



Euroregion Baltic
Present Presidency
Southeast Sweden 2001-2002

27 June 2001

Minutes Euroregion Baltic Executive Board Elblag, 27 June 2001

- Board members:** Roger Kaliff, President, Southeast Sweden
Henryk Slonina, Mayor of Elblag
- National secretariats:** Zdislaw Olszewski, Poland
Malgorzata Samusjew, Poland
Victor Koshelev, Kaliningrad
Niels Chresten Andersen, Denmark
Maria Lindbom, Sweden
Björn Johansson, Sweden
- Interreg IIIB (PIA):** Håkan Brynielsson, Chairman of Working group
Rolf A Karlson, Expert
Zbigniew Czepulkowski, member of Working group

The Latvian and Lithuanian parties are not present at the meeting.

§ 1 Welcome

Mr Kaliff opens the meeting by welcoming everybody to the board meeting in Elblag a second time and thanking the Polish party for their hospitality. He then stresses the importance of keeping meeting-dates decided by the board. We should aim at developing a trustful environment in Euroregion Baltic to be able to be successful in our common work.

Euroregion Baltic is an important political platform. At a conference in Budapest recently, Euroregions were mentioned by the Commission as vital instruments for the implementation of e.g. EU structural policy.

Mr Kaliff hopes that all members of the board will be present at the next board meeting 25 September in Klaipeda (*as well as in Karlskrona/Sweden 21-22 August, Council- and ERB 2002+ meetings*).

§ 2 Approval of council- and board minutes

At the latest board meeting a procedure of checking and approving of the minutes from our meetings was adopted as a current routine.

The minutes of the board meeting 10 April in Elblag have been sent to the Latvian party, Mr Niedols for his approval and co-signature.

Decision

Mr Slonina is chosen to check the minutes and co-sign the minutes of today's meeting.

§ 3 Interreg IIIB

Mr Brynielsson, chairman of the PIA group, explains that the Interreg formalities require a signed Letter of Intent from each ERB party to take part in the Interreg IIIB project. Mr Karlson will produce a draft of such a letter and send it for comments to each ERB member-secretariat.

Mr Karlson presents how he regards the work with Interreg IIIB and how we could work with the General Development programme :

Central mission:

ERB long term vision

Strategy

Joint Regional Dev. Programme

- guidelines
- cornerstones
- priorities

Action Plan

Supporting activities - sub-projects - GIS–statistics (see sketch enclosure Seagull Workframe doc)

Mr Karlson further reports about visits in Liepaja, Baltijsk and Elblag, where discussions were carried out with experts and ERB members. From a general point of view the idea to develop a common development programme with Interreg support is regarded as positive. The wish to develop concrete projects within e.g. the following fields has also been expressed:

- tourism
- infrastructure
- creation of data-base for statistics of ERB

Statistics Sweden (SCB - the central board for statistics in Sweden) looks very positive upon the work of ERB and is interested in taking part in an Interreg IIIB project on regional statistics. SCB would therefore appreciate help to

identify/deepen contacts with counterparts in each of the ERB regions (regional/national level). SCB would like to develop a regional data-base together with equivalent bodies in the member regions. Issues of interest are for instance:

- accuracy of data
- standard of work
- how to break down data etc

The aim must be to continue this kind of work also after the project has finished. SCB co-operates already with Poland (10 years).

The anchoring and dialogue in each ERB region is of crucial importance to reach good results in the Interreg project. The aim should be to make the General Development programme a natural part of the developing programmes of each region.

"RUPEN"- the development programme for Kalmar county is handed out as one example of how to work. The members of the board are kindly asked to take a look at it. At the council meeting in August a decision has to be taken on how to proceed with the work. RUPEN consists of 4 different chapters describing:

- what is important today
- the vision
- the strategy
- the measures

*As concrete as possible – as early as possible!
People should see what we are doing – what happens!*

Time schedule Interreg IIIB:

- call for proposal end October and first decisions in December 2001
- Phare call next year 2002

A draft application will be presented at the board meeting 25 September 2001 in Klaipeda. The Letter of Intent, explaining that each party really wish to take part, has to be signed before that, tentatively in August some time. The signing of the Letter of Intent is also of great importance for the anchoring of the project in each political organisation.

