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## MINUTES

### **BSR INTERREG IIIB PROJECT „SOUTH BALTIC ARC“ 3<sup>rd</sup> Transnational Workshop in Wierzba/PL on 19 May 2004**

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**Place:** The House of Creative Work, Wierzba/PL  
**Time:** 19 May 2004, 9:00 – 15:00 h  
**Participants:** See appendix 2.  
**Agenda:** See appendix 1.  
**Minutes:** Jens Masuch  
**Appendices:** 1. Agenda  
2. List of participants  
3. Presentations

## **§ 1 Opening and Introduction**

Bernhard Heinrichs opens the meeting. He points out, that the main subject of the workshop will be WP 1 (Harmonisation of Development Strategies). Actions so far in this WP have included mutual presentation and discussions of spatial development strategies as well as consultations in the context of the revision of the State Spatial Planning Programme of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. As a next step, possibilities for further transnational action based on the findings of the study elaborated by the VASAB secretariat will be discussed at this workshop.

Radomir Matczak adds that the discussing will deliver possibilities for continuing the cooperation at the same time. The first task is to define what subjects should be taken onboard in further cooperation. They should be developed independently from the instruments that might be chosen for implementation at this stage.

## **§ 2 Presentations**

### **A) Possibilities for Common Action in the SBA Zone: Outcome of a Transnational Survey of Planning Documents (Jacek Zaucha)**

Jacek Zaucha presents the main findings of the comparative analysis of planning documents in the SBA region. The methodology of the expertise is based on an extensive compilation of relevant strategies in the partner region. In the end, ten of them have been considered to be relevant for the project. The contents have been compared with regard to matching contents. As a result, seven priority fields of actions have been identified. They represent the basis on which the SBA region can be further developed. All of the seven fields have been elaborated further on, checked for possible support by Interreg III B and concrete proposals for further actions have been made.

The fields of action proposed by the expertise are:

1. Establishing a mechanism for joint SBA international management.
2. Creation of Centres of Excellence (CoE) improving regional conditions and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).
3. Elaboration of a concept for development of secondary transport networks in the SBA.
4. Assisting maritime community in development of the short sea and inland water shipping servicing SBA and increasing its spatial cohesion and polycentricity.
5. Elaboration of a SBA network of green corridors and management of transnational green networks.
6. Combining NATURA 2000 and rural development at meso-level (SBA).
7. Implementation of territorial aspects of the Lisbon strategy.

Jacek Zaucha stresses that these proposals represent only a first draft that should be further developed and concretised in common discussions at this meeting. However, with regards to a harmonisation of existing strategies, he considers two things as necessary: First, to introduce the SBA concept to all strategies, and second, to enhance the consideration of EU enlargement.

*The complete presentation is enclosed as .ppt file (see appendix 3).*

### **B) The Cultural Dimension: Potential for a Common Strategy in SBA Zone for Cultural Heritage (Radomir Matczak)**

Radomir Matczak presents intermediate results of a study by Pawel Koscielecki (National Centre of Culture, Warsaw/PL). The objective of the study is to find out what features of cultural and natural heritage are significant for identification and cohesion of the whole SBA region. However, the results show that there is a high diversity rather than common features.

Following conclusions can be drawn from the intermediate results:

- A uniform approach to cultural and natural heritage is hardly possible. An attempt could be made, however, it would be the more vague the more eastward one goes.
- There are very little coherent legal and financial tools to ensure preservation of cultural heritage. Against this background, exchange of best practice is a promising option.
- The younger generation should be acquainted with cultural and natural heritage. Education could create a basis for better preservation in a long-term perspective.
- It is possible to create common tourist products based on cultural and natural heritage. Some already exist in parts of the SBA region (e.g. brick gothic), new ones can be developed (e.g. Teutonic castles). The partners should individually and conjointly support them. A possibility for a common product for the whole region is to take advantage of the diversity of rural areas that represents a contrast to the uniform hanseatic cities of the area.

