



EUROREGION BALTIC ANNUAL REPORT 2016



EUROREGION BALTIC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Aleksander Bogdanov	ERB President, Deputy Chair of Regional Government of Kaliningrad, Russia
Akko Karlsson	ERB Vice President, Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Kalmar County, Sweden
Carina Bengtsson	ERB Board Deputy Member, Member of the Council, Region Kronoberg, Sweden
Britt-Louise Berndtsson	ERB Board Member, Member of the Board, Region Kronoberg, Sweden
Gustaw Marek Brzezina	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
Wiesław Byczkowski	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland
Lennarth Förberg	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge, Sweden
Vytautas Grubliauskas	ERB Board Member, Chair of Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
Grzegorz Grzelak	ERB Board Deputy Member, Chair of International and Interregional Committee of Pomorskie Regional Parliament, Poland
Alla Ivanova	ERB Deputy Board Member, Minister-Head of Agency for International Affairs and Interregional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region, Russia
Christina Mattisson	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge, Sweden
Maria F. Kjaergaard	ERB Deputy Board Member, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
Tautrimas Rupulevičius	ERB Board Member, Chair of ERB Youth Board, Klaipeda Region, Poland
Åke Nilsson	ERB Board Member, Member of the Executive Committee, Regional Council in Kalmar County, Sweden
Per Ole Petersen	ERB Board Member, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
Mieczysław Struk	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland
Carina Bengtsson	ERB Board Deputy Member, 1st Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council, Södra Småland, Sweden
Grzegorz Grzelak	ERB Board Deputy Member, Chair of International and Interregional Committee of Pomorskie Regional Parliament, Poland
Hanna Pruchniewska	ERB Board Deputy Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of the Association of Communes, Poland
Robert Olesen	ERB Board Member, Member of the Board of Regional Council, Region Kronoberg, Sweden
Suzanne Svensson	ERB Board Deputy Member, Member of Parliament, Sweden
Witold Wróblewski	ERB Board Member, Chair of Board of the Association of Communes, Poland
Joanna Zielińska	ERB Deputy Board Member, Deputy of Board of the Association of Communes, Poland

In 2016 Euroregion Baltic Executive Board met on 8th April 2016 in Svetlogorsk (Russia), 9th June 2016 in Rønne (Denmark) and 8th November 2016 in Stockholm (Sweden).

EUROREGION BALTIC YOUTH BOARD

Tautrimas Rupulevičius	Chair of Youth Board, Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
Veronika Kryukova	Deputy Chair of ERB Youth Board, Kaliningrad Region
Mateusz Kryżba	Chair of Youth Board, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
Mateusz Ankiewicz	ERB Youth Board Deputy Member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
Brigita Barkauskaitė	ERB Deputy Board Member, Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
Mikkel Holm Tved	ERB Youth Board Member, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Sabine Lyngberg	ERB Youth Board Member, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Maksymilian Lewandowski	ERB Youth Board Member, Association of Communes, Poland
Adam Świeczkowski	ERB Deputy Board Member, Pomorskie Region, Poland
Jędrzej Tadrzak	ERB Youth Board Member, Pomorskie Region, Poland
Alexandra Winberg	ERB Youth Board Member, Regional Council in Kalmar County/Kumulus

In 2016 **Euroregion Baltic Youth Board** met on 7th April 2016 in Kaliningrad, Russia and on 6th June 2016 in Nexø, Denmark.

Focus area 1: Lobbying

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

1. In 2016 ERB participated in the implementation of ETC and ENI programmes in the BSR:

1.1. In 2016 ERB was actively engaged in the implementation of the South Baltic Programme. The ERB's engagement was particularly important in:

1.1.1. The second meeting of the Monitoring Committee on 26-27 April 2016 in Kalmar, Sweden where delegates to the Monitoring Committee (MC) of the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 met to discuss the results of the 1st call for proposals. Following in-depth and detailed analysis of each of the 27 proposals, they decided to approve 10 projects for funding. The



resources from the European Regional Development Fund to be allocated to these projects amount to approximately 11,4 m EUR (15% of the Programme financial capacity). The projects approved cover all specific objectives of the Programme.

Among the approved projects one has been supported directly by Euroregion Baltic and its partners. The CaSYPoT project will strive to create an ERB cooperation network around the theme of strategic youth policy by involving universities, municipalities and cross-border cooperation structure and youth organisations. Led by the Regional Council in Kalmar County the project will deliver its results over 3 years of intensive capacity building activities.

