



## BSSSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Svetlogorsk, Kaliningrad Region, Russia  
23 May 2018

### **BSSSC Board meeting Svetlogorsk, Kaliningrad Region, Russia Minutes (adopted by the Board 12.09.18)**

**Tuesday, 23 May 2018, 1000-15.00.**

Meeting venue: Universal Hotel. Nekrasova street, 3, Svetlogorsk.

**Present:**

**Chairman** Mr. Roger Ryberg (Eastern Norway County Network).

**Board Members:** Mr. Martin Rümmelein (Schleswig-Holstein), Ms. Alla Ivanova (Kaliningrad Region), Mr. Stefan Musiolik (Schleswig-Holstein), Ms. Siv Henriette Jacobsen (Østfold County)

**Board Civil:** Mr. Jon Halvard Eide (Vest-Agder County), Ms. Reetta Sorjonen (Häme region), Mr. Janne Tamminen (Helsinki Uusimaa Region), Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska (Pomorskie Region), Mr. Toivo Riimaa (Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities), Ms. Malgorzata Ludwiczek (West-Pommern), Evgeniya Russu (Kaliningrad Region)

**Others:** Mr. Andrey Tolmachev (Head of the Administration of the Svetlogorsk municipal district), Mr. Denis Moskalenko (Head of the subdivision for regional cooperation, Department of All-Europe Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation), Ms. Daria Akhutina (Senior Advisor CBSS).

**Secretariat:** Ms. Ann Irene Saeternes (ENCN Chairmanship), Mr. Lars Lund Godbolt (ENCN Chairmanship), Ms. Hilde Beate Aaroe (ENCN Chairmanship), Ms. Trine Ellingsen (backup for Mr. Jan Edøy - BSSSC Brussels Antenna)



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### AGENDA

#### 1. Opening of the Board meeting

- 1.1. Opening of the meeting – Mr. Roger Ryberg, BSSSC Chair.  
Mr. Ryberg wished everyone welcome. He thanked the Kaliningrad region for hosting the Board Meeting and the VII Kaliningrad international forum the day before.
- 1.2. Adoption of the agenda.

The agenda was adopted without any changes or amendments.

- 1.3. Adoption of Board meeting minutes from Board Meeting in Stockholm, March 23, 2018.

The minutes were adopted without additional comments.

#### 2. Kaliningrad Region's engagement in Baltic Sea Region cooperation

- 2.1. Introduction by Ms. Alla Ivanova, Kaliningrad Region

**Ms. Alla Ivanova** presented international cooperation in the Kaliningrad region. Their basic principles for cooperation are partnerships, economic relations and participation in international programmes and projects. Kaliningrad takes part of the cross-border cooperation programmes Poland-Russia and Lithuania-Russia. They also have cooperation with Chinese, Korean and Japanese regions. Further it was informed that they hope to have established electronic visa applications by next year. As for the VIII International Forum of the Kaliningrad Partner Regions, 22-23 May there were 300 participants where the Governor met the EU Ambassador 22 May. The Kaliningrad region are organising business missions to foreign countries and 20 countries have expressed their interest in business cooperation with the Kaliningrad region.

**Mr. Roger Ryberg** thanked for the presentation and opened for questions from the members of the Board.

**Mr. Martin Rümmelein** asked if there were any current projects on an international train connection. **Ms. Alla Ivanova** informed that there had been a project between two private companies on a train connection between Kaliningrad and Poland, but that it was not profitable and therefore no longer running.

**Ms. Siv Henriette Jacobsen** asked if the Kaliningrad had any Norwegian partners and if there were any formal requirements to be a partner with Kaliningrad. **Ms. Alla Ivanova** told that there had not been any proposals from Norway and that there were no formal requirements.



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**Mr. Stefan Musiolik** commented that that it is good that Kaliningrad is engaged in the Baltic Sea Region and thanked for the commitment and engagement.

**Ms. Ann Irene Saeternes** made a remark that traditionally Norwegian cooperation with Russia has been connected to the North – in the Barents region. Now as Russia has joined the Baltic Sea Region programme, further concrete cooperation with Russian regions should be encouraged.

**Mr. Roger Ryberg** said that the international forum in Kaliningrad on May 22 demonstrated that there are many opportunities and that he appreciated the frank tone of the conference. It is important with increased cooperation at the sub-state level, even though relations at the top are cold.