It is remarked that the study does not include the whole SBA and is therefore not complete yet due to incomplete and insufficient data from Latvia, Kaliningrad Region and parts of Lithuania. It will be further elaborated as far as the necessary data has been received. The partners concerned ensure to support Pawel Koscielecki and to provide him with the required information, which exists for all involved regions according to the participants.

*The complete presentation is enclosed as .ppt file (see appendix 3).*

**C) Options for Further Cooperation: Non-investment Activities for better Visibility, Attractiveness and Competitiveness of SBA Zone (Radomir Matczak):**

Radek Matczak presents the main achievements of the PHARE project so far with regard for future activities in the SBA region, including results from the latest workshop within the PHARE project that took place in Olsztyn on 18 May 2004. They can be summarised as follows:

- The first step was a compilation of all planned investment projects in the Via Hanseatica transport corridor in Poland. It does not include only the Via Hanseatica itself, but also some important roads crossing this corridor, i.e. regional roads connecting it with the inland.
- The second step is the application of the common methodology for territorial impact assessment on programme level in Poland. The output are a set of maps, which show how certain investments will effect certain parts of the Via Hanseatica transport corridor. Similar data can be expected for Kaliningrad region, where Prof. Marek Dutkowski (Szczecin University/PL) instructs the application of the method by SPI Kaliningrad. On this basis of the application of the methodology, six investments, two in each voivodship, have been chosen in Poland, including measures for four national roads and two regional roads. They will be subject to pre-feasibility studies that will be elaborated in uniform manner as far as appropriate.
- A further component of the project is the development of a common marketing strategy for the SBA region. The meeting in Olsztyn set basic propositions for the strategic orientation with regard to the Polish part. The cornerstones of the marketing strategy can be:
  - a. A focus on natural and cultural heritage, using it as a background for SME support.
  - b. Attracting Investments: Making the region visible for investors based on a balance between intraregional competition and cooperation.
  - c. Support SMEs in fund raising activities
  - d. Increasing the role of big cities as gateway cities to the SBA region. Especially the access to these cities is important. Furthermore, the specific economic structures of these cities require innovative approaches to maritime industries.

- e. Reintegration of the SBA into the BSR: There is a feeling that the SBA is not integrated into the BSR.
- f. Establishing a completely new image for Northern Poland: So far, the connotations are shipyards and ports. In the future, it should take a stand as an innovative region integrated into an international development zone.

To implement the joint marketing involves the following measures:

- a. No implementation by ad hoc projects, but on the basis of a closer, continuous cooperation and coordination between the three Polish regions that defines the common will, ideas and tools.
- b. Hiring a full-time coordinator for coordinating activities in the three regions
- c. Focus on two kinds of marketing: (1) Internal marketing oriented towards local and regional politicians and other decision-makers, as well as (2) external marketing, which presents the cooperation as a product ("We work successfully together, so come here and invest")
- d. Encouragement of international cooperation for ensuring the success of the marketing strategy, since cooperation only within Poland is too narrow for giving the region a significant role both with regard to the national and the EU level.

#### **D) The Via Hanseatica Development Zone in Estonia (Andrus Pirso)**

Andrus Pirso presents activities concerning the Via Hanseatica Development Zone in Estonia:

- The starting point of the project has been that the Eastern part of Estonia, which is crossed by the Via Hanseatica, is peripheral. The development of the transport corridor Riga – Tartu – Narva – St. Petersburg as an alternative to the route Riga – Pskov – St. Petersburg has been considered as a way to enhance regional development of this area. Against this background, the Via Hanseatica project has been launched, involving three state ministries (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Economy and Communication, Ministry of Internal Affairs) and four counties (Ida-Viru, Jõgeva, Tartu and Valga) A steering group has been established that meets once in a month in order to discuss common actions.
- Four options have been identified for the promotion of the development zone, namely (1) a tourist project, (2) a spatial planning project, (3) improvements of road and rail transportation and (4) joint marketing activities. In the end, the first option has been chosen and an INTERREG IIIB project application prepared, which has been submitted and is currently in the state of examination. The partnership consists of 50 partners from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Finland, with the East Estonian Tourism Foundation acting as Lead Partner. The budget amounts to 1,2 Mio. EUR.
- Against this background, proposal for transnational activities from the Estonian side are (1) the coordination of Via Hanseatica and SBA activities based of a common understanding of the concept of the Via Hanseatica transport corridor, (2) a common communication and information exchange system, and (3) broadening best practice exchange.

