

# EUROREGION BALTIC ANNUAL REPORT 2013



## EUROREGION BALTIC EXECUTIVE BOARD

<b>Per Ole Petersen</b>	ERB President, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
<b>Vytautas Grubliauskas</b>	ERB Vice-President, Chair of Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
<b>Wiesław Byczkowski</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland
<b>Lennarth Förberg</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge, Sweden
<b>Roland Gustbée</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Södra Småland, Sweden
<b>Monica Haider</b>	ERB Board Member, 2nd Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Södra Småland, Sweden
<b>Karl Holst</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Youth Board, Kalmar, Sweden
<b>Alla Ivanova</b>	ERB Board Member, Minister-Head of Agency for International Affairs and Interregional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region, Russia
<b>Christina Mattisson</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge, Sweden
<b>Akko Karlsson</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Kalmar County, Sweden
<b>Åke Nilsson</b>	ERB Board Member, Member of the Executive Committee, Regional Council in Kalmar County, Sweden
<b>Grzegorz Nowaczyk</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Association of Communes, Poland replaced by <b>Jerzy Wilk</b> , Chair the Board of the Association of Communes, Poland
<b>Jacek Protas</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
<b>Mieczysław Struk</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland
<b>Carina Bengtsson</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, 1st Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council, Södra Småland, Sweden
<b>Grzegorz Grzelak</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Chair of International and Interregional Committee of Pomorskie Regional Parliament, Poland
<b>Martin Sten Jörgensen</b>	ERB Deputy Board Member, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark replaced by <b>Maria F. Kjaergaard</b> , Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
<b>Maciej Lisicki</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of the Association of Communes, Poland
<b>Suzanne Svensson</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Member of Parliament, Sweden
<b>Anna Wasilewska</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Member of the Board of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland

In 2013 Euroregion Baltic Executive Board met on 26<sup>th</sup> February in Gdańsk (Poland), 28<sup>th</sup> May in Karlskrona (Sweden), 5<sup>th</sup> September in Kalmar (Sweden) and on 15<sup>th</sup> November in Olsztyn (Poland).

## EUROREGION BALTIC YOUTH BOARD

<b>Karl Holst</b>	Chair of the Youth Board, Kalmar, Sweden
<b>Ivan Aslanov</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Kaliningrad, Russia
<b>Žydrūnė Chlebavičiūtė</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Klaipėda, Lithuania
<b>Maria F. Kjaergaard</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Bornholm, Denmark
<b>Agnieszka Piłką</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Association of Communes, Poland replaced by <b>Maksymilian Lewandowski</b>
<b>Oliver Rosengren</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Södra Småland, Sweden
<b>Sara Sakhnini</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Blekinge, Sweden
<b>Katarzyna Wasyliszyn</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
<b>Mateusz Ankiewicz</b>	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
<b>Hmida Benatallah</b>	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Kalmar, Sweden
<b>Mateusz Kryzba</b>	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
<b>Thea H. Olsen</b>	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Bornholm, Denmark
<b>Elin Petersson</b>	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Blekinge, Sweden
<b>Henrietta Serrate</b>	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Södra Småland, Sweden

In 2013 **Euroregion Baltic Youth Board** met on 26<sup>th</sup> February in Gdańsk (Poland), 27<sup>th</sup> May in Karlskrona (Sweden), and on 15<sup>th</sup> November in Olsztyn (Poland). **Youth Board** also participated in the SYPERB project meeting on 5-6<sup>th</sup> September in Kalmar (Sweden). In addition, **Youth Board** had online meetings on 15<sup>th</sup> October and 12<sup>th</sup> December.

## ADDRESS BY ERB PRESIDENT

Between 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014 Euroregion Baltic was under political leadership of the Member of the Municipal Council of Bornholm, Mr Per Ole Petersen.



*Dear Friends!*

*The time has come to sum up the past thirteen months as President of Euroregion Baltic (ERB) and to hand over the ERB mallet to my successor. The time to say thank you all for your hard work and involvement! The goal of my presidency has been to steer our joint efforts in line with the objectives clearly outlined in the ERB 2020 Agenda: making ERB a dynamic tool to tackle common challenges and strengthening its political impact in the cross-border cooperation of the Baltic Sea Region. I strongly believe we have advanced in both these areas.*

*This past year, a lot of effort has been made to participate in the programming process within the South Baltic CBC Programme 2014 – 2020. Supported by its task forces ERB has contributed to the development of the Programme measures in such a way that good financial support will be available to organisations and institutions in the region willing to cooperate in the future. Links have been strengthened to the EU Strategy of the Baltic Sea Region, as well as to the focus areas prioritised by the ERB stakeholders: enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, protecting the environment and supporting resource efficiency, promoting sustainable transport, stimulating employment and supporting labour mobility, and improving institutional capacity and an efficient public administration.*