We discuss a lot about how to work, what to include etc. Mr Olszewski points out that it is important to decide a methodology for the work and to choose specific fields, e g environmental technology as a priority – purifying of waters etc. What we want to do for our own region is important to include in the common project.

The Swedish projectleader should clearly define what is needed for the meeting 21-22 August for the parties to be able to prepare sufficient material.

Mr Slonina regards the process as too slow and wishes to know what data is needed to be able to start working. He considers it a waste of time just to discuss.

The simplest way of handling the problem is that the Swedish party decides what material/data is needed. Another method, however more time-consuming, is that each party presents data of own interest. Mr Slonina means that the statistical data should be ready by the council meeting in August.

Mr Andersen means that if we can identify 4 priority areas we will know what we need. He sees it as very important for each region to discuss the matter thoroughly at home. The Swedish party needs more input from the ERB parties but on the other hand a first draft from the project leader is urgently needed – in other words everybody has to start working actively.

Mr Karlson clarifies that we have to remember not to start taking steps that should be taken within the project, e.g. the data-base should be created once we have an accepted Interreg IIIB project – not before - not part of application – part of implementation! Some basic statistics on each region should however be included in the application.

Mr Karlson will be in a continuous close discussion with the Interreg IIIB secretariat in Karlskrona to learn about what is eligible and what is not.

Victor Koshelev means that each party should write down its own development priorities and present them to the board. These should then be put together in a common document. The situations are very different in each country which of course does not make it an easy task to summarise.

Decision

A Letter of Intent will be signed some time in August, before the Executive Board meeting 25 September in Klaipeda. Rolf Karlson will distribute a proposal of such a Letter of Intent to all ERB secretariats.

§ 4 ERB 2002+

Mr Johansson has sent a report in advance to the secretariats, which he summarises. The objective of the ERB 2002+ project is to make the organisation as effective and efficient as possible. The main question to discuss is "how will ERB be organised and work within the next 4-5 years?" "How shall we use the organisation?"

An invitation is handed out concerning the council and ERB 2002+ seminar **21-22 August** in Karlskrona. Mr Johansson kindly asks the parties to return the registration forms before 20 July. We hope that all council-/working group-members will take part as well as representatives from each ERB secretariat.

Mr Andersen explains that the Danish party will take an active part also in this project.

The second ERB 2002+ seminar is suggested to be held in connection with the council meeting **12-13 November**. Liepaja has agreed to host this meeting.

Decision

The board approves of the ERB 2002+ process and agrees to proposed dates and locations for the seminars/council meetings in August as well as in November.

§ 5 Working group report

Maria Lindbom makes a brief summary of the results of the Environmental working group. The secretary of the group has concluded a report on “Environment – existing analyses and strategies within Euroregion Baltic” which is handed out. The report is based on a questionnaire sent to regional bodies and on analysis, strategies and other official documents gathered during 2000 by the working group. Unfortunately several bodies have not answered. In spite of this, the compilation can be a part of the ongoing discussion about common priorities and activities within the ERB area.

High priority issues are:

- water in a broad context
- nature value
- solid waste and energy

§ 6 ERB marketing/information

”Quarterly”

The amount of money previously collected to produce a new issue of the Quarterly is suggested to be transferred to the present Presidency – Sweden (from the Lithuanian party?). We should stick to the previous principle that the responsibility to produce such reports should follow the Presidency. We discuss the matter of replacing the ”Quarterly” with a common updated *”Annual Report”* on the activities of ERB after each presidency and that newsletters should be a matter for each region to deal with themselves.

Internet web-site

An ERB web-site was established in 1998 but has since then not been paid for. Therefore it is now a free site. Sweden proposes to register the site again to start working actively. The cost is approx. 300 USD and an additional yearly amount of approx. 30USD. Sweden suggests that the responsibility/practical work with

the Web-site should follow the Presidency. When the secretariat moves to a new region the codes are given to the new presidency secretariat for them to be able to put out information on the web.

