



## BSSSC Board meeting Klaipeda, Lithuania – Minutes

Location: Radisson Blu Hotel Klaipeda, 28 Sauliu Street, Klaipėda 92231

13:00 – 18:00 (light lunch from 12:00)

### Present:

Board Members: Roger Ryberg, Reiner Kneifel-Haverkamp, Ossi Savolainen, Arne Tilk, Stefan Musiolik, Agnes Lustig, Venla Hatakka, Wojciech Dorżynkiewicz, Alla Ivanova, Ričards Gailums, Grzegorz Grzelak.

Board Civil: Krystyna Wróblewska, Małgorzata Klawiter-Piwowarska, Toivo Riimaa, Janne Tamminen, Matti Lipsanen, Reetta Sorjonen, Jon Halvard Eide, Marlene Rothe, Laila Gercane, Christopher Lucht, Krista Taipale (via videolink), Malgorzata Ludwiczek

Secretariat: Ann Irene Sæternes, Hilde Aarø, Lars Lund Godbolt

Others: Klaudija Kiones, Dala Makuškienė, Jon Petter Arntzen, Bernd Hemningway

### AGENDA

#### 1. Opening of the Board meeting

1.1. Opening of the meeting – Mr. Roger Ryberg, BSSSC Chair

**Mr. Ryberg** initiated an introductory round seeing many new faces - he welcomed new Board Members Wojciech Dorżynkiewicz from West Pomerania Region, Poland, and Ricards Gailums, from Vidzeme Region, Latvia, and Grzegorz Grzelak from Pomorskie Region, Poland. He thanked the host, Association of Klaipeda Region, for hosting the Board Meeting.

1.2. Welcome by the host region

**Ms. Klaudija Kiones** from Association of Klaipeda Region gave an introduction to the Klaipeda region. She said it is a great honor to welcome the BSSSC Board to Klaipeda for the Board Meeting and the Annual Conference.

1.3. Adoption of the agenda

**The agenda was adopted.**

1.4. Adoption of the minutes from the Board Meeting in Cesis, May 2019.

**The minutes were adopted.**



**2. Information about Lithuania and the governmental system** – by Dalia Makuškienė, Regional Development Department under The Ministry of The Interior, Head of Klaipeda region section

**Ms. Dalia Maliuskiene** presented the regional development system in Lithuania. She highlighted the law on regional development's main goal is to reduce social disparities between and within regions. Please see the attached presentation.

**Mr. Ryberg** mentioned that Lithuanian regions have not been active in the BSSC since the regional reform and expressed his wish that Lithuania will join the BSSC again.

**Ms. Maliuskiene** proposed that the Association of Klaipeda region would be the best option of involvement in the BSSC.

**Mr. Ryberg** informed that a letter of invitation would be sent to the association.

**3. BSSC Annual Conferences**

AC 2019 in Klaipeda, Lithuania – last status and information from the hosts

**Ms. Kiones** could inform that the conference has about 130 registered participants and that everything was going as planned.

**3.1. Adoption of 2019 Conference Resolution**

**Ms. Sæternes** gave an update on the Conference Resolution.

**Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska** and **Mr. Reiner Kniefel-Haverkamp** thanked the Chair and Secretariat for the good work.

**Mr. Jon Halvard Eide** wanted to add a phrase in the resolution to raise the issue of democratic backsliding in some countries.

After some discussion the Board agreed to not accept the proposed phrase and rather accept the resolution in its original format without further amendments.

**The conference resolution 2019 was adopted.**

**3.2. BSSC AC 2020**

**Mr. Ryberg** could inform that the next Annual Conference will be in Kaliningrad, Russia and gave the word to **Ms. Alla Ivanova**.

**Ms. Ivanova** said they are happy to welcome the Board for the Annual Conference next year in Kaliningrad. She said that a new electronic visa procedure will ease the visa application to Kaliningrad. She encouraged the Board Members to discuss with her on what topics and issues the next year's Annual Conference should raise.



### 3.3. BSSSC AC 2021

**Mr. Ryberg** could inform that the Annual Conference in 2021 will be in Estonia and gave the word to **Mr. Toivo Riimaa**.

He said that it will be hosted by the Estonian Association Cities and Municipalities and that they are happy to welcome the Board and conference participants in 2021.

## 4. MFF and cohesion policy and paper on the interregional innovation investment component

### 4.1. Update from Rapporteur

**Mr. Reiner Kneifel-Haverkamp** informed that there were not many changes since the last Board meeting. The European Parliament starts its discussions now and the new European Commission has not yet been approved. The Commission is slowly being formed. The trilogue meetings will start soon. The Finish EU Presidency have sent around a questionnaire concerning where and much money should be placed. There are expectations that the overall financial frame will be decided in October or at a special summit in November – but most likely it will be postponed to 2020.

