



EUSBSR
EU STRATEGY
FOR THE BALTIC
SEA REGION

After 2020

9th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy
for the Baltic Sea Region



ESTONIA, TALLINN, 4-5th of JUNE 2018

REPORT

After 2020

9TH Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea
Region

Estonia, Tallinn, 4-5th of June 2018

Report

As the 9th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Tallinn has come to an end, and we would like to present the key takeaways from the presentations and the discussions that took place during the event. Issues of digitalization, protecting the Baltic Sea environment, and integrating the EU SBSR into the new European financial instruments were at the forefront of the Forum, and the report focuses on the main conclusions drawn as regards those challenges and the post-2020 future of the BSR cooperation. The report provides an overview of the plenaries and seminars held in the framework of the event.

Plenary Summary

Monday, 4 June 2018

Opening and I Plenary the EU Cohesion Policy and the EUSBSR after 2020

Speakers

Mr Jüri Ratas, Prime Minister of Estonia
H.E. Mr Maris Kucinskis, Prime Minister of Latvia
H.E. Mr Saulius Skvernelis, Prime Minister of Lithuania
H.E. Mr Jacek Czaputowicz, Foreign Minister of Poland
Ms Corina Cretu, EU Commissioner for Regional Policy

Panellists

Mr Alexander Stubb, Vice-President of the EIB, one of the authors of the EUSBSR idea
Mr Konrad Szymanski, Secretary of State for European Affairs, Poland
Dr Kai Böhme, Director, Spatial Foresight
Mr Erik Bergkvist, President of Västerbotten Region

Moderator

Mr Johannes Tralla, Correspondent, Estonian Public Broadcasting

The opening and the first plenary of the 9th EUSBSR Annual Forum focused on taking stock of the achievements in the area of regional cooperation in the BSR, as well as the future of the BSR post-2020 – how the EU Cohesion Policy and the EU Strategy for the BSR can adapt to future challenges.

The Prime Minister of Estonia stressed the main aspects of the BSR cooperation after 2020: digitalization, protecting the environment, integrating the EU SBSR into the new EU financial instruments. Mr Jüri Ratas called for the region to become the model for digital governance based on the free, efficient and truly private flow of data between the people and authorities in the region. Mr Ratas emphasized the need to remain flexible in allocating funds for the regional priorities and focused on relevant common activities.

The Prime Minister of Latvia noted the need for the BSR countries to work further on accomplishing the EU Energy Union goals. Rail Baltic was mentioned as the most important infrastructure project in the region. Prime Minister Kucinskis also emphasized the role of digitalization in further cooperation, specifically through regional centres of innovation excellence and the Nordic-Baltic collaboration in developing 5G network services. Convergence between different BSR states, according to Prime Minister Kucinskis, is no longer possible without the digital solutions and infrastructural connections.

The Prime Minister of Lithuania emphasized the synchronization of the Baltic electricity grid with the continental grid as one of the topical challenges. Prime Minister Skvernelis also noted the need to engage citizens and communities with the projects, as well as bring businesses, NGOs and the people together in their framework. The potential of digitalization – including such new technologies as cryptocurrencies and blockchain – was noted for its significance for the region.

The Foreign Minister of Poland highlighted the fading trust and security concerns related to the Russian Federation. As regards digitalization, Foreign Minister Czaputowicz emphasized the creation of a coherent digital ecosystem, development of the 5G infrastructure and free data flow as necessary precursors for increasing the united competitiveness of the region.

The EU Commissioner for Regional Policy elaborated on the expectations related to the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) negotiations and the post-2020 EU SBSR. Commissioner Cretu urged the BSR stakeholders to consider that the macro-regional strategies should be implemented not only with the help of Interreg funds, but that local and regional funding should be mobilized to ensure success of the strategy.

The first plenary panellists brought forward several topical issues and concerns related to the post-2020 BSR. One suggestion mentioned concerned revising one of the 3 Nos and advocating for a special budget allotment in the framework of the MFF negotiations. Expected cuts in cohesion funding for all the BSR states might affect convergence inside the region in a negative way, according to the panellists. The issues of lack of political leadership, complexity and bureaucracy were also cited as hurdles on the way to a truly connected BSR. Flexibility in securing funds (finding alternative sources, such as the Integrated Territorial Investment) and decision-making (multilevel governance) as well as re-defining the image of the cohesion policy as a no-return investment were emphasized by the panellists.

II Plenary - EUSBSR and the digital world - a coherent digital Baltic Sea Region

Speaker

Mr Andrus Ansip, Vice President, European Commission

Panellists

Mr Andrus Ansip, Vice President, European Commission

Mr Karol Okonski, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Digital Affairs, Poland

Ms Åsa Zetterberg, Government Chief Digital Officer of Sweden

Ms Katariina Ora, Associate General Counsel Western Europe, Microsoft

Ms Jessica Blechingberg, Community Operations, Maria O1 start-up community

Mr Martin Andersson, Professor, Blekinge Institute of Technology & Lund University – presenting the 'State of the Digital Region' report www.topofdigital.eu

Moderator

Mr Luukas Ilves, Deputy Director & Senior Fellow, Lisbon Council

This plenary session was dedicated to exploring the digital opportunities under the title 'A coherent digital Baltic Sea Region'. The Vice President of the European Commission noted that, digitally speaking, the region is well-placed to embrace technological progress. However, there are big disparities between the Nordics and the other countries, and while the divide is not unusual in the EU, Vice President Ansip urged the BSR states to not let it widen. Vice President Ansip emphasized that everybody should have access to high-speed internet, including 5G, and urged the European governments and industry and business representatives to match the level of commitment to digitalisation set by the EU.

