

Euroregion Baltic
Executive Board Meeting
6th Oct 2021

On-line meeting during the BSSSSC Annual Conference in Kaliningrad Region

Title Meeting minutes

Submitted by MLR, International Permanent Secretariat

Summary / Note This document provides the meeting minutes of the ERB Executive Board on-line meeting on 6th Oct 2021

Requested action Comment

Participants:
ERB Executive Board:

Mr Gustaw Marek Brzezin	ERB Vice-President, Member of ERB Executive Board, Marshal of Warmia and Masuria Region
Mr Wiesław Byczkowski	Member of ERB Executive Board, Deputy Marshal of Pomorskie Region
Ms Helen Bengtsson	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Chair of the Council Region Kronoberg
Ms Suzanne Svensson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Regional Development Board Region Blekinge
Ms Ingrid Hermansson	Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Regional Development Board Region Blekinge
Ms Cecilia Magnusson-Svärd	Member of ERB Executive Board, Skåne Association of Local Authorities
Mr Lars Lundberg	Member of ERB Executive Board, Skåne Association of Local Authorities
Mr Per-Ole Petersen	Member of ERB Executive Board, Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Ms Alla Ivanowa	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Minister-Head of Agency for International

	Affairs and Interregional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region
Ms Liana Maximova	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Deputy Head of the Agency for International Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region
Ms Elin Sjölander Landerdahl	Member of the ERB Executive Board, Region Kalmar County
Ms Johanna Wyckman	Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Kalmar County
Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas	Member of the ERB Executive Board, Klaipeda Region Association

ERB Youth Board:

Ms Johanna Wyckman	Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board, Kalmar Region
Ms Julia Orluk	Member of the ERB Youth Board, Pomorskie Region
Ms Elin Petersson	Member of ERB Youth Board, Region Blekinge
Mr Alexander Nilsson	Member of ERB Youth Board, Region Blekinge
Mr Grzegorz Gieda	Member of ERB Youth Board, Warmia and Masuria Region
Ms Greta Tautavičiūtė	Member of ERB Youth Board, Association Klaipeda Region

ERB Secretariats:

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen	Regional Municipality of Bornholm
Mr Slawomir Demkowicz -Dobrzanski	Region Kronoberg
Mr Peter Nilsson	Skåne Association of Local Authorities
Ms Egle Stonke	Association of Klaipeda Region
Mr Łukasz Bielewski	Warmia and Masuria Region
Mr Piotr Zwolak	Warmia and Masuria Region
Ms Agata Czyżewska	Pomorskie Region
Ms Antje Schreyer	Region Kalmar County
Ms Johanna Rönn	Region Blekinge
Mr Marcin Żuchowski	Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic



Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło	Head of the Euroregion Baltic International Permanent Secretariat
Ms Anna Dudziak	Euroregion Baltic International Permanent Secretariat
Ms Paulina Lieder-Żuchowska	Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic

Guests:

Mr Mattias Andersson, Chairman of the Mobility Core Group

Mr Tobias Facchini, Chairman of the Water Core Group

Mr Torben Jörgensen, Water Core Group

Mr Nicolai Munk Pedersen, Mobility Core Group

ERB Executive Board meeting

6th Oct 2021

10.00 – 12.00 CET

On-line session

10.00	1.	Welcome and opening
10.10		<p>Due to the sad and unexpected death of the President of Euroregion Baltic, Mr Johan Sandberg, Chair of the Regional Development Board in Region Blekinge, Sweden, the meeting was chaired by ERB Vice President, Mr Gustaw Marek Brzezina from Warmia and Masuria Region.</p> <p>The chair of the meeting welcomed participants of the ERB Board meeting organised on-line due to the COVID19 pandemic and asked ERB Board members to hold a moment of silence in honour of ERB President Johan Sandberg.</p> <p>Mr Brzezina conveyed condolences from Mr Mieczysław Struk, Marshal of Pomorskie Region.</p> <p>Ms Johanna Ronn expressed gratitude on behalf of Region Blekinge for all the compassion.</p> <p>Ms Alla Ivanova, Minister-Head of Agency for International Affairs and Interregional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region and Deputy Member of Euroregion Baltic Board, welcomed the meeting participants on behalf of the Kaliningrad Region – hosts of the Annual Baltic Sea States Subregional Conference meeting and hosts for the ERB Board Meeting. Despite the pandemic, she informed that some youth representatives arrived in Kaliningrad to participate in the BSSSC Youth Conference. She added that the conference proves that all Baltic regions have joint problems, joint goals, solutions, and interests.</p> <p>The chair of the meeting presented the agenda.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board members approved the agenda.</i></p>
10.10	2.	Signing the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meeting
10.15		<p>ERB IPS have submitted the minutes of the previous ERB Executive Board meeting held on 25th May 2021.</p> <p><i>ERB Executive Board approved the minutes, and ERB Vice President signed the ERB Executive Board meeting minutes.</i></p>

