



# **EUROREGION BALTIC**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2018**



## EUROREGION BALTIC EXECUTIVE BOARD

<b>Anne Thomas</b>	ERB President, Vice Mayor of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
<b>Vytautas Grubliauskas</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
<b>Carina Bengtsson</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Member of the Council, Region Kronoberg, Sweden
<b>Britt-Louise Berndtsson</b>	ERB Board Member, Member of the Board, Region Kronoberg, Sweden
<b>Aleksander Bogdanov</b>	ERB Board Member, Deputy Chair of Regional Government of Kaliningrad, Russia
<b>Gustaw Marek Brzezina</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
<b>Wiesław Byczkowski</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland
<b>Lennarth Förberg</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge, Sweden
<b>Grzegorz Grzelak</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Chair of International and Interregional Committee of Pomorskie Regional Parliament, Poland
<b>Akko Karlsson</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Kalmar County, Sweden
<b>Alla Ivanova</b>	ERB Deputy Board Member, Minister-Head of Agency for International Affairs and Interregional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region, Russia
<b>Christina Mattisson</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Region Blekinge, Sweden
<b>Sabine Lyngberg</b>	ERB Board Member, Member of the Council of Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark
<b>Åke Nilsson</b>	ERB Board Member, Member of the Executive Committee, Regional Council in Kalmar County, Sweden
<b>Mieczysław Struk</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland
<b>Hanna Pruchniewska</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of the Association of Communes, Poland
<b>Robert Olesen</b>	ERB Board Member, Vice Chair of the Board of Regional Council, Region Kronoberg, Sweden
<b>Suzanne Svensson</b>	ERB Board Deputy Member, Member of Parliament, Sweden
<b>Witold Wróblewski</b>	ERB Board Member, Chair of Board of the Association of Communes, Poland
<b>Joanna Zielińska</b>	ERB Deputy Board Member, Deputy of Board of the Association of Communes, Poland

In 2018 **Euroregion Baltic Executive Board** met on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in Elbląg (Poland), 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 in Klaipeda (Lithuania) and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 on Bornholm (Denmark).

## EUROREGION BALTIC YOUTH BOARD

<b>Alexandra Winberg</b>	Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board, Regional Council in Kalmar County/Kumulus
<b>Yanina Andrushkevich</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Kaliningrad Region
<b>Simona Skuodaite</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
<b>Dawid Jędrzejak</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland
<b>Arvydas Razma</b>	ERB Deputy Board Member, Association Klaipeda Region, Lithuania
<b>Mikkel Holm Tved</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
<b>Sabine Lyngberg</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
<b>Damian Ciachorowski</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Association of Communes, Poland
<b>Marek Ziemian</b>	ERB Youth Board Member, Pomorskie Region, Poland

In 2018 **Euroregion Baltic Youth Board** met on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in Elbląg, Poland and on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 in Klaipeda, Lithuania.

## ADDRESS BY ERB PRESIDENT



Between 16th February 2018 and 13th February 2019 Euroregion Baltic was under political leadership of the Regional Municipality of Bornholm represented by **Ms Anne Thomas**.

**Dear Euroregion Baltic Friends,**

2018 became a year for the regional collaboration to grow larger and even stronger. Stronger in the sense that all regions participated actively in developing new goals for the coming decade. And larger because we had the great pleasure of welcoming another regional partner.

While the validity of maritime cross-border co-operations have been questioned, our cross-border ties have demonstrated longevity and relevance through our joint talks of a shared future and interdependence.

The number and scope of successful projects implemented in our network are a testament of our shared interests and knowledge.

ERB 2030 Agenda builds on the achievements of first 20 years of successful cooperation and provides an updated strategic framework by defining the vision for Euroregion Baltic. According to the vision, by 2030 ERB will become an important platform involving partners from Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden in activities contributing to the development of the whole Baltic Sea Region and with particular attention to the South Baltic area

The ERB 2030 Agenda came at a time of organisational development of the network. This development momentum culminated in 2018 when on its 20th anniversary ERB welcomed its new member, the Skåne Association of Local Authorities (Kommunförbundet Skåne - KFSK). The Association is a non-profit organisation with the task of supporting and developing the local self-governance, protecting local interests, promoting collaboration between municipalities and assisting them in their activities. With all 33 municipalities in Skåne being members of the Association, KFSK works in important cooperation areas of energy and climate, environment and community planning, labour market and business, local authority management, education, public health and welfare as well as research, innovation and development. Their membership will undoubtedly bring new ideas for cooperation, especially focusing on the issues of green and blue growth.

