

Schleswig-Holsteinischer Landtag

Umdruck 15/4030

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Herrn
Rolf Fischer, MdL
Vorsitzender des Europaausschusses
des schleswig-holsteinischen Landtags
Landeshaus

24 November 2003

Sehr geehrter Herr Fischer,

zu Ihrer Kenntnis übersende ich Ihnen in der Anlage die EntschlieÙung und den
Halbzeitbericht zu STRING II, die von den politischen Vertretern der STRING-Partner
am 6. November in Malmö angenommen worden sind.

Auf Einladung von Uno Aldegren, dem Präsidenten des Regionalrates der Region
Schonen, trafen sich die politischen Vertreter zu einer Halbzeitbewertung. In dem
Zusammenhang äußerten sie sich übereinstimmend positiv zur großen Bedeutung,
die die Kooperation in der südwestlichen Ostseeregion für ihre jeweilige Region hat
und bekräftigten den politischen Willen zu einer langfristig angelegten Zusammenar-
beit.

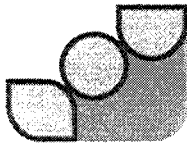
Besonders herausheben möchte ich das eindeutige Bekenntnis zu einer festen Feh-
marn-Belt Querung.

Ich möchte Sie abschließend darauf hinweisen, dass die Abschlusskonferenz zu
STRING II im April in Hamburg stattfinden wird. Eine Einladung dazu werde ich Ihnen
rechtzeitig zuleiten.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

U. Wolff-Gebhardt

Ulrike Wolff-Gebhardt



STRING II
Southwestern Baltic Sea
Transregional Area
Implementing New Geography

**RESOLUTION OF
THE SECOND POLITICAL FORUM
STRING II
(Malmö, November 6th 2003)**

**European Co-operation strengthens
the regions in the south-western Baltic Sea Area**

The undersigning STRING partners appreciate the project results so far and the strong commitments of the participants of STRING II.

The Mid-term Conference has confirmed the quality of the co-operation in the south-western Baltic Sea area which was based on clear visions as well as common and transparent interests. Therefore the STRING partners approve the annexed mid-term report and welcome the proposed conclusions.

The STRING partners will continue the co-operation after STRING II in a more focused way and will base its competitive strategy on its main assets that include an advanced knowledge based society. In that respect a clear defined added value will be a crucial element for the selection of future co-operation activities.

The STRING partners welcome the renewed EU interest regarding the fixed link across the Fehmarn Belt as an important prerequisite for the physical integration within the STRING region and towards connected areas.

Furthermore the STRING partners welcome the new EU member states in the Baltic Sea area and will strive to coordinate efforts in order to facilitate the integration process.



Project part-financed by
the European Union

By jointly developing the potentials of the area, especially in the fields of business, culture and environment the partner regions will gain additional competences, offers and an improved competitiveness of important business clusters.

The undersigning partners confirm the relevance of the co-operation and will further give political support to the future co-operation in the south-western Baltic Sea area.

- **Ivan Olsen, County Mayor, Storstrøm Region, Denmark**
- **Mads Lebech, Chairman of the Greater Copenhagen Authority, Mayor of Frederiksberg, Denmark**
- **Ulrike Wolff-Gebhardt, Head of the State Chancellery, Land Schleswig-Holstein, Germany**
- **Hans Jørgen Holm, County Mayor, West Zealand Region, Denmark**
- **Roland Salchow, Secretary of State, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Germany**
- **Uno Aldegren, President of the Regional Executive Board, Region Skåne, Sweden**

Mid-term Report STRING II

Evaluation and Conclusions

1. General evaluation

After approval of the development concept „On the way to a new geography“ in May 2001 STRING II is the first step of practical co-operation in the south-western Baltic Sea area. In spite of a number of practical problems during upstart of the project, the September Mid-term Evaluation Conference proved that the first period has indeed been useful to learn how to work together and has helped to define the interests of the partners in more details.

Under the STRING II umbrella 12 projects and forums have been launched, covering the fields of environment, infrastructure, business development and culture. Some 50 partners are currently involved in concrete cooperation and coordination, involving hundreds of individuals from the 6 participating regions. These project and forums will continue their activities until end of the project period in April 2004.

2. Vision and profile

The co-operation in the south-western Baltic area is an answer to the growing competition between European regions. Therefore the STRING partners consider it a basic requirement to jointly strengthen competences in order to increase adaptability to change, also after the end of the current project period.

In this context the STRING partners confirm the validity of the three pillars of the STRING vision: entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainability. But the vision has to be supplemented by a co-operation strategy defining concrete objectives. The STRING area shall focus its co-operation and base its competitive strategy on its main assets which include an advanced knowledge society, a positive attitude to innovation, well established infrastructure for knowledge exchange and rich potentials in respect to business, culture, environment and natural resources.

Based on these common values the region shall develop common unique competences, and make it visible to the public within and outside the area.

3. Added value of trans regional co-operation in the STRING area

The STRING partners will base its long-term co-operation on the following expected added value.

Common information and communication networks will gain knowledge about recent developments and trends. Knowledge and jointly organised offers and capacities for learning will create trans national skills which are important prerequisites for young people and organisations to be adaptable to change.

Exchange of experience and best practice projects as well as common solution to problems will have positive spill-over effects that can be achieved with comparative cost advantages. By jointly developing the potentials of the area in the field of business, culture and environment the partner regions will gain competences and improved site conditions that attract companies and tourists.

The development of an enhanced home market and a conducive environment for enterprises can improve the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises already located in the area.

4. The implementation structure and budgets

The existing implementation structure has proved its conformity with the needs of a complex umbrella project. But according to the perspective of a more focused co-operation the future implementation structure has to be adapted. The three pillars Political Forum, Steering Committee and Common Secretariat will continue to function, but focus more on encouraging independent projects and activities. The role should hence shift and become less operational and focus more on generating ideas and visions, and give back up and support to concrete projects that develop within forums and networks.

In the future, the number of forums should be limited, and be established only when they give a clear added value to the STRING area.

The costs of the future networks in the forums and of the Political Forum, the Steering Committee and the Common Secretariat have to be born by the budgets of the STRING partners. EU-funding will be examined with regard to potential and concrete future projects.

The STRING partners will distinguish between the **political co-operation area** and the **activity area**; i.e.: within the future activities the neighbouring regions and the new Member States in the Baltic Sea area could be integrated more closely.

5. Information Policy

The STRING partners consider it necessary to involve more people, institutions and business by an extended and improved information policy to achieve the expected added value.

6. Infrastructure

The STRING partners very much welcome the renewed interest in establishing a fixed Fehmern Belt link, which will help tie Scandia, Zealand and the northern parts of Germany even closer together. A fixed link will facilitate a number of the STRING initiatives to think and work on a trans-regional level, benefiting the inhabitants, private enterprises and the cultural life in all partner regions.