

Euroregion Baltic
 Executive Board Meeting
 Svaneke, Bornholm, DK
 25 April 2008



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| Title | Provisional Minutes |
| Submitted by | SDD, International Permanent Secretariat |
| Summary / Note | This document provides the provisional minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 th April 2008 |
| Requested action | Signing |

Participants

ERB Executive Board

- Mr Per Ole Petersen ERB President, Bornholm
- Mr Jacek Protas ERB Vice-President, Warminsko-Mazurskie
- Ms Marie-Louise Hilmersson ERB Board member, Södra Småland
- Mr Bernth Johnson ERB Board member, Blekinge
- Ms Raisa Minčinauskienė ERB Board member, Klaipeda
- Mr Åke Nilsson ERB Board member, Kalmar
- Mr Ms Elena Koroleva for Mr Mihail Pluhin, ERB Board member, Kaliningrad
- Ms Krystyna Wróblewska for Mr Jan Kozłowski, ERB Board member, Pomorskie

ERB Council

- Mr Ken Bolmar ERB Council member, Bornholm
- Mr Roger Kaliff ERB Council member, Kalmar
- Ms Suzanne Svensson ERB Council member, Blekinge
- Mr Sebastian Bloch Jensen ERB Youth Board member, Bornholm

Guests

- Mr Tom Asmussen Business Centre, Bornholm
- Mr David Hunt B7 Coordinator, Bornholm

ERB Secretariats

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| Mr Niels Chresten Andersen | ERB Secretariat, Bornholm |
| Mr Ulf Andersson | ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland |
| Ms Elena Butorova | ERB Secretariat, Baltijsk (via online connection) |
| Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski | International Permanent Secretariat |
| Ms Ann-Kristin Erlandsson | Blekinge County Council Administration |
| Ms Karen Lynn Jacobsen | Financial Officer, Bornholm |
| Ms Mariana G. Johannesson | ERB Secretariat, Södra Småland |
| Mr Victor Koshelev | ERB Secretariat, Baltijsk (via online connection) |
| Mr Per Gudmund Lindencrona | ERB Secretariat, Blekinge |
| Mr Andrey Luzin | Seagull II Tacis Staff, Baltijsk (via online connection) |
| Ms Viktorija Liutkute | ERB Secretariat, Klaipeda |
| Ms Kora Stańczyk | ERB Secretariat, Pomorskie |
| Mr Rafał Wolski | Department of Int'l Relations, Warminsko-Mazurskie |
| Mr JacekZdrojewski | Tourism Working Group Administrator |
| Ms Julia Zdanova | Seagull II Tacis Staff, Baltijsk (via online connection) |
| Mr Piotr Zwolak | ERB Secretariat, Warminsko-Mazurskie |

- 08:30 – 08:35 1. **Welcome and opening of the meeting**
- ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen welcomed the participants giving an overview of the two-day visit of the ERB Executive Board on Bornholm. He then opened the Executive Board meeting.
- 08:35 – 08:40 2. **Adoption of the agenda**
- ERB Executive Board members approved of the present agenda with two changes. Points 9.1 and 9.2 of the agenda were postponed until the next Board meeting on 11th June 2008. Due to the late submission of these two points, the partners did not have the opportunity to consult them internally.
- 08:40 – 08:45 3. **Adoption of 28.01.08 ERB Board Meeting minutes**
- ERB President, Mr Per Ole Petersen and ERB Board member, Mr Bernth Johnson co-signed the minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting which took place in Växjö on 28th January 2008 (see the attached minutes).
4. **Information by the International Secretariat**
- 08:45 – 08:50 4.1 on the update of Board meeting dates in 2008
- ERB Executive Board members approved of the revised 2008 ERB Calendar after changes made to the dates and places of ERB Board meetings, i.e. ERB Board meeting on 12th June instead of 1st August, ERB Board meeting on 11th September in Klaipeda instead of 11th September Brussels and ERB Brussels event on 11th June instead of 10th September.
- 08:50 – 09:00 4.2 on the request to establish an ERB Information and Communication Strategy Team
- Following the action recommended by 2008 – 2009 ERB Action Plan (Priority 3), Executive Board members appointed their regional representatives to the ERB I&C Strategy Team establishing a group that now consists of: Niels Chresten Andersen (Bornholm), Mariana Gomez Johannesson (Södra Småland), Krystyna Wróblewska (Pomorskie), Rafał Wolski (Warmińsko-Mazurskie), Olof Sjölin (Blekinge) and Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański of IPS. Names of members from Baltijsk, Kalmar, Klaipeda will be announced soon.
- The ERB I&C Strategy Team is supposed to present the first draft of the I&C Strategy at the Board meeting on 11th September 2008. The Strategy is expected to contribute to a more coherent and active ERB information policy.
- 4.3 Following the invitation from the Committee of the Regions to present an ERB ambition towards the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation, the Executive Board members discussed who could be an ERB representative at the CoR event called: Building A European Grouping OF Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) to be held in Brussels on 19 June 2008.

