



# **EUROREGION BALTIC**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2019**



## EUROREGION BALTIC EXECUTIVE BOARD

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**Witold Wróblewski** ERB Vice-President, Mayor of Elbląg, Chair of Board of the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic, Poland

**Maria F. Kjaergaard** ERB Board Member, Member of the regional council in Bornholm, Denmark

**Sabine Lyngberg** ERB Board Deputy Member, Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Denmark

**Helen Bengtsson** ERB Board Deputy Member, Region Kronoberg, Sweden

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**Alla Ivanova** ERB Board Deputy Member, Minister-Head of Agency for International Affairs and Interregional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region

**Liana Maximova** ERB Board Deputy Member, Deputy Head of the Agency for International Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Kaliningrad Region

**Gustaw Marek Brzezina** ERB Board Member, Chair of the Board of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland

**Wiesław Byczkowski** ERB Board Member, Vice-Chair of the Board of Pomorskie Region, Poland

**Johan Sandberg** Chair of the Regional Development Board, Region Blekinge, Sweden

**Suzanne Svensson** Regional Development Board Member, Region Blekinge, Sweden

**Ingrid Hermansson** Deputy Chair of the Regional Development Board, Region Blekinge, Sweden

**Karin Helmersson** ERB Board Member, Region Kalmar County, Sweden

**Elin Landerdahl** ERB Board Member, Region Kalmar County, Sweden

**Peter Vretlund** ERB Board Deputy Member, Region Kalmar County, Sweden

**Hanna Pruchniewska** ERB Board Deputy Member, Association of Polish Communes ERB

**Joanna Zielińska** ERB Board Deputy Member, Vice-Chair of the Association of Polish Communes ERB

**Anders Tell** ERB Board Member, Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden

**Lars Lundberg** ERB Board Member, Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden

**Cecilia Magnusson-Svärd** ERB Board Deputy Member, Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden

**Vlado Somljačan** ERB Board Deputy Member, Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden

**Leif Sandberg** ERB Board Deputy Member, Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden

In 2019 **Euroregion Baltic Executive Board** met on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in Klaipeda (Lithuania), 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in Kalmar (Sweden) and 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019 in Łódź (Poland).

## EUROREGION BALTIC YOUTH BOARD

**Julia Orluk**, Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board, Pomorskie Region

**Simona Skuodaite**, ERB Youth Board Member, Klaipeda, Lithuania

**Grzegorz Gieda**, ERB Youth Board Member, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Poland

**Christian van der Weij**, ERB Youth Board Member, Regional Municipality of Bornholm

**Johanna Wyckman**, ERB Youth Board Member, Region Kalmar County, Sweden

**Damian Ciachorowski**, ERB Youth Board Member, Association of Communes, Poland

**Mikhail Mikhailovskiy**, ERB Youth Board Member, Kaliningrad Region (until 10.2019)

**Danil Migunov**, ERB Youth Board Member, Kaliningrad Region (since 10.2019)

**Elin Petersson**, ERB Youth Board Member, Blekinge Region

**Alexander Nilsson**, ERB Youth Board Member, Blekinge Region

In 2019 **Euroregion Baltic Youth Board** met on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in Klaipeda (Lithuania), 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in Kalmar (Sweden) , 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019 in Itawa (Poland) (Denmark) and 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 in Gdańsk (Poland).

## WATER CORE GROUP

**Roger Gustavsson**, WCR Chairman, Region Kalmar County

**Tobias Facchini**, Region Kalmar County

**Ekaterina Latysheva**, Environmental Center "ECAT-Kaliningrad"

**Valeria Zagirova**, Environmental Center "ECAT-Kaliningrad"

**Antje Schreyer**, Region Kalmar County

**Torben Jørgensen**, Bornholm Energy and Supply

**Therese Jephson**, Skåne Association of Local Authorities

**Sarah Keidser**, Blekinge Region

In 2019 **Water Core Group** was re-established and they met on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in Kalmar (Sweden) and during the on-line meetings on 28<sup>th</sup> August and 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019.

## ADDRESS BY ERB PRESIDENT



Between 13th February 2019 and 12th February 2020 Euroregion Baltic was under the political leadership of the Klaipeda Region Association from Lithuania represented by Mr **Vytautas Grubliauskas**.



**Dear Euroregion Baltic Friends,**

It has been a great honour and privilege after five years to be leading the cooperation in Euroregion Baltic in 2019 again.