1.1.2. Establishment and participation in two meetings of the Working Group on Simplification in which Head of the ERB International Secretariat was also directly involved. The Group met two time times in Warsaw, Poland. During its work it focused on the details of the Programme Manual making it more user-friendly, logical and simple. During the works Euroregion Baltic focused especially on those provisions of the Manual which were of the importance to its



stakeholders i.e. municipalities, NGOs and all other potential beneficiaries which in the past found it more difficult to engage in South Baltic project s. During the WG meeting ERB also presented the proposal for a strategic capacity building project for small and less experienced beneficiaries of the Programme, that could be

implemented within the Priority Area 5 of the Programme.

1.1.3. On 11th and 12th October 2016 in Växjö, the ERB International Secretariat represented Euroregion Baltic at the meeting of the Interreg South Baltic Programme Monitoring Committee. Following fruitful and efficient discussions, the Committee decided to approve the following 12 projects for funding. The resources from the European Regional Development Fund to be allocated to these projects amount to approximately 13,6 m EUR (17,5% of the Programme financial capacity). The projects approved cover the Programme priorities 1, 2, 4 and 5. An official communication to the applicants will follow shortly.

1.1.4. ERB International Secretariat supported the bodies of the Programme in their works by engaging in a number of additional activities. For example, the Head of IPS took part in 3 recruitment committees created by the Managing Authority to recruit a new Project Officers and new Head for the Joint Secretariat in Gdańsk. Such practical activities with the Programme will also be continued in the future as they promote the good spirit of cooperation and reciprocity in mutual relations.

1.1.5. In the second half of 2017 the ERB initiated the development of the new strategic capacity building project for the South Baltic Programme entitled Umbrella. The project builds on the successful implementation of the Capacity Building Project implemented in 2010-2011 which targeted similar groups of stakeholders of South Baltic Programme in past perspective. On the national level it rests on vast experience of LP in developing and managing different small cross-border funds eg.

Phare Small Project Fund 1999-2006 with 225 projects supporting small and medium enterprises and educational organisations, and Small Cross-Border and Inter-Regional Grant Fund funded by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism in 2009-2012 with more than 80 micro-projects. The project is also based



on the experiences of the two Seagull (BSR Interreg III B) project designed to develop cross-border potential of LP and its ERB partners. It will also create synergies and closer ties with two current projects - South Baltic CaSYPoT and Public Innovators Network, and Interreg BSR project Let's Communicate.

The research shows that the South Baltic Programme (SBP) is still poorly available to small organisations, because of their insufficient institutional and financial capacities. In general among the SBP stakeholders there are still communication barriers due to lack of English language skills, lack of competences and capacities for project development and implementation, especially by small local actors. As a consequence, low-level international activity of small actors can be observed. This leads to the fact, that local community actors

(especially newcomers and small organisations) are hampered in participating in cross-border cooperation projects, thus in using cross-border cooperation as an instrument for local policy development. To address these challenges, Umbrella project aims at developing know-how capacities for small local and regional organisations in the South Baltic Programme area to initiate their active participation in the cross-border cooperation in their daily activities. To achieve this goal, project implements significantly wider approach (in comparison with the regular projects financed by the SBP within Priority Area 5), going much beyond typical scope of projects' intervention. This is determined by a strategic decision of the partnership to address different levels of capacity building processes – from single institutional capacity of potential project partner, via micro-activities addressed to the micro organisations till strategic capacity building on the programme macro level. To ensure relevant spectrum of competences, the partnership structure covers whole geographical South Baltic region and consists of 6 Project Partners and 9 Associated Organisations representing regional authorities, macro-regional structures and scientific / training institutions, partly involved in the previous Capacity Building Project implemented in the programming period 2007-2013.

- 1.1.6. In 2016 the ERB also joined a strong partnership headed by Region Blekinge which developed the INTERCONNECT - a joint project to break the car dependence trend in the South Baltic area.

Better and more sustainable public transport services for regional and cross-border travels



have a key role in curbing the car-reliant mobility trend in the South Baltic area. The current offer of the public transport hardly meets customer expectations for easiness and attractiveness of regional and cross-border journeys, with scarce range of integrated ticket options for multimodal rides, difficult access to one-spot passenger information and no clear benefits for users when choosing the public transport over car.

A number of stakeholders teamed up in a seed project financed by the Swedish Institute to address this challenge. Through a series of thematic seminars an international network of professionals dealing with policy-making and management in the area of public transport was built to identify the shared problems and agree on the way to address them.

A common obstacle faced by planners and managers of public transport is that market incentives and promotion campaigns in the local and regional communities to change travel behaviour are not effective if not based on well-identified preferences, needs and expectations for no-car mobility – not only now but also in the years to come. Although many good public transport services and products in the South Baltic area are available locally, they are very scattered and the good practice has never been effectively exchanged. Also, the lack

of cross-sectoral dialogue hinders exploiting the potential of the public transport services to stimulate socio-economic growth, e.g. by contributing to more competitive labour markets and tourism.

