



The chairmanship of the West Pomeranian Region in the BSSSC is coming to an end. The two-year period was an intense time of work and cooperation for the BSSSC Board. Baltic Sea Region like the whole Europe has to respond to nowadays challenges. Active participation in shaping the future of the BSR has been the main task of the BSSSC. The Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is being revised in response to the stakeholders' recommendations and demands. Let's hope that it will contribute to the sustainable and inclusive growth of our region. The new programming period also gives great opportunities to all regions. The dialogue with European Institutions should result in legislative framework tailored to meet the Baltic Sea regions needs.

The years to come will also be of a great importance. Finding best solutions for sustainable growth in difficult economic situation in Europe and globally is a great challenge for our regions and our organization. I'm sure that the incoming BSSSC presidency of Helsinki-Uusimaa region will bear this task in excellent way giving new impulse and gaining strong momentum of the BSSSC and regional policy in the BSR.

Olgierd Geblewicz
Marshal of the Westpomeranian Region, Poland
BSSSC Chairman 2011-2012

The Westpomeranian Region

West Pomerania is one of the five largest regions in Poland. The capital of the region is Szczecin – the city with almost a half of million inhabitants located near Polish-German border; the seat of many regional institutions and universities; the headquarter of NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast and the biggest city of Euroregion Pomerania. Development of West Pomerania is determined by its location in the Baltic Sea Region, at the crossroads of North-South and East-West trade axes, near Scandinavia and Berlin. Modern sea ports, navigable Odra river fairway and fruitful Polish-German cross-border cooperation also have positive impact on economic growth of the region.



Improvements in transport and technical infrastructure contribute to increasing spatial competitiveness of the region, facilitates attracting new investments and stimulating exports. The Region's development potential is also determined by its education resources. A number of universities such as the Maritime University, Pomeranian Medical University, University of Szczecin, West Pomeranian University of Technology together with private institutions educate qualified personnel for the labour market.

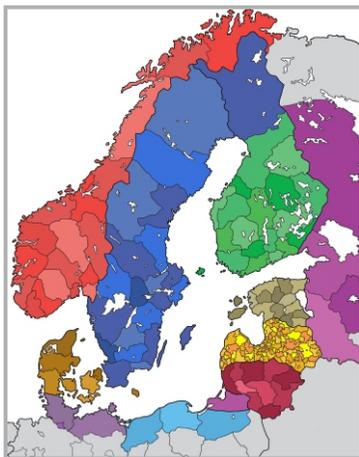
West Pomerania is also peculiar cultural melting pot. The borderline climate, traditions brought from different parts of the world by the settlers after World War Two and the constantly build identity of our regional community are reflected in rich and diverse social and cultural events of the region. Historical and cultural trials crossing the Region refer to pre-Slavic culture, the medieval times, Pomeranian reign and modern times. Therefore West Pomerania can be perfect destination for cultural tourism.



Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation



The Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) is a political network for decentralised authorities (subregions) in the Baltic Sea Region. The organisation was founded in Stavanger, Norway, 1993. Its participants are regional authorities of the 10 Baltic Sea littoral states: Germany, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia.



The presidency of the BSSSC rotates between member regions every two years. From the 1st of January 2011 the organization is chaired for the first time by the Westpomeranian Region (Poland).

Baltic Dialogue 2011-2012

Since 2011 the organization has focused mainly on two issues: the new programming period +2013 and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region – two topics have a key significance because they shape the current state of the BSR.



Participants of the 19th BSSSC Annual Conference in Szczecin (5-7.10.11)



BDF Chairman Hans Skov Christensen at the BSSSC Annual Conference in 2011

In October 2011 Szczecin – the capital of West Pomerania hosted over 200 BSR stakeholders on the 19th BSSSC Annual Conference under the patronage of the Polish Presidency in the EU.



BSSSC Chairman Geblewicz at the 13th BDF Summit / 2nd Annual Forum on the EUSBSR in Gdansk



14th BDF Summit / 3rd Annual Forum in Copenhagen

The event has formed a debate on the effectiveness of the Baltic Strategy and the EU cohesion policy with emphasis of the expectations and role of the regions. The results developed in the course of the ruff discussion were submitted to the European Commission and presented during the II EUSBSR Forum in Gdańsk.



H.E. Gerhard Almer (CBSS CSO Chair) and Chairman Geblewicz during the Baltic Sea Days in Berlin (23.04.12)

BSSSC is working closely together with other key BSR and European institutions in order to promote and advocate the interests of the regions to decision makers on the regional, the national and on EU level.

In March 2011 and April 2012, respectively the BSSSC Board met with the Council of the Baltic Sea States Committee of the Senior Officials in order to discuss the common areas of cooperation.

On 5 June 2012 in Szczecin, the Declaration of Common Interest between the BSSSC and the Committee of the Regions was signed. Together with B7 Baltic Islands Network, Union of the Baltic Cities, Euroregion Baltic and Euroregion Pomerania, BSSSC have declared their common interest in developing the cooperation with the Committee of the Regions. The agreement is in force for the period of 2012-2015.

BSSSC has published following position papers:

- [Statement on Cohesion Policy in the Multi Annual Financial Framework 2014-2020 \(October 2011\)](#)
- [Position Paper on Implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region \(June 2011\)](#)
- [Joint position on the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region \(BSSSC, B7, UBC, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Euroregion Baltic\)](#)
- [Letter on the legislative proposals for the EU cohesion policy 2014-2020 \(June 2012\)](#)

The Westpomeranian Chairmanship intends to support an innovative interregional projects as they bring added value for all regions around the Baltic Sea. The BSSSC aims to foster the project-oriented cooperation, based on exchange of solutions and focused on technology transfer. There is a strong believe, among the BSSSC members, that only through such a cooperation the sustainable development of all BSR regions can be assured.



Signing the Declaration of Common Interest with the CoR (5 June 2012, Szczecin)



BSSSC Board meeting at the Arctic Centre in Rovaniemi, Finland (24.02.12)

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