

Euroregion Baltic Executive Board Meeting



Title	Meeting minutes
Submitted by	International Permanent Secretariat
Summary / Note	This document provides the draft of the meeting minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting in Iława, Poland on 12th September 2019
Requested action	Implement
<p>Euroregion Baltic Board meeting minutes</p> <p>12 September 2019</p> <p>09.00 – 12.00</p> <p>Venue: Hotel Port 110, Iława, Poland</p>	
Participants:	
ERB Executive Board:	
Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas	ERB President, Mayor of Klaipeda, Member of Klaipeda Region Association
Ms Helen Bengtsson	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Board of Region Kronoberg
Ms Elin Landerdahl	Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Kalmar County
Ms Liana Maximova	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Kaliningrad Region
Mr Roland Gustbée	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Board Region Kronoberg
Mr Witold Wróblewski	Member of ERB Executive Board, Chairman of the Association of Polish Communes ERB
Mr Lars Lundberg	Member of ERB Executive Board, Skåne Association of Local Authorities
Mr Leif Sandberg	Member of ERB Executive Board, Skåne Association of Local Authorities

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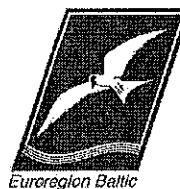


Mr Gustaw Marek BrzezIn	Member of ERB Executive Board, Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Ms Ingrid Hermansson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Blekinge
Ms Suzanne Svensson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Blekinge
ERB Youth Board:	
Ms Julia Orluk	Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board, Pomorskie Region
Mr Christian Van der Welj	Deputy Member of ERB Youth Board, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Ms Johanna Wyckman	Member of ERB Youth Board, Region Kalmar County
Mr Grzegorz Gieda	Member of the ERB Youth Board, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Mr Mikhail Mikhailovskiy	Member of the ERB Youth Board, Kaliningrad Region
Ms Elin Peterson	Member of ERB Youth Board, Blekinge Region
Mr Alexander Nilsson	Member of ERB Youth Board, Blekinge Region
ERB Secretariats:	
Mr Niels Chresten Andersen	Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Ms Slawomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski	Region Kronoberg
Ms Johanna Haward	Skåne Association of Local Authorities
Ms Małgorzata Klawitter - Piwowarska	Office of the Marshal of Pomorskie Region
Ms Klaudija Kionies	Association of Klaipeda Region
Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło	Euroregion Baltic International Secretariat
Ms Agata Ludwiczak	Euroregion Baltic International Secretariat
Mr Jan Martinsson	Region Kalmar County
Ms Johanna Rönn	Region Blekinge

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Ms Małgorzata Samusjew	Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic
Mr Piotr Zwolak	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Mr Łukasz Bielewski	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Ms Katarzyna Kozłowska	Office of the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region
Guests:	
Johan Sandberg	Chair of the Regional Development Board, Region Blekinge
Miłosz J. Zieliński	First Secretary, Vice-Consul, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad
Michał Ostrowski	Programme Officer, Joint Secretariat South Baltic Programme
Jarosław Bleniecki	Runmageddon Poland, CEO
Barbara Wleczorek	Runmageddon Poland, Sales Director
Monika Stankiewicz	Strategy and European Funds Department, Olsztyn Municipality
09.00	<p>1. Welcome</p> <p>ERB President and Chairman of the Association of Klaipeda Region, Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas welcomed the participants of the meeting. Mr Grubliauskas reminded his region is currently holding the ERB Presidency and this is the last ERB Board meeting under their lead. President also welcomed special guests of the meeting - Marshal of Warmia and Masuria region, Mr Marek Gustaw Brzezina, Mr Miłosz Zieliński, First Secretary and Vice-Consul, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad and Mr Michał Ostrowski from the Joint Secretariat of the South Baltic Programme.</p> <p>Mr Marek Gustaw Brzezina welcomed the participants on behalf of the hosts underlining the importance of Euroregion Baltic and cross-border cooperation to Warmia and Masuria region. He emphasised a significant work that has been done past 20 years, that is visible also in places like Iława. He mentioned Warmia and Masuria smart specialisation priorities – production of wooden furniture, water economy, boat production and healthy food, as critical areas of the region's economy. He thanked ERB Board members for cooperation, not only in ERB but also in Committee of Regions.</p> <p>Finally, he invited everyone to the next meeting in Ostróda, that is Marshalls home town, for the South Baltic Annual Conference that will</p>