Mr Bernth Johnson pointed out that it would be best if ERB President, Vice-President and IPS Head could all go. Since it was not clear whether interpretation is going to be provided during the event, the decision was postponed until further clarification, preferably during the coordination meeting on 5th May 2008.

5. **ERB Youth Board**

09.00 – 09.05 5.1 Introduction

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski made a brief introduction of the formal status of the youth cooperation within ERB. He focused on the statutory obligations that the ERB member regions took on to support financially their youth representatives, recommendations of ERB 2008 – 2009 Action Plan concerning ERB youth cooperation, and the amount of 5,100 EUR allocated in the ERB joint budget for youth cooperation.

09.05 – 09.35 5.2 status report and presentation of the ERB Youth Action Plan

A report of youth activities held between February and April 2008 followed. Ms Mariana Gomez Johannesson presented information including the number of meetings, their participants and the scope of themes discussed.

She drew attention to some obstacles observed after the establishment of the Youth Board:

- not all Youth Board members take part in the meetings;
- not all Youth Board members get financial support from the regions;
- Youth Board members do not use Marratech online system;

Ms Mariana Gomez Johannesson also presented an ERB Youth Action Plan drafted as a result of the meetings held by the Youth Board, highlighting the following:

- ERB Youth Board has a chair, Kaliningrad Region representative, Ms Anya Gryazova;
- ERB Youth Board deputy will be appointed ad hoc for every meeting, preferably representing the region in which a meeting takes place; this time it is Mr Sebastian Bloch Jensen from Borholm;
- the Board structure also includes a secretariat that is run by the representative from Södra Småland;
- the major events planned include the construction of the website, organisation of the annual youth conference and the implementation of a youth project led by Region Blekinge.

09.35 – 10.25 5.3 Discussion

A discussion in response to the declaration of the Youth Action Plan followed.

Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene asked what topic will be chosen for the annual conference. Ms Mariana Gomez Johannesson answered it will probably refer to 2000 - Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

Mr Jacek Protas informed that the Region of Warmińsko-Mazurskie appointed a deputy Youth Board member who will now stand in for an ill member. He also stressed that the region he represents is ready to sustain its commitment to support the formal youth structure within ERB. Making use of the opportunity, Mr Jacek Protas

invited the Youth Board to meet in Warmińsko-Mazurskie in July 2008 on the occasion of Grunwald Battle enactment.

Ms Raisa Mincinauskiene said the youth member selection in Klaipeda is in process, and a meting will shortly take place between all the municipalities in the County to decide how to finance the youth.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski said that the Lithuanian, Polish and Russian regions all share the financial problem of not being legally capable of paying travel and accommodation costs for people who are not employed by their regional administrations. However, the two Polish regions found a way and probably they could share how to make it possible with others.

Mr Ulf Andersson asked the President to request that all the Board members make a clear statement of their readiness to deliver their promise of financial support to their young representatives.

President Per Ole Petersen asked all the regional representatives to confirm they are ready to stick to their statutory obligations and facilitate (also financially) the cooperation of the ERB Youth Board. Such confirmation was expressed by all the ERB member regions.

Mr Sebastian Bloch Jensen said that from his point of view it is now most important to focus on what specific results the youth themselves want to achieve.