Anne Thomas

President of Euroregion Baltic, 2018

## Focus area 1: Lobbying

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

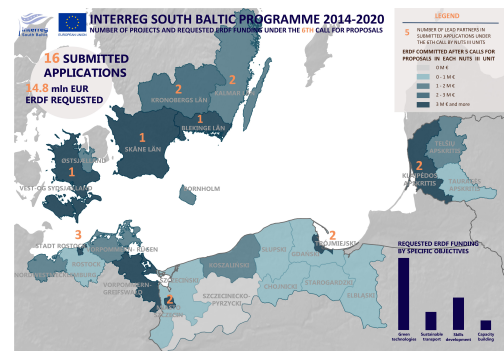
#### ➤ South Baltic Programme

The first 2018 meeting of the Monitoring Committee was held on Bornholm, Denmark on 24-25 April 2018. During the meeting the Committee decided to approve 10 new projects for funding.

The resources from the European Regional Development Fund to be allocated to these projects amounted to 15 066 852,69 EUR (19% of the Programme financial capacity).

The Monitoring Committee decided also to open the 6th call for proposals from 1 October until 18 December 2018 for the Specific Objectives: 2.2, 3, 4 and 5.

The 6th call for proposals of the Interreg South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 was opened between 1 October and 18 December 2018. In total 16 project proposals were submitted by lead partners. The requested ERDF amounts to 14,8 mln EUR. Following the assessment phase, the selection of the 6th call projects by the Monitoring Committee was expected to be made in May 2019.



sustainable tourism, transport, green technology promotion in the region, increase of the qualification and cooperation skills of employees, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship projects in round-tables. On the second day the participants took part in two round-tables on project joint dissemination and clustering.

Participants of the Event had the opportunity to take part in the boat tour and see closer a project co-financed by the Interreg South Baltic Programme - the LNG terminal. Another group of participants cycled to the sites of projects that are being implemented in the city of Klaipeda.



### ➤ UMBRELLA project implementation

In 2018 Euroregion Baltic also started the implementation of the South Baltic UMBRELLA project which 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.



Its main activities focused on raising awareness of local actors on the possibilities offered by cross-border cooperation, micro-activities and direct expert support in writing project applications for South Baltic Programme.



Project's first Awareness Raising Event took place on 11th and 12th June in Gdańsk and gathered over 100 participants from organisations and institutions representing 5 countries around the South Baltic region.

On 11th June the project underlined the importance of cross-border (CBC) cooperation and transnational projects with three study visits: in Marszewo Forest Botanical Garden in Gdynia, Gdynia Aquarium and Maritime Institute in Gdansk. It also had a micro

activity for the stakeholders interested in cooperation between the museums which was hosted in the Baltic Sea Cultural Centre in Gdańsk.

The second-day conference held in the European Solidarity Centre started with a historical overview, conducted by Prof. Jacek Zaucha, pointed out the challenging process that, passing through the Hanseatic League, has allowed the current CBC within the region. Following that

we've received the lecture by the Prof. Dorota Simpson from the University of Gdansk on cultural and Baltic identity and ideas on how to shape it, also in CBC projects.

Later in the afternoon, the participants shared their experiences through focus discussions and workshops about three topics: culture and tourism, youth and sustainable transport.

During the whole day, participants also had the chance to talk with JS representatives who answered their questions about the South Baltic Programme, as well as get to know the offer of other EU programmes like Interreg Baltic Sea Region, Europe for Citizens or Horizon 2020.

The next event was the Cross-border Conference with "Policy Area" Panel focusing on bioeconomy. The main objective of the conference was to investigate the possibilities to create projects to be submitted to the upcoming call for proposals in the South Baltic Programme. To be able to do that, the conference provided information about the ongoing discussion concerning Bioeconomy in Brussels, the objectives in the EU Baltic Sea Strategy and the support you can get from the Umbrella-project in the project application phase. The conference is co-organized with the EUSBSR PA Bioeconomy-Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and attracted more than 60 participants.



#### ➤ INTERCONNECT project

In 2018 the INTERCONNECT project executed a series of events and activities moving it closer towards the goal of improving cross-border transport in the South Baltic area. These included study visits, seminars and conferences, as well as benchmarking studies, reports and pilot actions.