The seed project helped set the direction for further activities and submit a project application to the Interreg South Baltic Programme. The enlarged partnership, consisting now of 9 organisations from 6 countries and several associated bodies, intends to enhance sustainable cross-border mobility in the South Baltic area through joint capacity-building, pilot demonstration and advocacy actions for high quality and sustainable regional and cross-border public transport services.

If approved by the Programme's Monitoring Committee in May 2017, the project will map the current and future mobility needs for in the South Baltic area and help the public transport organisations and public authorities respond to them with adequate services and products, such as joint ticketing and information solutions for cross-border travels between the partner areas. In addition, the project will connect the stakeholders representing various competence sectors of relevance to the public transport, towards a more systematic cooperation in the South Baltic area.

Project partnership boasts a wide, diverse partnership of Region Blekinge (Lead Partner, SE); Self-government of the Pomorskie Region (PL); The Hanseatic Institute for Entrepreneurship and Regional Development at the University of Rostock (DE); Hanseatic City of Rostock (DE); Municipality of Guldborgsund (DK); Klaipeda Public Transport Authority (LT); Blekinge Institute of Technology (SE); Euroregion Baltic International Secretariat (PL) and Viimsi Municipality (EE).

The project will run between June 2017 – May 2020 with the total budget of ca. 3,5 MEUR

2. participating in the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR):

2.1. ERB continued to be present at main EUSBSR events:

2.1.1. From 19-20 October 2016 tourism representatives convened for the 9th Baltic Sea Tourism Forum (BSTF) in Pärnu / Estonia. The international convention was hosted by the City of Pärnu and University of Tartu, Pärnu College in cooperation with the Policy Area Tourism in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Tourist Board and together with a group of like-minded partners.



The 9th BSTF focused on seasonality and sustainability. Improvements and development potentials in the Baltic Sea region under the dedicated themes were discussed by international tourism experts, both from the political-strategic level and the operational-private sector. An adopted line-up of presentations, panels and workshops secured two

interesting days for the participants. In addition, pre- and post-convention tours provided an insight on the development of tourism offers and services in Pärnu and the surrounding area.

2.1.2. On 15th September 2016 in Vilnius Euroregion Baltic participated in an international conference organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, together with the Lithuanian Association of Local Authorities. During the conference entitled “Moving Forward. Implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) – Role of Local Authorities” more than 80 representatives of Lithuanian municipalities learnt more about the EU Baltic Sea Strategy and opportunities it offers to Lithuania and the region for sustainable economic development.

“The Baltic Sea region is one of the most dynamically developing regions in Europe. We need to better understand the benefits of regional co-operation which is a tool helping us to improve not only the Baltic region’s competitiveness and well-being, but also to effectively implement national strategies “- said Deputy Foreign Minister Neris Germanas. The participants were introduced to several examples of international cooperation organisations and networks engaged in the implementation of EUSBSR – CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Association of Municipalities of Klaipeda Region, EUSBSR PA Education, Swedish Institute and Euroregion Baltic.



3. Promoting ERB during other events:

3.1. Cooperation of Regions in the Baltic Sea Area was the title of a workshop organised on 15th April 2016 in Saint Petersburg by the Brandenburg Region within the framework of the 13th German Week. The workshop gathered regional political representatives, international experts and members of pan-Baltic organisations. Euroregion Baltic contributed to the discussion by giving presentation on the work of ERB with special focus on current priorities under the Russian presidency. The meeting also offered valuable opportunities to discuss future cooperation within different formats including the upcoming EUSBSR Forum in Stockholm.

3.2. A match-making seminar between Russian and Swedish municipalities took place in Kaliningrad on

28-29th April 2016. The goal of the seminar organised by ICLD (Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy) was to



rekindle cross-border cooperation on the local level by identifying common challenges in the field of energy/environment and inclusion of people with disabilities and coming up with joint cross-border project proposals which then will be submitted to a special call for proposals funded within the ICLD programme. The ERB helped to facilitate the programme on the territory of the Kaliningrad Region and was also engaged in further activities supporting this cooperation.

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. 7th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders

The 2016 ERB Forum changed its typical formula to better synergise with the 7th EUSBSR Forum in



Stockholm on 8-9th November 2016. To this participated in a workshop on youth affairs organised by BSSSC in co-operation with Union of Baltic Cities called "Nothing on Us without Us" on November. The ERB Youth was represented by Tautrimas Rupulevičius from Klaipeda and Alexandra Winberg from Kumulus, as well as by ERB Vice President Akko Karlsson.