Mr Per Gudmund Lindencrona presented an outline of the project by which Region Blekinge would like to support the development of a joint youth project. Such a pre-study would be co-financed by Region Blekinge, whose Board already agreed to allocate money for it, and by SIDA, whose decision is still expected. The pre-study would take six months to implement and its main output would be a South Baltic Programme project application to the second call of proposals in autumn 2008.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski commented by saying it really is a positive initiative that Blekinge wants to put extra resources into the ERB Youth Board. He stressed though the pre-study must include all the members of the ERB Youth Board and have a broad partnership which will secure genuinely shared ownership of the project itself and youth cooperation in general.

Mr Per Gudmund Lindencrona confirmed that the pre-study will be open to all ERB Youth Board.

Ms Mariana Gomez Johannesson said the Youth Board was presented with the idea of the pre-study. Although they agreed to go ahead with it, they had some critical comments and insisted that anchoring for this project is properly and efficiently done at the regional level.

adoption of the ERB Youth Action Plan

10.25 – 5.4
10.30

Following the discussion, ERB Executive Board members made a decision to adopt the ERB Youth Board Action Plan.

10.30 –
11.00

6. **ERB Working Groups – progress so far**

Following the establishment of six ERB Working Groups at the ERB Council meeting on 22nd February, chair people and administrators of the Groups presented status reports on their recent activities.

6.1 ERB Working Group on SME / Innovation

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski said the WG had five meetings in two sub-groups: one dealing with net based learning and the other with networking of science and technology parks.

Two separate applications are being prepared, though both will be submitted later during the year.

6.2 ERB Working Group on Rural Development

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen said the WG is now ready with a SIDA application which will be a pre-study for a big Interreg IV B BSR project to be submitted in the Spring 2009 for the establishment of a South Baltic Rural Development Centre.

6.3 ERB Working Group on Tourism

Mr Jacek Zdrojewski said the WG is now working with the formation of partnership and application to the South Baltic CBC Programme around the idea of establishment and promotion of crossborder tourism products.

6.4 ERB Working Group on Social Dimension

Ms Kora Stańczyk said the WG is now working with the formation of partnership and application to the South Baltic CBC Programme around the idea of integration of ERB labour markets.

6.5 ERB Working Group on Energy Forum

Mr Ulf Andersson said that Södra Småland continues its support towards the work of this particular WG. It proved impossible now during the first call within the South Baltic CBC Programme to launch a joint project but work will go on. Mr Andersson reported some difficulties with attracting relevant partners into the WG, a comment also shared by the Working Group on Water Forum.

6.6 ERB Working Group on Water Forum

Mr Roger Kaliff presented an outline of the Group's work, including preparation of *Modern Water Management* and *Environmentally Friendly Farming* projects.

He made two proposals to the ERB regions: firstly that they each contribute to *Modern Water Management* project with 20 hours worth of work, and secondly that they each appoint a politician in order to develop a draft ERB position to the Helcom Action Plan.

ERB member regions were asked to respond to the proposals during May 2008.

6.7 planned Working Group on Transport Infrastructure

Ms Suzanne Svensson said the WG is under construction, now waiting to be completed with names from two regions.

She also presented a draft joint statement by which the ERB Executive Board supports the EWTC II project to be submitted to the Interreg IV B BSR Programme.

Mr Åke Nilsson suggested the text of the statement is completed with *sustainable* transport.

Ms Carolina Gunnarsson recalled the *Baltic Tangent* project which also dealt with East – West transport corridor.

President Per Ole Petersen recommended and the Board agreed to ask all the ERB member regions to contribute their comments until 15th May. After this date the joint statement will be sent out again in the revised form to become official before 30th May 2008.

