



Title	Final Minutes
Submitted by	SM, International Permanent Secretariat
Summary / Note	This document provides final minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting in Elbląg, Poland on 16th Feb 2018
Requested action	Signing

Participants:
ERB Executive Board:

Ms Anne Thomas	ERB President, Vice Mayor of Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Ms Britt-Louise Berndtsson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Board of Region Kronoberg
Mr Wiesław Byczkowski	Member of ERB Executive Board, Deputy Marshal of Pomorskie Region
Mr Vaclovas Dačkauskas	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Mayor of Klaipėda District Municipality
Mr Lennarth Förberg	Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Blekinge
Ms Akko Karlsson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Kalmar County
Ms Christina Mattisson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge
Mr Robert Olesen	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Board Region Kronoberg
Ms Sabine Lyngberg	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm

ERB Youth Board:

Ms Alexandra Winberg	Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board, Regional Council in Kalmar County / Kumulus
Mr Mikkel Holm Tved	Deputy Chairman of ERB Youth Board, Regional Municipality of Bornholm

Ms Yanina Andrushkevich	Member of ERB Youth Board, Government of Kaliningrad Region
Mr Marek Ziemian	Member of ERB Youth Board, Pomorskie Region
Mr Damian Ciachorowski	Member of ERB Youth Board, Association of Polish Communes
Mr Dawid Jędrzejak	Member of ERB Youth Board, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Ms Mille Sommer	Deputy Member of ERB Youth Board, Regional Municipality of Bornholm

ERB Secretariats:

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen	Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Ms Liana Maximova	Government of Kaliningrad Region
Ms Evgeniya Russu	Government of Kaliningrad Region
Ms Klaudija Kionies	Association of Klaipeda Region
Ms Agata Ludwiczak	Euroregion Baltic International Secretariat
Mr Sebastian Magier	Euroregion Baltic International Secretariat
Mr Jan Martinsson	Regional Council in Kalmar County
Ms Zofia Makowska	Regional Council in Kalmar County / CaSYPoT Project Manager
Ms Johanna Rönn	Region Blekinge
Ms Małgorzata Samusjew	Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic
Mr Łukasz Bielewski	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Mr Piotr Zwolak	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Ms Krystyna Wróblewska	Pomorskie Region
Ms Gabriela Zarębska-Jende	Pomorskie Region

Guests

Ms Greta Tautraviciute	City of Klaipeda, European Youth Capital 2021
Ms Ann Irene Saeternes	Secretary General of BSSSC
Mr Lars Godbolt	Executive Secretary of BSSSC

1. **Welcome**

Ms Małgorzata Samusjew, Director of Secretariat of Association of Polish Communes in Elbląg welcomed the participants of the meeting on behalf of Mr Witold Wróblewski, Chairman of Association's Board.

2. **Opening**

President of Euroregion Baltic, Ms Akko Karlsson opened the meeting and presented the agenda.

ERB Executive Board approved the agenda.

3. **Signing the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meeting**

Mr Sebastian Magier, ERB International Secretariat submitted the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meetings held in Palanga on 18th September 2017

Minutes of ERB Executive Board meeting in Palanga were signed by Ms Akko Karlsson, ERB President and Ms Christina Mattisson, Member of ERB Executive Board.

4. **Reflections on 20th Anniversary Conference (9th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders)**

Ms Akko Karlsson requested all participants of the meeting to share their opinions on the Anniversary Conference held a day earlier and discuss its format, themes and how it could influence the further development of the organisation.

Most of the participants commented that the conference was well planned and executed. The main topic of the discussion allowed the participants to reflect on the history of the ERB and its main achievements as well as challenges, but at the same offered an opportunity to discuss the future of the organisation and its potential for both local and regional stakeholders. In that sense the panel debates allowed for reminding about the reasons for the establishment of the Euroregion, both as an organisation bridging the borders and allowing for the communities to work together, but also as an important hub for tackling joint cross-border challenges.

It was underlined that the ERB should maintain its unique character as maritime cross-border cooperation platform working mainly with local and regional actors. While not becoming a pan-Baltic organisation, still ERB should be open for further development and gaining new members in accordance with its internal regulations.

The ERB's cooperation history is something that binds and motivates its members in future cooperation. The identity we have created so far should be used as a resources for next joint initiatives and projects.

There is no opposition between the network nature of the ERB and its ability to deliver concrete results to its members. The project that have

been implemented over that last 20 years as well as those being realised currently prove that the organisation is successfully delivering results.

Much attention was given to the local and regional dimension of the ERB cooperation. It was said that the organisation proved useful for building effective cooperation links between local and regional levels of governance and their better involvement in international cooperation and cross-border projects within the Baltic Sea Region and beyond. The importance of small, people-to-people project was specifically mentioned as one of the basic tools for building trust and foundations for more advanced forms of international cooperation.

The decision to commemorate the founders of the Euroregions with a historical footage of its establishment as well as a discussion panel with politicians engaged in ERB over the years, was also much appreciated by the Board.

Overall impression was that the Conference delivered its main goals and allowed for an interesting and concrete discussion on the future of the organisation while bringing back the experiences of the last 20 years of joint cooperation.