10.20 3. **Information from the South Baltic Programme**

10.35 Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed the ERB Executive Board members about the recent developments in the Interreg South Baltic Programme, including the Programme's Seed Money Call, Public Consultations of the new Programme for 2021-2027 and the works of the Joint Programming Committee.

SDD stressed out that the programming process for the new programming period 2021-2027, based on previous experience, is conducted within several structures. First of all, there is the Joint Programming Committee (JPC) with representatives of Managing Authorities of the programme and regional authorities from regions involved. JPC is the body that takes decisions regarding the shape of the programme, strategies and priorities that will be included in the final programme. Besides the regional and national partners preparing the new programme preparation process, some other actors are also involved. External experts are employed to provide socio-economic and SWOT analysis, programme drafting, and SEA. Euroregion Baltic and Euroregion Pomerania are too active actors in the preparations of the new programme and the implementation of the current programme. ERB has been very early in promoting the programme and calling for its' continuation. All this stands in accordance with the EU Commission's regulations that both the implementation of the programme and the programming of the new programme should take place in a comprehensive, consultative manner, including a broad range of national, regional and local actors. Thus, the regional Contact Points have been involved in the process. SDD informed that just the day before, on 5th October, there was an on-line consultation meeting where representatives of the regional and local organisations and authorities were invited together with other relevant partners. The meeting was also attended by the ERB, MA and EU Commission representatives. Niels Chresten Anderssen was an active participant in the meeting and also contributed to the meeting.

SDD informed that the JPC should approve the final Programme document by 16th November. The next step in the process is that until the end of 2021, the Member States will approve the Programme and then it will be submitted to the European Commission, which is planned to happen until the end of January 2022. However, the date of the submission to EC is 2 April 2022. This only shows the commitment of all the actors involved in the



process to finalise the new Programme as early as possible. After the submission, the EC will closely look at the proposal giving their comments and/or requiring some clarifications. It is expected that the document will be approved sometime in IQ or IIQ of 2022. During that time, there will also be some simultaneous work on implementing documents. Hopefully, the new Programme's kick-off and first proposal call will happen in the 2nd half of 2022, probably after the summer holiday of 2022.

SDD reminded about the ongoing 3rd Seed Money call for proposals within the current programme, which started on 13th September and will last until 5th November. Organisations can apply within all current priorities and specific objectives. This call aims to develop the project proposals for the full-scale projects that could be implemented as regular projects under the future South Baltic Programme 2021-2027.

ERB Board Members took note on the information provided.

10.35 4. **Euroregion Baltic Youth Board update and information**
10.50 **about the Erasmus+ youth project application**

Ms Johanna Wyckman, ERB YB Chairwoman, presented the report from the recent ER Youth Board meetings happening on-line in the past months and started with the information about the Erasmus + project application on youth entrepreneurship that the ERB YB has been working on for the previous couple of months and it was already submitted on 5th October. The idea of the project is to address youth unemployment, strengthen youth entrepreneurship and better connect youth in the Baltic Sea Region. Ms Wyckman also underlined that the focus areas of interest for the ERB YB are sustainability, gender equality and cross-border cooperation.

She informed that the preparation phase of the project includes creating a programme for the youth camp, which will take place in Kalmar in summer 2022. There will be 3 country groups – Sweden (Region Kalmar), Poland (Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic) and Lithuania (Klaipeda Region). There are preparation meetings with ERB YB planned, and hopefully, it will be a physical meeting, first to be held this autumn and the second one in May, back to back with the ERB Executive Board meeting. The camp will be held at the end of July 2022 and will last for five days, each day led by one country group. There will be different themes of the camp for each day, all connected to youth entrepreneurship. These are an introduction to entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial leadership, women entrepreneurship, sustainable and socially responsible entrepreneurship and digital entrepreneurship. There are also

visits to local entrepreneurship planned as well as having local speakers invited to the event.