Assuming the ERB Presidency on behalf of the Association of Klaipeda Region municipalities, I am happy that the Year was fulfilled by exciting and inspiring events, successfully implemented various scope of projects and initiatives leading by ERB. Together we have opened a new page into ERB history. We started to implement ERB's long – term strategic plan towards 2030. Revised and re-designed ERB future vision, ambitious cooperation goals have been set up into a one-year action plan for 2019.

Our Presidency priorities have been focussed on: EU Interreg South Baltic Programme post-2020 by lobbying ERB interests, and closer links with other BSR organizations and Brussels Regional Offices, sustainable transport and connectivity, Blue and Green growth, Youth and Water Core Group Agenda's, as well pay more attention to ERB communication. It has been a very ambitious and interesting year!

I would like to emphasize ERB Youth work in 2019. ERB is a strong, trustful Youth Platform which opens new opportunities and spaces to act for youth people. I am proud that it has huge baggage of experiences! ERB played an important role in getting Klaipeda's European Youth Capital 2021 awarded title, ERB was one of the co-organizers of the biggest Baltic Sea Youth Camp. Within CaSyPot project, an essential document - Youth Strategy of Euroregion Baltic 2020+ was prepared. It's a fantastic background for new inspiring youth initiatives!

We have been continuing lobbying ERB interest on the EU Interreg South Baltic Programme post-2020. An additional position paper came out and has been delivered to the EU and national institutions. I do believe that ERB positions will be heard and they remain as a strong maritime programme which opens new cooperation perspectives for our regions! Indeed, we are better together!

Taking this occasion on the Presidency report, I would like to thank you to new Head of ERB IPS Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło and her team for great leadership, ERB management and members engagement and professional networking. Thank You to all colleagues from the Executive Board for always constructive work, insights, ideas and important decisions we approved in 2019 for the better future of ERB cooperation.

**Vytautas Grubliauskas** President of Euroregion Baltic, 2019

## Focus area 1: Lobbying

### **Strategic objective: strengthening the political role of ERB in the cross-border cooperation**

#### ➤ South Baltic Programme

The first meeting of the Heads of Delegations to the Monitoring Committee of the Interreg V-A South Baltic Programme took place on 30th January 2019 in Warsaw, Poland. During the meeting, the financial state of play in the South Baltic Programme 2014-2020 and possible further steps regarding the co-financing rate in the Programme was discussed. Participants also agreed on the financial closure of the 2007-2013 South Baltic Programme. They considered appointing a working group for the possible Programme of the 2021- 2027 perspective to ensure the continuation of the South Baltic Programme after 2020. The first 2019 meeting of the Monitoring Committee was held in Palanga, Lithuania on 15-16 May 2019. During the meeting, the Monitoring Committee agreed on transfers of allocation between the Priority Areas. The Monitoring Committee also selected for funding nine projects with further conditions, clarifications, and recommendations. Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic holds the position of a project partner in one of the selected projects - South Baltic Creative Clusters (SO5). Another granted project - CROSSROADS – Crossroads in History led by the Kalmar County Museum received the ‘rent-an-expert’ support from the Umbrella Interreg South Baltic project, led by Euroregion Baltic.



On September 24-25th the Annual Event "Let's share and learn" of the Interreg South Baltic Cross Border Cooperation Program took place in Ostróda, a city located in the western part of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship in Poland.



The annual meeting was dedicated to sharing experiences and learning from each other about significant issues reaching the final stage of projects' implementation. Around 150 participants from different countries and institutions took part in the event. On the first day, the networking activities, seminars and debates presented an insight into the vital issue

of capitalisation. The second day – communication, durability, future challenges and expectations were discussed. Communication workshop on the 2nd day was handled jointly by Umbrella project Communication Manager and the Joint Secretariat team. Participants also had the opportunity to exchange with other experienced project partners on issues such as sustainability of results, the upcoming Programme Period and challenges in intercultural cooperation.

Participants of the event could take part in the boat trip on the Drwęckie Lake or take part in the Ostróda Teutonic Castle sightseeing tour.

➤ UMBRELLA project implementation

In 2018 Euroregion Baltic started the implementation of the South Baltic UMBRELLA project which aims at developing know-how capacities for small local and regional organisations in the South Baltic Programme area to initiate their active participation in the cross-border cooperation in their daily activities.



