

ERB NEWSLETTER



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EUROREGION BALTIC IS A POLITICAL COOPERATION OF NINE REGIONS IN DENMARK, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, POLAND, RUSSIA AND SWEDEN



President's Foreword

It's a great pleasure for me to present this first issue of Euroregion Baltic international newsletter to our readers: ERB members, associates and friends.

Initially, the newsletter will be published every quarter, giving you an insight into developments within our organisation and an account of events that are held in the ERB member regions.

This issue informs about an inspiring sporting event that took place in Starograd Gdański, Poland, where over 400 youth competed in football, basketball, volleyball and boxing. It also

refers to some of the ongoing ERB projects, like *Seagull, Green Circle Schools, Let's Know Each Other Better* and *New visions of Tourism Development in the Baltic Sea*.

Among this summer highlights you will find information on the recently initiated Seagull II Project and the ERB Board meeting in Klaipeda, which coincided with the 10th anniversary of Klaipeda County Administration and resulted in the joint statement on the future *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument*.

I hope you will find our newsletter both informative and enjoyable. Have a good read!



Ms Irina Rozova, Klaipeda County Vice-Governor, holds ERB Presidency in 2005

ERB Board Meeting in Klaipeda on 22 July

The meeting coincided with the tenth Anniversary of the establishment of Klaipeda County to whose celebrations the Board members were invited, as well as the Sea Festival in Klaipeda that attracted tens of thousands of inhabitants and tourists.

Among the highlights of the celebrations were the official meeting at the Drama Theatre attended by the Governor of Klaipeda, Ms Virginia Lukosiene, and the wreath laying ceremony. The armada of some thirty ships headed by the Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas sailed off the port in Klaipeda and

stopped out at sea to commemorate the seamen who perished on duty.

Apart from its routine tasks the Board approved the final version of the position paper on the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument to be signed by all the leaders in the ERB member regions and took on its new role as the Seagull II project Steering Committee.

The participants accepted the contents of this first issue of our international newsletter and debated on a possible date for a joint Council and Board meeting in November, finally approving the Joint Transnational Development Programme. It was

decided that the meeting will take place in Klaipeda on 28 November 2005, followed by the Seagull II kick-off conference on 29 November.



ERB Board Members (from left to right): Zigo Rutkovskis (Latvia), Alexander Kuzniecov (Russia), Jan Kozłowski (Poland), Annalise Molin (Denmark), Bo Frank (Sweden).

BALTIC MUSCLES

Euroregion Baltic had its First Youth Games held in Starogard Gdanski in Poland between 24 and 26 June. More than 400 sports youth, both boys and girls from around the Baltic Sea competed in boxing, basketball, volleyball, and football.

Boxing matches involved young boys in a number of weight categories, up to 64 kilograms, with most fights won by Polish



and Russian contenders.

The home team of Starogard won the boys' basketball tournament, and the outstanding Swedish team beat all their rivals in the girls' competition.

Volleyball proved a Polish specialty. The boys' team from Malbork and the girls' team from Kwidzyn scored better than their opponents from Kaliningrad and Klaipeda.

Football games were played in two groups. The winners in each group: Lithuanian team from Klaipeda and Polish line-up from Tczew had their showdown on the last day of the Games. After some exciting ninety minutes of matching performance from both teams Tczew managed to score

three goals as opposed to the two delivered by Klaipeda.



Youth shooting a ... film

ERB Youth project aims to extend cooperation between the member regions of Euroregion Baltic through integration of youths. It involves about 150 young people aged 15 – 21 living in the Baltic Sea Region.

Its main activity is a film made in a joint effort by all partners in the project – promoting national values of ERB member countries, and showing everyday life of the youth in the context of the integration process in Europe. The film is supposed to be of educational character. Made by the young and for the young it

will aim at presenting in an interesting way how their peers in other countries live, what their history, traditions and culture are. Another activity is the organization of training workshops for the young representatives of ERB. These aim at integrating and common understanding. The output is an established ERB Youth Group, generating ideas for more common projects and creating an ERB Youth Group website as a platform for the young people in ERB.



On October 6th 2005 a kick-off conference is being held in Klaipeda to initiate an ERB Water Forum, bringing together representatives of the regions, water agencies and experts in the field. For more information and guidance, please contact Carolina Gunnarsson at carolina.Gunnarsson@kalmar.regionforbund.se

Seagull devERB: Joint Transnational Development Programme

The Seagull Steering Committee met on May 28 in Budapest during its study tour to Hungary and Slovakia. The tour was to find out about rural and other development actions by the West-Hungarian Research Institute (HAS), and to study actions and work methods of the Carpathian Euroregion.