### 2.2. Mr. Andrey Tolmachev – Head of the Administration of the Svetlogorsk Municipal District

**Mr. Andrey Tolmachev** made a presentation on Svetlogorsk - a tourist resort with a federal status. There are mainly tourists, but they also focus on creative industries and IT industries. They have a good tax regime provided by the regional and national government, and stated an interest for international business ventures and cooperation. There are big plans for city development in Svetlogorsk. There are several good sport facilities in the region, and that Kaliningrad will organise four matches in the football World Cup in June. The Serbian team will stay and train in Svetlogorsk.

### 2.3. Denis Moskalenko – Head of the subdivision for regional cooperation, Department of All-Europe Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

**Mr. Denis Moskalenko** thanked the Kaliningrad Region for organising the VIII International Forum of the Kaliningrad Partner Regions. He stated that the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the work of the BSSSC. In these difficult times, building interregional cooperation is important. He highlighted that cross-border programmes and cooperation is a success-story.

### 2.4. Comments and questions

**Mr. Stefan Musiolik** thanked Mr. Denis Moskalenko for attending the meeting and it is a good signal that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are present. Our regional cooperation can contribute to making the international cooperation climate better in the future, and underlined that it is positive that Russia now has become a full partner in the Interreg BSR programme.

**Mr. Denis Moskalenko** agreed with Mr. Stefan Musiolik and added that the Kaliningrad region is one of the most active regions in international cooperation.



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**Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska** took the opportunity to invite the Russian Foreign Affairs at the BSSSC AC 2018 in Gdansk.

### 3. BSSSC Policy Paper on Culture, creative industries and regional identity

#### 3.1.1. Presentation by Mr. Stefan Musiolik

**Mr. Musiolik** gave an introduction to the paper, saying the idea is to have a paper to show the value of culture in all fields, not in an area of its own. It is very important for the creation of a regional identity in the BSR, for growth and jobs, for innovation, for social inclusion and touching the hearts of the people. We should not only be addressing the head but also the heart of the people.

In the proposal there are five concrete demands.

1. Promoting culture and creative industries should become an inherent goal of the European Structural Funds policy.
2. Preserving and promoting culture should become a thematic priority of the Structural Funds Programmes 2021-2027 and a possible topic of Smart Specialisation Strategies (provides maintenance of the current programming structure).
3. Culture is one the 13 Policy Areas of the EU Baltic Sea Strategy, but without sufficient financing possibilities; cultural projects should become eligible within the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021-2027.
4. Facilitate the funding of small scale projects in the fields of culture, intercultural exchange and the promotion of democracy and tolerance suitable to strengthen European identity and solidarity in the ETC (European Territorial Cooperation) programmes.
5. Facilitate access to the centrally managed EU programmes (e.g. Creative Europe) for Macro-regional strategy projects (flagship projects).

#### 3.2 Discussions

On the third point, **Mr. Musiolik** and one of the co-authors, **Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes**, disagree. **Mr. Musiolik** argued that the demand should be written now so that it in the minds of the people from an early stage. **Ms. Sæternes** argued that the BSR Programmes are not decided yet and that this demand therefore is too detailed and should be introduced at a later stage as a follow-up.

**Mr. Jon Halvard Eide** argued that culture and cultural heritage is already a prioritised topic in several programmes and said it could be problematic to argue for a side track for cultural projects from the Baltic Sea Region only. **Ms. Marlene Roethe** replied that cultural heritage is the only area prioritised in the existing BSR programme and this limits the options for cooperation projects.



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**Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska** suggested to keep point three, but perhaps it could be rephrased to be more conditional.

**Mr. Roger Ryberg** said maybe the wording should be a bit different and suggested that Mr. Musiolik and Ms. Sæternes did this bilaterally.

**Mr. Martin Rümmelein** suggested to emphasise more youth and the role of young people in the paper.

**Ms. Alla Ivanova** mentioned that Russia is a part of the process and should be mentioned in the paper.

After the lunch, the wording in point three was changed to be less specific and more conditional. A sentence involving non- EU regions was added to included Russia in the statement. A sentence on youth involvement was also added.

The BSSSC Policy Paper on Culture, creative industries and regional identity was adopted with the proposed changes.