		take place on 24-25 th September.
09.10	2.	<p>Opening</p> <p>President of Euroregion Baltic, Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas officially opened the meeting and presented the agenda asking if there are any requests to change the agenda or add any point. He also explained that in position no.6, we would not have an online meeting with WCG representative, but Mr Jan Martinsson from Kalmar Region will present the WCG Work Plan. There will also be a round of introduction of new Members of the ERB Executive Board.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board approved the agenda.</i></p>
09.15	3.	<p>Signing the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meeting</p> <p>Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło, Head of ERB IPS submitted the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meetings held in Kalmar on 13th May 2019.</p> <p><i>Relevant ERB Executive Board members signed the minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting.</i></p>
09.20	4.	<p>Information about the final sequence of ERB Presidency transfers post-2020.</p> <p>Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło reminded the decisions taken regarding the sequence during the Kalmar meeting in May and asked Ms Johanna Rönn from Blekinge Region to follow up. Ms Rönn explained the recent changes in the ERB Board members in Blekinge, as new Chair of the Regional Development Board, Mr Sandberg, was appointed just last week and other Blekinge Board members are also new to the Board. Ms Rönn informed about the discussion they had with representatives from Skåne, and they jointly decided that Blekinge feels powerful and glad to take the presidency in 2021 and Skåne Association of Local Authorities to assume the chair in 2024. Mr Sandberg also confirmed that the Blekinge region is very committed to the ERB cooperation and they are ready to accept the 2021 presidency and will be honoured to do so.</p> <p>The final sequence for ERB presidency for the year 2021-2030 is as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"> <i>2021 Blekinge, Sweden 2022 Warmia and Masuria, Poland 2023 Bornholm, Denmark 2024 Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden 2025 Kaliningrad region, Russia 2026 Kronoberg, Sweden 2027 Pomorskie, Poland 2028 Kalmar, Sweden 2029 Klaipeda Association, Lithuania 2030 Association of Polish Communes, Poland</i> </p>

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		<i>ERB Executive Board approved the final sequence for the presidencies for the years 2021-2030.</i>
09.30	5.	<p>South Baltic Sea cooperation from the perspective of Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad</p> <p>Mr Miłosz J. Zieliński, First Secretary and Vice-Consul from the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Kaliningrad informed the ERB Board about the ongoing cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region. He mentioned the successful Poland-Russia CBC programme and some of the achievements from the projects that benefited municipalities in Pomorskie, Warmia and Masuria and Kaliningrad region. There is significant financial aid, targeting many infrastructural projects. He also mentioned the recent 10th Annual EUSBSR Conference that took place in Gdansk in June, where key stakeholders presented the considerable developments in the CBC cooperation in the South Baltic sea. Mr Zieliński thanked everyone for their presence in Iława and for making the ERB cooperation this successful.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board members took note on the information presented.</i></p>
09.40	6.	<p>Presentation of the Water Core Group Work Plan for 2020-2022.</p> <p>Mr Jan Martinson from the Kalmar region confirmed that water issues are crucial for ERB, that was expressed during the workshops the day before, but also is visible in the WCG presence in ERB cooperation since many years. Then he presented the finalised WCG Action Plan for 2020-2022 mentioning the on-line consultations that happened over the summer. During the discussions, some experts expressed the need to add more specific goals. Still, the Work Plan is more general on purpose, as we are a network and we mostly inform each other about the water issues and developments in the region and try to work on possible project applications together. He added the area of microplastics was added to this plan, as one of the focus areas, which is a significant change comparing to the previous program.</p> <p>Mr Marinsson informed about the plan for next year including the physical meeting of WCG connected to the next ERB Board meeting in Elblag in Feb 2020, and later to organise the Water Forum in September next year, all this depending of course on the interest and will of the regions and ERB Members.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board members approved the proposed WCG Action Plan for 2020-2022.</i></p>
09.55	7.	<p>Presentation of the ERB Youth Board Strategy prepared as the outcome of the Casypot project.</p> <p>Chairwoman of the ERB Youth Board Ms Julia Orluk and Agata Ludwiczak (IPS) project coordinator of Casypot project presented the ERB</p>



