



Appendix 3 – 5§ “Via Baltica”

**DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR
VIA BALTICA THROUGH CONSTRUCTION OF THE
AUGUSTOW ROAD BYPASS**

**CPMR Baltic Sea Commission EC Riga
2007-09-01**



**“BALTIC SEA COMMISSION CPMR MEMBER REGIONS
Riga, 28th September 2007
DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR VIA BALTICA THROUGH CONSTRUCTION OF THE AUGUSTOW
ROAD BYPASS**

The VIA BALTICA¹ is a route of utmost importance for the European Union and the only way to reach the Baltic States and Finland by road from any point in the EU without having to leave EU territory.

This route was decided at the Summit of the European Transport Ministries in Crete (GR) in March 1994. Indeed, the EU Summit decided to name VIA BALTICA as a *Pan-European Transport Corridor*.

Unfortunately, the construction of this *Pan-European Transport Corridor* was suspended in Poland as it is in conflict with the NATURA 2000 project.

Due to these two decisions there is a conflict between NATURA 2000 and TENs policies. This conflict has caused the suspension of the road bypass construction in Augustów² (Podlaskie - PL) that is presently the bottleneck of VIA BALTICA.

When VIA BALTICA passes through Poland it becomes a narrow passage between two non-EU Member States (Russia-Kaliningrad and Byelorussia) and unfortunately there are no alternative ways through the corridor outside the NATURA 2000 area, without making the bypass significantly more expensive and without creating more pollution. Traffic on this part of the route has been rapidly increasing since the accession of Poland in the European Union (1st May 2004) creating traffic hazards. For instance, in the Region Podlaskie (PL) in 2006, 208 people died on the road and 1,438 people were injured because of 12,955 road collisions.

Poland acknowledged this problem many years ago and decided to reconstruct VIA BALTICA passing through Augustów before the Polish accession to the EU and furthermore before setting up Natura 2000 areas³.

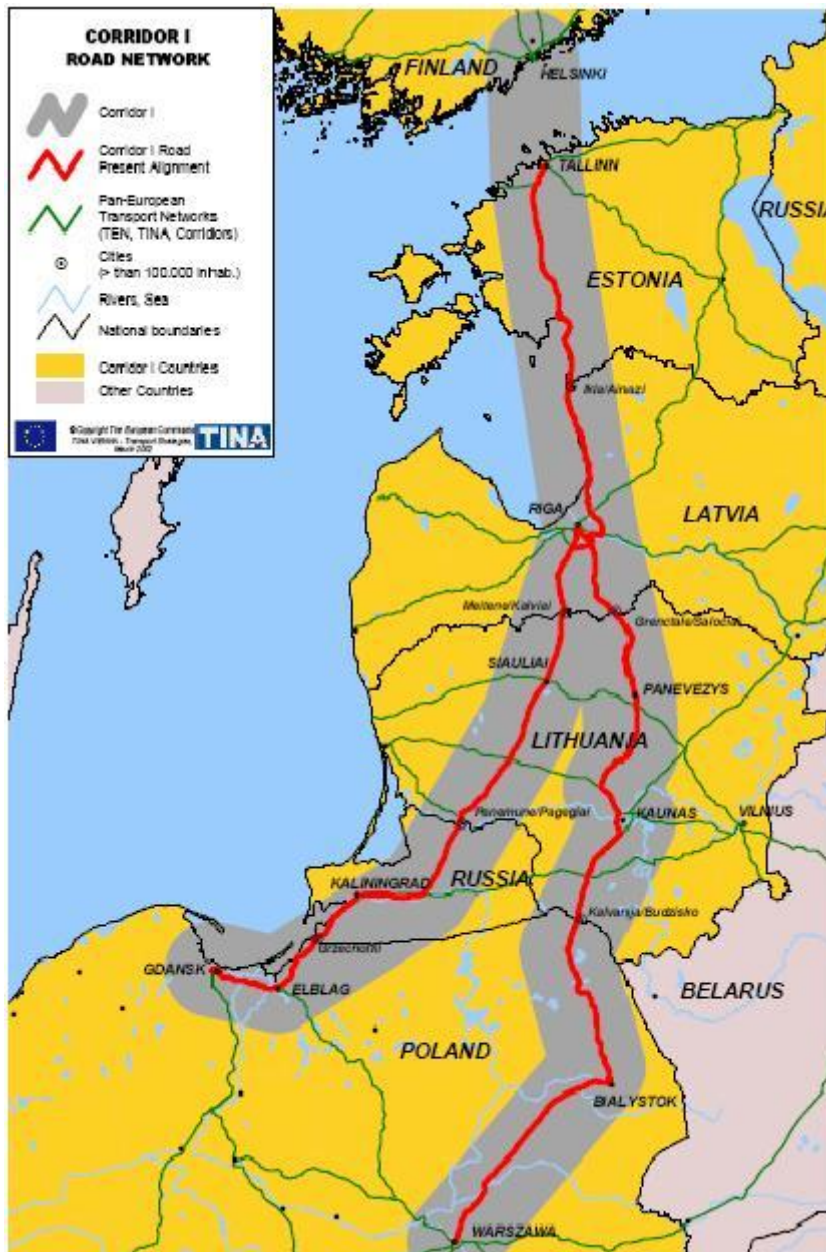
This project will definitely boost the development of all Baltic and Scandinavian Regions and moreover it will increase the cohesion of Europe. Therefore, the member Regions of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission recommends the European Commission to reconsider its decision on the Augustów road bypass and readdress this issue in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and fairness among European citizens, to ensure optimal competitiveness for the region of Podlaskie and fair access of its population to services of general interest.

Appendix: Map of VIA BALTICA project and the NATURA 2000 area. “

¹ *European route E67, is a highway running from Prague in the Czech Republic to Helsinki in Finland by way of Poland, Kaunas (Lithuania), Riga (Latvia), and Tallinn (Estonia).*

² *Augustów is a tourist centre in North-Eastern Poland and its economic development is significantly linked to the construction of the VIA BALTICA. Other towns in the Podlaskie Region are also affected by the same issue.*

³ *Following 15 years of legal procedures, broad social consultations with various stakeholders, and numerous thorough assessments of ecological, economical and social impact of five different variants, the long-awaited construction of Augustów road bypass had finally begun last winter.*



WOJEWÓDZTWO PODLASKIE

NATURA 2000



DYREKTYWA PTASIA

- PLB 200001 - BAGIENNA DOLINA NARWI
- PLB 200002 - DOLINA BIEBRZY
- PLB 140002 - DOLINA DOLNEGO BUGU
- PLB 140007 - DOLINA DOLNEJ NARWI
- PLB 200003 - DOLINA GÓRNEJ NARWI
- PLB 200004 - PRZEŁOMOWA DOLINA NARWI
- PLB 200005 - PUSZCZA AUGUSTOWSKA
- PLB 200006 - PUSZCZA BIAŁOWIESKA
- PLB 200007 - PUSZCZA KNYSZYŃSKA
- PLB 280012 - PUSZCZA PISKA



WARMIŃSKO - MAZURSKIE