Its principal activities focused on raising awareness of local actors on the possibilities offered by cross-border cooperation, micro-activities and direct expert support in writing project applications for South Baltic Programme.

2018 was spent setting the basis for an efficient capacity-building process that unfolded in 2019 with cross-border events accompanied by local-based initiatives, mapping of stakeholders, communication and scouting campaigns, besides the production of valuable teaching material. Umbrella's partnership evolved into a well-structured, motivated and energetic team. Umbrella-Boosting cross-border cooperation capacities of local actors in the South Baltic Sea- became an ambitious attempt to provide professional consultancy on EU funding and cooperation opportunities in the South Baltic Sea Region. Through the South Baltic Programme support, it was possible to finance numerous initiatives creating a future easily replicable package. On a practical organizational side, Umbrella built a Pool of Experts who could cover several EU and non-EU funding programmes in the Baltic Sea Region. Support to local organizations (small municipalities, NGOs, institutions, local activists, etc.) was provided through the actions described below.

5th-7th February 2019 – Cross-Border Workshop in Lund (SE) co-organized by the Association of Polish Communes of Euroregion Baltic (PL), Region Kalmar County and Skåne Association of Local Authorities as cross-project action. The scope was to create continuity with the SB-PIN project (South Baltic- Public Innovators Network), in its final phase. SB-PIN had laid the basis for several workshops and discussions covering the topics of Blue Growth, Green Growth and Inclusive Cities. Umbrella's team participated in SB-PIN final conference providing expertise and a pragmatic approach through a workshop on EU funding opportunities- from the local to the international level- search of calls of proposals, and project ideation. This was a first test to decide on topics not to be missed when approaching a cross-border cooperation network.



24th-25th April 2019- Cross-border conference with EUSBSR Policy Area SMART SPECIALIZATION panel. After the success of the first Conference with PA panel on Bioeconomy held in Kalmar (SE) in September 2018, Umbrella and Euroregion Baltic participated in the co-organization of this experts meeting “International Value Chains as a goal for regional Smart Specialisations”.

9th MAY- on Europe Day, a second Awareness Raising Event was held in Sorø, organized by PP Guldborgsund Municipality as an informative event on EU opportunities for municipalities and educational institutions. The intention was to show different cooperation opportunities both at local, regional and international level and saw the participation of Greater Copenhagen EU Office. Danish municipalities’ own experience with EU funds was also illustrated. A micro-activity on Culture was held as back to back event.



MAY-AUGUST- during the summer all the efforts were devolved to the cooperation with the consultancy company Whitecom Project Experience sp. zoo (based in Warsaw), that won a public tender for the preparation of a project training and coaching pack. Umbrella’s team set the basis of choosing a set of topics that have been organized in educational and self-learning contents on project management. Thanks to the constant work between Whitecom, Pomorskie in the EU association and LP,

the output resulted in high-value material covering both generic notions on project management and tailor-made sections with a focus on the Baltic Sea Region. The training and coaching pack has been delivered in two project management manuals: for beneficiaries of the Umbrella project and trainers. The purpose of this package is to support people and groups with great ideas that could contribute to the sustainable development of the South Baltic Region. Through the manual, knowledge about project management, paperwork and requirements associated with successfully acquiring the funding for projects are conveyed. A trainers book came as a supplement for the beneficiary manual and presents the contents of the package from the perspective of the instructor conducting training courses to individuals who would like to acquire, understand and use the knowledge included in the package. Guidelines on the right teaching process, key learning points, explanations of the course flow and logic were put together with additional resources. The final scope of the training and coaching pack is: to provide basic knowledge and ability to use essential tools and techniques of project management- and other disciplines- that could be used in relation with projects; to increase the confidence and skills of beneficiaries in the process of preparation of a successful project proposal as part of an application for financial support from the financing programme.

During this experience, we realized how important is communication. Therefore, the Association of Polish Communes of Euroregion Baltic as LP invested some finances in renovating the ERB website. It has the potential to serve as the basis for the capacity-building platform on a broader regional level. Meanwhile, for the project purpose, a Moodle platform has been established and organized in “courses” where training material for self-learning is available for free for all (subscription needed).

COMMUNICATION - Umbrella invested a lot of efforts in communication and dissemination through the social media campaigns: *Know us better!; Did you know?; ERB history; Know ERB member regions* both on ERB and Umbrella website. We also organized a workshop during the SBP ANNUAL EVENT IN OSTRÓDA on 24th-25th SEPTEMBER 2019 attended by more than 50 people.