The main message from the workshop was that youth should

be talked to and not just talked about and young people should be included in all fields of decision-making not just youth affairs. The success of the seminar means that the cooperation among the organisations will continue in 2017 with another seminar on youth cooperation in Berlin in June 2017, and a joint project on youth policy reform in the Baltic Sea Region in 2018.

4.2. ERB Executive Board meetings

4.2.1. The first 2016 the meetings of Euroregion Baltic were held on 7-8th April 2016 in Kaliningrad and Svetlogorsk in Kaliningrad Region, Russia.

During the meeting of the Executive Board on 8th April 2016 in Svetlogorsk the ERB Presidency was handed over from Pomorskie



Region to Kaliningrad Region with Mr Aleksander Bogdanov, Deputy Chairman of Kaliningrad Regional Government assuming the position of the President of Euroregion Baltic. The ERB Executive Board will be asked to approve the activity report for 2015 and Action Plan for 2016 – 2017 specifying goals and expected results of our work in the two coming years. The meetings also saw the transfer of Chairpersonship within the ERB Youth Board, which will take place at its meeting on 7th April 2016 in Kaliningrad when Mr Tautrimas Rupulevičius from Klaipeda Region assumed the position of Youth Board's Chairperson. Also on 7th April 2016 in Kaliningrad an information seminar was held that showcased European Territorial Cooperation programmes and Swedish international development instruments in support of Russian stakeholders active in cross-border cooperation in Euroregion Baltic.



4.2.2. Between 8-9th June 2016 the ERB stakeholders met on the island of Bornholm to discuss current and upcoming cooperation initiatives within the organisation in the area of water management, youth policy development and capacity building for local and regional actors. Hosted by the Regional Municipality of Bornholm the ERB meetings included the general meeting of the Executive Board as well as two dedicated events – ERB Water Forum and Youth Board meeting. The first day of meetings included the Water Forum which was co-organised by the Regional Council in Kalmar which is leading the ERB cooperation in the area of water management and chairs the ERB Water Core Group, a specialised working body gathering both politicians and experts in the field. The Forum focused on the identification of challenges and opportunities for the Baltic Sea and its environment and included an intervention from Mr Mikhail Durkin, Executive Secretary of Coalition Clean Baltic. It was followed by presentations and discussions about the future activities of the ERB Water Core Group and potential ERB water project tackling the most important challenges identified by the stakeholders. The Forum was preceded by a study visit to the Rønne Wastewater Treatment Plant where participants learnt about modern solutions of cleaning waste water. The ERB Youth Board met on the same day to discuss the participation of ERB in the upcoming project Capacity Building for Strategic Youth Policy and Transnational Cooperation (CASYPOT) as well as the organisation of a joint seminar on Baltic organisation on youth policy during the 7th Annual Forum of EUSBSR in Stockholm. Also practical issues connected to conducting daily coordination of ERB YB were discussed with ideas being put forward for EVS volunteers or Erasmus interns to be hosted by the organisation one of ERB member organisations.

The ERB Executive Board met on 9th June 2016 and was chaired by Ms Akko Karlsson, ERB Vice President. Among discussion points, apart from summarising the previous meetings the day before, were strategic aspects of cooperation with the Kaliningrad region presented by Mr Arne Grove, Honorary Consul of Denmark in Kaliningrad as well as involvement of ERB in development and implementation of new projects, especially the CASYPOT project. The Board was also informed about project initiatives developed by the Bornholm Museum.

4.2.3. On 8th November 2015 the ERB Executive Board met in Stockholm, Sweden. The discussion focused on the involvement of ERB in further South Baltic projects, especially Umbrella and Interconnect. More focus was also put on the strengthening of cooperation with other pan-Baltic organisations, especially the BSSSC and UBC in the context of youth cooperation at the 7th EUSBSR Forum in Stockholm.

4.3. ERB Secretariats maintained regular contacts:

4.3.1. Via continuous email exchange

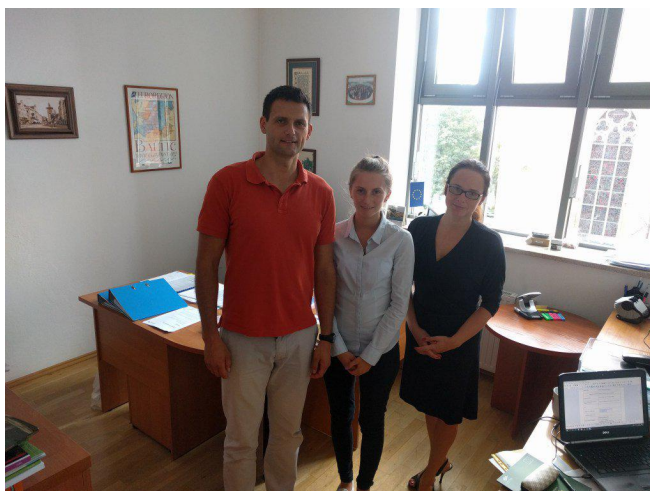
4.3.2. During online meetings held on 10th March, 19th April, 30th May, 7th September, 3rd October and 13th December 2016.