#### 4. **Renewal of the Declaration of common interest with Committee of the Regions**

##### 4.1 Presentation by Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes

**Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes** informed that **Mr. Jan Edøy** and herself had a meeting with the deputy Secretary General of the Committee of the Regions as well as a meeting with vice president Mr. Marku Markula before Easter. They discussed how an update of the existing declaration could move forward. All cooperation agreements would have to be approved by the CoR Bureau, and signed by the president. The declarations should also include an action plan. They want that the BSSSC and its BSR partners are available for providing good examples from the EUSBSR, so that it could be shared by other MR strategies. They would also like to continue the regional dimension in the Northern Dimension and add a new point on youth cooperation. The secretariat will continue to work on this. The declaration could be signed at the Annual Conference in Gdansk, but this depends on further progress of the work with the declaration. A final draft version will be distributed to the Board for adoption.

##### 4.2 Discussions

**Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska** stated that it would be very good to have the declaration ready by September for signing.

The Board took note of the information



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### 5. BSSSC Annual Conferences

#### 5.1 Annual Conference 2018 in Gdansk - Presentation by Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska

**Ms. Wroblewska** on behalf of the host of the BSSSC Annual Conference 2018 gave an update on the planning and preparation of the BSSSC Annual Conference 2018. There is now a proposal on good practices for session 5, and a second keynote speaker is ready for session 2.

**Ms. Sæternes** said that session 5, "Good practices" will be prepared and executed in cooperation with AteneKom. The session will discuss how the Baltic Sea Region look like in twenty years.

The organisers of the conference will try to send out invitations in mid June.

#### 5.2 Discussions

**Ms. Wroblewska** informed that they have had troubles finding a good partner for the organisers of the BSSSC youth Event in the days prior to the Annual Conference. However, she recently read about an initiative by one of the schools in the region which is about solidarity towards less fortunate people related to poverty. This project is done in corporation with the arts university in Gdansk. **Ms. Wroblewska** have approached them and they are interested in being a partner with the organisers of the BSSSC Annual Conference 2018 and be a partner for the youth event. A problem is that one of the key persons does not speak English. However, the project is still very relevant, so **Ms. Wroblewska** hopes it can be manageable. She hopes to have a concrete proposal at the end of next week. The host region have booked a hostel for the youth participants. It is located in Gdansk and it is supposed to be good. It is booked it for 24. They have also booked room in European solidarity centre. The organisers are covering the costs of the hostel, but the travel expenses have to be covered by the regions sending the youth participants.

**Mr. Musiolik** noted that perhaps we should look at the vision group of the CBSS and their plan ahead. He said that CBSS would like to have a fundamental reform and perhaps this is something the BSSSC should pick up on for our Annual conference. He also added a general remark that the Danish colleagues from last year's Annual Conference wanted topics that are more political.

**Mr. Musiolik** also suggested combining the culture seminar together with the planning of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Camp 2019. At the seminar, we can raise questions on how we at the Baltic Sea Region Youth Camp can inspire youth to engage for society. At the seminar we could discuss this question with youth, culture workers and politicians with the aim to give input to the Baltic Sea youth event.

**Mr. Eide** suggested a title change for the conference:  
*Solidarity, participation and smart action for a better future.*



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The Board agreed with his proposal.

For workshop 3 he suggested renaming the title to *sustainable societies*.

**Mr. Eide** also added that on the session on youth and silver: the youth participants should be encouraged to participate in all workshops.

**Ms. Wróblewska** thanked for all the input. She said regarding the session on silver and youth, it is not supposed to be a workshop for youth. It is supposed to be organised by the youth for everybody.

### 5.3 Conference Resolution 2018 – Presentation by Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes

**Ms. Sæternes** gave a summary of the ideas of the Conference resolution. It will focus on the Annual Conference's main topics: solidarity, participation and smart action, but will also take up the EU-budget and especially the cohesion policy post 2020, Northern Dimension and cooperation with neighbouring countries, the EUSBSR, youth policy and youth involvement.

There is still plenty of time to give input for the conference resolution.

Mr. Eide questioned the validity of the second paragraph and said that the Multiannual Financial Framework should not be discussed only within the frame of cohesion policy.