On 2nd OCTOBER 2019, a TRAINING OF TRAINERS was held by Whitecom Project Experience with the purpose of training Project Partners and other pre-selected experts in anticipation of the National training. The training was organized as a practical workshop on teaching tools and teaching practices.

25th OCTOBER - a Cross-border conference with EUSBSR Policy Area ENERGY panel was organized by PP2 Baltic Institute for Regional Affairs BISER together with

UMBRELLA Interreg South Baltic and project partners. The main objective of this conference was to provide beneficiaries with relevant information concerning the on-going discussion on Energy topics in the South Baltic Sea, Energy & electromobility objectives in the EU Baltic Sea Strategy and Umbrella's opportunities for the preparation of future project applications in the Interreg South Baltic Programme. Being the conference co-organized with the EUSBSR PA ENERGY Coordinator, participants met with experts in the frame of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. A specialised „Microactivity” aiming experts related to the electromobility was also organized as a back-to-back event. During the micro-activity electromobility projects in the Pomorskie region were presented, besides the Mevo- Metropolitan e-Bike Sharing System and EUSBSR Seed money calls possibilities.

## RENT-AN-EXPERT what is it?

Service directed to beneficiaries from the South Baltic Region that have identified relevant themes or concrete ideas for development of projects within the South Baltic Programme or other EU programmes.



 Umbrella

NOVEMBER - The “Report With Assessment Of Needs And Potential Project Themes And Project Barriers” was delivered by HI-ERO - Hanseatic Institute for Entrepreneurship and Regional Development, external expert in charge of mapping Umbrella's stakeholders. Within the scope of this study, almost 90 organisations from five European countries have been interviewed with regards to their knowledge and experience about EU-funded projects and, in particular, the obstacles that hinder organisations from participating in EU-funded projects. This survey has brought to light specific trends

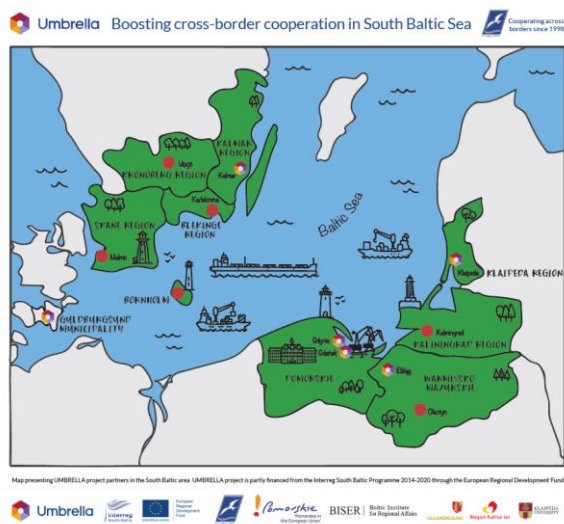
and results that can have an impact on the improvement of EU-funded projects. The Mapping Stakeholders was foreseen to present a general picture of organisations in the regions covered by the UMBRELLA project qualified as potential beneficiaries of the South Baltic Programme.



## APPLICATIONS SUPPORTED THROUGH RENT AN EXPERT SO FAR

1. Cross-roads in the South Baltic Sea- Interreg South Baltic- granted.
2. Implementation of new solutions – as an effect of international cooperation – in a field of improvement of the functioning of local government units in the area of public services availability for people with specific needs. Polish POW ER Programme (transnational component), not granted.
3. Bullhead- Interreg South Baltic- granted. This project was ideated and formulated thanks to the organization of a micro activity and then supported by an expert from umbrella's pool in January 2019.

## NATIONAL TRAININGS



1. 21.10.2019- Kristianstad (SE)
2. 28.10.2019- Chojnice (PL)
3. 22.11.2019- Telsiai (LT)
4. 28.11.2019- Gdansk (PL)
5. 05.12.2019- Kalmar (SE)
6. 10.12.2019- Klaipeda (LT)
7. 10.01.2019- Alvesta (SE)
8. 24.01.2020- Elblag (PL)
9. 28.01.2020- Nida (LT)

National trainings in Denmark will be held in February 2020.