The most important process was the development of the Pomorskie pilot case that aims at creating a joint ticketing system for the entire region. On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in Gdańsk (Poland), project partners of INTERCONNECT project organized a seminar "Benchmarks for the current public transport system". The signing of agreements enabling pilotage on the joint ticketing system began on Thursday during the Seminar "Patterns for modern public transport". After the ceremonial signing of the agreements, participants of the seminar became acquainted with one of Interconnect Project's reports, concerning the analysis of communication systems in different regions



of the Southern Baltic Countries.

The agreements to join the pilot project were signed at the Marshal Office of the Pomorskie Voivodeship by representatives of the cities of Gdańsk, Gdynia, Słupsk, Tczew and Starogard Gdański and Pomeranian Voivodeship's self-government.

➤ implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)



ERB actively participated in the 9th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR. The main theme of the 9th Annual Forum in Tallinn was the Baltic Sea Region After 2020. The Forum discussed how to improve the implementation of the EUSBSR in the framework of the future EU Cohesion Policy. It discussed also the current state of the ecosystem in the Baltic Sea as well as how to advance the Region as a global digital hub.

Baltic Cities Euroregion jointly with BSSSC, National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (LSU), The National Youth Council of Latvia (LJP) and Estonian National Youth Council (ENL) arranged a seminar at the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region annual forum 2018 about youth inclusion. Youths from all our networks were present and had good discussions with representatives from EUSBSR Policy areas of Culture, Innovation, and Education, as well as the horizontal action area Climate, and Maira Mora, Director General of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

The twenty youths had met already on June 10, discussing digital tools and revising the educational system to be better equipped for the future throughout Sunday and Monday before the EUSBSR Annual forum 2018 kicked off. "The educational system should not teach us the length of European rivers or other facts we easily can google, it should teach us skills to be able to quickly adapt to new tools and technology" said one of the youths. Stefan Musiolik, PA Culture, said that they learn a lot from youths, among other using tools such as gamification to teach history in a fun and easy way. In the light of digital tools, another youth added that "the youths are

not only interested in apps and hashtags, we read books, declarations, we adopt to the grown up world: we dress up nicely and we are here, at this forum, to talk to you".

➤ Promoting ERB during other events:

Euroregion Balti, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, CBSSS Baltic 2030 and Baltic Sea Future co-organised the event 'Transforming our Baltic Sea Region' took place on 7 March 2018 in Stockholm.

The seminar provided the opportunity for regional politicians and civil servants to discuss and exchange best practices on how the principles of the Baltic 2030 Agenda can be integrated into regional policies.

In his opening speech, Gustav Hemming, County Council Commissioner for Regional Planning from Stockholm County Council, stressed the importance of linking regional development with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the first part of the seminar, representatives from the local level (the City of Lahti in Finland and the City of Stockholm), the regional level (Region Skåne) and the national level (Sweden) presented actions taken by the public authorities to implement the SDGs into policies.

During the seminar, Krista Kampus, Head of Unit of the CBSSS, presented the Baltic 2030 Action Plan which was endorsed by the CBSSS Foreign Ministers in 2017. It was followed by a presentation of the results of SDGs implementation in the Baltic Sea Region by Sven Beyersdorff from Nordic Sustainability.



The seminar was also marked by the introduction by Alan AtKisson, renowned sustainability consultant, of a method of working with sustainable development composed of five critical steps called the "VISIS tool" (Vision > Indicators > Systems > Innovation > Strategy). This method should help public authorities to integrate the SDGs in policies.

## Focus area 2: Strategic actions

### Strategic objective: enhancing the added value of ERB cooperation

#### ➤ 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders and ERB Executive Board meetings

On February 14-16, Euroregion Baltic celebrated its 20th Anniversary during a 3 days long series of meetings and conferences hosted by ERB International Permanent Secretariat in Elbląg. The celebration, which saw the participation of nearly 150 guests representing delegations from Russia, Poland, Sweden,



Denmark and Lithuania, was a good opportunity to take stock of the situation, capitalise the results achieved over the last 20 years and lay the foundation for a fruitful future cooperation.

On February 14th two projects were launched: UMBRELLA and SB YCGN (Youth Core Group Network). UMBRELLA, within whom ERB plays the role of Lead Partner, 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 daily activities. On the other side, SB YCGN focuses on the cooperation of different local actors as regional authorities, universities, NGOs, etc. in the field of youth participation in the decision making on the local level and to strengthen the capacities of local and regional actors related to youth policy in the South Baltic Programme area.

