

Euroregion Baltic Executive Board Meeting 6 April 2009, 13.00 – 15.00



Kalmar: Regionförbundet i Kalmar län,
Nygatan 34, 2nd floor Middleroom
Online: Marratech at <http://91.121.177.13:8000/>

Title	Final Minutes
Submitted by	SDD, International Permanent Secretariat
Summary / Note	This document provides the provisional minutes of the Board meeting held on 6 th April 2009.
Requested action	Signing

Participants

Mr Jacek Protas	ERB President, Warmińsko-Mazurskie
Mr Arunas Burksas	ERB Board member, Klaipeda County
Ms Marie-Louise Hilmersson	ERB Board member, Södra Småland
Mr Åke Nilsson	ERB Board member, Kalmar
Mr Per Ole Petersen	ERB Board member, Bornholm
Ms Suzanne Svensson	ERB Council member, Blekinge
Mr Niels Chresten Andersen	ERB Secretariat, Bornholm
Ms Lisa Andersson	YC3 Coordinator, Blekinge
Mr Ulf Andersson	ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland
Ms Elena Butorova	ERB Secretariat, Kaliningrad Region
Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski	Head of International Permanent Secretariat
Ms Marie Fridh	ERB Secretariat, Region Blekinge
Mr Victor Koshelev	ERB Secretariat, Kaliningrad Region
Mr PG Lindencrona	ERB Secretariat, Region Blekinge
Ms Victoria Snioliene	ERB Secretariat, Klaipeda County
Mr Rafał Wolski	ERB Secretariat, Wamińsko-Mazurskie
Ms Krystyna Wróblewska	ERB Secretariat, Pomorskie
Mr Piotr Zwolak	ERB Secretariat, Wamińsko-Mazurskie
Mr Ryszard Polakowski	ERB Homepage Designer

ERB EXECUTIVE BOARD AGENDA

- 13:00 – 13:00
1. **Opening**
- ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas welcomed the participants and opened this online meeting.
- 13:00 – 13:05
2. **Adoption of the agenda**
- No comments were submitted and the ERB Executive Board approved of the present agenda.
- 13:05 – 13:05
3. **Adoption of 11.09.08 ERB Board Meeting minutes**
- ERB Executive Board members approved of the minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting which took place in Kaliningrad on 22nd January 2009. Due to the nature of this online meeting, actual signatures will be placed by ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas and ERB Board member, Mr Per Ole Petersen at a later time.
- 13:05 – 13:35
4. **Information from the ERB President**
- The Danish ERB Secretariat, International Secretariat and the Marshal Office of Warminsko-Mazurskie had a working meeting on 18th March in Olsztyn and agreed to present the following proposals to the Board:
- 4.1 Change of date for an ERB Council meeting
- The originally agreed date (19-20th November 2009) was proposed to be moved to either 4-5th or 5-6th November 2009. The present delegations agreed to have the Council meeting on 5-6th November 2009. The location will be the Western part of the Warmian and Masurian region, but decided more specifically in the nearest future.
- 4.2 ERB Youth meeting
- ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas recalled that with the adoption of the new action plan, ERB partners agreed to hold annual youth events around ERB regions. Such an event should attract a wide spectrum of youth from our member regions and offer an interesting educational and sightseeing programme. The first proposal was that such an event is organised before the ERB Board meeting in June, on 7-8th June. However, with the elections to the European Parliament held on 7th June, this date seems now impossible. President Protas expressed hope that some cost related to such event (e.g. transport) could be partially co-financed from the Yc³ budget. He proposed that further details could be discussed in combination with the ERB Board meeting in Gdansk.
- ERB Board member, Mr Per Ole Petersen said it is a really good idea to organise meetings allowing more efficient anchoring of the ERB youth cooperation in the member regions. He fully supported the event.
- ERB Youth Board chair, Ms Cajsza Augustzén agreed that such events should help involve the youth in the regions in more active

cooperation. She informed that a kick-off conference for the youth project will be held in Gdańsk between 9 and 10th June 2009, pending decision by the South Baltic CBC Programme Steering Committee. She also informed that the Yc³ budget is strictly related to the project activities and thought that a solution should be to combine the planned project events with those extra ones organised by the regions.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by proposing to hold a working meeting to discuss further details of the youth event on 9th June. He added that this meeting will also be attended by Warmińsko-Mazurskie Coordinator for Nongovernmental Organisations in order to investigate the possibility to search regional partners in the youth cooperation.