The Estonian representatives hand over a declaration of the Estonian Via Hanseatica Development Steering Group about their interest in deepening the cooperation with the SBA partners concerning activities for promotion of the Via Hanseatica Development Zone. They stress that they are interested in participating in a SBA follow-up project in case that the Via Hanseatica project application should not be approved.

*The complete presentation is enclosed as .ppt file (see appendix 3).*

### § 3 Discussion of Possibilities for Transnational Actions

The proposals presented by Jacek Zaucha are discussed among the participants. The positions and comments of the project partners can be summarised as follows:

- *Estonia*<sup>1</sup>: Tourism is the central subject. It is the first thing that should be developed in the rural area Estonian part of the SBA region. The transnational management of green areas especially with regard to Russia is very important. Furthermore, the management of NATURA 2000 is a top priority. Logistics is of special interest that might be integrated into SME support. From an Estonian point of view, seaward water transport is not a priority. The focus should be road and rail transportation rather than sea transport. However, inland water (Lake Peipsi) is an interesting subject. Leningrad Oblast/ St. Petersburg should be involved as additional partners.
- *Siauliai County*: The main task is the development of Via Hanseatica as transport link. In so far, secondary transport network is the main priority. The task is to convince the Lithuanian Government, that Via Hanseatica is of great and European relevance. So far it is not considered as priority corridor compared to Via Baltica. It is proposed to focus not only on SMEs, but to include also activities for supporting existing large industries.
- *Zemgale Region*: The main priority for Zemgale is NATURA 2000 and secondary road network including the so-called "amber way" from Liepaja to Riga. In this context, it is proposed to integrate also technical design and feasibility studies. Tourism will be important if the Via Hanseatica INTERREG IIIB project will not be approved. The involvement of Kaliningrad is very important.
- *Kaliningrad Oblast*: The main priorities are innovation and support of SMEs. It is pointed out, that according to the National Transport Strategy until 2020, Via Hanseatica is a priority transport axis on national level, like all international transport corridors. Thus, the national level does not have to be convinced in the case of Kaliningrad.
- *Poland (Pomerania, Warmia-Mazury, Western Pomerania)*: Top priorities are the support of SMEs, short sea shipping and the secondary transport network. As part of the secondary network, special attention should be paid to small ports and small airport, which development and conversion is a specific task for spatial planning. The measures should also include investments. The support of SMEs should additionally focus on the institutional infrastructure (How can a regional instead of a national system for support be built up?). A further important issue is labour market. An examination of labour market movements and labour market mobility in the SBA region is proposed. For Warmia-Mazury, green networks and NATURA 2000 are further priorities.
- *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern*: Investments and support for SMEs are the most important subjects. It is remarked that it could to an option to taken up activities with reference to the Motorways of the Seas concept in a separate project, since not all involved regions are touched by this issue to the same extend.

The participants point out that:

- The territorial delimitation of the South Baltic Arc Region is of pragmatic nature. It should include all regions in the Southern Baltic Rim that want to participate in common actions for promoting a macro region approach and the Via Hanseatica. The Via Hanseatica transport corridor is the backbone of this region. The Via Hanseatica Development Zone represents a part of the SBA region as it marks the immediate impact zone of the rail/road transport corridor.
- Road construction is not the main argument behind the Via Hanseatica idea, since traffic figures are, especially in Poland and Estonia, rather low. The common objective for promoting the Via Hanseatica transport corridor as well as the SBA region is rather an