*Continually striving to make Euroregion Baltic an effective tool to tackle common challenges and to deliver added value to its stakeholders we held our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum in Kalmar where representatives of local and regional authorities, experts and practitioners from the tourism sector and labour mobility networks investigated the potential for blue and green growth in the South Baltic. Showcasing several tourism projects and labour mobility projects with active involvement of the ERB partners we had interesting discussions on specific ideas and interests from the regional and local representatives.*

*Indeed, contributing to youth employment has been one of our priorities. It is a challenge shared by all our members although to a varying degree. The work with these issues has resulted in the submission of a pre-study project (Stay the Course) researching a specific group of upper secondary students who do not complete their education. Youth cooperation as such has been the part of our cooperation to which the ERB partners have paid a lot of attention. ERB Youth Board received extra support and started another pre-study (SYPERB) enabling a more active youth cooperation in the ERB member regions.*

*I would like to express special gratitude to the Swedish partners for making it possible for the ERB secretariat to continue its operations throughout 2013. We have been through the year of intensive consultations and discussions on new organisational structure for our cooperation. We are now coming to the final stage of the process confident we will be able to enhance the efficiency of our work.*

*This has been a challenging year that brought a number of ideas and pre-studies which can be developed further. I have mentioned the projects: SYPERB and Stay the Course. There is also "WaterNets" spreading the implementation of the so-called Water User Partnerships. I look forward to the next year of our cooperation! I look forward to the new presidency and have confidence we will make good use of new opportunities!*

Per Ole Petersen

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Per Ole Petersen', written over a light blue circular stamp.

## Focus area 1: Lobbying

### Strategic objective: strengthening the political role of ERB in the cross-border cooperation

1. In 2013 ERB participated in the implementation of ETC and ENI programmes in the BSR:
  - 1.1. work was coordinated by the ERB Task Force on EU Cohesion Policy which held online meetings on 23.01, 04.04, 06.05, 23.09, and 24.10. The Task Force consists of the representatives of the ERB member organisations who take part in the implementation of the following ETC and ENI programmes: South Baltic CBC Programme, Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007 - 2013, Interreg IVB North Sea Programme, Interreg IVA Öresund Kattegat Skagerrak Programme, CBC Programme Lithuania-Poland, Central Europe Programme 2007 – 2013, and Lithuania-Poland-Russia ENPI CBC Programme 2007-2013.
  - 1.2. The process was overseen by the ERB Executive Board which heard reports from the Task Force at meetings on on 26<sup>th</sup> February in Gdańsk (Poland), 28<sup>th</sup> May in Karlskrona (Sweden), 5<sup>th</sup> September in Kalmar (Sweden) and on 15<sup>th</sup> November in Olsztyn (Poland).
  - 1.3. In 2013 ERB continued to participate in the implementation of the South Baltic Programme by taking active part in the work of Programme Steering and Monitoring Committees. This was manifested in the participation in:
    - 1.3.1. Monitoring Committee meeting in Szczecin, Poland on 27<sup>th</sup> November.
    - 1.3.2. 16 written procedures within the Steering Committee concerning all kinds of changes within the ongoing projects, as well as 3 written procedures in order to select new projects within the so-called mini-calls:
  - 1.4. In 2013 ERB was represented in the South Baltic Joint Programming Committee and its task forces working to prepare the new programming period of 2014 – 2020. There were 7 meetings in 2013:
    - 1.4.1. in Warsaw, Poland, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 (Task Force 1),
    - 1.4.2. in Ostróda, Poland, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013 (Joint Programming Committee and Task Force 1),
    - 1.4.3. in Warsaw, Poland, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2013 (Task Force 2),
    - 1.4.4. in Rostock, Germany, 24-25<sup>th</sup> September (Joint Programming Committee),
    - 1.4.5. in Berlin, Germany, 6<sup>th</sup> November (Joint Programming Committee, Task Forces 1 and 2),
    - 1.4.6. in Szczecin, Poland, 27<sup>th</sup> November (Task Force 1),
    - 1.4.7. in Gdańsk, Poland, 18<sup>th</sup> December (Task Force 2).
  - 1.5. A response to the questionnaire was approved by the ERB Board on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013 concerning thematic objectives and investment priorities within the South Baltic CBC Programme 2014 – 2020, based on the ERB 2020 Agenda. The response recommended thematic priorities 3 (enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs) and 6 (protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency) as highly relevant, and priorities 7 (promoting sustainable transport) and 8 (promoting employment and supporting labour mobility) as relevant. All these thematic priorities were included in the new programme.