### 5.4 Opening discussions on Annual Conference 2019

**Ms. Sæternes** gave a summary of next year's Annual Conference. As of today we do not have a clear idea on where it can be. She suggested Klaipeda in Lithuania, focusing on the maritime sector. If anyone has a good proposal for hosting 2019, please let the secretariat know. Our idea is that we can open a dialogue with Klaipeda and see what we can do. Lithuania, Denmark and Russia have not hosted the Annual Conference for a long time. The Chairmanship will work to identify a 2019 host.

## 6. EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Forum 2019

### 6.1 Presentation of the Forum topic, content and BSSSC's role by Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes

**Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes** informed that the project is adopted by the Baltic Sea Region Interreg programme. The work will start up after the EUSBSR Forum in Tallinn. BSSSC will promote topics connected to Northern Dimension, youth and sustainable development in the programme work. She encouraged everyone to read the summary attached to relevant documents provided before the Board meeting. All input are welcomed!

### 6.2 Comments and questions





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There were no comments or questions.

### 7. EU Multi Annual Financial Framework and Cohesion Policy post 2020

#### 7.1 Update by Mr. Reiner Kneifel-Haverkamp

**Mr. Reiner Kneifel-Haverkamp** did not attend due to a cancelled flight, so a summary of his written input was presented by **Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes** at the board meeting:

*Here is a short report on the draft Multiannual Financial Framework 2021 which the European Commission has published on 2 May 2018 under the Title "A Modern Budget for a Union which Protects, Empowers and Defends."*

*The draft tries to bridge the gap between the loss of a major net contributor to the EU budget as a result of Brexit and the increasing challenges facing the EU. As a result, the Commission proposes to moderate increase the MFF from 1,03 % of GNE to 1,11 % (the European Parliament had requested 1,3%). Within this framework traditional spending on research & innovation (Horizon Europe), education (Erasmus+), infrastructure (Connection Europe Facility) and migration and security are sometimes greatly increased, whereas cohesion policy and the the Common Agricultural Policy are reduced by roughly 7 %.*

*The draft describes Cohesion Policy as the most important EU investment policy. The envelope foreseen for Cohesion Policy is 373 bln EUR. The cuts also seem to affect European Territorial Cooperation. What this means for the individual Member States and regions is currently not clear at all. We will have to wait for the first draft of the regulations which are due to be published next week.*

*Some hints were given in a speech by Commissioner Oettinger before the last Committee of the Regions plenary session a review of the methodology for allocating funds is foreseen. The so called „Berlin methodology“ in its current form would lead to massive losses in particular in the Central and East European Member States. Therefore it should be amended and a safety net should be introduced which would prevent lossess of more than 30%. Another feature still under discussion is the distinction between three groups of regions (less developed <75%, transition 75-90, more developed >90). The reference period for calculation the allocations shall bet he years 2014 – 2016.*

*In view of this, I propose to the board to draft a new resolution of the BSSSC for the board meeting in September. Brandenburg would volunteer to write a first draft and to consult it with the ad hoc working group and other members who would be willing to participate.*

#### 7.2 Discussions

**Mr. Musiolik** said he thinks drafting a new policy paper of the BSSSC for the Board Meeting in September is a great idea. He added that at the end of May we get the regulations for the different funds so we know more about the Interreg programmes. He is glad that





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Brandenburg takes the lead on this, and Schleswig-Holstein will contribute through the ad hoc working group. **Mr. Musiolik** also added that it might be a good way to get a broader scope on the cultural aspects.

The Board agreed to start working on a new BSSSC policy paper on the EU Multi Annual Financial Framework and Cohesion Policy post 2020 to be presented at the BSSSC Board meeting in September.

### 8. BSSSC Chairmanship post 2018

#### 8.1 Introduction by Mr. Roger Ryberg

**Mr. Roger Ryberg** stated that the BSSSC is a very good lobby organisation. We do currently not have a candidate for the Chairmanship for 2019-2020 and this is among others linked to the ongoing regional reforms around the Baltic Sea Region. If the Board agrees, he offered that the Norwegian Chairmanship could continue until 31.12 2019. A prolongation of the Norwegian Chairmanship for one more year will be finally decided in the Regional Cooperation Board of Eastern Norway County Network on 8 June.