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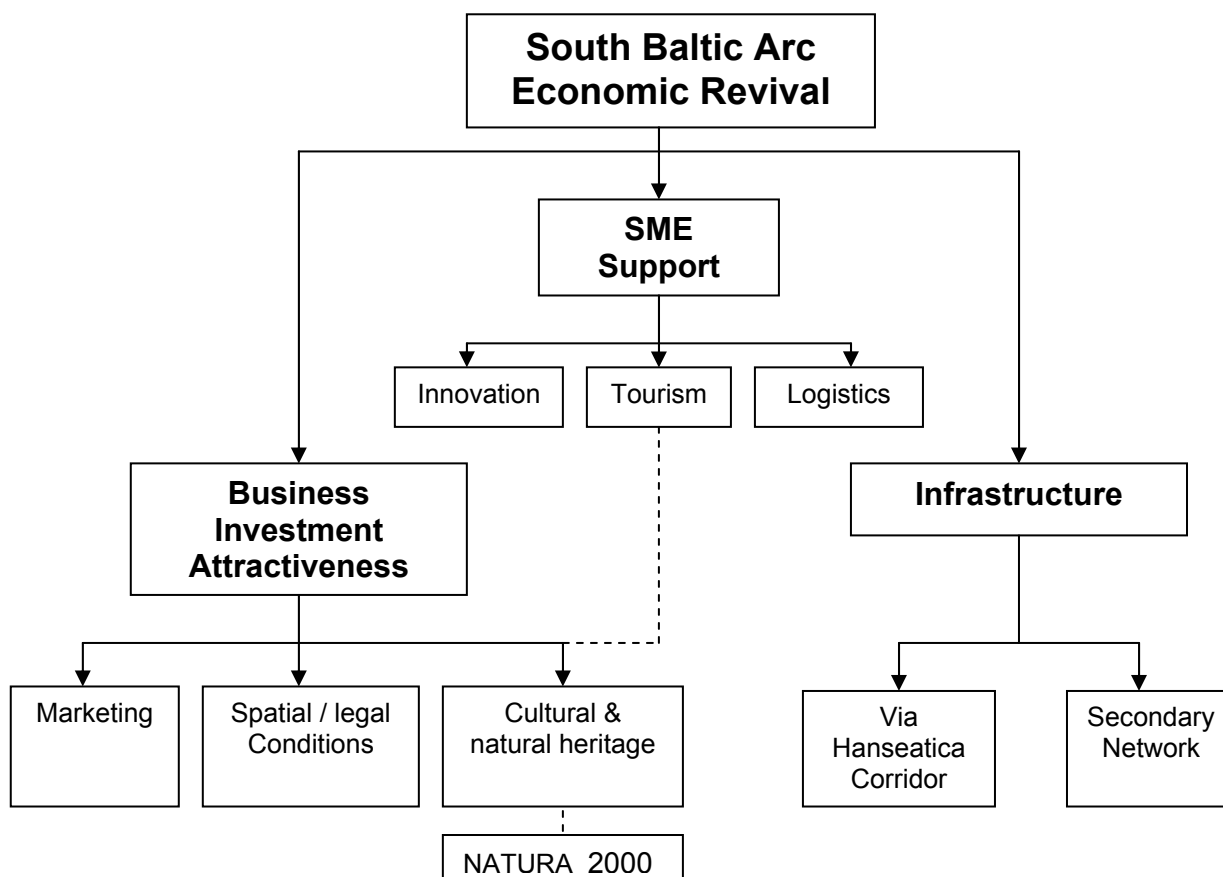
<sup>1</sup> The Estonian participants represent the joint position of three state ministries (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Economy and Communication, Ministry of Internal Affairs) and four counties (Ida-Viru, Jõgeva, Tartu and Valga counties).

- enhancement of regional development, since the Via Hanseatica crosses lagged-behind regions.
- A common international management of the SBA region is crucial and the basic prerequisite for a successful implementation of common activities in the future.
  - The involvement of Russia, especially Kaliningrad region, has to be further intensified.