The project will end with the implementation phase. There will be follow up meetings at home for each country group. Also, an on-line network will be created, and a short movie from the camp itself will be developed. If the project is successfully accepted, it will begin in 2022.

Ms Alla Ivanova, Kaliningrad, requested to consider the participation of Russian participants in the camp. If such information comes in advance, the Russian Agency will be able to include the camp costs in its financial plan for the next; thus, it will be able to finance the Russian youth visit to Kalmar.

Ms Magda Leszczyna – Rzucidło expressed her appreciation for the work and engagement of the YB members. She also informed that within the ERB budget, there is money for the YB activities; thus, if the application is granted, it would be great to have representatives from all ERB member countries taking part in the camp. The results should be known by the end of the year, end of January 2022 at the latest, which would give ERB enough time to secure the participation of all ERB members.

Ms Wyckman added that the goal was to involve all ERB states in the application; thus, it would be great also to have representatives from Kaliningrad joining the camp.

Mr Brzezina added that he is pleased to see that the ERB YB members activity is constant and promising within the future framework.

ERB Executive Board discussed the Youth Board activities and took note of the information presented by the ERB YB Chairwoman.

10.50 5. **Information from the 1st meeting of the ERB Working Group on Conference on the Future of Europe debate**

11.05

Mr Niels Chresten Andersen presented the report from the 1st meeting of the ERB Working Group on COFOE that took place on 21st Sep 2021. The Working Group was established until the 8th of July with all regions included, except Kaliningrad since it is not an EU member. All the regions are represented in the WCG by secretariats, Europe Direct Informative offices, and representatives from Brussels.

The first on-line meeting was held on the 21st of September, where the concept of the work and thematic areas for the position paper was discussed. It was agreed that the position paper would be adopted by February-March 2022. NCA also mentioned the group discussed sharing information about events, and he recommended following a unique, multilingual digital platform for the COFOE, where different events can be

found. He briefly informed about the upcoming events in Bornholm, Pomorskie Region and Warmia & Masuria Region.

NCA underlined that it is essential to meet the expectations towards COFOE not later than February-March 2022. He encouraged organising different events regarding the Future of Europe. He suggested strengthening the ERB YB's engagement to mark what kind of Europe they would like to see in the future.

Ms Johanna Rönn followed presenting the next steps in the ERB WCG on COFOE works. She agreed with NCA that ERB has to be realistic on how much impact in terms of the Future of Europe it can make; therefore, it is imperative to know what needs to be highlighted and the purpose of doing this kind of activity. The two main messages that the ERB WCG would like to underline are that Euroregions are driving engines for local actors contributing to the common European goals and, secondly, the importance of the cross-border cooperation and bottom-up approach.

JR added there are many ongoing initiatives, and there is a possibility to register different kinds of events such as webinars and physical meetings on the platform. The ERB WCG will continue to collect the inputs from those events and include them in the draft ERB position paper on COFOE. The document shall be prepared in fall 2021 with the leading role of the Region Blekinge. It will be presented to the ERB Board during the meeting planned for 2022 in Warmia and Masuria Region, Poland.

JR briefly explained how the COFOE platform works. She informed that the ERB WCG has made a brief overview of the platform's thematic areas and concluded that climate change, youth issues, digital transformation connected to tourism, strong economy and European democracy could be the topics they could address in the position paper. She added that other areas of interest could be proposed, and she referred to the NCA statement about bringing up youth engagement and the possibility of organising a youth-oriented webinar on COFOE.

Ms Johanna Wyckman added that the ERB YB is very eager to be involved in the COFOE and the thematic areas mentioned by JR are also the ones the YB would like to highlight in their future activities.

Marshall Brzezina added that the ERB Board would strictly correlate with the WCG in presenting the ERB's position on COFOE.

ERB Executive Board members commented on the proposed input to the joint ERB position paper on COFOE.