4.3.3. During a face-to-face meeting in Elbląg on 2-3rd February 2016. The meeting was dedicated mostly to the drafting of the ERB Action Plan for 2015-2016 with new ideas on lobbying and exchange initiatives proposed for further consideration. Also the ERB Secretariats discussed strategic areas of cooperation including youth issues, business-to-business and water cooperation. Finally on the agenda were practical matters concerning upcoming Executive Board meetings and 7th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders.

5. strengthening ERB internally:

5.1. As of 1st August 2016 the ERB International Secretariat hired a new Project Manager. Ms Agata Ludwiczak took the position of the Deputy Head of International Secretariat responsible for the implementation of the CASYPOT (Capacity Building for Strategic Youth Policy and Transnational Cooperation) project, a new ERB strategic project dedicated to the development of youth policies in the cooperation area.

A graduate of philosophy and international trade at the Universities of Poznań and Gdańsk, Ms Ludwiczak has several years of experience in initiation and management of cross-border project implemented within the South Baltic Programme 2007-2013 and the Lithuania-Poland-Russia Programme 2007-2013. She also has significant experience in working on promotion and dissemination of information within the projects. In addition, she has been working as an independent consultant on preparation of project proposals to various programmes in the area of social policy, culture and entrepreneurship development. Finally, it is also worth mentioning that Ms Ludwiczak is now finalising her PhD studies at the University of Gdańsk with a thesis focusing directly on the implementation of the people-to-people projects within the first edition of the South Baltic CBC Programme 2007-2013.



5.2. Between August-December 2016 the ERB International Permanent Secretariat staff has expanded and included a young volunteer from Poland. Paulina Lieder is a student of Economic Entrepreneurship at the Faculty of Economics of the State School of Higher Professional Education in Poland where she is currently writing a dissertation in which she is comparing the current status of development of different renewable energy sources in Poland, Germany, Italy and Norway.

Apart from her studies she has already been studying and working abroad. As a part of the Erasmus+

programme she studied at the University of Foggia and later became involved as a volunteer at the university's International Erasmus Office where she worked for more than 2 months with international students.

At the university in Elbląg she is involved in the work of the SENEKA Student Scientific Association. She speaks very good English and is able to handle varied assignments connected to the daily work of the IPS.

Her responsibilities included assistance in the implementation of the CASYPOT project as well as other tasks related to project development. Once fully integrated in the IPS working structure, she will also support the work of the ERB Youth Board.

6. supporting youth cooperation within ERB Youth Board:

6.1. In 2016 main focus within this area of cooperation was put on the implementation of CaSYPoT Capacity Building for Strategic Youth Policy and Transnational Cooperation, to better reflect the strategic orientation of the South Baltic Programme. In the project the ERB (the Association of Polish Communes as a formal project partner) would be working as a project partner with the total budget of total budget of 63 109,00 EUR. This significant involvement would still allow ERB to implement many youth related activities. In all the ERB's participation would be beneficial for the organisation and strengthen its youths cooperation agenda.

6.2. The CASYPOT project kicked-off in Emmaboda, Sweden on 20-21 September 2016. The project aims at cross-border network for developing strategic knowledge-based youth policies. The first meeting of the project included the representatives of Project and Associated Partners from the Regional Council in Kalmar County, Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic, Elbląg Europa Association, Emmaboda Municipality, Gusev Municipality (represented by



Secondary School 3), Klaipeda University, Kumulus, Linnaeus University, Secretariat for Youth of the West Pomeranian Region (representing BSSSC), South Baltic Programme Joint Secretariat, State Budget Establishment in Kaliningrad Region "Youth Center", Svetlogorsk District Administration, UBC Youthful Cities Commission. Integrated in the CASYPOT youth project is the CASYPOT-RU project which involves partners from Kaliningrad Regional Government, Kant University and municipalities of Svetlogorsk and Gusev. The project is funded by the Swedish

Institute and allows Kaliningrad partners to directly participate within a South Baltic project, thus bringing important partners to joint cooperation on youth issues.

The meeting started with welcome words from the Board of Emmaboda municipality and Regional Council of Kalmar County. The meeting was also attended by Polish volunteers from Elblag Europe Association and the representative of the Youth Board ERB from Sweden. Young people have made a lot of interesting comments about the project and presented ideas for future activities within the project.