2. participating in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR):
  - 2.1. On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013 ERB Executive Board decided to merge the Task Force working with EUSBSR with the ERB Task Force on EU Cohesion Policy. The rationale behind it was a significant overlap



between the two groups and the ambition within ERB to align ERB's involvement in EUSBSR PAs and FPs (within specified areas of interest) with the work in the field of EU Cohesion Policy. Since then, ERB Task Force on EU Cohesion Policy coordinated ERB's participation in the implementation of EUSBSR.

2.2. ERB Task Force on EU Cohesion Policy prepared a roadmap of further ERB involvement in EUSBSR which recommends that ERB should be

realistic and think of available resources; ERB working structures are already involved in the implementation of EUSBSR: Task Force on Labour Cooperation is an observer at the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (EUSBSR flagship), ERB Youth Board cooperates within the Baltic Sea Youth Forum and their flagship project on youth policy, ERB Water Core Group has proposed the WaterNets project to become EUSBSR flagship, and Business Link Greater Copenhagen (Bornholm) are also in contact with relevant flagship projects regarding the Baltic Sea Cluster Development Centre.

- 2.3. ERB representatives regularly attended the meetings of in EUSBSR national coordination teams in Denmark, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden.
- 2.4. ERB Task Force on EU Cohesion Policy presented conclusions from the EU Council on macro-regional strategies calling for more attention to multi-level governance, stronger internal structure of the Strategy, stronger High Level Group, more active participation from the private sector, regional and local levels, and civil organisations, and finally stressing usefulness of seed funding.
- 2.5. ERB continued to be present at main EUSBSR events, including:
  - 2.5.1. Council of the Baltic Sea States Week in St. Petersburg on 19-21<sup>th</sup> March,
  - 2.5.2. Fourth EUSBSR Annual Forum in Vilnius on 11 – 12<sup>th</sup> November.

3. holding dialogue with relevant actors:

- 3.1. ERB initiated a dialogue with the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation and the Union of the Baltic Cities in order to hold a joint event based on the cooperation agreement between BSR organisations (incl. ERB) and the Committee of the Regions.
- 3.2. A representative of the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (BSSSC) was invited to attend ERB meetings in 2014. Mr Alexander Wendt who represents Region Blekinge in the BSSSC cooperation took part in the ERB Executive Board meeting which was held on 28<sup>th</sup> May in Karlskrona (Sweden). In addition, the region of Pomorskie who is a member of the cooperation within BSSSCS and ERB acts as a liaison and facilitates the exchange of information between the two organisations.

## Focus area 2: Strategic actions

### Strategic objective: enhancing the added value of ERB cooperation

4. reinforcing stakeholder approach through continuous dialogue and information exchange:
  - 4.1. Fourth Forum of ERB Stakeholders was held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013 in Kalmar (Sweden)



Themed ‘Connecting local actors’, the Fourth Forum gathered representatives of local and regional authorities as well as experts and practitioners from the tourism sector and labour mobility networks from the cooperation area. The first part of the Forum informed the participants of new cooperation possibilities within the South Baltic Cross-border Cooperation Programme and facilitated an exchange of project

ideas between interested actors. During the debate the stakeholders also discussed specific ideas and proposals regarding the thematic objectives and investment priorities of the programme for 2014-2020. During the second part the stakeholders attempted to investigate the potential for blue and green growth in the South Baltic. Showcasing several tourism projects with active involvement of the ERB partners, the Forum also focused on tourism as the third largest socioeconomic activity in the EU with a positive effect on economic growth and employment. The final part of the Forum was devoted to the problem of improving labour mobility. It involved presentations of labour mobility projects currently implemented by the ERB partners and a discussion on specific ideas and interests from the regional and local representatives, as well as other actors involved in the projects or other activities enhancing labour mobility and employment in the Baltic Sea Region.

- 4.2. ERB Executive Board met around the cooperation area in:
  - 4.2.1. Gdańsk (Pomorskie) on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013



The meeting discussed further development of a stronger cooperation on labour market issues, with a focus on improving labour force mobility and combating youth unemployment during the seminar which took place on 25<sup>th</sup> February. During the official dinner after the seminar the ERB Presidency was handed over from södra Småland to Bornholm, and the chairmanship in the ERB Youth Board from södra Småland to

Kalmar. On 26<sup>th</sup> February the Executive Board approved the Action Plan for 2013 – 2014 specifying goals and expected outputs of our work in the two coming years following the

presentations from the ERB Task Forces, Youth Board and ERB Water Core Group. The Executive Board members adopted the resolution which was drafted as a result of the labour market cooperation seminar (see page 15 of this report).