11.05	6.	Proposal for the sequence of ERB Presidency transfers post-2023
11.15		

Due to the decision of the Skåne Association of Local Authorities to end their membership to Euroregion Baltic by 31st December 2021, presented to the ERB Board Members during the meeting on 25th May 2021, it was necessary to update the Euroregion Baltic Statute in 2022 and decide on the changed sequence of the ERB Presidency post-2023.

Ms Magda Leszczyna Rzucidło, Head of the IPS ERB, presented the Presidencies order approved by the ERB Executive Board in 2019, which was as follows:

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 Euroregion Baltic, Poland

MLR proposed two possibilities to change the planned sequence – first would be to move all the presidencies planned post-2023 one year earlier, which means that after Bornholm's presidency in 2023, the next would be taken by the Kaliningrad Region and followed by Kronoberg in 2025, Pomorskie Region in 2026, Kalmar in 2027, Klaipeda Association in 2028 and Association of Polish Communes ERB in 2029. However, suppose any regions would like to keep the previously planned presidency due to accompanying significant anniversaries or other reasons. In that case, it is possible to maintain the planned year and to propose a change some other way around. MLR requested the ERB Executive Board members to discuss the proposals and to share their ideas or opinion.

The Kaliningrad Region stated it would be very reasonable to move its presidency to 2024 as it would coincide with the 300th Anniversary of Immanuel Kant, and there will be a lot of events and information to share with the neighbouring regions.

Bornholm agreed to the first proposal of moving the presidencies one year earlier if it suits all the regions.

Regions Kronoberg, Kalmar, Pomorskie, Blekinge, Klaipeda Association and Association of Polish Communes supported the above proposal and accepted the new presidencies order.

ERB Executive Board members voted and accepted the changed order of ERB presidencies post-2023, after the Bornholm Presidency.

11.15 7. **Reports from the Water Core Group and Mobility Core Group**

11.30

Mr Mattias Andersson representing the Mobility Core Group secretariat, presented the information about the Mobility Core Group Swedish Institute project kick-off and the plans for the future MCG engagement to South Baltic cooperation. MA underlined that the SI project directly affects the previous Interconnect project and focuses on using its experience within the travel planner developed by Innobaltica and trying to connect it with the tourism sector. Thus, the project's official name is "Public Transport Interconnecting Sustainable Tourism Routes and destinations in the SB area". There are six partners of the project – Region Blekinge, Blekinge Institute of Technology - supporting the project with gamification and behavioural change theories, Innobaltica – the owner of technological platform and responsible for its further development within the project, Association of Sea Cities and Municipalities – responsible for the stakeholder's dialogue in Pomorskie Region, Association of Klaipeda Region Municipalities (stakeholders dialogue in Klaipeda Region) and finally the State Enterprise form Kaliningrad Region. MA encouraged neighbouring regions to join the project.

The total project budget is 489000 SEK, and Region Blekinge is taking care of the co-financing of all the partners. MA underlined that the project aims to form a partnership with a well-established plan to implement solutions identified during the seed funding project.

On 30th September, the first on-line meeting and workshop took place where the new partners were informed about technological possibilities in the already developed platform. The next meeting scheduled for the end of October is planned to create specialised road maps for the system development. On top of that, there will be monthly partner meetings and a physical workshop in Gdańsk in November. NA added that the central part of the project is the stakeholder dialogue. The aim is to have at least 20 dialogues in each region, which hopefully will be extended to other areas. At the beginning of 2022, regional seminars with the stakeholders are planned, starting in Klaipeda in January with the final workshop in Karlskrona in March. The final application to the Interreg South Baltic Programme will be defined.

Mr Tobias Facchini, Head of the Water Core Group, updated the Board members on the recent WCG and WaterMan Seed Money project meeting in Kalmar and the joint ERB WCG project on water re-use. TF started with the WCG's information on developing the WaterMan seed project for the last two years. He briefly presented the project's background, which evolved based on identified water-related problems common in the BSR area, for instance, high amounts of nutrients & hazardous substances, water shortage and floods issues etc. TF added that the project's original objective has narrowed down from where it's started and is now mainly focused on water re-use with different circular approaches.