The meeting was devoted to communication strategy, financing and reporting. At this stage of project implementation an important role in the discussion was adopting survey to local context and add local questions. This subject showed differences in cultural, political, legal and organizational between partners from Sweden, Lithuania, Poland and Russia.

Scientists, representatives of youth organizations and municipalities of the countries involved in the project presented great commitment in the preparation of questionnaires which resulted in a very efficient collaboration during the workshops.



6.3. The meeting in Kaliningrad Russia on 24-25 November 2016 was the next important stage of work on the Russian part of the project CaSYPoT-Ru – Capacity Building for Strategic Youth Policy and Transnational Cooperation. At the meeting discussions on important issues were held and significant solutions concerning the project were developed.

The meeting began with a presentation about Russian project partners taking part in the project and their activities including a relevant research and analysis in the field of: leisure, school,

politics and society, security, health, work, family and future. Next the representatives of the schools in the cities of Svetlogorsk and Gusev presented their involvement in the project.

Another part of the meeting was the presentation about Swedish LUPP – the survey methods, results and changes implemented by municipalities and local governments based on the analysis of the collected data.. The results showed observable increase in satisfaction oy young people with the implemented changes.

After the project presentation and discussions about the survey, work in groups took place. Its purpose was to make better survey taking into account the views of each partners and analysis of the differences in the education system of each country. The obtained solutions were adapted to the language of the country and the different national contexts.

The conditions for the pilot survey and the proper survey were established. It was also decided how the data would be collected and analysed by universities. The partners concluded that discussions with the youth will be the next step.

The last part of the meeting was a discussion in groups about potential problems or barriers, as well as suggestions about any organizational issues. The meeting closed with a discussion about the CaSYPoT website functionality .

The CaSYPoT-Ru is financed by Swedish Institute and is complementary with the project Capacity building for Youth Policy and Strategic Transnational cooperation-CaSYPoT is part-financed from the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 through the European Regional Development Fund.

- 6.4. On 14th September 2016 in Hämeenlinna, Finland representatives of ERB Youth Board participated in the 2016 Annual Event of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC). The meeting gathered young active people involved in youth cooperation on both ERB, BSSSC and the Union of the Baltic Cities. During the meeting participants discussed two important topics – cultural inclusion and the vision for the Baltic Sea Region after 2030. The results of the



discussion served as an input to the joint seminar that was held together with UBC and BSSSC at the 7th Annual EUSBSR Forum in Stockholm on 8th Nov 2016.



- 6.5. In 2016 ERB Youth Board continued to facilitate its work with the help of European Voluntary Service (EVS). Youth Board stands as a partner in several regional projects focused on youth policy in the Baltic Sea region. Two of them was Erasmus+ Key Action 1. YB agreed to be one of 3 organisation taking part in youth exchange and simulation how to provide dialogue with local authorities from youth perspective and also concerning youth entrepreneurship. Unfortunately both projects hasn't been funded. Youth Board also agreed long-term informal

partnership with three polish EVS receiving organisation to grant to access to European Volunteers.

- 6.6. During 2016 the ERB IPS continued its effort to apply for a hosting institution status within the Erasmus+ project run by Italian Universities entitled Universities for EU Projects Culture. Within the second call for proposal ERB managed to selected a student from the University of Padova who would implement her traineeship between April and September 2017.

- 6.7. In October 2016 one of the ERB team members, Damian Ciachorowski participated in the European Youth Conference in Kosice organised by the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The 4-day event gathered around 150 members of



the National Youth Board, the Ministries and European Commission representatives. They were deciding about the recommendations in the field of the Youth Affairs in the frame of the structured dialogue of Danish-Slovak-Maltese Trio Presidency. It was really intensive event with a lot of different meetings, online voting, working groups ect. What is needed to be highlighted, all that event on every steps was organised by youth. – refers Damian Ciachorowski, the team member of ERB International Secretariat. The EU Youth Conference finished with the agreement of all members on „Joint recommendation of the Structured Dialogue on Youth”. There are 16 of them in the fields from education through mobility and unemployment.

6.8. Euroregion Baltic has been featured in the latest edition of the Baltic Rim Economies (BRE).

In his article for the edition 6/2016 the ERB's Head of International Secretariat focuses on one of the strategic areas of ERB cooperation under the Russian Presidency ie. the youth cooperation.

The short analysis includes presentation ERB's concrete actions aiming to strengthen youth engagement in development of policies on local and regional level and also a strategic dialogue with other Baltic organisations – BSSSC and UBC on the development of youth policy in the entire Baltic Sea Region. As for the tools for strategic youth policies, the results of the ERB projects – CaSYPoT – Capacity Building for Strategic Youth Policy and Transnational Cooperation and CaSYPoT-Ru – a parallel project funded by the Swedish Institute allowing direct project participation for partners from the Kaliningrad Region, could be used in further work on the wider Baltic scale.