The findings of the 'State of the Digital Region' report were presented. Key policy recommendations included shifting education focus from adopting technology to adapting to technology; tackling dual job polarization inside and between BSR countries; an institutionalizing life-long learning in education. It was also mentioned that a way to link BSR countries and provide smooth data availability should be found for the region to achieve yet unmet goals set at the EU level. The Digital North initiative, according to the panellists, plays an important role in strengthening the region as a digital hub. The panellists reiterated that the strongholds of the region are education, people, technology and a stable political climate. Thus, the cooperation should focus on upholding and improving these strengths.

Tuesday, 5 June 2018

III Plenary - EUSBSR and marine environment - safeguarding the ecosystems of the Baltic Sea

Speaker

Mr Lasse Gustavsson, Executive Director, Oceana in Europe

Panellists

Mr Siim Kiisler, Minister of the Environment of Estonia

Mr Dalius Krinickas, Vice-Minister of the Environment of Lithuania

Ms Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Director, HELCOM

Ms Veronica Manfredi, Director of Quality of Life Directorate, European Commission

Mr Lasse Gustavsson, Executive Director, Oceana in Europe

Moderator

Dr Jacob Carstensen, Professor of Marine Ecology, Aarhus University

The results of the first version of the 'State of the Baltic Sea' report showed that although there have been signs of improvement in some cases, the Baltic Sea Action Plan's goals and ecological objectives have not been achieved. The panellists agreed that the Baltic Sea is at its limit in terms of human impact and urged the BSR countries to link the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and the EUSBSR priorities. Political recommendations also included developing regulations for reducing the by-catch and improving monitoring and reporting. The panellists also reiterated the need to solve the problem of plastic waste by withdrawing single-use plastic from the market. Additionally, cooperation between national and regional levels should be prioritized, according to the panellists. As regards eutrophication and agriculture waste, the panellists noted that the BSR already has a holistic assessment system and political regulations in place — it is only enforcement that lags behind.

All speakers agreed that it is highly unlikely that a good environmental state will be reached in the BSR by 2021. The main challenge lies in the fact that problems keep changing (with microplastic and pharmaceuticals being topical in terms of pollution at the moment), while the political will fails to address them with enough ambition and in a timely manner. The panellists also called for more honest

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communication between the policy makers and the agriculture and fishing sector representatives on the environmental impact of both in the BSR.

Closing Session. Farewell Tallinn - Welcome Gdansk!

Speakers

Mr Matti Maasikas, Undersecretary for European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia

Mr Flemming Stender, Director, Baltic Development Forum

Mr Wieslaw Byczkowski, Deputy Marshal of the Pomorskie Region

Moderator

Mr Johannes Tralla, Correspondent, Estonian Public Broadcasting

Video: Welcome to Gdansk 2019!

Undersecretary for European Affairs of Foreign Affairs of Estonia Matti Maasikas summed up the main issues and challenges discussed during the forum. Proposed cuts to the Cohesion funds, a smooth decrease in funding and the level of national contributions of the BSR states are expected to become subjects of active debate. Undersecretary Maasikas urged the public to get acquainted with suggestions and policy recommendations for the future of the BSR in the report 'EUSBSR after 2020: governance remastered?' The main suggested solution concerned invigorating the political will through reviving the Steering Groups. Undersecretary Maasikas also recognized the need to further modernize the BSR economy, especially through development of the 5G infrastructure.

Director of the Baltic Development Forum Flemming Stender emphasized the central role of digitalization in all debates of the EUSBSR forum. Although a truly cross-border digital region has not yet been created, according to Director Stender, digitalization remains an important tool for bridging the gap inside the BSR and advancing the European digital single market.

Deputy Marshal of the Pomorskie Region Wieslaw Byczkowski noted that the next forum will focus on issues of demographic change and challenges to the circular economy.



Photo: Raigo Pajula – Government Press Office

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Photos: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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Parallel Seminars Summary

Monday, 4 June 2018

Parallel Seminars

Seminar 1. Taking a closer look: study on the EUSBSR

Speakers

Ms Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary, HELCOM

Ms Baiba Liepa, Interact Programme

Ms Maria Toptsidou, Spatial Foresight

Mr Jean-Pierre Halkin, Head of Unit, European Commission

Ms Erja Tikka, National Coordinator of the EUSBSR, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

Mr Rene Reisner, Head of Department, Ministry of the Environment of Estonia

Moderator

Mr Johannes Tralla, Correspondent of the Estonian Public Broadcasting



During the seminar, the report 'EUSBSR after 2020: governance remastered?' was presented. The report focuses on how the work is organized to implement the 'Save the Sea' objective by taking a closer look at flagship projects and their realization. The aim of the report was to reflect on the current implementation of the EUSBSR and provide recommendations vis a vis future trends. The report made several proposals, including thematic partnerships, use of existing funding via CPR Art. 70 and macro-regional integrated investments.

Photo: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The last proposal is based on ITIs in ESIF. Several points were made in the ensuing debate. First, a suggestion to more deeply study what is being implemented in the EUSBSR and BSAP was mentioned. A desire for the Forum to have political consequences was expressed. The use of ITIs was seen as an interesting idea which would make for a change to the system. Another suggestion consisted in considering the question of which ministry should be responsible for macro-regional strategies.