### 4.2. BSSSC Policy paper on the Interregional Innovation investment component

**Mr. Reiner Kneifel-Haverkamp** introduced the policy paper and thanked for all contributions. The BSSSC supports the introduction of an instrument for interregional innovation investments in international value chains. It is stressed that it is important to have this instrument under direct management in order to avoid state aid problems. The Interregional Innovation Investment Component should be funded within the ERDF – and not take money away from Interreg-programmes. Please see supporting documents for the full text.

### 4.3. Discussions and adoption

**The BSSSC Policy paper on the Interregional Innovation Investment Component was adopted.**

## 5. EUSBSR revision of the Action Plan

### 5.1. Status and update

**Ms. Sæternes** gave an update on the revision of the EUSBSR. She could inform that two draft papers on the Strategy are now issued. One on thematic issues, one paper on governance. These are based on questionnaires and interviews as well as documents available. The governance paper analyses the structure of today and present a critical look at how it functions. Meaning the national coordination group, Policy area coordinators/Horizontal action coordinators, and steering groups, etc. Ms. Sæternes could inform that the results from the discussions at the BSSSC/UBC/BSC arranged seminar back to back with the EUSBSR Annual Forum in June can be seen in these papers. The BSSSC arranged Baltic Youth Camp is also mentioned in the report, as well as the youth declaration. The report encourages the regions and municipalities to find out how they want to participate and find their role – what they want to contribute with.



On the thematic scope the papers are analyzing the topics in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. The thematic focus will be related to that what is important for the region, makes sense to do together, and which promotes macro regional cooperation. Communication is mentioned as a key weakness of the strategy.

**Ms. Sæternes** proposed that BSSSC continues being active in the process. She said that the Secretariat have made a proposal on the EUSBSR survey sent out and asked for feedback on the responses outlined.

#### 5.2. Discussion around BSSSC positions

After a lengthy discussion the Board agreed that it would not be expedient to answer the survey because the Board could not agree upon the different questions asked. It was therefore recommended that the Board rather set down a task force to create a Paper stating the BSSSCs main priorities and suggestions for the revision of the EUSBSR. The member regions in the Board were encouraged to send in their views via the questionnaire.

German Board members informed about a paper from the North-German Länder – where they call for closer relation between the EUSBR and the Interreg BSR programme. They also call for a permanent secretariat for the EUSBR – financed by Interreg - to make the strategy stronger and better support the work of the National Coordination Group. CBSS should play a more important role towards the strategy.

**Ms. Sæternes** encouraged Board Members and their civil officers to contact the Secretariat if they want to be a part of the task force. The plan is to have some points for discussion at the next Board meeting.

## 6. BSSSC Strategy 2030

**Mr. Roger Ryberg** informed that a final version of the BSSSC strategy will be presented for adoption at the upcoming Board meeting in December.

**Ms. Sæternes** informed that the current draft is based upon the working sessions during the past two Board meetings. The year 2030 has been chosen as a target date so that it corresponds better with the SDGs. The current draft is narrowed down to two pages and that the secretariat has tried to link the BSSSC's policy areas to the SDGs. If the members of the Board have comments and proposals to the draft they can be submitted to the Secretariat within the next weeks. The Secretariat will send out a written procedure to collect comments and input to the draft strategy document.

The Board took notice of the draft. Comments should be sent in written to the Secretariat before 10 October.

## 7. Next chairmanship(s) – troika

**Ms. Wroblewska** thanked the Board for the trust put in them to be the next Chairmanship and counted on the support from all Board members in their future work. She supported the idea of having a troika between the outgoing Chairmanship (Eastern Norway County Network), the



upcoming Chairmanship (Pomorskie Region) and the next Chairmanship when identified - to ensure continuity in our work.

**Mr. Kneifel-Haverkamp** added that the Brandenburg Region still wants to consider a BSSSC chairmanship. However, the results of the recent regional election in Brandenburg shows that the construction of the next regional government will take time to negotiate. Therefore, as of today Land Brandenburg can only confirm its support and cooperation with the next Chairmanship.

## 8. Reports from projects and events

### 8.1. EUSBSR Annual forum 2019 in Gdansk by Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes

**Ms. Sæternes** gave a quick summary of the EUSBSR Annual Forum in Gdansk. There were a total of 774 participants who took part of the conference and a high number of representatives from local and regional bodies participated. A questionnaire was forwarded the participants after the conference and 84 percent of the participants said the organisation was good or excellent and 83 percent of the respondents said that the topic was highly interesting or relevant. The next Annual Conference will take place in Turku. For more information on the reports on circular economy please go to the BSSSC web-page. Please see the supporting documents for more information.