The Web-site could for instance contain minutes from meetings, information on working group activities, partner search etc. The national secretariats will discuss more in detail what should be on the web/what should not etc.

Mr Andersen suggests that a group of technical experts from each region is formed to handle web-site issues etc.

Decision

The board agrees to registering the web site again. The Swedish Presidency will take the charge. The responsibility/practical work with the web site shall follow the presidency in office.

An annual report replaces the Quarterly and is produced by the Presidency in office at the time. The amount of money on a Lithuanian account previously meant for an issue of the Quarterly should be transferred to the Swedish presidency – to produce an annual report.

§ 7 VASAB 2010 Plus Draft Report

Mr Karlson comments on the letter sent to VASAB. The chairman has received approx. 500 comments.

The Polish party regrets not having been able to give any input before sending the letter since it is a very important document.

§ 8 EXPO 2002 in Kaliningrad

The Swedish party states that it is important to choose specific fields/a focus for the EXPO. If not there is a risk that no companies will participate.

Possible fields with an interest from businesses in South-east Sweden could be Environmental Technology and Polymer/Plastic.

The Centre of Baltic Expo has reported that possible exhibition dates are within the period 23 May – 7 July 2002.

Forum South Sweden will be held in Kaliningrad 30-31 May 2002. The Swedish party would like to investigate the possibility of arranging the EXPO parallelly to the Forum if possible.

Mr Slonina suggests that each country prepares two parts for the EXPO :

1. info-stand – e.g. on tourism
2. commercial part – companies with the special focus that we decide on – seminars

It is important to decide the exact dates as soon as possible for the Chambers of Commerce to prepare everything, Ministries of Economy etc etc

Each party should present a contact person for the EXPO to Victor Koshelev.

Mr Kaliff suggests that each party thinks it over during the summer – contacts companies at home to learn more about their interest. In August a decision has to be taken about the Focus.

Decision

A definite decision has to be taken in August 2001. The board however decides that the preliminary focus should be as follows :

- environmental technology
- tourism/foods
- possibly two more areas will be chosen after discussion with the Chambers of Commerce in each region

Preliminary dates for the EXPO: 30-31 May 2002

§ 9 Projects

An invitation concerning a football tournament in Kaliningrad end October 2001 has been given to the Swedish secretariat. One club in Kalmar has shown an interest in taking part but more specific information is needed.

Poland has no information at all and wishes to receive more information about such a project.

§ 10 Forthcoming dates/Activity plan 2001

Mr Kaliff repeats the importance of sticking to decided dates for meetings.

He also presents an idea to invite the ambassadors in Latvia representing the national level of each ERB region to the meeting in Liepaja 12-13 November (Board/Council and ERB 2002+ seminar). We would then inform about our work in ERB. In August the Swedish party will present the idea more in detail after consulting the Swedish Foreign Ministry.

The Polish party reports about meetings with the national level in Poland in which ERB issues are considered thoroughly. Once a year a meeting with all Polish Euroregions is held to discuss matters concerning foreign co-operation.

Mr Andersen strongly supports the idea to invite ambassadors as well as representatives from governmental level to inform about our work.

Decision

The Swedish party will present the idea more in detail in August.

§ 11 Multiple Visa for ERB members

Victor Koshelev explains the difficulty to receive a visa to Latvia.

Decision

The Swedish party will discuss the matter with the Foreign Ministry in Sweden to see what possibilities there might be from a Swedish point of view. The board will continue the discussion on border crossing problems and possibly produce a common letter from all parties to each national level to explain the problems.

§ 12 AEER

20-22 September the 30th Anniversary of the Assembly of European Border Regions is celebrated. Mr Kaliff and Ms Lindbom will participate for EBR.

A representative for the AEER will take part in the Council meeting 21-22 August to inform about membership fees etc (*has later been cancelled*).

Roger Kaliff
President

Henryk Slonina, Mayor of Elblag
Elected to check the minutes

Maria Lindbom
Secretariat