ERB Board agreed to proceed in the proposed manner.

13:35 –
14:00

5. **Information from IPS**

5.1 New ERB homepage

Mr. S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented a newly designed ERB website. The pages were displayed by the website designer, Mr Ryszard Polakowski.

Mr. S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański explained that the idea was to make the website more presentable and modern looking, but also to give the ERB secretariats new opportunities to coordinate their work by creating intranet, common work spaces and project fork schemes.

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska thought the new website is both impressive and professional. Per Ole looks supported her view and stressed that the website will need regular updating, which should be a task of all the secretariats in the member regions.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by offering his compliments and asking all the ERB partners to submit their comments when they have a closer look at it and start regular usage. He asked the International Secretariat to consider these comments when giving the site its final shape.

5.2 Secretariat meeting on 2nd April

Mr. S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the Board of the outcome of the secretariat meeting which took place on 2nd April with the aim of discussing a new joint ERB project.

ERB Secretariats discussed the status of JDP related work within ERB Working Groups. The discussion had two goals: 1) to investigate missing themes in ERB cooperation and thus be able to pinpoint areas which should constitute a basis for a new joint project; and 2) to begin a process of mid-term evaluation of the implementation of ERB Joint Development Programme.

General comments included those on a quite evident absence of private sector of the triple helix cooperation in all Working Groups; insufficient participation of knowledge institutions; the need to have a very active political participation in the new project. It was also noted

that even when the implementation of projects begins, WGs should not be left to their own devices and just focus on the projects. They should continue to develop their activities also outside the scope of the projects. On the part of all the secretariats, coordination and exchange of information will be crucial.

The secretariats heard a project proposal from Blekinge and thought it was a good basis to continue further work. While the work is done, the following should be taken into account: added value for the individual regions, something that can prove relevance of ERB cooperation for them; concrete results must be generated while ERB institutional development and capacity building will be a natural by-product; implementing one of the Baltic Sea Strategy actions should be a good political message for the regions so one could be selected as a pilot – testing ground for something bigger in BSR; mapping of BSS and JDP activities in search for possible matches should be carried out.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen added the meeting was very fruitful thanks to all taking part. While new stakeholders of a joint project are still to be decided (SMEs, knowledge sector, etc), tangible results are a must.

Mr Ulf Andersson said it was agreed between the secretariats that a more concrete proposal will be presented to the Board on 9th June.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by noting that the discussion on the joint project is very important since projects constitute a very important sector of ERB cooperation. He urged the secretariats to continue their work and the member regions to offer necessary assistance. ERB Board members gave their full support.

5.3 ERB Board meeting on 9th June

Mr. S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański proposed that the Board meeting on 9th June has the following items on its agenda: 1) discussion in relation to a regional youth event in 2009; 2) presentation of a more developed description of a joint ERB project; 3) presentation of the outcome of the meetings held by Energy and Transport Working Groups which will be held in combination with the Executive Board meeting.

Ms Suzanne Svensson explained that the Transport Working Group will meet on 9th and is ready to present the result of their work to the Board if the Board meets in the afternoon. One other idea proposed by the Group is to organise a thematic discussion on transport issues during the ERB Council meeting in November.

Mr Ulf Andersson informed that the Energy Working Group has more projects in the pipeline (LED, submitted to the South Baltic was very positively evaluated by the assessors) and will be ready to make a presentation to the Board in June.

ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

14:00 –
14:20

6. **Preparation for the events with the Committee of the Regions**

6.1 ERB Board meeting and Baltic Sea Action Plan seminar at the Committee of the Regions

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska and Mr. S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the Board of the preparation status. Following the working meeting with Mr Uno Aldegren, the Chair of the Baltic Sea Regions' Commission at the Committee of the Regions, a letter making a formal request to co-organise the seminar on the Baltic Sea Action Plan by the Committee of the Regions and Euroregion Baltic is being prepared to be signed by ERB President and sent to Mr Aldegren. The meeting is planned to take place in Brussels on 7th October and will be followed by the ERB Executive Board meeting. Once the Committee of the Regions confirms the date, agendas for both meetings will be prepared and distributed together with the invitations.

