

Euroregion Baltic
Council Meeting
Elbląg,
Warmia & Mazury, Poland
5 March 2010



Title Final Minutes

Submitted by International Permanent Secretariat

Summary / Note This document provides final minutes of the ERB Council meeting which took place on 5th March 2010.

Requested action Adoption

1. **Welcome**

Mr Artur Zieliński, Deputy Mayor of Elbląg welcomed the participants of the Euroregion Baltic Council meeting and presented the city's recent development achievements, mostly financed within the existing EU-funded regional programme.

2. **Opening**

Mr Jacek Protas, President of Euroregion Baltic opened this meeting of the Council, offering special welcome to the new Marshal of Pomorzanian Region and new member of the ERB Board, Mr Mieczysław Struk, General Consul of Poland in the Kaliningrad Region, Mr Marek Gołkowski, and Mr Valenti Sallas i Campmany, head of the international relations in the Department of Culture of the Government of Catalonia.

In the special address, Mr Jacek Protas, President of Euroregion Baltic awarded Mr Niels Chresten Andersen with the Honorary Badge of Merit for his contribution to the development of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region.

3. **Adoption of 05.11.2009 ERB Council meeting minutes and of present agenda**

ERB Council approved the minutes of the 05.11.2009 Council meeting and adopted the agenda presented for this meeting without alterations.

4. **Adoption of the ERB Council statement**

After the presentation by Mr Per Gudmund Lindencrona and a short discussion, the Council of Euroregion Baltic approved the political statement on the ongoing revision of the TEN transport corridors recommended by the ERB Working Group on Transport Infrastructure.

5. **2009 Reports**

Reports were delivered with reference to the activities planned in the 2009-2010 Action Plan within its four priorities, as well as to the ERB initiatives taken in the past year which were originally not included within the scope of this action plan.

5.1 **Priority 1**

This priority, related to the implementation of the ERB Joint Development Programme was reported by Mr PG Lindencrona (on transport), Mr Victor Koshelev (on environment), Mr Per Ole Petersen (on rural development), Ms Kora Stańczyk (on social dimension), Mr Roger Kaliff (on water forum), Ms Mariana Johannesson (on energy) and Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzański (on SMEs and innovation).

5.2 **Priority 2**

This priority, related to cultural and societal integration within ERB was reported by Ms Elise Wåhlin, ERB Youth Board member, and Ms Joanna Zielińska, administering the Local Initiative Working Group.

5.3 **Priority 3**

This priority, related to the implementation of the ERB Information and Communication Strategy was reported by Mr. Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański.

5.4 **Priority 4**

This priority, related to the enhancement of ERB institutional capacities was reported by Mr Piotr Zwolak.

5.5 **Information from the Polish secretariat**

Mr Zdzisław Olszewski informed the Council on the recent activities conducted by the secretariat of the Association of Polish Communes in order to investigate possibilities of involving Russian partners in the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation, including the presentation of the subject made at the 10th meeting of the Polish – Russian Cooperation Council which took place on 25 – 26th February 2010 in Olsztyn.

5.6 **President's Conclusion**

Mr Jacek Protas, the President of Euroregion Baltic concluded by saying:

Thank you for presenting the reports regarding the realization of Action Plan in 2009. Last year ERB was very active in many fields, although some of the plans had to be postponed until the cooperation review process will have been completed. However, in my opinion, we can be satisfied with the ERB's achievements. The future looks optimistic. ERB is a flexible organization, that has to react to occurring circumstances and adjust its structures. Cooperation review process is to enable it.

Looking back to 2009 the continuing increase of ERB's political activity on the international level needs to be emphasized. The EU's new initiatives such as the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Partnership are vital for the cooperation within ERB.

The relations with the Committee of Regions are also becoming more significant. This has its reflection in cooperative organization of such events like the September seminar in Ryn entitled 'Around the Baltic – European Inspirations', devoted to the interregional cooperation in the Baltic Sea region and cooperation with the Ukrainian partners or the October joint seminar on the implementation of EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Brussels.

