



In co-operation with:



Regional Development Agency,  
Korca



Center for Inter-Balkan  
Cooperation, Kozani



Regional Enterprise Support  
Agency, Bitola

1<sup>st</sup> Council Meeting  
Florina, 01 June 2005

**TRANS-FRONTIER INSTITUTION BUILDING PROJECT FOR THE PRESPA/OHRID REGION  
2003-2005  
TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EUROREGION**

**Working Group Report**

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## I. Background

The Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion Council is the steering body of the Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion. It consists of fifteen members and equally represents each border community (of Albania, Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) participating in the Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion. Each side is represented by five members from associations of local and regional authorities, development agencies and (in one case) chambers of commerce consisting on each side of the borders.

The Euroregion Council meeting on 01 June 2005 was the first gathering in a series of meetings and trainings aimed at elaborating representative and relevant development priorities for the Prespa/Ohrid region. The Council Meeting on 01 June 2005 was followed by a training workshop for local authority administrative staff on strategic planning and workplan elaboration on 08 June 2005 in Ohrid and a second council meeting from 15 - 16 June 2005 on the elaboration of a comprehensive list of development priorities for Prespa/Ohrid based on the suggestions elaborated during the first Council Meeting. Involved in the elaboration of the Euroregion development priorities were next to the council members (mayors, prefects, experts) also administrative experts from the Prespa/Ohrid local and regional authorities and representatives of various Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion working groups (Higher Education, NGO Network, Tourism).

## II. General Conclusions

The Council meeting started with welcoming words from Mr. Kalatziaias and Mr. Blagas from the Prefecture of Florina as well as Mr. Busse from the EastWest Institute. Opening statements were made by Mr. Simanopoulos from Center for Inter Balkan Cooperation Kozani, Mr. Grabocka from the Regional Development Agency of Korca and Mr. Taleski, the Mayor of Bitola. The three sides explained their regional development priorities as agreed upon internally by Euroregion members on each side of the border. It became clear that there was a substantial overlap of development goals as needs are similar on each side of the borders and Euroregion associations based their priority list upon common recommendations made in 2003 by the Prespa/Ohrid Economic Task Force in its publication “ ”. Subsequently the participants discussed to what extent it was necessary to go beyond the development recommendations set out in the study “ ”.





It was concluded that additional development goals were necessary as there was not enough input from smaller prefectures and municipalities in the study. Priority areas were defined as:

- Road Infrastructure between all prefectures and municipalities
- Support to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in the Region
- Cooperation and Improvement on Health Infrastructure
- Joint Environmental Protection Initiatives
- Tourism Development
- Higher Education Co-operation

A comprehensive list of the development priorities as endorsed by the participants can be found in the Annex to this report. The council members further agreed to have administrative experts from each member municipality and prefecture elaborate the development priorities further.



## III. Agenda

Venue: Prefecture of Florina

10:30 (local time): Arrival of Participants

11:00 Welcoming Notes:

- *Mr. Georgios Kalatziaias, Vice Prefect of Florina*
- *Mr. Antonios Simanopoulos, Board Member CIBC*
- *Mr. Georgios Blagas, Advisor to the Prefecture of Florina*
- *Mr. Johannes Busse, Project Manager, EastWest Institute*

11:30 Working Session

- *Development Priorities of the Prespa/Ohrid Region – Towards the Euroregion Workplan*

12:30 Coffee Break



- 13:00 Continuation of Working Session  
- *Development Priorities of the Prespa/Ohrid Region – Towards the Euroregion Workplan*
- 14:00 Overview of next activities  
- *Johannes Busse, Project Manager, EastWest Institute Press Conference*
- 14:30 Press Conference
- 15:00 Lunch and Departure of Participants

#### IV. List of Participants

Prefecture of Florina

*Mr. Kalaitzidis Georgios, Vice Prefect*

*Mr. Blagas Georgios, Consultant*

Municipality of Florina

*Mr. Petros Giannatsis, Vice Mayor*

Prefecture of Grevena

*Mr. Nikolaos Papadopoulos, Vice Prefect*

Prefecture of Kastoria

*Mr. Panagiotis Kirkopoulos, Vice Prefect*

*Mr. Paschalis Ikonomidis, Director of Planning and Development*

Municipality of Korca

*Mr. Vladimir Cepa, Euroregion Lawyer*

Municipality of Bilisht

*Mr. Valter Miza, Consultant*

Municipality of Erseka

*Mr. Adriatik Brace, Mayor*

Municipality of Bitola

*Mr. Vladimir Taleski, Mayor*

Municipality of Ohrid

*Mr. Aleksandar Petreski, Mayor*



Municipality of Resen

*Mr. Dimitar Buzlevski, Mayor*

*Ms. Daniela Apostolovska, Advisor, International Relations*

RDA Korca

*Mr. Aurel Grabocka, Director*

RESC

*Mr. Dragan Damjanovski, Director*

CIBC

*Mr. Simanopoulos Antonios, Member of the Board of Directors*

*Mr. Nikos Sketas, Administrative Staff*

CTP

*Ms. Gabriela Scheiner, Director*

EWI

*Mr. Johannes Busse, Project Manager, Centre for Border Co-operation*

*Ms. Marija Dojranska, Project Assistant, Centre for Border Co-operation*

*Mr. Andreja Ralebok, Interpreter*

## V. Annex

### **Development Priorities for the Prespa-Ohrid Euroregion**

*based on recommendations by the Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion Council and the Prespa Economic Task Force*

#### *Euroregion Sustainability*

Feasibility Study on Local Co-Financing of Euroregion Structures (at local/ regional authority and business levels alongside external sources of funding) including the work of the Euroregion Council, Euroregion secretariats and the Euroregion working groups

#### *Physical Infrastructure*

##### Feasibility Study on Main Road Infrastructure

For example: Korca – Ohrid (ext. Struga) – Resen – Bitola (ext. Prilep) – Niki – Florina (ext. Kastoria, Grevena, Kozani)

#### *Business*



Follow up Research Study (to the ETF Report) on the Economic Base and Interconnectedness of the Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion (first, second and third sector) as basis for well targeted local economic development projects

Annual Prespa/Ohrid Business fair rotating among the main exhibition centres in the region (Kozani, Bitola and Korca) to become one of the main fairs in the Balkans

Long Term Goal: Establishment of Prespa/Ohrid Free Economic Zone

### *Working Groups*

University Cooperation: Towards common curriculum design of the Universities in Florina/Kozani, Kastoria, Bitola and Korca

Tourism Cooperation: Develop the Prespa/Ohrid Region as one destination for local and foreign tourists

Civil Society: Strengthening of the NGO Network

### *Outreach/Marketing*

Elaboration of the Prespa/Ohrid Euroregion Website

### *Advocacy*

Improvement of Border regime and management (especially Visa)

Opening of Border Point at Agios Germanos/Markova Noga