Seminar 2. Marine plastic in the Baltic Sea

Speaker

Mr Harmen Spek, Innovation & Solution Manager, Plastic Soup Foundation

Panellists

Mr Harri Moora, Programme Director, SEI Tallinn, representative of the BLASTIC project

Mr Mikhail Durkin, Executive Secretary, CCB

Ms Reka Rozsavolgyi, Policy Officer, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE)

Mr Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, Professional Secretary, HELCOM

Mr Gennadi Gramberg, Head of Division at Tallinn City Office

Moderators

Mr Lauri Tankler, Senior Editor, Ekspress Meedia

The seminar concentrated on the problem of marine litter in the BSR, the different types of plastic that form the plastic soup in the seas and oceans, and the solutions for reducing it. Harmen Spek, innovation manager at plastic pollution awareness body 'Plastic Soup' and keynote speaker noted that the use of plastics must be rethought. Harri Moora concentrated on the key outcomes of the BLASTIC project, which is aiming to reduce the amount of plastic waste in the Baltic Sea. The methodology developed by the BLASTIC project is a great tool for helping local governments to map sources and pathways of plastic litter and develop marine litter prevention and reduction action plans. The methodology applied in Tallinn can also be easily applied to other municipalities in the Baltic Sea area. In addition, the seminar focused on the marine plastic topic on the EU level through a presentation by Policy Officer Reka Rozsavolgyi. The local level context was given by Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, Field Manager at HELCOM. In addition, the problem of microplastics was discussed by Mikhail Durkin from the NGO Coalition Clean Baltic. The seminar's main conclusions were that even though the problem of plastic soup and plastic islands is not as big as in the Baltic Sea as in the world oceans, the problem is nevertheless on the rise. It's something that needs to be addressed by both industry and on a political level, but each of us individually can also contribute to using less plastic in order to reduce the amount of plastic waste generated (25 million tonnes annually in Europe alone) which ends up in our seas.

Seminar 3. Territorial cohesion in planning renewable energy



Speakers

Mr Talis Linkaits, Head of Secretariat, VASAB (Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea)

Mr Riku Varjopuro, Head of Sustainable Use of Marine Areas Unit, Finnish Environment Institute

Dr Graham Butt, Head of Renewable Energy Unit, Ministry of Energy, Infrastructure and Digitalization Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany

Dr Matthias Mossbauer, Project Manager, Ministry of Energy, Infrastructure and Digitalisation, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany

Ms Tuuliki Kasonen, Estonian Wind Power Association, Estonia

Mr Hannu Koponen, Development Manager, Regional Council of Central Finland

Photo: Ardo Kaljuvee — Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Mr Jens Kurnol, Head of Unit European Spatial and Urban Development, Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, Germany

Joint spatial planning perspectives for increasing the share of renewable energy in the BSR are expected to form a strong contribution to cohesion policy and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth after 2020. Currently there is no joint transnational consensus regarding the definition of spatial planning criteria for defining the most suitable places and growth areas for renewable energy (this being the aim of the BEA-APP project). Taking into account important pillars in the planning of renewable energies (economy, society, conflict and transnational cohesion), the seminar presented examples of land-based spatial planning and Maritime Spatial Planning.

In the second part of the seminar, the panel discussed how capacity in BSR countries can be improved to steer the growth of renewable energy production and use in a spatially compatible manner. Two major questions were discussed in regard to territorial cohesion through spatial and energy planning: what major challenges have we met, and how far can we go? The results of the seminar are to be integrated in the outcomes of the EUSBSR horizontal action Spatial Planning flagship project BEA-APP.

Seminar 4. Delivering smart and innovative strategic transport projects: post-2020 perspective

Speakers

Mr Ricardas Degutis, Vice-minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania

Ms Maria Öberg, PhD, Researcher at Luleå University of Technology

Ms Ulrike Schütz, Joint Spatial Planning Department Berlin-Brandenburg

Mr Jan Carsten Gjerlow, Akershus County Council

Mr Gunnar Platz, Project Manager of Interreg Baltic Sea Region Project EMMAi

Mr Thomas Erlandson, Coordinator of the Transport Policy Area of the EUSBSR

Moderator

Mr Algirdas Sakalys, Transport Coordinator, EUSBSR PA

The seminar featured a welcome address by Mr Ricardas Degutis, Vice-minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania. In his presentation Vice Minister stressed that development of the TEN- T Core network corridors will increase attractiveness of all countries in the BSR. At the same time, he noted, it is important to develop "hubs" approach with emphasis on multimodality and on interoperability of different modes. Ms Maria Öberg presented innovative ideas on wide involvement of business, regional and local stakeholders in the TEN-T Core Corridors network implementation. Ms Ulrike Schütz dedicated her presentation to Urban Node development, elaborating on such topics, as last mile connection, commuter traffic, ticketing, green mobility, integration of smart solutions, civil acceptance and communication. Mr Jan Carlsten Gjerlow stressed that regional and local decision makers will become more important as the main driver for shifting to alternative fuels in the near future. In his presentation Mr Gunnar Platz highlighted the importance and future role of TEN-T corridors and the inland waterway transport.

In his concluding remarks Thomas Erlandson, Coordinator of the Transport Policy Area of the EUSBSR, stressed that deployment of new technologies and innovations on regional transport network will enhance the overall efficiency of the TEN-T network in the Baltic Sea Region. At the same time, the new technologies and innovations will contribute to territorial cohesion and sustainable growth as well as to the EU's green transport policy.

Seminar 5. Nothing about us without us – digital tools for better youth involvement and dialogue

Speakers

Mr Mikk Tarros, Vice President of the Estonian National Youth Council (ENL)

Panellists

Mr Emils Anskens, President of Latvian youth council

Ms Agnes Lusti, youth representative

Mr Martin Rümmelein, youth representative

Mr Krzysztof Burchat, youth representative

Ms Sandra Rönnsved, board member LSU

Ms Tessa Bornkessel, youth representative

Mr Sebastian Magier, Head of International Permanent Secretariat Euroregion Baltic

Mr Anders Bergström, PA Education

Mr Tomasz Jalukowicz, PA Innovation

Ms Maira Mora, Director General, Council of the Baltic Sea

Ms Olga Zuin, HA Climate

Mr Stefan Musiolik, PA Culture

Moderators

Mr Peter Wolkowinski

In his key note speech, Mr Mikk Tarros, Vice President of the Estonian National Youth Council, touched upon the need for human coordination in using digital methods; constant promotion of digital participation possibilities; youth-friendly, relevant, comprehensive information; and, ultimately, meaningful participation. Consequently, the panellists discussed the need to involve youth in policy-shaping processes. Additionally, it was noted that communication is crucial – messages should be short and engaging to ensure youths' participation. This participation should also be mainstreamed (not an add-on), according to the participants. There is also a growing need for skills in youth and digital engagement.