The article comes at the time when all three organisations – BSSSC, UBC and ERB in a discussion on the next steps which will include a joint seminar at the EUSBSR Forum in Berlin next year, and development of an Erasmus+ project on youth policy reform.

7. fostering B2B cooperation with focus on clusters, innovation and SME internationalisation and tourism:

7.1. In this area work focused on involving ERB in different project initiatives connected with the activities specified in the Action Plan. As results of joint efforts by the ERB Task Force for Project Facilitation and ERB IPS, the ERB joined the following partnerships:

7.1.1. Baltic Sea Tourism Centre - the project undertakes to establish a permanent service unit for improved communication and cooperation at transnational level by associating the key tourism stakeholders and promoting a sustainable, responsible and innovative tourism in the Baltic Sea region. The BSTC is developed within the framework of the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum and complements and supports the activities of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in profiling the area as a tourist destination and contributes to the target and action defined in the strategy as “Establishing the Baltic Sea region as a common and coherent tourism destination”.

With respect to ERB, participating in the project as an Associated Partner will give the organisation a direct access to all important activities and further contribute to the implementation of the ERB Action Plan 2015-2016 and its specific action fostering B2B cooperation with focus on clusters, innovation, entrepreneurial internationalisation and tourism development. The project comprises partners from Blekinge, Klaipeda and Pomorskie. The project was approved for implementation in October 2016.

7.1.2. South Coast Baltic - The project proceeds and reinforces the joint efforts to foster boating tourism intensity along the “South Coast Baltic” that started with MARRIAGE project thereby project seeking to establish durable and comprehensive boating destination management for the area of South Baltic. The project comprises partners from the following ERB regions: Bornholm, Kaliningrad, Klaipeda and Pomorskie. It also underlines the need for the

development of maritime tourism thereby improving the interconnectivity of the region. The project was approved for implementation in October 2016.

7.1.3.DUNC - project aims at developing the UNESCO World Heritage sites and UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in the South Baltic area into attractive tourist destinations. This idea complies with the European programmes (e.g. indeed, UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme 2013-2015 mission is defined as facilitation of the management and development of sustainable tourism at World Heritage properties through fostering increased awareness, capacity and balanced participation of all stakeholders – which is reflected in the project by directly involving 4 UNESCO World Heritage sites as project partners and 2 biosphere reserves as associated partners), national and regional tourism development programmes 2014-2020. Project was submitted within the 3rd call for proposals in December 2016.

8. facilitating water cooperation:

8.1. ERB Water Forum

The ERB Water Forum 2017 took place on Bornholm on 8th June 2016 and was co-organised by the Regional Council in Kalmar which is leading the ERB cooperation in the area of water management and chairs the ERB Water Core Group a specialised working body gathering both politicians



and experts in the field. The Forum focused on the identification of challenges and opportunities for the Baltic Sea and its environment and included an intervention from Mr Mikhail Durkin, Executive Secretary of Coalition Clean Baltic. It was followed by a presentations and discussions about the future activities of the ERB Water Core Group and potential ERB water project tackling the most important challenges identified by the stakeholders. The Forum was preceded by a study visit to the Rønne Wastewater Treatment Plant where participants learnt about modern solutions of cleaning waste water.

8.2. participation in development of WaterNets project

Throughout 2016 the ERB Water Core Group and its leader – Regional Council in Kalmar County were working on the development of the WaterNets-RU project project within the funding mechanism of the International Centre for Local Democracy. Continuing the success of the MOMENT project, WaterNets would introduce a water management concept for a cleaner Baltic Sea, referred to as Water Users Partnerships (WUP), creating a fora for local and regional water

users, enabling them to get actively involved in the implementation of EU and International Water Policies, and also facilitate a cross-sectoral and vertically aligned policy oriented dialogue amongst all levels. The main objective would be twofold, first to increase the mobilization among local authorities by providing an efficient water management concept and tools (i.e. WUP concept and tools) and secondly, establish a jointly developed concept (i.e. WUP concept) and common understanding among water authorities in the Baltic Sea Region, on how to better involve the local level in the EU Water Framework context, enforcing implementation of concrete measures.

8.3. Implementing Water Core Group Work Plan 2015-2017

The overriding goal for the ERB Water Core Group was to implement concrete measures aiming to improve ecological and chemical status in the ERB waters, as a base for better development of the area. To this end the WCG proposed two focus areas:

1/ Decreasing the outflow of nutrients and hazardous substances into the water by coastal and upstream work (for example water management and/or spatial planning). This focus area could be tackled by the WaterNets project, should it be approved for implementation.