#### 4.2.2. Karlskrona (Blekinge) on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013



ERB Executive Board members were updated on recent, current and upcoming activities within the organisation and their relevance to the ERB 2020 Agenda and ERB 2013-2014 Action Plan. They heard presentations from two projects with strong involvement of Blekinge partners (Baltic Maritime Science Park and ArtLine) and their contribution to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Also, the Baltic

Sea Cluster Development Centre project led by the Danish partners contributed to the discussion. In addition, ERB Youth Board and ERB Task Force on Cohesion Policy presented information on South Baltic Programme and EUSBSR. Simultaneous meetings were held in the afternoon with separate agendas for the ERB Youth Board, ERB Secretariats and ERB Executive Board. ERB Executive Board made a decision regarding South Baltic thematic scope, discussed possible cooperation with the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC), decided to support the proposal from the ERB Youth Board concerning a project idea dealing with the LUPP concept, and supported the future water cooperation plan, discuss further steps leading to legal status for ERB.

#### 4.2.3. Kalmar (Kalmar) on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013



In the first part of the meeting ERB Executive Board members expressed their opinions on the Fourth Forum of ERB Stakeholders that was held the day before. Later they discussed legal personality of Euroregion Baltic and expressed preliminary consent to set up the international association based on the Polish law and with a seat in Poland. ERB Board members also heard reports from ERB task forces on

EU Cohesion Policy and Labour Mobility, as well as the ERB Water Core Group. Board held a discussion with the ERB Youth Board about their forthcoming SYPERB project, and debated on the cooperation with other Baltic organisations.

#### 4.2.4. Olsztyn, (Warmińsko-Mazurskie) on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013.



Euroregion Baltic Executive Board met on 15<sup>th</sup> November. Pomorskie informed about a new draft of the statutes for the international association prepared by their lawyers. ERB Executive Board decided that further work on the statutes will be based on the new draft. The Statutes will be shortened and will comply with requirements of the Polish law. ERB Executive Board also decided to extend a

mandate for ERB Task Force on Labour Mobility, Water Group and ERB Task Force on EU Cohesion Policy. ERB Youth Board members presented a report on the recent and upcoming activities. Mr Lars Albäk from Business Link Greater Copenhagen informed about cluster cooperation in the area of Euroregion Baltic. The information was also given about initiatives for internationalisation of small and medium enterprises in Kalmar County and preparations for a new Action Plan for 2014 and 2015. The Executive Board meeting was accompanied by a parallel Youth Board meeting.

#### 4.3. ERB Secretariats maintained regular contact:

4.3.1. via continuous email exchange,

4.3.2. during online meetings (07.02, 12.04, 07.05, 22.05, 12.06, 19.08, 10.10, 04.12),

4.3.3. at the face2face meetings (28-29.01 in Gdańsk and 27.05 in Karlskrona).

#### 5. strengthening ERB internally:

5.1. On 26<sup>th</sup> February in Gdansk ERB Executive Board decided to adopt the 2013 – 2014 Action Plan which outlines the process of forming an international legal person for ERB, and the terms of reference for the purchase of legal expertise to assist the process.

5.2. On 28<sup>th</sup> May in Karlskrona ERB Executive Board asked that the statutes and assisting documents explaining finances, liability, and employment conditions should be completed in June 2013, and expressed preliminary consent to set up the international association based on these documents. ERB Board members agreed to extend the temporary hosting of IPS by the Regional Council in södra Småland until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

5.3. On 5<sup>th</sup> September in Kalmar ERB Executive Board discussed comments submitted by the ERB partners to the statutes of the international association which was submitted on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2013. ERB Board members requested a response from the Russian partners as to their position towards the establishment of the association by 1<sup>st</sup> November, Polish regions to consider the hosting of IPS in 2014, and the Swedish regions to extend their hosting of IPS in Växjö until the end of 2013.

5.4. On 15<sup>th</sup> November in Olsztyn ERB Executive Board decided to wait for a new version of the statutes of the international association to be submitted by the Polish partners, and postpone the final decision on the establishment of the international association after an answer is given by the Kaliningrad region. ERB Executive Board asked the Regional Council in södra Småland to host the ERB Secretariat until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

- 5.5. ERB Task Force on Cohesion Policy investigated the possibility of applying for an EGTC status and concluded the process with the recommendation that ERB should not work continue this process any longer given the ongoing preparations for the status of the international association. The recommendation was made to the ERB Executive Board on 15<sup>th</sup> November in Olsztyn.
- 5.6. On 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013 ERB Executive Board decided to merge the Task Force working with EUSBSR with the ERB task Force on EU Cohesion Policy. The rationale behind it was a significant overlap between the two groups and the ambition within ERB to align ERB's involvement in EUSBSR PAs and FPs (within specified areas of interest) with the work in the field of EU Cohesion Policy.