The seminar ended with the presentation of a joint youth statement from BSSSC, ERB, LSU and UBC, based on the following points:

- Youth want a fixed role, place and influence in the EUSBSR after 2020;
- Youth are writing the 'Baltic Sea Youth Declaration' – a living document using digital tools – so that ALL youth of the BSR have the opportunity to contribute.
- The EUSBSR must use the Baltic Sea Youth Declaration as a foundation for policy work in the youth area.

Seminar 6. Designing and orchestrating a BSR-wide smart specialisation strategy ecosystem

Speakers

Dr Erik Bergkvist, President of the Västerbotten Region

Mr Jonas Lundström, Head of Enterprise, Innovation and Social Development in Region Västerbotten

Ms. Alison Hunter, EPPC, Entrepreneurial Discovery Process

Ms Esa Kokkonen, Director, Baltic Institute of Finland - BSR Stars S3

Ms Joanna Przedzmirska, Head of the Project Management Centre, the Maritime Institute in Gdansk – Smart Blue Regions

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Ms Lina Stanionyte, S3 Platform, Joint Research Centre - Efforts in aligning of S3 projects and instruments in the Baltic Sea Region

Ms Åsa Bjerling, Executive Secretary CPMR Baltic Sea Commission - The need for S3 capacity building

Ms Joanna Wojtkowska, National Coordinator for Poland EUSBSR reflection connecting back to the start of the ERDF Network

Mr Jonas Lundström, Head of Enterprise, Innovation and Social Development in Region Västerbotten

Moderator

Ms Lisa Fröbel

The seminar presenters and panellists looked into the following questions: What new/other kind of funding mechanisms already exist or should be developed in the coming programme period post-2020? Could the existing Managing Authority networks of the ESI funds be used? What other components are essential for regions to design things jointly? Discussion revolved around what is needed at present to make cooperation on S3 more effective in the Baltic Sea Region. It was followed by a more detailed exemplification of how to make use of the ERDF MA Network (case: Blue Growth or Digitalisation). Finally, discussion on how the ESF funds could be used to increase the capacity of regions and regional stakeholders to work inter-regionally took place.

Seminar 7. European energy system transformation: the rise of energy prosumers and smart technologies

Speaker

Mr Rytis Kevelaitis, Adviser to the Minister of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania

Panellists

Mr Janis Patmalnieks, Deputy State Secretary, PA Energy, Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia

Mr Kevin Johnsen, from Nordic Energy Research

Mr Ignas Pranskevicius, Board Member, Head of Service division, ESO, Lithuania

Mr Georg Rute, Development Director for Digitalisation, Elering, Estonia

Ms Pia Salokoski, Program Manager, Business Finland

Mr Andrius Sersniovas, EV Product manager, Energy Solutions Centre, Lithuania

Energy consumers – the focus of the seminar – are at the heart of the Energy Union and the EUSBSR PA Energy. The development of innovative and smart technologies in the energy field is stimulating the energy system's transformation towards smarter, more flexible, more sustainable, secure and competitive ways of delivering energy to consumers. The changes in the energy system form steps that are being taken so as to be closer to the EU targets for post-2020. Smart technologies empower consumers, allowing the development of the consumer demand response and stimulating the rise of a new types of actor: prosumers. The seminar focused on discussing the performance of smart technologies in the energy sector since their introduction, their growth potential and key challenges, in an attempt to bring the post-2020 smart energy technology developments closer to the EUSBSR.



Photos: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tuesday, 5 June 2018

Parallel Seminars

Seminar 1. Exercises as tools for building a resilient BSR post-2020 – from the round-table to the field (Part I and II)

Speakers

Mr Siim Kallas, Municipal Mayor of Viimsi, Former Vice-President of the European Commission

Mr Torbjörn Lindström, Development Manager, Southwest Finland Emergency Services

Mr Teemu Niemelä, Lieutenant Senior Grade, Finnish Border Guard

Ms Else Timms, Funding Strategist, Strategic Planning and Analysis Unit, Swedish Coast Guard, representing the PA Secure flagship project Balex Delta

Mr Jonas Westerberg, Consultant to Swedish Coast Guard and Project Manager of DiveSMART Baltic

Mr Jürgen Krempin, Hamburg Fire and Rescue Service Moderator

Mr Arya Honarmand, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB)

Moderator

Mr Christer Pursiainen, Professor of Societal Safety and Environment, Department of Engineering and Safety, Faculty of Science and Technology, Arctic University of Norway

Moderator for demonstration @ Seaplane Harbour

Mr Jürgen Krempin, Head of International Cooperation, Hamburg Fire and Rescue Service

The seminar session had two parts: I. A panel discussion focusing on various types of exercises as tools for achieving results in different areas, and the life cycle of an exercise; the benefits, challenges, and lessons learned. II. A live demonstration of an exercise in the Seaplane Harbour. All the manoeuvres were professionally narrated and explained by the moderator (from Germany). Four flagship initiatives contributed to the sessions: ChemSAR (PA Safe), HAZARD (PA Secure), DiveSMART Baltic (PA Safe) and Balex Delta (PA Secure).

The main topic discussed during the panel discussion was the need for exercises and their importance. Presenters focused on the positive impact of various exercises, such as opportunities to

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learn from each other, to network, and to create better preparedness and resilience as well as better cooperation in case of emergency. Presenters focused on the ultimate objective of an exercise, which is to create better preparedness for the rescue services to save lives. The main conclusions from the sessions revolved around the importance of exercises as tools for building preparedness and resilience in the Baltic Sea Region, and the importance of transnational cooperation in making the region safer and more secure.



