal adoption in November. Hence, the Programme will most probably be launched in the first quarter of 2009.

ERB Board member, Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene informed that the Lithuanian representatives in the Sovetsk project from the Lithuanian Ministry of Environment are going to have a meeting in Moscow and offered their support during these talks to the Russian partners.

6.5 planned ERB Local Initiatives Working Group

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed the Board that the patron of the Group – the Association of Polish Communes appointed its chair, Ms Joanna Zielińska to be responsible for the Working Group, and their Secretariat employee, Ms Adriana Gniado to act as an administrator. An official invitation to the regions appoint representatives to the Group will soon follow. The Association is now implementing an umbrella project within the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, called the Cross-border and Inter-regional Small Grant Fund, and available for crossborder component within the Baltic Sea Region states and the Kaliningrad Region and for inter-regional component with the Ukraine, as well as EFTA and EEA countries. Therefore, the proposal will be that the Group will first of all promote this project as a possible tool for local beneficiaries around ERB to implement small projects with funding up to 30 thousand EUR.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by saying that the ERB Board had the possibility to familiarise themselves with a number of projects and project ideas. He thought they all are a good sign of active cooperation within ERB, showing success is possible when we work together. President Petersen wished all the projects successful submission and implementation.

12.30
13.30

Lunch

13.30
14.30

7. **ERB contribution to the Baltic Sea Strategy**

7.1 Information on the meeting on 22nd August 2008

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen informed of the meeting of Baltic Sea organisations' representatives (a.o. ERB, BDF, B7 and BSSSC represented by the Danish Regions) which took place in Copenhagen with the aim of developing a joint position on the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. The meeting was chaired by Mr Knud Andersen, head of the Danish delegation to the Committee of the Regions and the former member of the ERB Board.

There were 3 specific issues that the ERB representative Mr N.Ch. Andersen proposed into the joint position: firstly, that it should recommend that the EU Strategy will consist of three chapters: first dealing with the integration of EU policies, second containing the Strategy Action Plan and third suggesting an implementation plan. The second issue concerned the geography of the Strategy impact which should encompass other non-EU partners. The third issue was to support the four objectives of the Strategy, as proposed by the Commission.

The draft of the joint position which was sent from the office of the Danish Regions on 8th September followed the specific items suggested by ERB, even though the paper makes reference to the eight thematic areas, all of them are in direct relation to the four objectives of the Strategy. It should be also noted that the eighth area on intercultural dialogue was introduced on request from Euroregion Baltic.

ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson complimented Mr Andersen for good work.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas said he was happy that drafting the joint position was possible, and especially content that the intercultural dialogue component proposed by ERB was included therein. He also presented the recommendation on behalf of the Polish Party that the joint paper also includes specific reference to Euroregions and other CBC structures as possible bodies implementing the Strategy.

Mr PG Lindencrona agreed that the joint paper is good, but stressed ERB must have its own position as well.

Mr Victor Koshelev complimented the joint position, too, and asked the partners from Blekinge about the map which accompanied their regional view on the Strategy, which he said did not have Baltijsk on it. Baltijsk, he said, is an important transport link and its role will continue to improve.

Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański agreed that the joint position should name Euroregions as bodies implementing the Strategy even if their role will be naturally limited. He argued that it should be seen as a possible tool to improve ERB's visibility and enhance its lobbying function.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen agreed that such a phrase added to the joint position will be good for ERB. He said he was still happy about the outcome where Euroregions and other CBC structures are mentioned three times in the paper.

ERB Board member, Mr Mihail Pluhin also supported the inclusion of the phrase on the role of Euroregions and other CBC structures in the joint position.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by recommending that the second sentence in the second paragraph on page two of the joint position is extended with the following phrase: "... as well as Euroregions and other CBC structures".

7.2 ERB resolution

Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented the second draft of the ERB resolution on the EU Baltic Sea Strategy. He explained that it is a result of considering the regional contributions from Region Blekinge, Bornholm, Warmińsko-Mazurskie and the ERB Youth Board. He proposed that comments which will be presented by the Board will be taken in while the final draft is being made ready before the Council meeting in November.

Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene presented proposals by Klaipeda County regarding Resolution of the Euroregion Baltic Council on an EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Mr Roger Kaliff explained that the draft presented before this meeting was discussed by the Swedish regions which approved it in its present form. He said he was surprised that the resolution is going to change. If so, he continued, this procedure will have to be repeated.

Mr Ulf Andersen pointed out that the three ERB representatives at the stakeholder conference in Stockholm will have to have a clear and strong position to present.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen remarked that there will be no possibility to present any positions by the participants of the stakeholder conference. He also noted that the resolution is drafted according to the process agreed on earlier, whereby the Council will make a relevant resolution.

Mr PG Lindencrona said he also had the information that no participants will be allowed to present their views on the Strategy. He also confirmed the resolution will have to be adopted by the ERB Council.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen asked if a new working paper could be ready for the following week so that the ERB representatives to the stakeholder conference will have some sort of guidelines as to what the ERB position on the Strategy is.

Mr Roger Kaliff argued that the adoption of the resolution in November could be little too late, and since there is an agreement as to this draft, it should be used.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas said the Strategy adoption schedule is known to be finalised only around June next year, so ERB fits right into it. Since the decision has already been taken for the resolution to be approved by the Council, we should stick to it. Although the text of the resolution is good it can still be improved, he added. Mr Protas also informed that at its internal meeting the Polish Party agreed to propose the following changes to the text: that the resolution will be accompanied by a separate list of recommended projects; that all provisions within the text recommending the establishment of new structures and funds should be deleted since the Commission has already announced its intention of not allocating new funds for the implementation of the Strategy; that all provisions within the text relating to the EU policies already in place should be deleted; that specific recommendations regarding transport projects should be more general.

Mr Ulf Andersson proposed that ERB representatives attending the stakeholder conference will have clear guidelines as to what ERB wants from the Strategy.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen said that Mr Kaliff is right about ERB having to be ready for the stakeholder conference on 30th September but not necessarily with a final paper. The guidelines proposed by Mr Andersson can be a good idea if they inform what kind of document ERB wants, what geography ERB proposes and finally, what kind of actors should be involved implementing it.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by recommending that a set of guidelines is prepared before the end of the following week which will be then made available to the ERB representatives attending events related to the Strategy.

7.3 Baltic Sea Strategy conferences

Information was presented on the three upcoming events related to the EU Baltic Sea Strategy:

a) Round table on accessibility and attractiveness to be organised by the European Commission DG Regional Policy during the BSSSC Annual Conference on 18 September 2008 (hosted by Kaunas County);

Mrs Raisa Mincinauskiene informed about her participation at the BSSSC Annual Conference as a representative of Klaipeda County.

ERB Executive Board agreed to ask Mr Jan Kozłowski, Board member and Marshal of Pomorskie Region to represent Euroregion Baltic.

b) Stakeholder conference to be organised by the European Commission and the County Administrative Board of Stockholm on 30th September 2008;

ERB was given three places which were distributed to Denmark (ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen), Poland (ERB Board member, Jan Kozłowski or ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas), and Sweden (Ms Marie Louise Hilmersson). While both Mr Petersen and Ms Hilmersson both confirmed their participation, it was not possible for Mr Protas or Mr Kozłowski to take part. Mr Jacek Protas thus proposed that it is the Head of International Secretariat attends the conference. The Board agreed.

c) Round table on environment to be organised by the European Commission DG Environment and CPMR Baltic Sea Commission on 13 November 2008 (hosted by Pomorskie Marshal's Office).

More information about the event as well as invitations to the ERB Executive Board members will follow soon.

14.30 8. **Information on the preparation for the Council meeting in** 14.45 **November**

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen informed the Board on the preparation status for the next ERB Council meeting that is scheduled to take place on Bornholm between 19 and 20th November 2008. He proposed that it will be a lunch-to-lunch meeting. On 19th participants will arrive before lunch and start the meeting afterwards; focus will be on the Baltic Sea Strategy and four seminars will be held on the Strategy objectives, followed by the adoption of the resolution and dinner. On 20th a regular Council meeting will take place, followed by lunch and departures. Transport and accommodation costs will have to be taken by the delegations themselves. At present, negotiations are held with hotels on Bornholm and specific information will be available later.

