



Title Minutes

Submitted by Bornholm and Warmia and Masuria regions

Summary / Note This document provides the draft minutes of the ERB Executive Board meeting on 2nd March 2023

Requested action Implement

Participants:

ERB Executive Board:

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| Mr Gustaw Marek Brzezin | ERB President, Member of ERB Executive Board, Marshal of Warmia and Masuria Region |
| Mr Mikael Benzón | ERB Vice-President, Member of ERB Executive Board, Regional Municipality of Bornholm |
| Ms Heidi Burgedahl | Member of ERB Executive Board, Regional Municipality of Bornholm |
| Mr Roland Gustbée | Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Kronoberg |
| Ms Helen Bengtsson | Deputy Member of ERB Executive Board, Region Kronoberg |
| Ms Suzanne Svensson | Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Regional Development Board Region Blekinge |
| Ms Lisa Österblad | Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Regional Development Board Region Blekinge |
| Ms Anna Ekberg | Member of ERB Executive Board, Member of the Regional Development Board Region Blekinge |
| Ms Ellinor Troli | Member of the ERB Executive Board, Region Kalmar County |
| Ms Maria Ixcot-Nilsson | Member of the ERB Executive Board, Region Kalmar County |
| Mr Grzegorz Grzelak | Member of the ERB Executive Board, Pomerania Region |

ERB Youth Board:

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| Mr Grzegorz Gieda | Member of ERB Youth Board, Warmia and Masuria Region |
| Mr Jakub Hamanowicz | Member of ERB Youth Board, Pomerania Region |
| Ms Amelia Laszewska | Member of ERB Youth Board, Pomerania Region |
| Ms Estelle Nerö | Member of ERB Youth Board, Blekinge |
| Mr André Nord | Member of ERB Youth Board, Blekinge |

ERB Secretariats:

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| Mr Niels Chresten Andersen | Regional Municipality of Bornholm |
| Mr Emil-Sebastian Juul-Pedersen | Europe Direct Bornholm |
| Mr Łukasz Bielewski | Warmia and Masuria Region |
| Mr Piotr Zwolak | Warmia and Masuria Region |
| Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzanski | Region Kronoberg |
| Ms Eglé Stonké | Association of Klaipeda Region |
| Ms Greta Tautaviciuté | Association of Klaipeda Region |
| Ms Johanna Rönn | Region Blekinge |
| Ms Monika Pochroń-Frankowska | Pomerania Region |

Guests:

David Christensen – BOFA, Bornholm

Torben Jørgensen – BEOF, Bornholm

Robert Hedman – Energy expert, Blekinge

Anna Dudziak – ERB information and communication expert

Online:

Marcin Żuchowski - Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic

ERB Executive Board meeting

2nd March 2023

13.00 – 15.00 CET

Rønne, Landemärket 26

Lunch was served at 12.00 – 13.00

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| 13.00 | 1. | Welcome and opening |
| 13.10 | | Gustaw Marek Brzezina, ERB President, welcomed participants and opened the meeting. He thanked Vice-President Mikael Benzon for organising the meeting. Mr Brzezina asked participants to check attendance and subsequently he confirmed the quorum. Ms Egle Stonke from Association of Klaipeda Region acted under authorisation from Association authorities. |
| 13.10 | 2. | Adoption of the meeting agenda |
| 13.10 | | Gustaw Marek Brzezina, ERB President, asked ERB Executive Board members about comments to the agenda of the meeting. No comments were submitted. <i>ERB Executive Board adopted agenda of the meeting.</i> |
| 13.10 | 3. | Signing the minutes from previous ERB Board Meeting on 9th December 2022 |
| 13.15 | | Gustaw Marek Brzezina, ERB President, signed minutes from previous ERB Board meeting held on 9 th December 2022 in Olsztyn. |
| 13.15 | 4. | Approval of the ERB Annual Report 2022 |
| 13.30 | | While presenting ERB Annual Report for 2022 Gustaw Marek Brzezina, ERB President summarised activities of Warmia and Masuria Region in 2022. He claimed it was a honour for him to be ERB President during the previous year. It was a year of many changes, both externally and inside Euroregion Baltic. First, it must be mentioned the invasion of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, which had tragic consequences for Ukrainian nation. It mobilised all ERB member organisations to provide quick and constant aid for Ukrainian refugees and residents. We may congratulate ourselves that we have been solidary with those in need. The consequences of the war were directly felt by Euroregion Baltic already in the beginning of March 2022, when we suspended Kaliningrad Region as ERB member. This had deep consequences for ERB, which had been the |

first Euroregion to include a partner from the Russian Federation.

Another factor influencing our cooperation was Covid-19 pandemic. Gradual easing of movement restrictions in the first half of 2022 allowed us to hold physical meetings again. For the first time since 2019 we were able to organise ERB Annual Forum of Stakeholders. It was held in Olsztyn on the 8th of December and gathered more than 60 people. Forum focused on circular economy and green energy.

2022 was also a year when new edition of Interreg South Baltic Programme was initiated. ERB played an active role in preparatory works for a new Programme, heading the joint delegation of Euroregions at Programme Committees. The first call in the Programme was open in December. Unfortunately, in spite of efforts and joint ERB position, olsztyński subregion was not included in the Programme area. However, Mr Brzezina wished ERB could continue activities in this matter, as some chances still remained. During last years Programme became an invaluable instrument for actors from our countries, enabling participation in projects on both sides of the Baltic. New Programme creates ground for further years of successful cooperation.