6. supporting youth cooperation within ERB Youth Board:

- 6.1. In 2013 the ERB Youth Board was supported by Karolina Hołowka who was also an EVS volunteer of the project run by Kumulus in Kalmar. Discussions on a permanent structure independent of projects implemented by or for the ERB Youth Board did not result in any definite conclusions. Instead, ERB Youth Board members decided to focus their activities in 2014 on creating a new effective structure of youth cooperation in Euroregion Baltic.
- 6.2. In 2013 ERB stakeholders supported youth in their participation in projects and events. The Regional Council in Kalmar County took main responsibility for the drafting and submission of the project called SYPERB (Strategic Youth Policy in Euroregion Baltic), which was backed by the ERB Executive Board and formally approved by the Swedish Institute. The purpose of this project will be to carry out a Lupp survey and to use it as a tool to improve everyday life for young people in the cooperation area. This will also contribute to the international exchange between youths, civil servants and politicians in the Baltic Sea Region. The cooperation will also target universities. In 2013 the project held one meeting on 5-6<sup>th</sup> September in Kalmar, Sweden.

ERB also financed Youth Board's participation in the EUSBSR Annual Forum in Vilnius, Lithuanian



on 10-11<sup>th</sup> November 2013 where a special meeting of the Baltic Sea Youth Forum was held. The goal of this Youth Forum is to unite different youth representing organisations and structures existing on different levels in the Baltic Sea Region in order to bundle their opinions and concerns and eventually strengthen their influence. ERB stakeholders also financed the participation of their youth representatives in all the ERB meetings held during the Danish presidency.

- 6.3. On 21<sup>st</sup> September a closing ceremony for 25<sup>th</sup> Jubilee International Competition of Fine Arts of Children and Youth from Euroregion Baltic entitled "We are from the Sea" was held in Elbląg together with the exhibition of 171 works which were selected out of 3 936 submitted by 436 cultural institutions from Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine. 52 of those works of art were rewarded. The exhibition is planned to be also staged in Gdynia in Poland and in Kaliningrad in Russia.

7. fostering B2B cooperation with focus on clusters, innovation and SME internationalisation:
  - 7.1. In 2013 Bornholm invited partners from around the Baltic Sea to collaborate on the establishment of the Baltic Sea Cluster Development Centre (BSCD) whose aim is to co-develop the activities and to jointly deliver services to clusters in the Baltic Sea Region. BSCD is planned as a network/knowledge hub on cluster development in the Baltic Sea Region and a business-to-business cooperation between clusters in the region to support the internationalisation of start-up companies and SMEs in clusters.
  - 7.2. On 24-25<sup>th</sup> April BSCD was officially launched during a conference on Bornholm. The focus areas to be of attention for BSCD were selected to be: tourism and experience clusters, ICT clusters, Clean-/GreenTech Clusters, Food/agricul-tural Clusters, and Maritime Clusters. On 28.05.2013 feedback from the conference presented and discussed at ERB Executive Board meeting in Karlskrona in Sweden.
  - 7.3. ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen took part in 5<sup>th</sup> Business Forum of Baltic and Eastern Markets organised by Warminsko- Mazurskie Regional Development Agency on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013 in Lidzbark Warmiński, Poland. Its main theme was "Partnership, cooperation, integration - for economic development". The aim of the Forum is to create conditions for common debate and intensification of cross-border cooperation of entrepreneurs from the EU member states and countries outside the EU, taking into account also the role which public administration can play in this process as well as enable establishing of direct economic contacts with foreign companies.
  - 7.4. In 2013 ERB Task Force on Cohesion Policy assisted in ERB's role as one of the actors preparing the South Baltic CBC Programme in 2014 - 2020. ERB promoted the inclusion in the programme of measures facilitating cooperation aiming to improve SME internationalisation, innovation and exports. Such cooperation will be possible in the new programme, and ERB should continue efforts improving business to business links in the area drawing for example on the results of the ongoing research of potential business cooperation between small and medium enterprises in South Sweden and North Poland, which is conducted by the Regional Council in Kalmar County and should be completed in 2014.

8. developing stronger cooperation on labour market issues in ERB:

- 8.1. In 2013 ERB through its Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation continued investigating perspectives for the labour market development in the South Baltic area. On 25<sup>th</sup> February a seminar on labour market in South-East Baltic Sea Region took place in Gdańsk, Poland gathering politicians, including members of ERB Executive Board, and experts.



The Executive Board members adopted the resolution which was drafted as a result of the labour market cooperation seminar (see page 15 of this report) which indicates main actions for ERB. These are: an improvement of the labour force mobility and combat against youth unemployment. During the members of the Task Force presented a report with statistics concerning labour market in ERB member regions and analysis of regional development

strategies regarding to aims of the employment policy. They also discussed the youth unemployment package recently launched by the European Commission as well as the financial instruments available through the Swedish Institute.

