



Resolution of the Council of Euroregion Baltic

supporting facilitation of the conditions for crossborder cooperation between its members

We, the participants in the conference:

“Perspectives for future border crossings of people and cargo within Euroregion Baltic”

have with great interest discussed the current border crossing situation between the Kaliningrad Region and its neighbouring regions within Euroregion Baltic.

We confirm:

the aims of Euroregion Baltic (ERB) remain, as agreed in February 1998, to

- improve the life conditions of the people inhabiting the area of Euroregion Baltic,
- promote mutual contacts,
- tighten bonds among local communities,
- eliminate historical prejudices,
- plan activities aimed at providing sustainable development,
- promote actions aiming at co-operation between regional and local authorities.

We also confirm the ERB Joint Development Strategy, adopted 28th November 2005, in which the Kaliningrad Region should be given special attention in the joint development efforts to be implemented. Furthermore, concrete goals and measures of ERB activities should relate to the Kaliningrad Region’s status as a potential gateway to the Russian market and markets further eastwards.

We fully support:

- the Joint Statement agreed on 31st May 2003 on the occasion of the St. Petersburg Summit, stating that the Russian Federation and the European Union agree to examine the conditions for visa-free travel as a long term perspective;
- the aims of the four common spaces, agreed on 10th May 2005 at the Moscow Summit, including in particular the Common Economic Space, whose aim is to create an open and integrated market between the European Union and the Russian Federation;
- the Agreement on the facilitation of the issuance of visas at the EU-Russia Summit in Sochi on 25th May 2006, reaffirming the intention to establish a visa-free travel regime between the European Union and the Russian Federation;
- the report by the European Parliament from 16th November 2006 on a Baltic Sea Strategy for the Northern Dimension, urging the Russian Federation and the European Union to examine the possibility of developing the Kaliningrad Region into a pilot region with improved access to the EU’s internal market;
- the new Northern Dimension Policy Framework Document agreed on 24th November 2006 in Helsinki, aiming to help to ensure that no dividing lines are established in the North of Europe, and including the Kaliningrad Region as a priority area, with its opportunities for development given its particular geographical situation;
- the readiness of the European Union, the Lithuanian and Russian Governments to coordinate the complex of measures aimed at the reduction of time for crossing the boarder by trains included in the scheme of the Kaliningrad passenger transit.

We strongly recommend:

that the Heads of States and Governments in the European Union and the Russian Federation

- endeavour to ensure that residents of the Kaliningrad Region and the neighbouring regions in Lithuania and Poland have conditions to cross the border which will be similar to the current border crossing regime, after Poland and Lithuania have become fully integrated into the Schengen Area;
- continue to work for a local border traffic regime within the framework of the new regulation adopted on 20th December 2006, with amendments on 23rd February 2007, by the European Parliament and European Council, specifically applicable to local border traffic through bilateral agreements offering advantages to border residents crossing the external borders of the Member States;
- extend the limit of 30 kilometres from the border allowing residents in the Kaliningrad Region and neighbouring regions of Lithuania and Poland to take advantage of the special local border regime;
- allocate specific resources in the new programmes financed within the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument to more intensively prepare a visa-free regime between the Kaliningrad Region and neighbouring EU regions in a short term perspective, to be extended to all the regions within Euroregion Baltic in a medium term perspective;
- enable navigation in the Vistula Lagoon and Kaliningradzkij Zaliv, based on intergovernmental agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation, and in the Curonian Lagoon, based on intergovernmental agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Lithuania and the Russian Federation, with the aim of inducing humanitarian and economic relations and making a good use of to the existing infrastructure on border area inland waters.

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