In the morning of February 15th, a delegation from Russia participated in a meeting led by Małgorzata Samusjew, ERB Director of the Secretariat, to discuss the cooperation between local governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to boost a joint and efficient local development. At the same time, organized by Damian Ciachorowski, ERB Youth Board, and Zofia Makowska, Project Manager of CaSYPoT at the Regional Council of Kalmar County, a Youth Panel took place to bring together young people, politicians, representatives of NGOs and local authorities in order to exchange ideas over the cooperation and involvement of multiple stakeholders in shaping transnational policies related to the youth. During the panel, Alexandra Winberg recently appointed Chair of ERB Youth Board, and Domenico Misurelli, Interreg Volunteer Youth – IVY at ERB, addressed the audience with their own current and past experience of young people operating in the field of youth and cross-border cooperation.

The main event of the 3 days long celebration took place in the afternoon: the conference entitled "PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE: Solving Baltic Sea Cooperation Rubik's Cube". The conference offered an overarching view of the successes and challenges of the ERB in the broader context of

the Baltic Sea Region and European Union while looking back at its past and current achievement. At the same time, the participants reflected on ideas and initiatives that could shape the future of ERB cooperation as an innovative international cooperation platform capable to better contribute to the multi-level development of the entire region.

After the welcome speech by Mr Witold Wroblewski, Mayor of Elbląg and Chair of the Association of Polish Communes, the panellists recalled the beginning of the organizations. Indeed, back in the 90's, a Euroregion in the Baltic Sea was a new form of cooperation and since it aimed at the inclusion of the Kaliningrad region several obstacles had to be overcome. In this sense, the institutionalized Polish-Swedish cooperation offered a unique start point from which expanding the collaboration in the region and including new actors. Currently involving 8 regions in 5 countries, ERB plays a fundamental role in addressing future challenges in the region along with organizations such as UBC, BSSSC, CBSS. As highlighted by Ann-Irene Saeternes, Secretary General of BSSSC, and Krystyna Wróblewska, Pomorskie Region Marshal Office, key issues such as the crisis of capitalism, globalisation, the crisis of democracy and climate change require a macroregional approach. In this regard and in order to tackle issues capable of affecting the region it takes a stronger political leadership, the capacity to anticipate trends, a closer cooperation with EU, a strengthened visibility and an increased financial support. As suggested during the panel the Rubik cube might not be solved if it means to end up being stranded. Indeed, the cooperation among different stakeholders placed in the region requires an ongoing effort capable to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants. Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals represents a great challenge for the whole Baltic Sea Region.

On February 16th, ERB Executive Board representatives met to summarise ERB's activities and plan the future ones. The ultimate goal of the ERB's work in the field of cross-border cooperation in the South Baltic Region will be to put people at the centre of its actions trying to find the right

balance. During the executive board, ERB Presidency was officially transferred from Ms Akko Karlsson, Vice-Chair of the Board of Regional Council in Kalmar County, to Ms Anne Thomas, Vice Mayor of Regional Municipality of Bornholm. At the same time, the Chair of ERB Youth Board was transferred from Ms Yanina Andrushkevich (Kaliningrad) to Ms Alexandra Winberg (Kalmar).



The Executive Board of Euroregion Baltic met in Klaipeda on 22nd May 2018 to discuss about the progress, the challenges and the priorities of the organisation in the coming year. The main topic of the meeting was the development of the ERB 2030 Agenda and discussion on the proposals already submitted by some of the ERB members. The discussion served as a source of inspiration and provided relevant content to the development of the document later this year.

The ERB also continued the dialogue on the potential enlargement of the organisation by including a new member from Sweden. To this end a representative of the Skåne Association of Local Authorities (Kommunförbundet Skåne) presented the organisation and their expectations towards the ERB as a potential future member organisation. The process is expected to be finalised at the next Board meeting in September 2018.

Much discussion was dedicated to the question of continuation of the South Baltic Programme under the new proposals submitted by the European Commission. It was agreed unanimously that the Programme should continue as an independent financial tools with significant budget allowing its stakeholders to tackle different challenges identified in the region. In order to provide an effective lobbying for the Programme the Board decided to develop a position paper highlighting the achievements of the Programme and lobbying for its continuation after 2020.