#### 8.2 Discussions

**Ms. Krystyna Wroblewska** said that they appreciated the proposal.

**Ms. Stefan Musiolik** said that they are very happy for the proposal. Never change a winning team.

**Mr. Martin Rümmelein** expressed that the youth is impressed by the work done by the Norwegian Chairmanship.

**Ms. Reetta Sorjonen** agreed and wanted to give greeting from Ms. Sari Rautio and she said yes to continuing the Norwegian Chairmanship.

**Ms. Alla Ivanova** gives her support.

**Mr. Toivo Riimaa** gives his support.

The Board agreed to support the continuance of the Norwegian Chairmanship in 2019.

### 9. BSSSC support to new Interreg BSR project applications

**Ms. Sæternes** gave an update on the projects.

#### 9.1 Creative Ports



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The Board agreed to support the Creative Ports Project.

### 9.2 URB Cultural Planning

The Board agreed to support the URB Cultural Planning project.

### 9.3 Discussions

No further comments were given (?).

## 10. Reports from policy areas (each 5 min)

### 10.1 Transport by Mr. Jon Halvard Eide

**Mr. Jon Halvard Eide** referred to the written report. He supplemented with information on transport application to the third call of the Interreg BSR programme. He also mentioned that the BSSC has issued a letter of support for the transport platform application BSR Access. The EU Commission DG Move has now published the third mobility package.

### 10.2 Maritime policy and HELCOM by Mr. Janne Tamminen

**Mr. Janne Tamminen** referred to the written report. The European Commission has published the proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027. The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund will be focusing on three objectives healthy seas and oceans and delivering sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, promoting the blue economy and strengthening the international ocean governance and maritime space. The total amount will be approximately 6 billion euros.

The XIX International Environmental Forum "Baltic Sea Day" was held in St. Petersburg in the end of March.

The HELCOM 54<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Heads of Delegations will take place in Helsinki in the middle of June. Finland will now take over the Chairmanship 2018-2020 from the EU.

A meeting in the CBSS Expert Group on Maritime Sector was held in Stockholm in the end of March. This is an important platform for the BSSC to take part in.

### 10.3 Sustainable development and climate change - Baltic 2030 by Mr. Lars Godbolt

**Mr. Lars Godbolt** gave a summary of the last meeting in the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development. They gave input to the CBSS report "Baltic 2030: Bumps on the Road. How Baltic Sea States are performing on the SDGs". The report has revealed three



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challenging SDGs in the BSR: 12 (consumption), 13 (climate) and 15 (life on land). They have also pointed at two discrepant SDGs: 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 11 (sustainable cities). Further details will be provided when the report is ready – it will then be distributed to the BSSSC network. Furthermore, the meeting discussed and approved the Baltic 2030 Communication Strategy and guided the Secretariat regarding the further development and financing of a web-Platform. This web-based collaborative learning platform supports the activation processes and stimulates stakeholder activity to realize the Baltic 2030 common vision by sharing knowledge and best practices, recognizing initiatives and achievements, and diffusing success stories. There are as of today no funds available for administrating this proposed webpage, therefore, the future is unknown for this project. The platform could be combined with the BSSSC input to the EUSBSR Annual Forum 2019, where we plan to create a mapping exercise of good practise on the SDGs which will cumulate in a brochure to be distributed at the Annual Forum.

**Mr. Godbolt** said that the BSSSC youth network are invited to join and host a workshop at the ReGeneration 2030 Summit 18–20 August 2018 on the Åland Islands. Because neither of our BSSSC Youth Board Members can participate in the Regeneration 2030 Summit, Julica Schütz, from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, who attended the BSSSC Youth Event in Hämeenlinna, will be responsible for arranging a 25 min workshop with help from the BSSSC Secretariat. The regions are encouraged to nominate more youths to attend!

**Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes** gave a brief summary about the process to develop an application to the EEA and Norway Grants within the transnational cooperation funds. Deadline is 1 July. We are working together with CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit and Union of Baltic Cities – Sustainable City Commission. BSSSC Brussels Antenna is taking main responsibility in the preparations.

### 10.4 Working group on youth policy – Martin Rummelin and Malgorzata Ludwiczek

**Ms. Malgorzata Ludwiczek** referred to the written report and stated that the spring meeting in Hämeenlinna was exceptional and the organisation was great. The youth were very well taken care of.

