

Baltic Sea Region – Towards Sustainable Economic Transformation

HIGH-LEVEL AGENDA

“Smart Specialisation for Economic Transformation and SDGs Implementation – for Sustainable Future in the Baltic Sea Region”

Date: 28 September, 2020

Time: 9.55-14.00 EEST

Venue: Virtual Meeting (Webinar), hosted from Aalto University



Background

The focus of the Smart-Up BSR has been on supporting regional development and innovations, including encouraging the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030 implementation in the Baltic Sea Region.

Smart Specialisation work has shown that innovation and development policies in the Baltic Sea Region have led to high performance and have brought prosperity on varying grounds, either through science, knowledge and economy, or digitalisation, logistics and harbour developments. Smart Specialisation has contributed in a positive way to the focus and prioritisation of innovation strategies and policies and impacted to the innovation performance of the regions. However, the study concludes that inter-regional collaboration, economic transformation and implementing SDGs, are not yet a norm in the Baltic Sea Region.

Objective

Smart Specialisation helps regions to use their strengths to boost growth and prosperity. Yet, many regions lack methods or institutional frameworks to implement it successfully. The Smart-Up BSR project takes a look into how regions work to align their ecosystems with Smart Specialisation initiatives to ensure the growth of their businesses and the wellbeing of their citizens.

We attempt to look behind the scenes at how regions embed Smart Specialisation Strategy creation and implementation in their regional, economic, and spatial development policies. By working with nine regions in

each of the Baltic Sea Region countries we have intended to get an insight into how Smart Specialisation Strategy affects the future prospects of the regions.

Structure

The morning part gives an overview of the context, state of play and recent developments followed by an interactive, moderated discussion. The agenda on the afternoon will focus on specific examples of the partners discussed issues and aim to learn from the experience gathered so far. Panels will also be followed by an interactive, moderated discussion – between the panellists and with a wider audience. This conference also acts as the stage for launching main contribution to the European Smart Specialisation Policy, by launching the book for helping understand the Smart Specialisation contributions in the Baltic Sea Regions.

Participation

The virtual event will bring together speakers from the EU and the Baltic Sea Region and the Member States. It is directed in applying Smart Specialisation and science, technology and innovation in order to achieve SDGs, respond to the development challenges and contribute to the post-crisis's recovery and resilience in a sustainable and knowledge-based manner.

Key issues to focus

- How the Baltic Sea Region innovation performance will be turned to smarter and greener cross-regional solutions?
- How do Smart Specialisation strategies and processes drive sustainable and cross-regional economic transformation?
- How to make the Baltic Sea macro-region meaningful for youth, citizens, businesses etc.?

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Time: EEST

10.00 *Opening Remarks*

Maroš Šefčovič, Vice President, Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight, European Commission

Paula Lehtomäki, Secretary General, Nordic Council of Ministers

Markku Markkula, Former President, European Committee of Regions (CoR)

Hosted by **Taina Tukiainen**, Professor, Aalto University

10.30 *Policy Discussion on 'Sustainable Economic Transformation' in the Baltic Sea Region*

Alessandro Rainoldi, Head of Unit, Territorial Development, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Reinar Kneifel-Haverkamp, Director General for European and International Affairs, Ministry of Finance and European Affairs of the State of Brandenburg, Germany

Sille Kraam, Director, Economic Development in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Estonia

Gunars Ansins, Deputy Chair, Development and Cooperation of Liepāja City Council, CoR Member, Latvia

Steen Bording Andersen, Aarhus City Council Member, CoR Member, Denmark

Sari Rautio, Vice Chair of the Board, Association of Finnish Municipalities, CoR Member, Finland

Moderated by **Markku Markkula**, Former CoR President, President of the Board, Helsinki Region

11.20 *Launch of the Book 'Sustainable BSR Towards Economic Transformation by Smart Specialisation Strategies'*

11.35 *Virtual coffee break*

11.50 *Panel on 'Leadership & Innovation – Future invented with Youth' in the Baltic Sea Region*

Inge Relph, Executive Director, Global Choices

Wiktor Sawaryn, Gdansk Youth Council & **Jonna Rönn**, Finnish Youth Agenda 2030

Satu Haapanen, Chair of Education and Culture Board, City of Oulu, CoR Member

Tomasz Szymczak, CEO, Inkubator STARTER

Igor Kuprienko, Head of Project Development, ITMO University

Marianne Ping-Huan, Professor, Aarhus University

Moderated by **Taina Tukiainen**, Professor, Aalto University, Finland

12.40 *Introduction to 'BSR Strategic Instruments for Sustainable and Entrepreneurial Capacity Building'*

12.50 *Experienced Insights – How to Move Forward to Actions*

Ramojus Reimeris, ex-Managing Director, Strata, Lithuania

Tuija Hirvikoski, Former President, ENoLL

Patrizia Busolini, Policy officer, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, EC

Martin Brynskov, Professor and Chair of OASC

Moderated by **Taina Tukiainen**, Professor, Aalto University, Finland

13.20 *Closing Remarks on the Future of Smart Specialisation and the Baltic Sea Region*

Alessandro Rainoldi, Head of Unit, Territorial Development, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Ossi Savolainen, Regional Mayor, Helsinki-Uusimaa Region

13.35 *Virtual Cocktails*