	<p>Youth Board Strategy prepared in the project being mostly the recommendations to the ERB on how they can implement youth-related activities. She explained that preparation of the document was not an easy task, as we have five countries with different youth policies, economic and social background etc. But the significant amount of work was done, and youth was involved in the whole process. Thus these recommendations may be beneficial to ERB when discussing the future of youth policy and activities in the future. The aim of the YB now is to build a bridge between the youth and the politicians. The YB suggests to make a survey and send questionnaire to all ERB members asking them about the toolbox presented in the document - if we are to call this document an ERB Youth Strategy then ERB Members should let YB know which tools they are interested in implementing in their regions and based on that YB could prepare projects and apply for relevant funds like Erasmus+, EEA grants etc. YB believes that these tools could help to solve some youth-related problems in each ERB member regions. This document was created as a 1st step to prepare an application, to be the diagnosis and state-of-the-play on youth situation in ERB regions. Full YB presentation is attached to the minutes.</p> <p>The next steps proposed were: the questionnaire will be sent out to the Secretariats with a question on which tools from the toolbox may be implemented and based on that the initial project application may be prepared.</p> <p>Ms Julia Orluk, Chairwoman of the Youth Board, presented the already prepared project idea that is proposed by the youth - "The Stock Exchange of Characters" (attachment to the minutes). She explained the concept briefly and asked for the ERB Board consent for Youth Board to follow up with the idea and application.</p> <p>Mr Niels Chresten Andersen thanked for the informative presentation and said the document with the catalogue is very concrete. Nevertheless, the problem may be the number of tools presented in the paper - it may be challenging to start the process and ask in each region all the questions about every tool in the catalogue. What's more some of them are not to be executed by the ERB Board, but the municipalities, thus all of the municipalities would have to be asked, and this may be impossible to conduct. There's a risk that this may take a long time to try to answer the survey ultimately as it involves also talking to NGOs, politicians, youth councils etc. This may take too much time and effort, so he proposed to start with the tool that is aiming ERB as a principle executor, thus maybe it is wise to start with this tool and state where ERB is to take the first move. Let's make a questionnaire, let's seek for the available funding, find critical stakeholders to involve etc. Regarding the "Stock Exchange" project proposal he finds it very good, maybe suggest to add more social and cultural themes in the programme to make it more attractive for youth (as now it focuses more on political issues).</p> <p>Ms Agata Ludwiczak agreed that the recommendations need to be discussed with municipalities, schools and other stakeholders, so indeed this may be a lengthy process. Nevertheless, it is crucial to talk with youth and educators working with youth.</p> <p>Ms Julia Orluk agreed that we should have a broad catalogue of topics</p>
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		<p>to be discussed with youth and they will surely engage youth from each participating region to be involved in the creation of the agenda so that each event is answering the needs from local youth.</p> <p>Ms Agata Ludwiczak also mentioned two success stories from Bartoszyce and Slupsk where new places for youth were opened with help from municipalities based on the Casypit project discussion.</p> <p>Ms Ingrid stated that in Blekinge they agree with concerns expressed by Mr Niels Chresten Andersen.</p> <p>Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas thanked everyone for the intense discussion and asked Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidlo to summarise the next steps. Ms Leszczyna-Rzucidlo thanked for all the comments and confirmed they would follow with the survey based on the remarks meaning that they will start with the tool related to the ERB and after that, they can see how the process work and suggest some new tools to be discussed later. For now, it is crucial to start and work step-by-step, consider the suggestions expressed in the discussion. She confirmed it is not necessary to accept the Strategy by the ERB Board now, as this was more as recommendation document, as mentioned, thus the IPS and YB will start with the next steps and slowly go further.</p> <p>Ms Niels Chresten Andersen mentioned again that the proposal we will work on is quite broad and will require lots of discussions and it's necessary to involve a lot of stakeholders. Though it will be done as no one wants to take the energy for the YB, as we all see this is important. He proposed again to start with the two steps (tool aimed to ERB and project proposal) and later we can work on the next steps.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board took note on the information presented and agreed on the next stapes related to work on the Youth Board Strategy and gave consent to the Youth Board to work on their project proposal.</i></p>
10.20	8.	<p>Runmageddon Baltic League event 2020 – presentation of the idea.</p> <p>Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas thanked Johanna Rönn and Jan Martinson for their initial help with the Runmageddon project proposal and helping to reach the relevant people in their regions. Mr Jarosław Bleniecki, CEO of the Runmageddon company, presented a short movie clip showing the Runmageddon events. Later he explained the idea of the joint event for young, active people from Polish and Swedish regions in 2020 with the proposition of active support and engagement of Euroregion Baltic. The event – Baltic League will happen in Sep 2020 in Pomorskie and Blekinge region, and Euroregion Baltic will become an official partner of the event also with the possibility to have their ERB Team to promote the network better.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board members took note on the information presented.</i></p>
10.35	9.	<p>Coffee break</p>