The main item for the meeting was to go through the comments on the second draft of the JTDP and conclude on the direction of the further work on the JTDP. The result of the meeting was that the structure and content of the document work should be:

a. The final papers describing the JTDP should be divided into three separate documents: (1) The Strategy – focus areas, (2) The prioritised actions to implement the strategy, and (3)

a background document with facts and figures about ERB, SWOT analysis, etc.

b. The strategic focus areas, with regards to the comments from the member regions, should be: (1) Support to a competitive business environment in the region, (2) Actions in order to enhance the unsatisfactory situation for ERB when it comes to transport infrastructure, (3) To be a frontrunner in implementing EU environment and energy policies, and (4) Labour market cooperation – in a wider frame of the EU social dimension.

c. Horizontal goals for all prioritised actions should be sustainable development, good governance and equal opportunities. Actions concerning the Kaliningrad Region should also be treated horizontally.

New Visions of Tourism Development in the Baltic Sea

The latest meetings in the Seagull project raised concerns on the need of emphasizing tourism development issues as one of the priority areas for developing competitive business environments in the region. The ERB member regions have proposed to establish the Tourism Development Working

Group (TDWG), supporting the coming Seagull II project within the scope of its reference networks.

Centre for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT), Bornholm, Denmark has initiated the proposal to conduct the pilot project as an attempt to establish the TDWG. CRT received the funding to implement the project called “New visions of tourism development in the Baltic Sea” from the Danish Ministry of Interior and Health, as part of its “Project Baltic Education Island.”

The pilot project started in March 2005 and will be completed in September 2005. Presently, two phases has been completed. For further information, please contact Project Manager Nino Javakhishvili Larsen at



Seagull S.C. at the central square in Győr



Håkan Brynielsson, Carolina Gunnarsson, Erik Ciardi and Rolf A. Karlson being toured around Sokoropatka Ecology Foundation Jam Factory



Niels Ch. Andersen, Erica Månsson and Marianne Gomez in SC meeting.

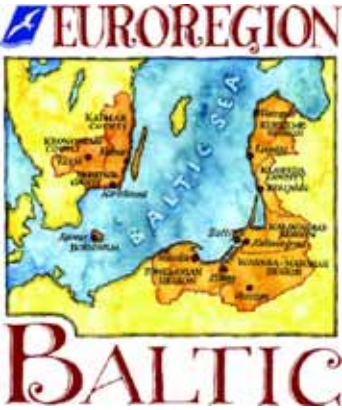


Milan Ilko, Vice Governor of Kosice Region, and Peter Karpaty of Carpathian Euroregion Secretariat in Slovakia.



Centre for Regional and Tourism Research. Photo: Atelier Fotohjørnet, Nexø

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Euroregion Baltic (ERB) was established in February 1998 as a cooperation between nine regions of Denmark (Bornholm), Lithuania (Klaipeda County), Latvia (Kurzeme Planning Region), Poland (Voivodeships of Pomorskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie), Russia (Kaliningrad Oblast) and Sweden (Regions of Blekinge, Kalmar, and Kronoberg). Since its early days ERB has been pursuing the goals of improving life conditions for its inhabitants, promoting bonds and contacts among local communities, and providing measures for a more sustainable development within the region. These have proved challenging tasks for the organization which then included EU member states, acceding countries, and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation. EU's enlargement on 1st May 2004 brought about a change in the make-up of our Euroregion, offering a historic opportunity to advance the prospects for genuine cohesion throughout the southeast Baltic Sea Region.

In November 2005 ERB Council will decide to approve the final draft of JTDP containing a proposed action plan to be implemented in ERB in the next 10 - 15 years. ERB political bodies realised that the implementation process itself will constitute a challenge. Therefore, ERB Council established its first joint organisational structure in the Euroregion, i.e. ERB International Permanent Secretariat (ERB IPS). ERB IPS has been functional since 1st July 2004, with two main objectives: firstly, to provide more coordinated cooperation among ERB national secretariats and regions, and secondly, to seek financial opportunities to support cooperation, especially with respect to the implementation challenge of JTDP. In spring 2005 a successful application was submitted to the Interreg III B BSR of a project called Seagull II. The key objectives of the Seagull II will be: first, to improve organisational capacities within ERB in assistance to the implementation process of JTDP (establishing permanent cooperative ERB networks of professionals and creating project development teams), second, to improve technical capacities within ERB in assistance to the networking activities (developing internet-based communication facility and establishing a common database enabling benchmarking activities), and thirdly, to improve HR capacities within ERB in assistance to the networking activities supporting the implementation of JTDP (increasing ERB politicians and civil servants' knowledge of EU policies relating to JTDP and improving ERB good governance capacities).



At the Board meeting in Brussels (from left to right): Marshal of Pomorskie, Jan Kozłowski, Director of Pomorskie Office to Brussels, Alicja Majewska-Gałęziak, EU Regional Policy Commissioner, Danuta Hübner, Major of Elblag, Henryk Słonina, and IPS Head, Sławek Demkowicz-Dobrzański.