### 8.2. BSR Youth Camp 2019 in Gdansk by Mr. Lars Godbolt

**Mr. Lars Godbolt** summarised the BSR Youth Camp 2019 which was organised back to back to the EUSBSR Annual Conference. 100 youth aged 18-25 participated. For four days the youth participated in workshops, seminars and presentations related to the SDGs. See supporting documents for more information.

**Ms. Gercane**, Vidzeme Planning Region, informed about a project of theirs involving youth and SDGs.

### 8.3. South Baltic Parliamentarian Conference in Schwerin by Ms. Hilde Aarø

**Ms. Hilde Aarø** informed that 23 -25 June this year the 17<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary forum of the South Baltic took place and the topic was "The digitization of the Southern Baltic Sea Region- South Baltic goes digital- opportunities and risks".

**Mr. Ryberg** was invited to make an intervention on behalf of the BSSSC and focused on the fact that the digital future with its tools and methods will offer tremendous opportunities within education and lifelong learning as well as support to science, creativity and innovation in the BSR regions. At the same time, the digitization of private and economic spheres carries substantial risks, e.g. for the social cohesion of our societies and the security of data and digitized infrastructure. The three-day conference was concluded with an extensive resolution on Digitization. Please contact the secretariat if you would like to see the resolution in full.



#### 8.4. BSSC conference in Oslo by Mr. Roger Ryberg

**Mr. Ryberg** informed that the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference took place in Oslo 25-27 August. The Norwegian presidency has in 2018-2019 focused on: Migration and integration, Digitalisation of working life, Pursuit of UN Sustainable Development Goals and Neighbourliness and cooperation based on democratic values, the rule of law, human rights and equal opportunities for all. Mr. Roger Ryberg held an intervention on Clean Oceans and circular economy where he stressed the need for youth involvement in decision making and the need to cooperate to make the necessary changes - cross sectors, levels of governance and cross generations.

Mr. Savolainen and Mr. Tamminen also attended the conference.

#### 9. Finnish EU Presidency autumn 2019

**Ms. Krista Taipale** could inform that the European Commission is aiming to come with the first proposal for the Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) by the end of October. The end proposal would then be ready by March 2020. She added that she hopes that the final decision can be made during the Finnish Presidency. The trilogy discussion on regional programmes will start Friday 20 September. **Ms. Taipale** could also add that Brexit is taking much time and energy and affects the process of the new MFF proposal strongly.

#### 10. Report from Brussels antenna

**Ms. Taipale** from the Helsinki- Uusimaa EU office delivered the report via Skype-connection. She informed that Ursula Von der Leyen published the structure and candidates for commissioners for the new European Commission last week. All the candidates for Commissioners will be interviewed by the Parliament during October, if all candidates are approved the new Commission will start 1 November. There is expressed a wish to create stronger links between innovation and education, but a discussion on how to include research will most likely come up in the Parliament. The SDGs will be integrated in all policies and a European Green Deal is one of the main priorities of the new President of the European Commission. Ursula Von der Leyen will also publish an agenda for digital economy during her first 100 days. A social dimension will be high on the agenda for the coming period; such as immigration, democracy, transparency, unemployment. For more information please see: <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/interim/commissioners-designate>

#### 11. Reports from other BSR organizations, programmes and networks

##### 11.1. CBSS – Deputy Director Bernd Hemmingway

**Mr. Bernd Hemmingway** began with giving an update from the CBSS Ministerial meeting held on 3 June in Jurmala, Latvia. The main outcome was the Jurmala declaration and a roadmap for the future of the CBSS. The declaration emphasizes the unique role of the CBSS for the development of the Baltic Sea Region, through intergovernmental dialogue and practical cooperation between all countries in the region, by fostering mutual



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understanding, building trust, ensuring stability and promoting people to people contacts. The Roadmap enables the necessary flexibility of the Council, higher adaptability, preparedness and effectiveness of the CBSS and increases the focus on synergies between cooperation formats in the Baltic Sea Region and, furthermore, promotes the facilitating role of the CBSS in this regard. The implementation of the Roadmap is the focus of the Danish Presidency that started on 1<sup>st</sup> of July. It is aimed to have more focused discussions on topical issues and using the unique role of the CBSS to facilitate discussions amongst members and the Observer States.

**Mr. Hemningway** could also inform that the CBSS Project Support Facility will be prolonged for the next financing period of 2020-2022 to support the priorities of the CBSS, namely Regional Identity, Sustainable and Prosperous Region and Safe and Secure Region.

**Mr. Hemningway** added that youth is high on the agenda in CBSS. He said that every single minister and others have pointed out the importance of youth in the BSR. The letter written by youths in the BSR encouraging CBSS to take a coordination role in youth work in the BSR has been forwarded to the CBSS Senior Officials Group. There is now agreement in the CBSS that they want to create a common youth platform, where BSSSC will be very closely involved. The idea of the CBSS is to apply for Erasmus + funding to finance a light infrastructure for it the first three years. **Mr. Hemningway** said that it is in the CBSS' interest to integrate youth in all our three areas: "Youth is the flavor of today, and we'd like to keep it so the next years".