10.50	10.	<p>Discussion about the current status of the Programme and future shape of the Interreg South Baltic.</p> <p>Mr Michał Ostrowski, Programme Officer from the Joint Secretariat of Interreg South Baltic Programme, presented slides with information on the current status of the Programme and the results of the survey they did with the SBP project partners. He mentioned the high success rate of the Programme and the amounts of funds designated to partners in each country.</p> <p>Regarding the future of the Programme, he mentioned the main EU objectives for 2021-27 being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Smarter Europe, through innovation, digitisation, economic transformation and support to small and medium-sized businesses</i> - <i>Greener, carbon-free Europe, implementing the Paris Agreement and investing in the energy transition, renewables and the fight against climate change</i> - <i>Connected Europe, with strategic transport and digital networks</i> - <i>Social Europe, delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare</i> - <i>Europe closer to citizens, by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.</i> <p>He also mentions the need for the brainstorming and discussion on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What kind of common challenges can cooperation tackle?</i> <i>What kind of untapped growth potential is characteristic for border areas?</i> <i>From the perspective of the harmonious development of the cross-border area, what is still needed?</i> <i>What problems need to be solved in the next perspective?</i> <p>This discussion should start already during the Ostród SBP Annual meeting to which he invited all the ERb Board members.</p> <p>Mr Niels Chresten Andersen reflected on the Future of the South Baltic Programme position ERB adopted last year, as most of the things we wanted to underline and lobby for are already more-or-less decided. For example, the continuation of the maritime CBC programmes is determined, and they will continue. Still, the EU budget for ETC programmes will be lower, and this is unlikely to change. This affects the co-financing rate, as it will go down from 85% and 75% to maybe even 70% to all. The exact amount is not cleared yet, but the co-financing most likely will go down. There is also a small chance for pre-financing possibilities due to lower budget issues. As for the geography of the Programme, ERB proposed to extend the eligible area to whole Warmia and Masuria region and Kaliningrad Region, but this may also not happen, as this is something our national governments should decide and lobby for. So far, they have not undertaken these topics on the agenda. The MC informal meeting/working group is supposed to meet in November 2019, and this will be the first step to discuss the future of the SBP. The priorities presented by the EC presented by Michał Ostrowski are likely to be adopted, but</p>
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		<p>there is also a chance for some capacity building priority. Another important topic we should continue to lobby for is the small project fund, and ERB should speak about this during the working group meeting. We should also talk about the joint interests for ERB in the South Baltic Programme future agenda. He proposed to lobby for the fact that at least 60% of the forthcoming budget addresses the first three priorities. It also seems to him that the social dimension will be a much higher focus in the future programme which is a top common concern in most of ERB regions, so this is an excellent proposal for the ERB. The drafting process will start soon (after the new EU budget is approved, most likely in spring 2020) and ERB representatives must be active and present throughout this process, as most likely we will have around nine months to draft the future SB programme to send it to the European Commission.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board members took note on the information presented.</i></p>
11.25	11.	<p>Presentation of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region SUMBA project</p> <p>Ms Monika Stankiewicz, Strategy and European Funds Department from Olsztyn Municipality and project partner in Interreg Baltic Sea Region SUMBA project. She explained the project main goals and outcomes they achieved so far, concentrating on the connectivity aspects crucial for the South Baltic Sea region and ERB municipalities in Warmia and Masuria region.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board members took note on the information presented.</i></p>
11.35	12& 13	<p>Euroregion Baltic Action Plan status and information about the upcoming events in ERB Members and conferences & training in Umbrella project open to all ERB members.</p> <p>Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas, the ERB president, asked the ERB Board members if it is possible to change the agenda at this point and present points no. 12 and 13 together, as the Board meeting, can not be prolonged and needs to finish exactly on time due to the bus leaving to the airport. The ERB Board Members agreed to present points 12 and 13 jointly.</p> <p>Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło, Head of the IPS, presented information about the current status of the Action Plan briefly, mentioning mostly the challenges in the EU agenda. The South Baltic Sea agenda and Baltic Sea Region Agenda are dealt with properly, ERB is active on both fields with several events organised in spring and planned for fall 2019, including expert conferences with EUSBSR Pa Energy and PA Tourism representatives within the Umbrella project framework. All information and invitations to these meetings will be sent out to the ERB Secretariats, but also posted on ERB website and social media. Ms Leszczyna-Rzucidło also mentioned the proposed date of the ERB Executive Board meeting on February 2020 that is planned on 12 and 13th in Elbląg. She also informed the Board about the communication campaign for ERB and Umbrella project that started in September and is scheduled until March 2020. The aim of the campaign is to renovate the website, gain more</p>

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		stakeholders awareness on the ERB framework and events and adequately inform about the Umbrella project activities and results available to all ERB stakeholders. <i>ERB Executive Board members took note on the information presented.</i>
11.55	14.	Conclusion and closing President of Euroregion Baltic, Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas closed the meeting of the ERB Executive Board and thanked everyone for their presence and active participation both in the workshops and discussion on the first day and the ERB Board meeting.
12.00	15.	End of the ERB Executive Board.

Chairman | Klaipėda region


12 02 2020
Mr. Vytautas Grubliauskas

ERB Board Member | Blekinge Region


Mr. Johan Sandberg