Photos: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Seminar 2. EUSBSR post-2020: Defining joint challenges as drivers for change

Speakers

Ms Nina Ekelund, Director of the Haga Initiative

Mr Esben Lanthén, Nordic Sustainability - Report "Baltic 2030: Bumps on the Road – How the Baltic Sea States are performing on the SDGs"

Mr Stefano Marta, Coordinator, OECD - "Territorial approach the SDGs"

Ms Krista Kampus, Head of the Baltic 2030, CBSS

Ms Trine Schmidt, Project Officer/Sustainable Development, NCM

Panellists

Mr Ado Lõhmus, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of the Environment, Estonia

Ms Nina Ekelund, Director of the Haga Initiative, Sweden

Ms Stefano Marta, Coordinator, OECD

Mr Pekka Jounila, Coordinator for EUSBSR, DG REGIO

Ms Eili Lepik, Adviser, SD Coordinator, Government Office of Estonia

Moderators

Mr Sven Beyersdorff, Nordic Sustainability

Ms Noora Löfström, Youth representative Generation 2030

At the seminar the organisers presented the new report 'Baltic 2030: Bumps on the Road — How the Baltic Sea States are performing on the SDGs'. The report, introduced by Esben Lanthén, analyses the performance of the BSR countries (including Iceland, Norway and Russia) on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and explores in depth five of the most challenging ones. Interesting discussions concerned the future of the EUSBSR — the need for the new Baltic Sea Action Plan to be strongly anchored to the 2030 Agenda was highlighted.



Photo: Ardo Kaljuvee — Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The SDGs shall become a framework but also a tool for macro-regional collaboration, in support of countries' and the EU's efforts to achieve the global goals. It is also crucial to increase the involvement of stakeholders and especially of the businesses, which play key roles in the shift towards more sustainable economies, according to the panellists.

The main conclusions from the seminar were that GHG emissions from growing freight and passenger transport could be curbed by modal shift, use of alternative fuels and zero-carbon vehicles. Mainstreaming climate into transport sector planning will save lives, money and the environment in the BSR and the Paris Climate Goals can be achieved only with the interaction and joint effort of all stakeholders.

Seminar 3. Fostering entrepreneurship by managing talent density, or How do we make the BSR a region of opportunity for talents?

Speakers

Mr Ugnius Savickas, Expert and Consultant of Rietavas Tourism and Business Information Centre, BBVET Project

Ms Minna Säpyskä-Aalto, BELT Project, Senior Specialists, Baltic Institute of Finland

Mr Tomasz Jalukowicz, PAC Innovation, Ministry of Science and Higher Education

Mr Anders Bergström, PAC Education, Norden Association

Panellists

Mr Jarmo Tuominiemi, Vice President, Development Director Demola Global

Ms Annika Ljas, Head of PR and Communications, WePower, Noontide

Mr Dan Rosenberg, Senior Talent Acquisition Manager, Copenhagen Capacity

Mr Raman Ramalingam, Head of Talent, STING — Stockholm Innovation & Growth (*tbc*)

Moderator

Mr Marcus Andersson, Executive Chairman and Co-founder, Future Place Leadership AB

The seminar explored different approaches to educating and working with digital talent. The topics of regional differences in socio-economic systems as a precondition for developing digital talent — e.g. the Estonian start-up visa/e-residency for attracting foreign entrepreneurs — were touched upon. The

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panel discussion attempted to answer such questions as: how can we work with talent in the BSR? Is there scope to develop a joint ecosystem to improve talent management? If so, what elements of talent management ecosystems should we design jointly? The discussions also looked into the ways to connect cities to talent producers (universities, hot hubs, etc.) and explored the new types of partnerships (between cities, universities, hubs, etc.) for all cities to become attractive alternatives as bases for talent. The need to find a way to keep talent in the region and compete effectively with global leaders in talent management was emphasised.

Seminar 4. How to make the best use of Interreg programmes in the Baltic Sea Region post-2020 for the benefit of the EUSBSR

Speakers

Ms Erja Tikka, Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Coordinator of EUSBSR

Ms Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM, EUSBSR Horizontal Action Spatial Planning Coordinator

Mr Jens Kurnol, Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development

Ms Joanna Przedzimirska, Maritime Institute in Gdansk, Lead and Project Partner on several EUSBSR flagship projects such as SUBMARINER, DAIMON and Smart Blue Regions

In the seminar, four panellists, namely a member of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme's Monitoring Committee, an EUSBSR National Coordinator, an EUSBSR Horizontal Action Leader and a flagship leader presented their proposals on "how to cut the cake" of Interreg Programme funding after 2020 for the benefit of the EUSBSR. The panellists agreed that there is a need for financial support for the work of the PACs/HACs. Joanna Przedzimirska from the Maritime Institute of Gdansk asked for more support for capacity building for people on the ground to take responsibility.

When it comes to funding for projects, there were different views about differentiating between flagships and non-flagships. Jens Kurnol and other panellists expressed the need for more flexibility in terms of duration and size of cooperation projects. "Why not consider projects as short as one year or as long as five, and applying only for EUR 50,000 up to EUR 5 million?" Jens Kurnol asked. Pointing out to the limitations of projects, Erja Tikka, EUSBSR National Coordinator of Finland, raised another point: "How can processes be funded within the Strategy which take longer than a single project?" All panellists saw the need to continue maritime cross-border cooperation in the region as this serves the specific needs of the region.