Furthermore, TF summarised the project meeting in Kalmar on 14- 15th Sep 2021, where experts from 4 countries arrived. During the meeting, Mr Jens Masouch and partners concluded project relevance towards the forthcoming call from BSR, which will be open in mid-November. The final project application is planned to be submitted to the BSR Programme by the end of March 2022; thus, if approved, the project will start in autumn 2022. TF added that the WaterMan project is a project with pilot actions where different measures can be tested to tackle the identified problems. Currently, there are partners from Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Denmark and Sweden, but other countries are considered.

NCA shared the information from the recent South Baltic Programme webinar that no Interreg Programmes can be approved expectedly before next year because the EU is still missing the implementation regulations so far. According to the information, the BSR tend to have a call open in mid-November, which is for phase 1 of 2. However, the final implementation decisions probably can only be approved from January 2022.

MLR added that the ERB IPS is very much engaged in both WCG and MCG work. As it comes to the MG project, ERB is not the actual partner of the project; however, MLR ensured that the IPS would support the MCG and its activities. MLR shared her hopes that the MCG that only started its work this year will follow the great pattern of the experience of the WCG. She stressed that the WCG is on its very best way to submit the main project application, where all ERB countries are involved, which is why the project targets the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme. She also mentioned the plan to have an additional physical meeting within the WCG in Gdańsk by the end of January 2022.

MLR again assured her support regarding any assistance needed from the ERB IPS in carrying out both groups' activities.

ERB Executive Board members took note of the information presented.

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| 11.30 | 8. | Information on the planned ERB project engagement, project invitation for the Euroregion Baltic and the upcoming events and ERB activities. |
| 11.40 | | |

Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło, head of the IPS, presented the information about the planned project

proposal on capacity building (Umbrella 3.0/New Umbrella) to be submitted to the Interreg South Baltic Programme Seed Money call, which was open on 13th September and the deadline is 5th November. She informed that following the activities within the Umbrella and Umbrella 2.0 projects, she has undertaken some initial actions within the ERB IPS to continue with the capacity building initiative. In agreement with all ERB secretariats, MLR has started to draft an application based on Umbrella and Umbrella 2.0 projects. She requested the ERB Executive Board members to decide whether to submit the Seed Money application project as the Lead Partner. She briefly presented the call requirements, possible partnership and main project goals and details and its timetable.

Furthermore, MLR presented the invitation to join the project proposal sent by the Sustainable Development Goals Centre at the Gdansk University (Pomorskie Region) to ERB IPS to join their Seed Money project as a partner. MLR briefly explained the idea of the project, its goals and some essential details of possible ERB IPS participation in the project.

Bornholm gave its full support for both presented Seed Money projects.

Finally, MLR updated the ERB Executive Board Members on Umbrella 2.0 capacity-building project events and meetings open to small and local actors from the South Baltic Sea area.

ERB Executive Board decided to enter both presented projects by the Euroregion Baltic.

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| 11.45 | 9. | Invitation to the next Executive Board meetings in 2022 |
| 11.55 | | |

Euroregion Baltic Board Members provided information about the upcoming ERB Board meetings. Marshal Brzezina, representing Warmia and Masuria Region, informed that the first ERB Executive Board meeting in 2022 will be held in Olsztyn with the transfer of the presidency. Detailed information on the exact date and agenda of the meeting will be sent to the Board members soon. The Warmia



and Masuria Region agreed on a prior with Region Blekinge the 2-years priorities for the ERB activities, and these remain in force.

The Kronoberg Region representative followed the invitation to the 2nd ERB Board meeting scheduled for the 11th May 2022.

Marshal Brzezina added that due to the cancellation of the joint BSSSC and ERB Board meeting that was foreseen for the afternoon of 6th October, it is planned to organise this meeting in 2022, possibly in a physical manner. ERB Executive Board took note of the information presented.

ERB Executive Board members took note of the information presented.

11:55

10.

Words from the Skåne Association of Local Authorities Board Members

Mr Lars Lundberg, ERB Board Member representing the Skåne Association of Local Authorities, addressed the ERB Board Members to mark the final ERB Board Meeting for the Skåne Association of Local Authorities representatives.

ERB Executive Board members took note of the information presented and thanked Skåne Association of Local Authorities Board Members for their work as Euroregion Baltic Members.

12.00

11.

Conclusion and closing

Chair of the meeting and Vice President of Euroregion Baltic, Mr Gustaw Marek Brzezina, summarised and closed the meeting of the ERB Executive Board.