**Ms. Reetta Sorjonen** thanked for the opportunity to host it.

**Mr. Martin Rümmelein** said that a lot of results came out of the spring meeting. The youth are currently working on a Baltic Declaration of Youth.

**Mr. Lars Godbolt** informed that the application for funding of a youth camp before the EUSBSR Annual Forum in Gdansk 2019 has been successful. 65 000 euros has been granted from the CBSS small project facility.

**Mr. Stefan Musiolik** informed that they have supported the BSR youth camp for 2019 from PA Culture and it could be a good idea that Martin Rümmelein, Timo Nikolaisen or Mr. Lars Godbolt present the project framework in their meeting on 4 June in Tallinn.

### 10.5 Northern Dimension by Mr. Janne Tamminen



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**Mr. Janne Tamminen** attended the Northern Dimension Steering Group meeting – back to back with the 9<sup>th</sup> Northern Dimension Business Forum in St. Petersburg in April - as a representative for the BSSSC. He informed about the current work of the BSSSC.

**Mr. Denis Moskalenko** said that there is support to exchange information between the ND steering group and the BSSSC.

**Ms. Ann Irene Sæternes** could inform that the EU External Action Services has been invited to the Annual Conference in Gdansk 2018 as a speaker in the opening session.

### 10.6. Smart Specialisation by Ms. Hilde Aarö

**Ms. Hilde Aarö** referred to the written report. A representative from the BSSSC has been invited to attend the RD12CluB Advisory Board and gave a brief introduction to what this would involve.

Ms. Sari Rautio, Häme Region, Finland, will represent the BSSSC in the RD12CluB Advisory Board.

## 11. Report from Brussels antenna

**Ms. Trine Ellingsen** gave a report on the most relevant and important affairs in Brussels.

### Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May, the European Commission released its proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework, which will run from 2021 to 2027. Overall, the Commission proposes a long-term budget of 1,135 billion euros. Adjusted for inflation, this is comparable to the size of the current 2014-2020 budget (but there is a gap created by Brexit).

The structure of the budget will be clearer and closer to the EU's political priorities. It will be a more flexible budget in the way that it will be easier to respond to evolving needs and emergencies in areas such as security and migration.

The Commission proposes to increase the budget in areas such as young people, research and innovation and the digital economy. The budget for Erasmus plus will be doubled, from 15 to 30 billion euros. The budget for the research and innovation framework programme (Horizon Europe) will be increased to 98 billion euros. The Commission plans to cut funding to the Common Agricultural Policy and Cohesion Policy – both by around 5 percent.

The EU is expected to reach an agreement on the budget in May 2019.

The EU-Western Balkans Summit



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The EU-Western Balkans summit took place in Sofia on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May. It brought together leaders from the EU member states and the six Western Balkans Partners (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo).

This was the first Summit with Western Balkan leaders for the last 15 years. The Summit reaffirmed the European perspective of the Western Balkans. The EU will strengthen its support at all levels to the region's political, economic and social transformation. The EU will promote a market- and investment-friendly environment in the Western Balkans to move faster towards a digital economy and to sustainable and climate friendly societies in line with the Paris agreement. Energy will be a priority.

The Western Balkans are committed to the fight against corruption and organised crime, good governance, as well as respect for human rights.

The next EU-Western Balkans summit will take place during the Croatian presidency of the Council in 2020.

Yesterday the European Commission presented a package of several initiatives to advance work on the European Education Area by 2025, reinforce the cultural dimension of the EU and strengthen youth participation.

The initiatives aim to improve learning mobility and educational opportunities, empower young people, to encourage them to participate in civic and democratic life, and harness the potential of culture for social progress and economic growth in Europe.

**Informal Baltic Sea Group – (IBSG)** The informal Baltic Sea Group's summer seminar will take place in Brussels in the European Parliament on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September. The seminar will be on saving the Baltic Sea Area and the progress that has been achieved. The aim is to develop a closer dialogue with the EU institutions, especially the Parliament.