Seminar 5. European and macro-regional territorial monitoring: how ESPON can support stakeholders of the post-2020 EUSBSR

Speakers

Mr Efrain Larrea, ESPON European and macro-regional territorial monitoring tool, Mcrit, Spain

Mr Odd Godal, DG Regio, European Commission

Mr Talis Linkaits, Head of Secretariat, VASAB (Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea)

Mr Ulf Savbäck, Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth

Moderator

Ms Sandra Di Biaggio, Senior Project Expert, ESPON European Grouping on Territorial Cooperation

The seminar addressed the ongoing ESPON project 'European and Macro-regional Territorial Monitoring Tool', which aims to develop a monitoring tool that allows easy access to different types of data, static and interactive maps and graphs, analytical features and other information for different types of stakeholders. Two main policy processes and structures in the BSR must be taken into account by the tool and its content: the EUSBSR and VASAB. Discussion focused on the impact of

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the post-2020 Cohesion Policy for the EUSBSR and the ever-evolving needs to monitor the development of the EUSBSR. Stakeholders were invited to share their needs in evidence necessary for implementing their activities. Panellists also looked into how cooperation in the BSR in contributing to the achievement of policy objectives in different territories can be measured and how ESPON can support stakeholders in the design of the post-2020 EUSBSR.

Seminar 6. Sharing heritage through digitalisation: the added value of virtual reality for BSR cultural heritage

Panellists

Professor Thomas Bremer, Gamedesign/Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft, Berlin Baltic Gaming Project Lead (Flagship)

Mr Ott Roots, Motoragency, Project Manager, VR Centre Estonia

Mr Maciej Hofman, Policy Officer, Culture - Cultural and creative sectors, European Commission

Ms Zelca Simansone, Director, Creative Museums, Latvia

Moderator

Mr Ragnar Siil, Founder & Managing Partner, Creativity Lab, Estonia

The relevance of cultural heritage as a perspective of the past creating a vision for the future is underlined by 2018 being the European Year of Cultural Heritage (ECHY). The seminar discussed and reflected on the importance of cultural heritage linked to virtual reality, focusing on real 'added value'. Discussions focused on the real opportunities presented by technology as well as avoiding 'technique for the sake of technique'. Some good practices for uniting cultural heritage and technology were presented.



Photo: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Seminar 7. Sustainable shipping on the Baltic Sea beyond 2020

Speakers

Ms Monika Stankiewicz, Executive Secretary, HELCOM

Professor Erik Fridell, IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute

Professor Peter Sigray, Research Director, Department of Meteorology, Stockholm University

Mr Piotr Nowak, Port of Gdynia

Moderator

Ms Maija Sirola, BONUS Secretariat

The seminar presented the results of the BONUS SHEBA project, which produced a lot of unique data showing the contributions of shipping to air pollution and contributions to loads of contaminants in seawater, as well as maps of shipping-related emissions of underwater noise and assessment of the impact of these pressures on marine life, land ecosystems and human health. A number of future scenarios have been assessed in terms of the impact of different policies and technical abatement measures on reducing the negative environmental impact caused by shipping. The seminar placed these results in the context of the environmental status of the Baltic Sea and the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan, also through discussion between experts from the BONUS SHEBA project, HELCOM and shipping industry stakeholders. Through an interactive dialogue the panel sought a pathway to a sustainable and competitive maritime sector in the Baltic Sea Region for the coming decades.

Seminar 8. A sustainable future for the Baltic Sea – updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan beyond 2021

Speakers

H.E. Maira Mora, Director General, Permanent Secretariat of CBSS

Mr Harry Liiv, Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of the Environment, Estonia

Ms Veronica Manfredi, Director of Quality of Life Directorate, European Commission, EU chairmanship of HELCOM

Ms Saara-Sofia Sirén, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference rapporteur regarding eutrophication of the Baltic Sea, Member of Parliament, Finland

Ms Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM Executive Secretary

Ms Otilia Thoreson, WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme

Moderator

Mr Urmas Lips, Co-chair of HELCOM State and Conservation Working Group, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia

Presenters focused on the current state of the Baltic Sea and the implementation of HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan. The HELCOM 'State of the Baltic Sea' report for 2017 shows that the goal of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) and the EUSBSR - the good ecological status of the sea - has not yet been reached. Many of the actions of the BSAP have already been implemented by some countries, but not all, and the remaining ones will have to be accomplished by 2021. At the same time, the HELCOM Ministerial Meeting on 6 March decided on the update of the BSAP for the period beyond 2021. In the seminar, HELCOM received feedback from a panel consisting of representatives of the European Commission, HELCOM Contracting Parties, NGOs, IGOs and parliamentarians on how the update of BSAP should be organized and who should be involved. The panellists highlighted inclusiveness in the process as well as prioritizing the existing commitments.

Seminar 9. Digitalising and connecting the neighbourhood: solutions for the BSR

Speakers

Ms Daria Akhutina, Senior Adviser, CBSS

Mr Mikko Lohikoski, Senior Adviser, City of Turku

Panellists

Mr Peyman Khodabakhsh, Project Developer and Manager, Atene KOM

Mr Lars Ahlbäck, CEO, Tilaajavastuu

Mr Jury Vorotnitsky, Chairman of the Board, Digitalization Transformation of the State Belarus University

Ms Svetlana Kochkaeva, Manager for the Center for Science and Technology Foresight Department

Moderator

Mr Darijus Valiucko, Project Manager, Atene KOM

The speakers introduced and analysed digitalisation trends and cooperation potential. In this context, Peyman Khodabakhsh (Atene KOM) established the picture for the discussion during the session by claiming that one needs “digital infrastructure”, “digital skills” and “digital services” to prepare the regions for the digital world after 2020. Other experts from around the Baltic Sea Region provided their insights and experiences to this topic. Lars Ahlbäck, CEO of Tilaajavastuu, addressed the topic of “digital services” by presenting the joint transnational platform for data sharing and building trust in the real estate and construction sector.