On 14<sup>th</sup> November in Olsztyn Euroregion Baltic, Self-Government of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship and Regional Labour Office in Olsztyn co-organised the conference entitled: "Support to youth on the labour market – experiences and future perspectives". It gathered politicians, labour market experts and youth from the Euroregion Baltic member regions. The objective was to present activities oriented towards support of employment of young people entering the labour market. This issue was raised from the perspective of the European Union, regional authorities and non-governmental organisations. The agenda contained addresses regarding the European Commission "Youth Guarantee Initiative", EURES network activities for labour mobility, activities within the Polish labour offices, and Voluntary Labour Corps. In addition, projects addressing youth, e.g. SYPERB (Strategic Youth Policy in Euroregion Baltic), and volunteers in European Mobility Programmes were presented.

8.2. As the programming process of the South Baltic CBC Programme 2014-2020 continued in 2013 the ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation provided support to ERB representatives in their argumentation for the inclusion of activities facilitating the cooperation between labour market institutions in the area with the aim of combating unemployment, and especially youth unemployment.

8.3. ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation coordinated ERB collaboration with the Baltic Sea Labour Forum and EURES offices in ERB area.

On 1 November 2013, the Baltic Sea Labour Forum Round Table took place in Helsinki where Euroregion Baltic President, Per Ole Petersen, as well as members of Euroregion Baltic Task Force on Labour Cooperation: Diana Unander Nordle and Johnny Winther Holbech participated. The



Round Table adopted an Action Plan on Cross Border Mobility. The main purpose of the Action Plan is to convey background information and analyses on cross border mobility; to encourage and support practical cooperation activities among the BSLF members; and to present recommendations to the governments of the Baltic Sea Region and the CBSS concerning cross-border mobility. Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs Erkki Tuomioja received the

Action Plan at the Round Table and welcomed the concrete co-operation plans of the BSLF. In addition to mobility, the BSLF Round Table devoted extensive attention to the pressing issue of youth unemployment. This is a serious and persistent challenge in the Baltic Sea Region, and the Round Table stressed that it must be tackled with concrete actions by the Social Partners and the governments.

ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation proposed to facilitate networking in ERB by establishment of EURES regional teams that would exchange information, do research, make analysis of labour market and support employers and jobseekers. To this end, ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen sent letters to the national EURES managers in Denmark, Germany, Lithuania,

Poland, and Sweden, as well as members of the European Parliament from these countries who deal with issues of employment. ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation also cooperated with the project called “South Baltic Professionals” and contributed to a specially designed job portal for the whole South Baltic Region which tackles structural challenges of the area. Job seekers can now find in only one portal job offers from eight South Baltic Regions, including Klaipeda in Lithuania, Kaliningrad in Russia, Kalmar in Sweden and the Tricity area in Poland.

8.4. Within the ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation a discussion was initiated on a project idea that would contribute to the work within Euroregion Baltic pursues in order to contribute to a lesser unemployment among young people. The representative of södra Småland and its Competence Platform (network of regional and local actors working together towards better skills and improved labour market in the region) proposed addressing the problem of drop outs among high performing upper secondary education students, target group which has not been explored so far with majority of projects working with those who drop out because of learning problems, disabilities or unfavourable social conditions. It was agreed that a pre-study will be necessary to investigate this new target group and the partnership was formed between the cities of Växjö, Klaipeda and Sopot. The application was successfully submitted to the Swedish Institute and the project will be implemented in 2014.

9. facilitating water cooperation:

9.1. MOMENT project, an ERB initiative, has successfully established seven Water Users Partnerships (WUPs) across the South Baltic Sea area. The WUP method has proven to be an effective tool in mobilizing action towards a healthier Baltic Sea. The method has also been recognized by the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and HELCOM whom both have expressed a favourable view of spreading the concept in a wider geographical area. An external evaluation, carried out by Ramboll Management, confirms the success of using the WUP method and also states a recommendation of spreading the WUP concept to other regions.

9.2. In addition, new methods were introduced in three countries, 350 active members are active in WUPs, 7 local programmes of measures were developed, and 17 different actions implemented. Moreover, the project participated in 40 different TV and radio interviews, organised 90 different excursions, field trips and study visits, published around 200 articles and arranged 200 meetings with 4 000 participants, and finally, had around 30 000 visitors.

9.3. Taken the above into consideration the ERB Water Core Group discussed possible ways to further develop the WUP concept. The discussions led to the successful submission of a seed money application of a project called “WaterNets” to the Baltic Sea programme second call in August 2013. At its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> May in Karlskrona ERB Executive Board supported this application and the work that will follow. The project will be presented as an ERB initiative in the future process which will both would strengthen the project and the ERB cooperation.

9.4. On 27-28<sup>th</sup> May A Study Tour called Baltic Action was held by the MOMENT project. During one day the participants visited several sites in Blekinge which had previously constructed measures to combat negative anthropogenic impacts on the Baltic Sea.