Registration is open: <http://www.searica.eu/en/events/save-the-baltic-sea-for-real/individual-registration>

## 12. Reports from other organizations, programmes and networks

### 12.1 CBSS by Ms. Daria Akhutina

**Ms. Daria Akhutina** sent her greetings from the CBSS. The CBSS has three long term priorities which are regional identity, sustainable and prosperous region and safe and secure region. The CBSS Vision paper will be presented for the Foreign Ministers on 18 June in Stockholm. CBSS will keep BSSSC updated. They are organising an event on digitalisation at the EUSBSR Annual Forum in Tallinn in June.

The CBSS is the lead partner for BSR Labour Forum, which is also addressing youth labour market issues. They thrive to ensure social inclusion in relation to ageing as well as issues related to migration. A co-ordination group will be created and the BSSSC are welcome to



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join this. CBSS is partner in two Interreg projects: Baltic Science network and Baltic Tram, and they are currently working on developing a programme for young scientists on RIS3 topics. The Baltic Sea Science Day will find place in Riga in February 2019.

Latvia will take over the chair July 1, and their priority will be cooperation between ports and harbours. This will be confirmed in June. **Ms. Daria Akhutina** asked for the possibility that CBSS and BSSSC organise something together in the future.

### 12.2 CPMR Baltic Sea Commission by Mr. Janne Tamminen

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission (BSC) held its 23rd General Assembly in the City of Oulu (Finland), on 16 May 2018. The event brought together more than 50 participants including political representatives from 17 Regions (from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Poland and Sweden), as well as external guests, to discuss European policies and Baltic Sea Cooperation. The meeting concluded with the election of the BSC's new President, Mr Jari Nahkanen, Member of the Board of the Council of Oulu Region. Strong message on the MFF. The declaration is on the website. Annika Sandstrom vice president, Stockholm county council. There will be meetings for the CPMR groups on Transport and maritime issues in June. Next big event will be in October in Madeira (for the whole CPMR). Åsa Bjerjing will continue as Executive Secretary the next two years.

We will invite President Jari Nahkanen to our Annual Conference 2018.

### 12.3 Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme

**Ms. Reetta Sorjonen** could inform that the Interreg Baltic Sea Region monitoring committee will meet next time back-to-back with EUSBSR Forum in Tallinn, on 6 June. On the agenda will be eg. approving the project platform applications (they recommend 6 out of 9 to be approved) and also approval of the funding applications of the EUSBSR coordinators (all of them are recommended to be approved). Evaluation of the third application round projects is ongoing. They will make decisions in the monitoring committee meeting in Tallinn in 19-20 September. The financial framework of EU commission was announced on 2 May. According to that, the whole budget of EU would raise despite the Brexit. Cuts would focus on eg. structure and cohesion policy (-7 %). Structural Fund policy would be implemented in the whole union territory, which is a good news for developed areas (such as many of the BSSSC areas). Interreg programmes between areas/regions will be continued, but their funding would be significantly reduced with about 20 %. The detailed proposal from the European Commission, eg. on the structural funds will be presented on 29 May.

## 13. Next Board Meeting in November

### 13.1 Discussions on date and place

**Mr. Ryberg** said that the BSSSC Secretariat have tried contacting Latvia and Denmark for them to host 2018's last BSSSC Board Meeting, but they both wanted 2019 instead. **Mr. Ryberg** asked Schleswig-Holstein if they could hold this in November.



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**Mr. Musiolik** replied that they first thought they would arrange it April 2019. He suggested that we could have the November Board Meeting in Brussels. He said that they have suitable meeting venue at the Hansa-office. He added that this might be a good opportunity to link up to the developments in Brussel.

**Ms. Ellingsen** added that the BSSSC Board may also use the facilities of the Oslo Region European Office.

**Ms. Sæternes** said that the date for the Board Meeting is set to 28-29 November. Wednesday or Thursday, with dinner the evening before. It is, however, up to the host to decide if the Board Meeting should be on the Thursday or Wednesday.

The Board decided to have the next Board Meeting in Brussels 28-29 November.
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### 14. Coming events

2-3 June, Youth Event with Euroregion Baltic and Union of Baltic Cities, Tallinn, Estonia.

4-5 June, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Annual Forum 2018, Tallinn, Estonia.

18-20 August, ReGeneration 2030 Summit, Mariehamn, Åland Islands

26-28 August, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, Mariehamn, Åland Islands

10-12 September, BSSSC Annual Conference 2018, Gdansk, Poland

**15:00 END OF MEETING**