The previous year was also a year of organisational changes in Euroregion. On the 11th of May ERB Executive Board decided to begin efforts for establishing a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation. New organisational framework shall provide a legal personality for ERB and new possibilities for joint undertakings. Warmia and Masuria Presidency led common actions towards that aim and we succeeded, with all ERB Regional Secretariats, to consult draft documents – Convention and Statutes. They will be a basis for a today voting. This will be a preliminary decision. The final one will require approval by Foreign Ministries and it will be a task for Bornholm Presidency to continue the work until the successful end.

Mr Brzezina stressed the transfer of the Presidency was in an exceptional moment – when Euroregion Baltic celebrated 25 years. He wished all participants and Euroregion Baltic next 25 years of fruitful cooperation.

Mr Brzezina thanked everybody for close cooperation during this passing period, which was difficult, but ERB managed to overcome problems and is moving forward.

ERB Executive Board members approved the Annual Report for 2022.

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| 13.30 | 5. | Transfer of ERB Presidency |
| 13.40 | | By the decisions of the ERB Executive Board of 9 th December 2022 the ERB Presidency was transferred from Poland - Warmia and Masuria Region to Denmark - Regional Municipality of Bornholm. The Vice Presidency position was assumed by Sweden – Region Kronoberg. |

ERB Executive Board Members were informed about Regional Municipality of Bornholm decision to nominate Mr Mikael Benzon for the ERB President. Simultaneously, Region Kronoberg nominated Mr Roland Gustbée, to take over the role of ERB Vice President.

By this opportunity, outgoing President, Gustaw Marek Brzezina handed a Nicolaus Copernicus commemorative medal to Mikael Benzon, new ERB President.

According to the Statutes, ERB Executive Board elected new ERB President and ERB Vice President.

13.40 6. **ERB Action Plan 2023**

14.05

Regional Municipality of Bornholm presented the ERB Action Plan for 2023.

Estimates for ERB budget and membership fee for 2023 were presented by new ERB Presidency and Vice Presidency.

ERB Executive Board was requested to take note of the information presented and to discuss budget and membership fee for 2023. It was also requested to decide on dates and places of ERB Executive Board meetings in 2023.

Decision:

The ERB Action Plan 2023 approved, including the meeting plan for the Executive ERB Board meetings 2023:

15-16th May 2023 including ERB Annual Stakeholder Forum in Blekinge, Sweden

26-27th September 2023 in Brussels, Belgium

Membership fee 2023 will not be requested before decision about EGTC-status is known. Warmia and Masuria Region will continue to be authorised by ERB Executive Board to accept expenses related to daily ERB operations.

Mr Grzegorz Gieda informed that the Youth Board will elect a new chairperson before the end of March 2023. The Youth Board will focus on contacts to the regional and local youth councils, the work in ERB Executive Board and investigate possibilities in Erasmus+ projects. Youth Board asked the ERB secretariats to appoint a coordinator to assist the Youth Board.

14.05 7. **European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation - approval of drafts Convention and Statutes**

14.25

Representative of Warmia and Masuria Region presented information about current status of the process aiming at establishing a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation by Euroregion Baltic.

ERB Executive Board was asked to approve final texts of drafts Convention and Statutes for EGTC and to decide about further process.

Decision:

The Executive Board except for the Association of Polish Communes (APC) agreed on the final texts to be informally consulted with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The APC will inform about its decision not later than 24th March 2023.

If approved also by the APC, the Warmia and Masuria Region will send the texts for informal consultation in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

14.25 8. **Task Force – Climate change and green transition**

14.40 The idea of establishing a new Task Force on Climate Change and Green Transition appeared during ERB Annual Forum of Stakeholders on 8th December 2022. Association of Polish Communes presented a draft outline for the proposal.

ERB Executive Board was asked to discuss and decide on the proposal

Decision:

The Executive Board agreed to work further on the proposal, and asked the Association of Polish Communes together with the ERB secretariats to prepare a revised draft to the next Executive Board meeting.

The proposal needs to be more clear about the role and time limit of the Task Force, as well as more concrete actions to be described. Eventually similar initiatives or cooperations should be checked.

A revised proposal should be sent to the ERB President in time to be sent out with the agenda to the next Executive Board meeting (26th April 2023)

14.40 9. **Information about Interreg South Baltic Programme and ERB Water Core Group**

14.55

Information from Interreg South Baltic Programme was provided by Mr Niels Chresten Andersen from Regional Municipality of Bornholm:

The Monitoring Committee 27/2 2023 approved 23 Seed Money projects out of 27 received applications. The projects must be implemented before end of August 2023.

Information from Water Core Group and WaterMan project will be provided by Mr Torben Jorgensen from BEOF Bornholm:

The WaterMan project consists of 16 project partners and will have its Kick-off meeting 14-16th March 2023 in Kalmar. Meeting/event schedule, task and deliverables were presented, as well as the output: "BSR Water Reuse Toolbox", to be tested in Kalmar (SE), Braniewo (PL) and Bornholm (DK).

ERB Executive Board was asked to take note of the information.

Decision:

The Executive Board took note of the given information.

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| 14.55 | 10. | Any other business |
| 15.00 | | Mr Sławomir Demkowicz-Dobrzański informed that as soon as the Swedish government releases new information about 9 th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue in Kronoberg 20-22 nd March 2023, he will send it out to ERB Regional Secretariats. |
| | | Mr Gustaw Marek Brzezina invited ERB Executive Board members for event in Elbląg about disinformation, which will be co-organised with the EU Committee of Regions (CoR) on 10-11 th May 2023. |
| | | Mr Niels Chresten Andersen invited ERB Executive Board members to the Baltic Energy Island Summit in Rønne, which will be organised on 16 th May 2023. |
| 15.00 | 11. | Conclusion and closing |
| 15.00 | | Mikael Benzon, ERB President, closed the ERB Executive Board meeting. |