## Focus area 3: Exchange activities

### Strategic objective: deepening relations & strengthening cooperation between ERB member regions

10. Meeting common challenges through collaborative approach based on the exchange of knowledge and information

10.1. Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders is the main meeting platform facilitating discussions of relevant stakeholders from the member organisations and outside (leading politicians and high-ranking civil servants, national and EU representatives, experts and practitioners of territorial cooperation), and thus providing valuable input to the ERB work. In 2013 the Forum was entitled: “Connecting local actors” and focused on the potential for blue and green growth in the South Baltic, showcasing several projects with active involvement of the ERB partners in the areas of tourism and labour mobility.

10.2. Between 27 and 30<sup>th</sup> August the Working Committee of the Regional Council in Kalmar County took a trip round the Baltic Sea visiting ERB partners in Gdańsk, Kaliningrad and



Klaipeda. The Swedish delegation was led by the Chair of the Regional Council in Kalmar, Mr Lars Blomberg and was hosted by the Deputy Marshal of Pomorskie region, Ryszard Świlski, Deputy Governor of Kaliningrad region, Mr Konstantin Suslov, and the President of Association Klaipeda Region and Mayor of Klaipeda City, Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas.

10.3. Information flow was maintained between ERB secretariats primarily by emails, as well as during on-line and face-to-face Secretariat meetings.

10.4. Information was collected disseminated externally via ERB website and facebook account.

10.5. In addition, in 2012 ERB was part of:

10.5.1. the conference entitled “Baltic sea Region: common territory – common interests – common projects” organised by the Council of the Baltic Sea States and North-West Development and Investment Promotion Agency in Saint Petersburg on 20<sup>th</sup> March,

10.5.2. the exchange of information and experiences with the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion which was established in June 2006 in Pula in Croatia and is transnational and interregional cooperation consisting of several regions and local authorities of Italy, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Greece,

10.5.3. the European Cooperation Day celebrated over the borders by the European citizens during a number of events organised in Europe with our ERB contribution during 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders held in Kalmar on 4<sup>th</sup> September,

10.5.4. the State of the Region Report published by Baltic Development Forum in October 2013,

10.5.5. South Baltic CBC Programme Annual Conference in Szczecin in Poland on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013,

10.5.6. research by the Institute for Academic Initiatives at Osaka University in Japan whose Assistant Professor, Mr Yasutoshi Yoshida visited Euroregion Baltic secretariat in Växjö, Sweden on 3<sup>rd</sup> December and partners in Klaipeda in Lithuania on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

## RESOLUTIONS & STATEMENTS

### Resolution of the Euroregion Baltic Seminar on Labour Market Cooperation held in Gdansk, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013

We, the participants of the Euroregion Baltic Seminar on Labour Market Cooperation:

- recognise that local and regional labour markets within Euroregion Baltic (ERB) have different socio-economic characteristics, but all face the problem of ageing populations and youth unemployment,
- believe that cross-border mobility should be of mutual benefit and contribute to the development and growth of the economies of all the regions.

Therefore, we:

- express further support to activities aiming to develop a basis for a stronger cooperation on labour market issues within ERB,
- believe special focus needs to be placed on the improvement of the labour force mobility and combat against youth unemployment,
- support the ERB Executive Board's engagement in the cooperation within the Baltic Sea Labour Forum,
- endorse the mandate of the ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation to coordinate our efforts in order to improve labour mobility and combat youth unemployment in ERB.

To this end, we encourage the ERB Task Force on Labour Market Cooperation to:

- investigate perspectives for the labour market development in the South Baltic area, and thus contribute to the programming process of the South Baltic CBC Programme 2014-2020,
- look into the youth unemployment package proposed by the European Commission and its financial instruments as a possible source of financing the improvement of labour mobility and combating youth unemployment in the area,
- stimulate cooperation between projects financed by the European Social Fund like *Education for all* and *Framtid Kronoberg* which have already started working together, by identifying regional projects relating to mobility and combating youth unemployment,
- investigate further cooperation potential based on the background report with labour market statistics in the ERB member regions,
- facilitate networking initiatives for EURES advisors as one of the first priorities of an implementation of the approach of close cooperation, in order to enable realization of an effective cross-border labour mobility of mutual benefit (South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 and European Social Fund).

## FINANCIAL RESULTS

### INCOME:

	Item	Planned for 2013: I-XII in EUR	Planned for 2013: I-XII in PLN: 1 EUR	Actual for 2013: I-XII in PLN
<u>1</u>	Result as of 01.01.2013	296,20 €	2 526,59 SEK	2 526,59 SEK
<u>2</u>	Region Blekinge	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	47 040,78 SEK
<u>3</u>	Regionförbundet Södra Småland	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	47 040,78 SEK
<u>4</u>	Regionförbundet i Kalmar Län	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	47 040,78 SEK
<u>5</u>	Bornholm	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	46 995,85 SEK
<u>6</u>	Pomorski Urząd Marszałkowski	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	46 975,50 SEK
<u>7</u>	Warmińsko-Mazurski Urząd Marszałkowski	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	47 054,70 SEK
<u>8</u>	Stowarzyszenie Gmin RP Euroregion Bałtyk	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	47 988,61 PLN
<u>9</u>	Klaipėda County	4 600,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	48 096,54 PLN
<u>10</u>	Kaliningrad Region	2 300,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	47 409,45 PLN