**Mr. Hemningway** added that the CBSS want to be involved in more than the three horizontal issues in the EUSBSR as they are as of today. The CBSS are the co-partner for next year's EUSBSR Annual Forum. He could inform that the CBSS was asked by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs if they would be able to act as secretariat for the EUSBSR. **Mr. Hemningway** said if the BSSSC Board has any issues or ideas to be raised at the next Annual Forum they should send them to the CBSS secretariat as soon as possible.

Klaudija Kionis informed that Klaipeda region is involved in the preparation of the next CBSS Lithuanian Chairmanship from 1 July 2020. They are positive to make use of BSSSC as well in this task.

### 11.2. Euroregion Baltic – Klaudija Kionies, Chairmanship of EBR 2018/2019

**Ms. Klaudija Kionies** presented the work of the Euroregion Baltic (ERB).

Klaipeda region has the current presidency of the ERB. They have several priority areas:

- Blue and green growth agenda (using smart specialization strategies, s3, tool-kit)
- EU Cohesion policy (lobbying)
- Transport accessibility (especially through the implementation of the interconnect project).
- Youth cooperation and Klaipeda European Youth Capital 2021. She encouraged everyone to look at ERB youth strategy which is available on the ERB website.
- Strengthening multi stakeholder cooperation (BSSSC and UBC especially).
- UN's Agenda 2030 (SDGs). The ERB have worked with CPMR-Baltic Sea Commission on the



SDGs. They will also focus on the Baltic 2030 action plan.  
- Support the future of the INTERREG south Baltic programme after 2020.

The next ERB presidency will be the Association of Polish Communes.

11.3. Interreg BSR programme – Elena Kolosova, Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme Secretariat

**Ms. Elena Kolosova** gave an update on the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme and especially on the involvement of Russian partners in the projects funded by the programme. Please see separate presentation.

## 12. Reports from policy areas and projects

12.1. Transport

**Mr. Jon Halvard Eide** referred to the written report in the supporting documents to the Board meeting. He stressed the importance that all members of the Board could provide information and input to the rapporteurs between the Board meetings.

12.2. Culture

**Mr. Musiolik** referred to the written report in the supporting documents to the Board meeting. He was happy to inform that the project idea “Baltic Sea Cultural Cities” now have received seed money from the Swedish Institute where CBSS is lead partner.

12.3. Maritime Affairs

**Mr. Janne Tamminen** informed that 1 August Rudiger Stempel assumed the position of HELCOM Executive Secretary. HELCOM has recently published the report "Noise sensitivity of animals in the Baltic Sea". It shows how marine mammals, fish and diving birds may react to underwater sound in the Baltic Sea. The next Heads of Delegations meeting will be held on December in Helsinki. **Virginijus Sinkevičius** from Lithuania is the new Commissioner-designate for Environment and Oceans. His task is to ensure that our environment, blue economy and fisheries sector form an integral part of the European Green Deal, helping to deliver the climate ambitions while creating jobs and sustainable growth. Conserving Europe’s natural environment. The EU Arctic Forum will be held on Thursday 3 October in Umeå, Sweden, jointly organised by the European Commission, the EEAS, and the Government of Sweden. High Representative *Federica Mogherini*, the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs *Ann Linde* and Commissioner *Karmenu Vella* will host the event. The forum will be followed by the Indigenous Peoples’ dialogue on Friday 4 October 2019.





12.4. Northern Dimension

**Mr. Ossi Savolainen** informed that the Northern Dimension Future Forum "Fresh and sustainable experiments of the Global North" will be held in Espoo, Finland, on 28 November, as a part of the Finnish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2019. The next meeting of Steering Group will be held in Bodø, Norway on 18 November.

12.5. Youth network meeting in Klaipeda – election of new Board member

**Ms. Agnes Lusti** referred to the written report in the supporting documents to the Board meeting. She had gotten very good feedback from the youth event in Gdansk and the youth wish that this will be an annual event. The youth platform will continue with CBSS. A new Youth Declaration has been added to the old one. They are now searching for a new region for the next spring meeting and would like some feedback from the members of the Board. She took the opportunity to thank **Mr. Martin Ruemmelein** for his contribution as a youth representative in the Board and wished **Ms. Venla Hatakka** from Region Häme in Finland welcomed as the new youth representative in the BSSSC Board.

**Mr. Christopher Lucht** presented himself as the new youth coordinator from Brandenburg, Germany.

**13. Coming events**

- 13.1. UBC bi-annual conference in Kaunas, LT
- 13.2. Forum Strategic in Saint Petersburg
- 13.3. Next BSSSC Board Meeting 2 – 3 December 2019 in Brussels

**END OF MEETING**