As a result of the comments and discussions, the list is revised in the following way:

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Partners supporting given item</b>
1.	Support for SMEs (focus on tourism and logistics) and innovation strategies	PL <sup>2</sup> , RUS, EE, MV, LV, LT <sup>3</sup>
2.	Secondary (i.e. beyond TEN) transport networks	MV, RUS, LV, PL <sup>4</sup> , LT, EE <sup>5</sup>
3.	Inland waterways	EE
4.	Short sea transport	PL
5.	Green networks, Natura 2000 versus development	EE <sup>6</sup> , LT, LV, PL, MV
6.	Attracting investments	LV, MV <sup>7</sup> , PL
7.	Large business, large enterprises and support for them	LT
8.	Transformation of rural areas in connection to CAP	PL <sup>8</sup>

The draft structure of a follow-up project can look like follows:



<sup>2</sup> Pomerania region  
<sup>3</sup> Support for networks supporting SMEs  
<sup>4</sup> Pomerania region proposed focus on small ports, small airfields,  
<sup>5</sup> Focus on rail  
<sup>6</sup> In connection with tourism  
<sup>7</sup> Focus on business environment  
<sup>8</sup> Pomerania region

#### **§ 4 General Conclusions and Further Work Programme**

Bernhard Heinrichs summarises the results of the INTERREG project so far and draws conclusion for the further work programme:

- With this workshop, the work in WP 1 is almost finished. Common fields of action have been prepared by the expertise and could be defined more precisely during the discussions at the workshop.
- In WP 2, the main achievement is the elaboration of the common TIA methodology on programme level. Its application by INTERREG and PHARE in Poland and Kaliningrad region delivers important clues for improvements of the transport infrastructure in the Via Hanseatica corridor.
- In WP 3 a number of sub-projects have been initiated. The development of large-scale industrial areas in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is already finished, results of the expertises about the future role of Szczecin as centre in the Polish-German border region will be available soon. The examination of tourism potential in the SBA region will be finished soon and final results presented. A further sub-project deals with sub-regional and local urban centres and their contribution to the development of the SBA region in Poland.
- A deficiency has been that the Baltic States were sidelined during the SBA project due to the lack of own and PHARE funds. The necessity for a deeper involvement of partner from these countries, including a broadening of the partnership (e.g. Estonian regions, Siauliai County/LT, further Latvian regions, Leningrad Oblast and possibly City of St. Petersburg/RUS) is an important lesson for SBA II. The present workshop, that has been attended by representatives from further regions of the SBA region represents an important step in this direction.

Bernhard Heinrichs stresses that MV is in favour of the idea that one of the Polish voivodships will take on the lead in a future project. An initial proposal containing possible contents was prepared by the LP, the Ministry for Labour and Construction Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in November 2003 and in the following responded by Polish project partners two times. The workshop represented a further, transnational consultation on this issue. The next task will be to develop it further on according to the results of the discussion.

Radek Matczak gives an outlook to the next steps within the project:

- The minutes of the meeting will be sent to all participants. They are asked to make proposals for developing the draft project structure further on until 15 June 2004. On this basis, Voivodship Pomerania will prepare a revised version until the study trip.
- The next main activity is the final conference of the PHARE CBC project "South Baltic Development Zone – South Baltic Arc" in Gdansk on 24/25 June 2004. All participants of the workshop are invited to take part. At the conference, the Marshals of the three Polish coastal voivodships and a representative from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (at least) will sign a common declaration about continuation of transnational cooperation in the SBA region. It represents an important prerequisite for intensifying the preparations of a follow-up project. The other partners are welcome to join the declaration. Official invitations to the heads of the regions will be sent out soon by Pomerania region.
- If desired, an additional meeting for discussing the follow-up project can be arranged before the meeting in Gdansk on 24 June in the morning.
- A study trip to Kaliningrad, Lithuania and Latvia will be carried through within the PHARE project in July 2004. Up to 20 participants from the Polish PHARE partner regions and probably a representative of the INTERREG Lead Partner will take part. The main purpose will be to present the results of the INTERREG and PHARE projects to

representatives of local, regional and national authorities in the respective countries as well as to discuss the ideas for follow-up activities with them.

- The final conference of the INTERREG project is scheduled for November/December 2004. It will take place in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. The objective should be to prepare an outline application for a follow-up project before this meeting.

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BSR INTERREG IIB PROJECT "SOUTH BALTIC ARC"  
**Transnational Workshop in Wierzbna/PL on 19 May 2004**  
**Appendix 1: List of Participants**

Family name	First Name	Organisation	e-mail	Country
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