### TOTAL INCOME

**49 796,20 €**

**424 761,59 SEK**

**428 169,58 SEK**

	Item	Planned for 2012: I-XII	Planned for 2012: I-XII in PLN:	Actual for 2012: I-IX in PLN
<u>1</u>	Overheads	32 918,24 €	280 792,58 SEK	316 642,36 SEK
	overheads (incl office rental, phone, internet)	6 226,85 €	53 115,00 SEK	63 037,75 SEK
	mobile phone	1 172,33 €	10 000,00 SEK	3 804,68 SEK
	salary (incl. social contribution and holiday)	25 519,06 €	217 677,58 SEK	249 799,93 SEK
<u>2</u>	Travel/Meetings	8 206,33 €	70 000,00 SEK	64 406,90 SEK
<u>3</u>	IT	838,22 €	7 150,00 SEK	0,00 SEK
	ERB homepage, updates, hosting	76,20 €	650,00 SEK	0,00 SEK
	web-conferencing facility	0,00 €	0,00 SEK	0,00 SEK
	equipment	762,02 €	6 500,00 PLN	0,00 PLN
<u>4</u>	ERB Youth Board	5 500,00 €	46 915,00 SEK	9 664,03 SEK
<u>5</u>	Legal consultancy	2 110,20 €	18 000,00 SEK	0,00 SEK
<u>7</u>	Banking charges	223,21 €	1 903,99 SEK	0,00 SEK

### TOTAL EXPENDITURE

**49 796,20 €**

**424 761,59 SEK**

**390 713,29 SEK**

### RESULT (Income - Expenditure)

**0,00 €**

**0,00 SEK**

**37 456,29 SEK**

# ERB SECRETARIATS

## ERB INTERNATIONAL PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

Videum Science Park  
351 96 Växjö, Sweden  
Sławomir Demkowicz Dobrzański  
Tel. +46 470 72 47 65  
E-mail: Sławomir.D-D@rfss.se  
[www.euroregionbaltic.eu](http://www.euroregionbaltic.eu)

## Агентство по международным и межрегиональным связям Калининградской области

Елена Лебедева  
+7 4012 599 089  
[e.lebedeva@gov39.ru](mailto:e.lebedeva@gov39.ru)  
<http://gov39.ru>

## Asociacija "Klaipėdos regionas"

Valdas Pučkorius  
Tel: +370 684 01285  
V.puckorius@gmail.com  
<http://www.klaipedaregion.com/>

## Bornholms Regionkommune

Niels Ch. Andersen  
Tel.: +45 3018 2192  
Niels.Chresten.Andersen@brk.dk  
[www.brk.dk](http://www.brk.dk)

## Region Blekinge

Johanna Rönn  
Tel: +46 455 30 50 22  
Johanna.Ronn@regionblekinge.se  
[www.regionblekinge.se](http://www.regionblekinge.se)

## Regionförbundet i Kalmar Län

Jan Martinsson  
Tel: +46 480 44 87 95  
Jan.martinsson@rfkl.se  
[www.rfkl.se](http://www.rfkl.se)

## Regionförbundet Södra Småland

Therese Magnusson  
Tel: +46 470 72 47 54  
Therese.Magnusson@rfss.se  
[www.rfss.se](http://www.rfss.se)

## Stowarzyszenie Gmin RP Euroregion Bałtyk

Zdzisław Olszewski, Roma Naruszewicz  
Tel: +48 55 611 2000  
sekel@eurobalt.org.pl  
[www.eurobalt.org.pl](http://www.eurobalt.org.pl)

## Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Pomorskiego

Krystyna Wróblewska, Magdalena Skłucka  
Tel: +48 58 32 61 710  
k.wroblewska@woj-pomorskie.pl  
m.sklucka@pomorskie.eu  
[www.woj-pomorskie.pl](http://www.woj-pomorskie.pl)

## Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Warmińsko-Mazurskiego

Łukasz Bielewski, Piotr Zwolak  
Tel: +48 89 53 40 019  
l.bielewski@warmia.mazury.pl  
piotr.zwolak@warmia.mazury.pl  
<http://www.wrota.warmia.mazury.pl>



*Participants at 4th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders: Niels Chresten Andersen and Roland Gustbée in the foreground*



*Participants at 4th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders: Åke Nilsson, Lennart O Werner and Jan Martinsson in the foreground*



*Participants at 4th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders: Carina Bengtson and Monica Haider in the foreground*

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