Jury Vorotnitsky, Chairman of the Board for Digitalization Transformation of the Belarusian State University, looked into the “digital skills”, where development of master programmes in the field of complex integrated system design prepares much-needed future skilled personnel. Svetlana Kochkaeva, Manager in the Center of Science and Technology Foresight at ITMO University in St. Petersburg, drew attention to the macro perspective and explained that one has to be aware of different possible futures. It seems the strategic collaboration on global challenges will play a role if we are to maintain the successful development of the region. To illustrate how the knowledge and examples can be implemented locally, the case of city of Turku was examined. The speakers made their recommendations to the developers of the Turku region, which could be summed up as widening the platform and improving the environment for innovation and “smart” development, enabling the data flow between departments and authorities in public administration, and encouraging global thinking, “crazy ideas” and local acting.

Seminar 10. Communicating the EUSBSR as simple as possible – but no simpler

Speakers

Ms Maxi Nachtigall, PA Coordinator, PA HAZARDS

Dr Lina Marcinkute, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Ms Joanna Wojtkowska, EUSBSR National Coordinator, Poland

Moderators

Ms Kirsi Ahlman, Project Manager, Let’s Communicate!

Ms Miitta Eronen, Project Coordinator, Let’s Communicate!

The seminar “Communicating the EUSBSR as simple as possible – but no simpler”, organized by the Communication Point of the EUSBSR (the Let’s Communicate! project) offered tools and concrete examples to overcome communications challenges. Speakers in the seminar represented key EUSBSR stakeholders. In the first part of the seminar, brand new EUSBSR promotional videos were
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presented and screened. The second part of the seminar was a panel discussion where two main communications challenges were discussed: communicating about a complex framework and communicating about the lack of resources. Panellists presented some solutions to these challenges, for example, branding the communications, specifying a target group, using simple language, involving colleagues and committing to communicate. The last part of the seminar was a workshop where participants brainstormed the communications of the upcoming EUSBSR 10th Anniversary.

Seminar 11. Sustainable tourism as an economic driver and platform for cultural exchange

Speakers

Mr Johannes Volkmar, Head of Baltic Sea Cooperation, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Tourist Board

Mr Dan Jonasson, Project leader and sustainable tourism expert, Region Västerbotten Turism

Ms Triin Sakermäe, NATTOURS Project Manager, Environment Department of Tallinn City Government

Moderator

Dr Björn Jacobsen, Professor at the University of Applied Sciences, Stralsund

Three interventions of dedicated experts provided profound insights on sustainable tourism cooperation structures on the transnational, regional and project level in the Baltic Sea region. The participants actively engaged in a complementary workshop to find answers to questions like: How can sustainable cooperation structures like the Baltic Sea Tourism Center be benefited from and which value-added service could it offer? The insights gained in the workshop and discussions are to be merged into a position paper presented at the 11th Baltic Sea Tourism Forum from 14-15 November in Riga.

Seminar 12. Transport sector responses to emerging climate risks

Speakers

Ms Cilia Sonne Allermann, Head of Section, Danish Maritime Authority (PA Ship)

Ms Vivi Niemenmaa, Auditor, European Court of Auditors. Challenges of climate change to the European transport sector

Mr Jonas Ericson, Project Manager, Clean Vehicles, Environment and Health Administration, Stockholm City. Stockholm's steps towards carbon neutral city

Ms Elena Visnar Malinovska, Head of Unit A3, EU Commission DG CLIMA. Mainstreaming Climate into ESIF

2014-2020 - lessons for Multiannual Financial Framework 2020+

Ms Maria Skipper Schwenn, Executive Director, Danish Shipowners' Association, Future of the Shipping in Baltic Sea

Moderator

Mr Valdur Lahtvee, Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat (CBSS)

Keynote speakers addressed the current state of play in the EU transport sector's responses to the challenges posed by new goals for GHG mitigation and discussed how to improve cross-border and transnational cooperation on adaptation and to increase the resilience of the sector to risks related to climate change.

The seminar contributed to the EUSBSR Annual Forum discussions on 'After 2020' by discussing opportunities and proposing ideas on how to further mainstream mitigation and adaptation within the EUSBSR and how to finance integrated climate actions in the EU MFF post-2020. It also contributed

to the AF main theme Marine Environment as low-carbon transport in the BSR has a less negative impact on the Baltic Sea environment.

Seminar 13. EU macro-regional strategies: Learning from experience, learning from each other

Speakers

Mr Stefan Gänzle, Jean Monnet Chair, University of Agder, Kristiansand, Norway

Ms Krista Kampus, Horizontal Action 'Climate', EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat, Sweden

Ms Andrea Vranovska, Priority Area 4 'To restore and maintain the quality of waters', EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Water Research Institute Bratislava, Slovakia

Mr Anders Bergström, Horizontal Action 'Capacity', EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Norden Association, Sweden

Ms Franziska Sielker, University of Cambridge, Department of Land Economy

Moderators

Mr Jörg Mirtl, Interact III Programme

Ms Baiba Liepa, Interact III Programme

The key note made an argument for understanding macro-regional strategies as a tool supporting the project-to-policy loop in an experimental way – providing opportunities for mutual learning inside, but also between the four macro-regional strategies of the EU. Panel discussants explored these ideas even further and came up with five bold statements:

- First, there is a need to have both a process and a project to bring macro-regional strategies to bear.
- Second, political will remains decisive – and it might be desirable to conclude at least some of the annual fora with a declaration of prime ministers. Meetings of sector ministers from all countries of the EUSBSR were highlighted as important.
- Third, a wider range of relevant stakeholders needs to be activated to make macro-regional governance more inclusive – e.g. from the business community.
- Fourth, a more prominent role for steering committees is needed to guarantee the success and sustainability of the Strategies.
- Fifth, the indicators must be more tailor-made, taking into account that strategies deliver on both processes and projects.