The cooperation with other Baltic interregional organizations and within the South Baltic Cross-Border Co-operation Programme is being continued. ERB is being active in debates on future EU policies. All of that made the ERB a renown brand.

ERB is also tracking the progress of events around the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation. Therefore, we shouldn't abandon the idea of organizing the Baltic Congress or a conference on cross-border cooperation. Supporting the interpersonal contacts, especially the ones of youth, is becoming more important in the ERB's action plan.

The Youth Board has become a grounded structure within the ERB and its inseparable part. A major part in achieving this status has been played by the Yc³ youth project, that started in 2009 and has been creating an opportunity for the youths to show their initiative and making use of their potential ever since. The ERB youth also met in Olsztyn at an photographic and painting open-air event. The aforementioned initiatives will be continued also in 2010.

*In 2009 the ERB Working Groups were implementing their projects and other endeavors. The following projects have already started:
MOMENT – carried out by the Water Working Group,
LED - carried out by the Energy Working Group,
DISKE - carried out by the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Working Group.*

Last year a conference for Local Action Groups was organized by the Rural Development Working Group. Work on an ERB's future common project has been initiated. I think we can agree, that a project such as this is essential. The discussions we've had so far are a good foundation for such project. The key task will be to use optimally the regions' existing resources and to build a good partnership with the participation of external institutions.

In the future the ERB will continue to listen to the ERB's inhabitants needs and try to satisfy them focusing on those areas where it holds the greatest resources and experience.

6. Transfer of ERB Presidency

Following the discussions and preliminary decisions of the ERB Parties, the Council of Euroregion Baltic adopted the resolution of the following phrasing:

Recognising the exceptional situation in which the Governor's Administration of Klaipeda County is not able to undertake to hold the ERB Presidency in 2010, the Council of Euroregion Baltic decides to suspend at this one time points 1.10 and 3 of Paragraph 5 of the ERB Statutes enforcing the rotation of ERB presidencies every year and hereby approves of the recommendation

by the Polish Party of Euroregion Baltic to appoint Mr Jacek Protas to hold the ERB Presidency in 2010. Consequently, the Council of Euroregion Baltic appoints Mr Mihail Pluhin as the ERB Vice-President.

ERB Council members thus enabled the current presidency of Mr Jacek Protas, Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, to continue until the Spring Council in 2011. The ERB Parties also took note of this following sequence of ERB Presidencies in the coming years:

- 2011: Russian presidency, and Lithuanian vice-presidency
- 2012: Lithuanian presidency, and Swedish vice-presidency
- 2013: Swedish presidency, and Danish vice-presidency
- 2014: Danish presidency, and Polish vice-presidency
- 2015: Polish presidency, and Russian vice-presidency
- 2016: Russian presidency, and Lithuanian vice-presidency
- 2017: Lithuanian presidency, and Swedish vice-presidency
- 2018: Swedish presidency, and Danish vice-presidency
- 2019: Danish presidency, and Polish vice-presidency
- 2020: Polish presidency, and Russian vice-presidency

7. Adoption of the 2010 Action Plan

The Council members approved the 2010 Action Plan.

8. ERB Cooperation Review Process

The overall objective of the review process is to set the agenda for the ERB cooperation until 2020. Such an agenda shall include the revised goals of the cooperation, as well as specific objectives and activities planned with the view of reaching the goals.

8.1 Background & Objectives

Mr. Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański presented the background and objectives of the review process, as outlined in the road map.

8.2 Adoption of the ERB Cooperation Review Road Map

ERB Council members adopted the ERB Cooperation Review Road Map (see attachment: ERB Cooperation Review Road Map.pdf.) submitted by the task force as a result of its meeting in Copenhagen on 11th February 2010.

9. Closing

Mr Jacek Protas, the President of Euroregion Baltic, closed this ERB Council meeting.

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Jacek Protas
ERB President

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Mihail Pluhin
ERB Vice-President