5. **Approval of the ERB Annual Report 2017**

- 5.a A report detailing the activities implemented within ERB cooperation in 2017 on behalf of the ERB Presidency was delivered by Ms Akko Karlsson, ERB President with details of particular activities being provided Mr Sebastian Magier, Head of ERB International Secretariat.
- 5.b An activity report presenting the outcomes of activities undertaken within the ERB Youth Board on behalf of the Chairmanship was delivered by Ms Yanina Andrushkevich, Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board with details of particular activities being provided Mr Sebastian Magier, Head of ERB International Secretariat.

ERB Executive Board considered the information presented in the ERB Annual Report 2017 and decided to approve it.

6. **Transfer of ERB Presidency and ERB Youth Board Chairpersonship**

- 6.a In accordance with the decision of the ERB Executive Board of 21st February 2011 approving the sequence of ERB Presidency transfers, the ERB Presidency was transferred from Sweden to Denmark, Ms Anne Thomas, Vice Mayor of Regional Municipality assumed the position of ERB President for 2018.

At the same time, the position of ERB Vice President was assumed by Lithuania with Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas taking over the position of ERB Vice President.

- 6.b ERB Youth Board Chairpersonship was transferred from Russia to Sweden and Ms Alexandra Winberg representing the Regional Council in Kalmar County was appointed new the ERB Youth Board Chairwoman.

At the same time, the Danish party assumed the Vice Chairpersonship of the ERB Youth Board with appointment of Mr Mikkel Holm Tved as the Vice Chairman of ERB Youth Board.

ERB Executive Board will be requested to approve the new ERB President and Vice-President, as well as the new ERB Youth Board Chair and her Deputy.

7. **ERB Action Plan 2018**

- 7.a President of Euroregion Baltic, Ms Anne Thomas outlined the new Action Plan for the ERB cooperation for 2018.

The ERB Presidency of Bornholm would focus on the following priorities:

- Consolidation and ERB 2030 Agenda – with focus on the implementation of current projects, especially those within the South Baltic Programme where ERB acts as a Project Partner or Lead Partner and new potential projects starting only in 2019.

At the same time, the ERB will be involved in the process of potential enlargement of the organisation from the Swedish site. The process will be overseen by the ERB President and decided upon by the ERB Executive Board after the joint position of the all current Swedish members of the ERB in accordance with the relevant procedure adopted by the ERB Executive Board on 31st October 2003 in Kaliningrad. This process will be underway during 2018, and if positive then the potential approval of the new ERB member could take place at the last meeting of the Executive Board in September.

- Youth Cooperation – focus on the implementation of youth projects and trilateral cooperation with BSSSC and UBC.
- Future EU Cohesion Policy – monitoring the development of the new Cohesion Policy and voicing ERB's position in accordance with the [ERB Position Paper of 18th September 2017](#).
- South Baltic Programme 2020+ - mainly through the current work of the Programme's Monitoring Committee.
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – by implementing and building on the results of the Regions and SDGs project realised jointly with the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission.

- 7.b Ms Alexandra Winberg, ERB Youth Board Chairwoman will present main activities planned within the ERB Youth Board and included in the ERB Action Plan 2018.

Commenting on the new ERB Action Plan, Mr Robert Olesen said that the Action Plan was well-structured and should consolidated the ERB's work in 2018. We already have to high workload so new project should not start this year.

Ms Liana Maximova stated that the cooperation with Kaliningrad should more focused. Significant focus of the organisation is already on the EU matters.

Mr Łukasz Bielewski said that better involvement of Kaliningrad was necessary and possible. As to the projects, the AMBER project could be

improved and resubmitted in 2019. In terms of lobbying we should do more to use the regional offices in Brussels, but also the fact that the leading politicians are members of the Committee of the Regions, eg. the Marshal of Warmia-Mazury.

Ms Ann-Irene Saeternes said that the Norwegian funds could be utilised to strengthen the cooperation with the Russian partners.

Ms Malgorzata Samusjew stated that such projects could directly involve Polish, Russian and Lithuanian partners while complementary projects funded from other sources eg Swedish Institute, could involve partners from Sweden and Denmark.

Following the discussion, the ERB Executive Board decided to approve the ERB Action Plan 2018.

8. **Development of ERB 2030 Agenda**

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen updated the ERB Executive Board on the process of development of the ERB 2030 Agenda.

Currently the work of ERB has been guided by the ERB 2020 Agenda which focuses very much on developing the added value of cooperation through 3 main areas: lobbying; exchange activities and strategic actions (projects as tools with strategic link to ERB priorities).

The ERB 2030 Agenda should be based on 3 external agendas:

- South Baltic Agenda
- Baltic Sea Agenda
- European / Russian Agenda including future Cohesion Policy.

There will also be 3 thematic agendas:

- Youth and People-to-People Agenda
- Green Agenda
- Blue Agenda

In internal spheres of ERB activities, we should work more on the improvement of communication both within the organisation as well as outside.