ERB Executive Board members took note of the information on arrangements for the Council meeting.

14.45 9. **Information on the Baltic Sea Festival in Karlshamn** 15.00

Upon the invitation from Ms Suzanne Svensson (ERB Council member and Deputy Mayor of Karlshamn) two groups from Pomorskie and Warminsko-Mazurskie presented their regional food culture at the Baltic Sea Festival in

Karlshamn between 17 and 19th July 2008.

Ms Suzanne Svensson informed the Board that their participation turned out to be an appreciated part of the Festival, and its organisers have already invited them for the next year.

Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański proposed that the next year's festival is attended by such groups from all the ERB member regions, forming a special ERB zone within the Festival area.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen said it would be difficult for him to send any such caterer to Karlshamn during the summertime at the peak of tourism season on Bornholm but proposed that a special festival task force is created within ERB which will attend this and other festivals organised around our member regions, with an ERB stand and information brochures.

ERB Board member, Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene said Klaipeda will be interested in attending the Festival next year and asked if it is only food that is exhibited.

Ms Suzanne Svensson informed that the festival started forty years ago and has been growing ever since. Food was only added this year but there are more areas of human activity present as well.

ERB Board member, Mr Jacek Protas congratulated the organisers on this successful festival and informed the Board that his region will gladly take part next year to promote their culinary heritage. He also encouraged the other regions to support the participation of their local and regional groups. Mr Protas said it will be the Warmińsko-Mazurskie unit of the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage which will coordinate their participation in the Baltic Festival 2009 and proposed a similar solution in the other regions (apart from Warmińsko-Mazurskie also Bornholm, Blekinge and Småland, including both Södra Småland and Kalmar, are members of the Network while Pomorskie is under introduction). Mr Protas also said that the Warmińsko-Mazurskie unit is now introducing the Ukrainian city of Rowne in the network and they can also present their food in Karlshamn.

ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen summed up by recommending that the regions will work towards more active exposure of their culinary heritage at the Baltic Festival in Karlshamn next year.

15.00 10. **Information on the involvement of the ERB Board members in**
15.30 **other international organisations**

ERB Executive Board members informed in writing before the meeting of the cooperation activities within the NEEBOR and ENCORE networks. During the meeting, ERB Board member Mr Jacek Protas informed the Board that since the previous meeting he himself had taken part in regular events within these to organisations as well as in the CoR Relex sessions, representing ERB whenever relevant.

ERB Board member, Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene said she took part in the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Executive Committee meeting in Denmark where interest was expressed in getting closer ties with ERB. She therefore proposed that CPMR representatives will be invited to ERB events.

No other involvement was reported.

15.30 11. **Any Other Business**
15.45

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen informed about the meeting of the South Baltic Programme Managing Authority and Contact Points during which a number of changes were proposed to be introduced to the Programme rules. 10% rule was clarified as to the eligibility of expenses, and the closer cooperation between SBA and ENPI Poland-Lithuania-Kaliningrad Programme was recommended. It was suggested that national and regional authorities are eligible project and lead partners even when their addresses are outside the Programme area. (The general principle is of course that a Lead beneficiary shall be located within the eligible SB programme area. An exception made concerns governmental organisations located outside eligible area, but having a branch office within eligible area). It was also proposed that maximum of five components are possible and 2 original sets of applications are no longer necessary; one will be enough. In addition, there was a discussion on the need to define by project partners universal and specific results in their applications. These proposals will have to be approved of by the Programme Monitoring Committee.

With reference to the geographical eligibility, the representative of Kalmar County stressed the importance of a having an early contact with JTS (Joint Technical Secretariat) in Gdansk before setting up a project with LB and/or partners outside the Programme area (exception Kaliningrad) in order to clarify their participation and budget flows.

At this point the agenda was completed and ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen closed the meeting.