With reference to the work that the European Commission is performing on the Baltic Sea Strategy Action Plan, Mr Niels Chresten Andersen expressed his astonishment at the way the process is run. Subsequent versions of the document are only available informally and from version to version become more and more complicated, with the latest one offering 4 headlines, 15 chapters and a lot of flagships. As feared before, everything became extremely confidential with no official consultation available anymore. From the point of view of ERB, he continued, we may get actions which will be extremely difficult to implement for organisations like ours. We are probably on the wrong track, with openness and transparency lacking.

Mr PG Lindencrona noted that at the CPMR meeting in Brussels last week a presentation of 5.0 version of the Baltic Sea Action Plan was made by DG Regio. It was announced that the drafting process was closed with the document sent out to national governments. He observed that a very important transport link between Karlskrona and Gdynia is missing, and thus intensive lobbying is being done by Blekinge and Pomorskie to address the problem.

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska agreed that as regions and ERB we should our most to make the process more open.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by saying preparation work on the seminars in Brussels is in progress. ERB Executive Board will be updated on both the preparation of the seminar and the status of the Baltic Sea strategy.

6.2 Conference on Baltic Sea Strategy and Eastern Partnership

Mr. Rafał Wolski informed the Board of the preparation for the conference which the Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie is co-organising with the Committee of the Region in Ryn between 15 and 17th September 2009. The conference will have two leading themes: Baltic Sea Strategy and Eastern Partnership. All ERB partners will be invited to take part. Ukrainian partners, he went on, will be invited as well to present what their expectations are towards these EU policies, what role in the BSR they could play, and what potential lies their geographic position between the Baltic and Black Seas.

The Board members took note of the information presented.

14.20 – 7. **South Baltic 2nd Call**
14.50

7.1 projects submitted by ERB Working Groups

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen informed the Board about the second call for proposals in the South Baltic CBC Programme. 24 project applications were submitted and 22 went through formal assessment. 2 projects (including LED submitted by Energy Working Group) were awarded A (recommended for approval), 8 projects (including MOMENT, BaltNet and Yc³, submitted by Water, Social Working Groups, and Youth Board) were awarded B (recommended for approval under conditions) and 12 projects (including DISKE and CELA submitted by SME/Innovation Working Group) were awarded C (recommended for rejection). In general terms, the quality of assessment improved significantly but very strict.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański noted that while the four projects recommended for approval should finally be approved and implemented, he very much hoped it would be possible for the Steering Committee to also give the green light to DISKE.

ERB Executive Board members took note of the information presented, and shared their hopes for the future implementation of the Working Group projects.

7.2 capacity building project proposal

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the Board that the South Baltic Steering Committee will also discuss an idea of a project which would aim at activating potential of project generation on the local (and regional) level, enhancing capacity and initiatives building on the local level, and detecting the most important areas for the SB sustainable development. The idea was a result of the meeting of contact points and regional contact points which took place in Gdansk on 29th January 2009.

During a discussion some criticism was voiced against the project idea. Among negative comments: there is no need to build new structures in the Programme area, contact points should not have the role of constructing and implementing projects, it can be seen that the Programme has its own project securing extra funds for the work of its contact points.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas concluded by observing that there is unanimity shared by the participants of the meeting in their approach to this particular project idea.

14.50 – 8. **Any Other Business**
15.00

Mr Rafał Wolski informed of a new initiative originating in Switzerland to define a list of new 7 world wonders. Among candidates to be shortlisted is the Warmian and Masurian Lake District. Mr Wolski asked all the ERB partners to support their region by submitting votes in the ongoing website campaign. Votes can be placed at: <http://www.mazurycudnatury.pl/>.

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas joined in the appeal, expressing his hope that Warmia and Mazury will finally find its well deserved place on the list of new seven great wonders of the world.

15.00 9. **Closing**

ERB President, Mr Jacek Protas closed the meeting, wishing everyone good Easter holidays.

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Jacek Protas
ERB President

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Per Ole Petersen
ERB Board member