Finally, it was concluded that the mutual exchange between stakeholders and implementers across all EU macro-regional strategies remains an important element. Initiation of thematic exchanges across the Strategies by the Interact III Programme are highly appreciated.

Seminar 14. Welcome to the Dragons' Den! Pitching ideas for a Clean Baltic Sea

Panellists

Mr Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky, Professional Secretary, HELCOM: Nutrient loads in the Baltic Sea and its eutrophication status (recent HELCOM assessments)

Pitchers

Mr Markku Ollikainen, Professor, University of Helsinki: Gypsum application of agricultural fields

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Ms Silja Kana, The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF): WWF Meat Guides – Reducing the ecological footprint of food

Ms Mari Heinonen, Head of Department, The Helsinki Region Environmental Services Authority (HSY): Phosphorus recovery from waste water

Ms Elis Vollmer, Estonian University of Life Science: New manure standards to improve nutrient recycling and reduce nutrient leaching

Dragons

Ms Maira Dzelzkaleja-Burmistre, Deputy Chairman of Farmers Parliament, Latvia

Ms Heidrun Fammler, President of the Baltic Environmental Forum Group, Project Coordinator with ResponSEable

Ms Kristina Svinhufvud, Officer, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Ms Anja Nysten, Senior Manager, Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO)

Moderator

Ms Marjukka Porvari, Director, Clean Baltic Sea Projects, John Nurminen Foundation

In a keynote speech, Mr Dmitry Frank-Kamenetsky (HELCOM) provided a quick overview of the recent HELCOM nutrient input assessments, explaining the sources of nutrient loading and progress towards national reduction targets. Four innovators presented their solutions for reducing eutrophication in short pitch-style presentations. These snapshots reviewed recent innovations that can contribute specifically to reducing eutrophication and thereby to the vision for the Baltic Sea in and beyond 2020, if applied across borders:

- Ms Mari Heinonen (HSY) introduced Case RAVITA, revealing a method for the large-scale recovery of phosphorus and nitrogen from wastewater.
- Ms Silja Kana (WWF Estonia) illustrated how consumers can reduce the ecological footprint of their diet with the help of WWF Meat Guides.
- Ms Elis Vollmer (Estonian University of Life Science) presented ongoing work to develop new manure standards to improve nutrient recycling and reduce nutrient leaching.
- Ms Anna Saarentaus (John Nurminen Foundation) explained the idea of gypsum amendment of agricultural fields - a method which remarkably reduces phosphorus loads instantly.



Photo: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Other activities

Speakers' Corner

Organised by HA Capacity, the Speakers' Corner, which created a place for vibrant discussions on current political questions, took place parallel to the plenaries and seminars. The aim of the corner was to link discussions in the news flow in the Baltic Sea Region to what is addressed in the EUSBSR.

The following topics were addressed:

EUROPE – HOW CAN WE MEET FUTURE CHALLENGES?

After the financial crisis, growing nationalism, Brexit and the rise of populism, the European Union faces many challenges. What are the greatest obstacles and opportunities, and what solutions can macro-regional strategies provide?

Panellists:

- **Mr Kai Böhme** – Spatial Foresight
- **Ms Erja Tikka** – National Contact Point Finland to the EUSBSR

CIVIL SOCIETY IS SPEAKING – IS ANYONE LISTENING?

In the light of rising scepticism and distrust among political elites all over Europe, dialogue with civil society is more important than ever. Is the engagement and capacity in civil society utilized enough – or are European elites losing touch with their peoples and societies?

Panellists:

- **Ms Therese Mithander** - Baltic Sea NGO Network Forum
- **Mr Stefano Marta** – OECD
- **Mr Jean-Pierre Halkin** - Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy

ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS TO THE BALTIC SEA – ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?



The Baltic Sea is one of the most threatened marine ecosystems on the planet. What is being done to tackle the environmental issues of the Baltic Sea? Is it enough – and how does it affect everyday life and tourism in the region?

Panellists:

- **Ms Heidrun Fammler** – Baltic Environment Forum Group
- **Ms Otilia Thoreson** – WWF Baltic Ecoregion Programme
- **Mr Jacob Carstensen** – Aarhus University

Photo: Ardo Kaljuvee – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CULTURAL DIVERSITY – WHAT DO WE FEAR?

Cultural diversity is a deeply emotional issue that polarizes many societies; some people consider it valuable while it triggers fear and hate in others. Why is this, and how do we foster integration and cultural diversity within the region?

Panellists:

- **Ms Sabine Hahn** - Hamburg Institute for Vocational Education and Training, EUSBSR PA Education
- **Ms Kai Klandorf** - Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations

#METOO – SOMETHING FOR EUSBSR, TOO?

The global Me Too movement against sexual harassment and assault has drawn attention to wider issues of gender equality in society. While these are vital European values, they are almost absent in the EUSBSR and its Action Plan. How can the Baltic Sea region become more gender equal? And what are the main challenges?

Panellists:

- **Ms Britt-Marie Söderberg Torstensson** - Winnet Sweden
- **Ms Ewa Ruminska-Zimny** - Warsaw School of Economics
- **Mr Mikko Lohikoski** - Union of the Baltic Cities, EUSBSR HA Capacity

Networking Village

The Networking Village was designed as a meeting place where participants could discuss their ideas for cooperation with PACs/HACs or ask questions on how to get involved in the development processes. This was also the place where the flagships could present their results and meet with potential partners.

Organizers and supporters of the 9th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region:

The 9th Annual Forum was hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia together with the Baltic Development Forum and in close cooperation with the European Commission, Ministry of Environment and other partners. The 9th Annual Forum was co-financed by the European Union Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme.



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