Next day the Youth ERB Board had a very constructive meeting as well. The youth organisation of Klaipeda hosted the meeting and its member presented to the Youth board their actions and activities in Lithuania. Moreover they presented the candidacy of Klaipeda for European Youth Capital 2020 and the vision and goals behind this candidacy.



Youth Board presented as well its priorities in connection with the

Euroregion Baltic Agenda 2030 as following: a/ Exchange of experiences and good practises with youth organisations around the South Baltic Sea! b/Living conditions for youth, c/ Hot spots for the exchange information among young peopl, d/ Better promotion of the Youth Board and youth activities in social media, e/ Gender Equality and Human Rights

During its third meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 on Bornholm the Executive Board decided to approve the final version of the ERB 2030 Agenda and position paper on the future of South Baltic Programme as well as admit a new member of ERB, Skåne Association of Local Authorities.

➤ Skåne Association of Local Authorities joins Euroregion Baltic

Over the last few years Euroregion Baltic has been constantly developing its activities as an important and active cooperation platform not only in the South Baltic area but in the wider Baltic Sea Region. These activities resulted not only in the improved visibility of the organisation but also started to deliver concrete



**Kommunförbundet Skåne**

results based on the involvement of ERB in several cross-border projects. This development momentum culminated in 2018 when on its 20th anniversary ERB has been approached by the Skåne Association of Local Authorities (Kommunförbundet Skåne – KFSK) to discuss a potential membership in the organisation.

Having concluded almost one year of concrete negotiations and fruitful meetings, in September 2018 the KFSK decided to apply for a membership in Euroregion Baltic. Following this request, the Executive Board of ERB decided to approve the KFSK membership and welcomed the Association as its new member effective starting from 1st January 2019.

The Skåne Association of Local Authorities (Kommunförbundet Skåne – KFSK) is a nonprofit organisation with the task of supporting and developing the local self-governance, protecting local interests, promoting collaboration between municipalities and assisting them in their activities. With all 33 municipalities in Skåne being members of the Association, KFSK works in important cooperation areas of energy and climate, environment and community planning, labour market and business, local authority management, education, public health and welfare as well as research, innovation and development.

The Association is also very active in cross-border cooperation, supporting their municipalities in international projects and directly joining some of them as an important and very experienced actor. This will undoubtedly provide a added value in ERB cooperation, opening the platform to new ideas and cooperation initiatives, especially in the area of green tech and sustainable development.