ERB 2030 Agenda will be a strategic document directing the organisation's work in the coming years, the process will take approximately half a year with initial feedback after the Board meeting in Elbląg to be sent to the member organisations for internal discussions (so called regionals roundtables). Should all go according to the plan, the regional discussions would be summarised at the Board meeting in Klaipėda on 22-23rd May after which a draft document of the Agenda would be created for internal discussion. The process would hopefully be finalised in September at the last 2028 ERB Board meeting on Bornholm (25-26.09.2018).

The discussion about the Agenda could also take place during a round-trip of ERB member organisations that is being planned by the new ERB President during Spring and Summer 2018.

Commenting on the information, Ms Christina Mattisson said that the document should also include innovation as an important element of ERB work.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

9.

Potential enlargement of Euroregion Baltic

Mr Jan Martinsson informed the Executive Board on a potential enlargement of the ERB including the information on the procedure adopted by the organisation in case there is a request from a region or regional organisation to join the ERB as a full member (see relevant procedure attached).

Mr Martinsson said that a dialogue is being held with potential candidate the Skåne Association of Local Authorities (Kommunförbundet Skåne KFSK). During the process that started in the late 2017 representatives expressed interest in learning more about the work and achievements of the ERB to consider potential cooperation with the organisation. Based on the information presented, the KFS engaged in more direct discussion concerning the conditions of the membership, should such a decision to apply be taken by the KFSK.

Mr Martinsson stated that according to the procedure, the KFSK would have to apply for membership directly to the ERB President. Next, before the matter is discussed by the Executive Board, the ERB member organisations from the country of the applicant (Sweden) would have to give their opinion on the membership. The Executive Board would then discuss the application at its next meeting and make a decision to include the applicant organisation in the ERB.

Mr Martinsson stated that the KFSK was undergoing internal discussions on the membership and before making their decision to apply, they would like to participate in the next meeting of the Executive Board in Klaipeda as observers. After that they would make their decision on the application, which the ERB Executive Board could consider at its meeting on Bornholm on 25-26.09.2018.

Commenting on the information presented, Mr Lennart Förberg said that it would be valuable to discuss with the KFSK their expectations toward the organisation and activities they would like to pursue as a future member.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented and expressed its full support for the continuation of the process.

10.

Information about ERB projects

Mr Sebastian Magier updated the ERB Executive Board about the ERB involvement in different projects presented in the list of projects, with special focus on:

- South Baltic Programme – CaSYPoT, Interconnect and UMBRELLA
- Regions and SDGs and the organisation of a seminar in Stockholm on 7th March 2018
- “Baltic Sea Labour Partnership” – Swedish Institute project implemented by CBSS designed to further develop the work of the Baltic Sea Labour Forum and develop a large application to the ESF. Due to the withdrawal of the Polish partner the project

has turned to the ERB with a request to help with one activity and substitute for the Polish partner – assist in organising the BSLF Annual Round Table in Riga on 18.04.2018 by inviting Polish representatives to the event. To this effect the ERB would be transferred the amount of 15000 SEK prior to executing the activity. Being the observer at the BSLF, the ERB will of course be invited to take part in the Riga meeting.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented and supported the inclusion of ERB in the BSLP project.

11. **Information about ongoing cooperation with pan-Baltic organisations**

- Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation

Ms Ann-Irene Saeternes, Secretary General of BSSSC informed about the activities of the organisation planned for 2018.

In 2018 the chairmanship of the organisation will continue to be held by the Eastern Norway County Network (ENCN) from Norway. The upcoming meetings of the Board will be held in Stockholm in March and Kaliningrad in May. On 10-12.09.2018 the Annual Conference in Gdańsk will be held focusing on the theme of solidarity and participation. The organisation already cooperates well with ERB on the topics of youth cooperation (also including the UBC), but also other institutions on the EU level, especially with the Committee of the Regions. In 2019 the BSSSC will be co-organising with the Pomorskie Region the EUSBSR Forum in Gdańsk.

The BSSSC Policy Areas include sustainable development, transport and accessibility, culture and creative industries as well as growth and jobs. The organisation does not engage directly in project implementation but supports them as an associated partner.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

12. **Information about the City of Klaipeda bid for the status of the European Youth Capital 2021**

Ms Greta Tautraviciute from the City of Klaipeda presented information about the Klaipeda's second bid to title of the European Youth Capital 2021 and invited the ERB to actively support the process.

ERB Executive Board decided to give full support for Klaipeda in the EYC2021 process.

13. **Invitation to the Annual Forum of Kaliningrad Partner Regions**

Ms Liana Maximova invited the ERB Executive Board to participate in the VIII Forum of Kaliningrad Partner Regions to be held in Kaliningrad on 25-26.05.2018 in Kaliningrad (the final date was 22-23.05.2018). The Forum would focus on cross-border cooperation, culture and city planning. The registration would be open in March and details would be sent to the ERB secretariats.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented and expressed interest in participating in the Forum.

14.

Conclusion and closing

President of Euroregion Baltic, Ms Anne Thomas thanked the participants for their active participation in the Board meeting and closed the meeting of the ERB Executive Board.

Anne Thomas

Akko Karlsson

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President of Euroregion Baltic

Member of ERB Executive Board