Ms Suzanne Svensson also said that the Group is now planning a meeting for all partner sometime in the summer. Preparations will start as soon as money is secured.

planned ERB Working Group on Environment Protection

6.8

Mr Victor Koshelev said that although the WG is still under construction, meetings had been held between Lithuanian and Russian partners in order to further work on a project dealing with the Helcom hotspot number 49 (Sovetsk Paper and Pulp Plant). The project would be submitted to Poland – Lithuania - Kaliningrad ENPI Programme in 2009.

planned ERB Working Group on People-to-People Cooperation

6.9

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed of the decision by the Board of the Association of Polish Communes to express readiness to take on the responsibility to initiate work with the aim of formally establishing an ERB Working Group on People-to-People Cooperation by to the Council in February 2009.

ERB Executive Board members took note of the information presented and gave a green light to the Polish Association of Communes to start preparations leading to the establishment of an ERB Working Group on People-to-People Cooperation.

11:00 –
11:15

7. **South Baltic Kick-off Conference**

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen made a brief summary of the South Baltic kick-off conference that took place on 26th March 2008 in Gdańsk.

Presentations from the conference were distributed among the participants.

11:15 –
11:30

8. **Debate on ERB contribution to the Baltic Sea Strategy**

8.1 Introduction

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska made a brief introduction into this new initiative to develop an EU strategy of the Baltic Sea. She said now a

15-page long communiqué is expected by the European Commission around June. The four expected pillars of the Strategy are supposed to *make the Baltic Sea region*:

1. an environmentally sustainable and clean place
2. a prosperous place
3. an accessible and attractive place
4. a safe and secure place

Ms Krystyna Wróblewska said no extra financing or administrative tools are to be announced. Instead, she continued, it is planned as a guideline on how to use best what is available now.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen commented that the point of view presented by Ms Krystyna Wróblewska was that of the European Commission whereas some Baltic partners like Baltic Development Forum would rather have other aspects included in the Baltic Strategy, which would probably be more favourable for Euroregion Baltic in terms of marketing and lobbying.

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen informed of a number of events planned in connection with the development of the Strategy, including a BSSSC annual conference in Kaunas in September, stakeholder conference in Stockholm at the end of September, and Baltic Development Forum in Copenhagen in December.

ERB Board members thought it necessary that the ERB secretariats inform each other about these and other similar events to coordinate possible ERB participation.

11:30 – 8.2 ERB Conference in Brussels
11.45

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski informed on the first confirmations from the conference speakers, including those from EU Commissioner Danuta Hübner, BDF Secretariat Director Hans Brask and ScanBalt Chairman Hans-Robert Metelmann.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski also asked the secretariats to inform IPS on how many people will be attending the conference from each ERB region so that en bloc reservations can be made with the help from the Pomorskie regional office in Brussels. It was decided the information will be provide by 30.04.2008.

Mr Ulf Andersson proposed that all the ERB partners invite their youth representatives to the conference.

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski proposed that the ERB secretariats discuss who could moderate the conference in Brussels. It was decided that such a discussion will be held during the coordination meeting on 05.05.2008.

The preliminary programme was presented as well. It seemed quite an intensive agenda and comments were made not to add new speakers if some of those invited should refuse to participate.

11.45 – 8.3 ERB contribution to the Conference and the Strategy
12.00

Mr S. Demkowicz-Dobrzanski said that the programme includes time after each intervention for questions from the floor. Such questions should be prepared by the ERB secretariats beforehand. A separate

issue should be the intervention by an ERB speaker as well as the ERB position on the Strategy itself which should be developed in cooperation of the secretariats.

Mr Ulf Andersson proposed that all the ERB partners consult their national governments before speaking their voice on the strategy.

Mr PG Lindencrona suggested that the ERB Working Groups are involved in the preparation of the joint position.

President Per Ole Petersen asked all the regions to contribute with their comments, opinions and questions before 5th May so that the draft paper could be prepared in time. Given the limited time, he continued, later contributions are also welcome. He insisted the process involves all the partners within ERB, including the Kaliningrad Region.

ERB Board took note of the information presented and urged the secretariats to work together on the preparation of the conference.

12:00 – 9. **Any Other Business**
12:05

ERB Executive Board decided to postpone points 9.1 and 9.2 of the agenda until the next Board meeting on 11th June 2008. Due to the late submission of these two points, the partners did not have the opportunity to consult them internally. Additionally, this ERB Board meeting ran not of time.