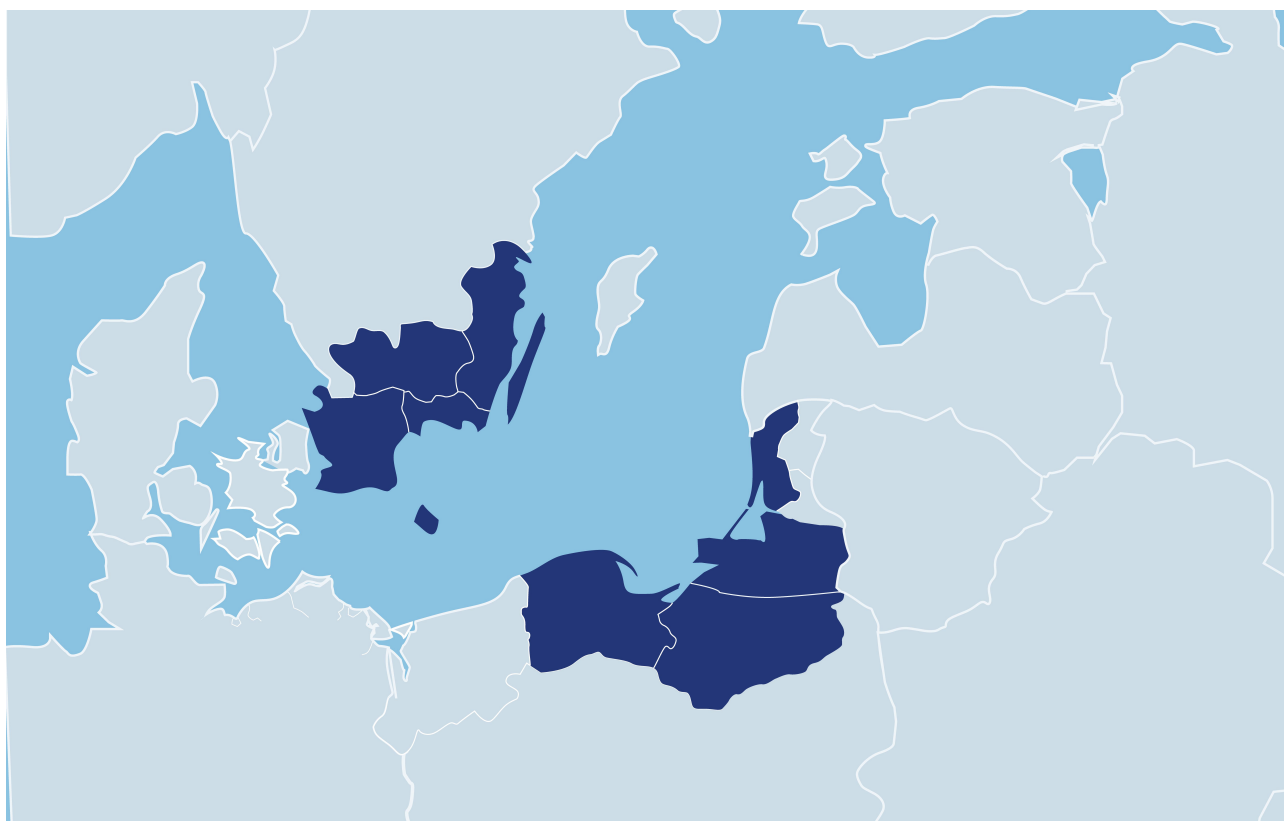
➤ Adopting ERB 2030 Agenda

The Executive Board at the meeting 22nd May 2017 in Elblag decided to start a revision process of the ERB 2020 Agenda. The first and initial discussion took place at the Board meeting in Palanga 18th September 2017, followed up 16th February 2018 in Elblag with a decision about the timeline and preparatory activities for an adoption of a revised strategy, ERB 2030 Agenda, at the Board meeting 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 on Bornholm. The ERB 2030 Agenda aims to set the long-term goals and priorities for the ERB cooperation, to be implemented through biannual action plans. This document is the result of regional stakeholder meetings and consultation visits with all ERB member organisations by the ERB President Anne Thomas, during the period May-August 2018. Inputs have also been collected from Skånes Kommunförbund, having applied for ERB membership. The structure of the ERB 2030 Agenda was agreed at the Executive Board meeting in

Elblag, February 2018 and finally included the following agendas: South Balitc, Baltic Sea Region, Europe, People-to-People and Youth, Green and Blue Growth.

## Budget execution for 2018

ERB Annual Budget between 1st Jan - 31st December 2018 (EUR and PLN) - execution as of 31.12.2018		
INCOME	Actual for 31.12.2018 EUR	Actual for 31.12.2018 PLN
Balance as of 1-01-2018	4.363,74 €	18.327,71 PLN
Blekinge	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Bornholm	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Kaliningrad	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Klaipeda	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Kalmar	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Kronoberg	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Pomorskie	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
Association of Communes ERB	5.500,00 €	23.100,00 PLN
CaSYPoT Project refund	17.834,55 €	74.905,11 PLN
INTERCONNECT refund	9.595,71 €	40.301,98 PLN
UMBRELLA refund	17.000,00 €	71.400,00 PLN
Baltic Sea Youth Camp advance payment	7.000,00 €	29.400,00 PLN
Other income	2.613,00 €	10.974,60 PLN
<b>Income total</b>	<b>107.907,00 €</b>	<b>453.209,40 PLN</b>
EXPENDITURES	Actual for 31.12.2018 EUR	Actual for 31.12.2018 PLN
Personnel:	27.476,80 €	115.402,56 PLN
Overhead including office rental	4.195,50 €	17.621,10 PLN
Phone	753,00 €	3.162,60 PLN
Salary	22.528,30 €	94.618,86 PLN
Travels, meetings	7.600,55 €	31.922,31 PLN
IT	600,22 €	2.520,92 PLN
Youth Board	0,00 €	0,00 PLN
Training and skills development	0,00 €	0,00 PLN
Banking charges	132,15 €	555,03 PLN
Projects	69.864,25 €	293.429,85 PLN
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>105.673,97 €</b>	<b>443.830,67 PLN</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>2.233,03 €</b>	<b>9.378,73 PLN</b>



Editor: Sebastian Magier

Copyright: Euroregion Baltic International Permanent Secretariat

2018