2/ Actions needed to cope with effects from climate change, like droughts and flooding, on water supply and water recipients (for example rain/storm water, drinking water). Within this focus area activities concerning storm water treatment could be tackled within a South Baltic Programme project which would also provide additional support for the functioning of the WCG.

The ERB Water Core Group continued to operate from a local and regional perspective and support trans-boundary cooperation. Moreover, this approach should be characterized by participation from private, public and academic sector (Triple Helix) and be based on the structure of water basin areas.

The WCG continued to be led by the Regional Council in Kalmar County with Ms Akko Karlsson as the Chair and Mr Tobias Facchini as the Secretary. The WCG was supported by the EBR IPS which engaged in its activities and liaised with ERB partners when it comes to coordination of its work.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

ERB Annual Budget between 1st Jan - 31st December 2016 (EUR and PLN)		
INCOME	Actual for 31.12.2016 EUR	Actual for 31.12.2016 PLN
Balance as of 1-06-2016	20 754,92 €	89 246,16 PLN
Blekinge	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Bornholm	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Kaliningrad	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Klaipeda	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Kalmar	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Kronoberg	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Pomorskie	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	5 500,00 €	23 650,00 PLN
Association of Communes ERB	11 000,00 €	47 300,00 PLN
Training and skills development	453,49 €	1 950,00 PLN
Income total	76 208,41 €	<u>327 696,16 PLN</u>
EXPENDITURES	Actual for 31.12.2016 EUR	Actual for 31.12.2016 PLN
<u>Personnel:</u>	<u>27 626,70 €</u>	118 794,80 PLN
Overhead including office rental	4 185,60 €	17 998,10 PLN
Phone	806,93 €	3 469,81 PLN
Salary	22 634,16 €	97 326,89 PLN
Travels, meetings	18 763,62 €	80 683,56 PLN
IT	1 850,50 €	7 957,17 PLN
Youth Board	2 287,83 €	9 837,67 PLN
Training and skills development	572,09 €	2 460,00 PLN
Banking charges	160,47 €	690,00 PLN
Reserve (projects)	12 900,26 €	55 471,13 PLN
EXPENDITURES	64 161,47 €	<u>275 894,33 PLN</u>
BALANCE	12 046,94 €	<u>51 801,83 PLN</u>

ERB SECRETARIATS

EUROREGION BALTIC INTERNATIONAL PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

ul. Stary Rynek 25
82-300 Elbląg, Poland
Sebastian Magier
Mobile: +48 606 216 845
Tel: +48 (89) 535 17 80
Fax: +48 (89) 535 17 84
E-mail:
Sebastian.magier@euroregionbaltic.eu
www.euroregionbaltic.eu



CONTACTS IN ERB REGIONS:

Агентство по международным и межрегиональным связям
Калининградской области
Yana Eremeeva
tel/тел: +7 (4012) 599-298
fax/факс: +7 (4012) 599-084
mob/моб: +7 (906) 239-11-85
y.eremeeva@gov39.ru
www.id.gov39.ru

Asociacija "Klaipėdos regionas"
Klaudija Kionies
Tel. +370 6456 1144
info@klaipedaregion.com
<http://www.klaipedaregion.com/>

Bornholms Regionkommune
Niels Ch. Andersen
Tel.: +45 3018 2192
Niels.Chresten.Andersen@brk.dk
www.brk.dk

Region Blekinge
Johanna Rönn
Tel: +46 455 30 50 22
Johanna.Ronn@regionblekinge.se
www.regionblekinge.se

Regional Förbundet i Kalmar Län
Jan Martinsson
Tel: +46 480 44 87 95
Jan.martinsson@kalmar.regionforbund.se
www.kalmar.regionforbund.se

Region Kronoberg
Therese Magnusson
Tel: +46 470 72 47 54
Therese.Magnusson@kronoberg.se
www.kronoberg.se

Stowarzyszenie Gmin RP Euroregion Bałtyk
Małgorzata Samusjew, Roma Naruszewicz
Tel: +48 55 611 2000
sekel@eurobalt.org.pl
www.eurobalt.org.pl

Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Pomorskiego
Krystyna Wróblewska
Tel: +48 58 32 61 710
k.wroblewska@pomorskie.eu
www.pomorskie.eu

Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Warmińsko-Mazurskiego
Łukasz Bielewski, Piotr Zwolak
Tel: +48 89 52 19 816
l.bielewski@warmia.mazury.pl
piotr.zwolak@warmia.mazury.pl
<http://www.wrota.warmia.mazury.pl>

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