Between October 2019 and January 2020, 9 National trainings based on Umbrella's training and coaching pack have been held in national languages to reduce the language barriers that sometimes emerge when using English as non-native speakers.

“MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURS” MICRO-ACTIVITIES- they are intended as meetings, and study visits where Umbrella’s stakeholders are supported while knowing each other and establishing new networks of cooperation. Project Partners have organized several micro-activities (some can be found in the text above):

DK- Guldborgsund 11th-14th November 2019 on Rural Development. The study trip aimed to exchange experiences, learn from good examples and discuss possible joint projects and cooperation in the future. Stakeholders came from Region Kalmar County, Sweden.

LT- Study visit in Klaipėda, 4th-6th December 2019- “Towards international collaboration: Culture and Arts”. The main aim was to bring together organizations active in the field of culture and arts, and promote mutual international collaboration opportunities with support tools of UMBRELLA project.

PL- Youth Group Exchanges organized as back to back in the Connect Europe project event on Solidarity in the ECS (Gdansk) on 2nd-4th December 2019. A project application on Youth Exchange in the South Baltic Sea region is being supported through Rent-an-expert service.

➤ INTERCONNECT project

The past year was a busy time for all Interconnect project partners, as it was marked by numerous meetings and promotion of the project itself. 2019 commenced with a partnership meeting in Karlskrona. Representatives of Stena Line, Region Blekinge (Project Leader) and Blekingetrafiken reviewed one ticket solution for the ferry passengers travelling without a car between Blekinge (Sweden) and Pomorskie Region (Poland).

During the year also, the following meetings with ERB presence and active engagement were held:

- Rostock workshop (11th April)
- The study visit in Klaipeda (21st May)
- Innobaltica workshop in Gdańsk (10th October)
- Karlshamn regional seminar (18th October)
- The study visit and project partner meeting in Rostock and Warnemunde (6th December).

Furthermore, the Interconnect project was presented on several events such as 10th Annual Forum of EUSBSR in Gdańsk, or the 'Boosting Cross-Border Region through better transport' conference in Brussels, where the moderator noted it as one of the most interesting ongoing cross-border projects.



The most significant event of the past year was undoubtedly the Interconnect project mid-term conference held on 5th September 2019 in Elbląg and organised by the Euroregion Baltic. During the meeting, the following thematic fields were defined: identification of needs of using alternative means of transport to a personal car, traveller-friendly offer and encouraging cooperation in the field of public transportation. The conference tackled all of the three areas. Still, considering the

selection of speakers, it mainly has focused on the cooperation of different stakeholders in the field of forming a traveller friendly offer.

The conference was opened by the Mayor of Elbląg, Mr Witold Wróblewski, who emphasized the growing importance of cooperation between different stakeholders and cities. Agata Ludwiczak, the representative of the Euroregion Baltic, presented the aim of the conference, i.e. including the present condition of public transport integration on the regional level and the analysis of the experience of other countries in the Baltic Sea Region.

During the conference regional experts and municipalities representatives presented best-practices from:

- Models for sustainable transport system – Region Blekinge;
- Public transport tariff and ticketing integration – Innobaltica and Pomeranian Voivodeship;
- Integrated transport in the agglomeration – benchmarks from the operational point of view - Rostock;
- The positioning of public transport integration in Olsztyn and catchment area Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship.

One of the main conclusions of the conference was that the so-called 'soft projects' consisting of developing international cooperation (e.g. INTERCONNECT) constitute an essential foundation for good practices popularization. They also contribute to the limitation of risk in the modern innovative solutions development, e.g. in the scope of tariff-ticket integration.



The September convention also resulted in several open information meetings regarding the modern public transport payment system FALA that will revolutionize travelling in Pomorskie Voivodeship and the city of Elbląg. Responsible for the implementation of the project is the Interconnect project partner – Innobaltica. The tender for the implementation of the FALA system in Pomorskie Voivodeship was announced on 20th December.

At the end of the year, another Interconnect partnership meeting took place. On 5th December, in Rostock, the project partners not only addressed past project activities and expected challenges of the project but also took part in a very conducive workshop on the catalogue of solutions for sustainable public transport.

➤ Implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)



ERB actively participated in the 10th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), entitled „Circular and sharing economy as an answer to demographic changes and environmental challenges in the Baltic Sea Region”, was organised in Gdańsk on 12-13 June 2019. It was hosted by the Pomorskie Voivodeship together with Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation in close cooperation with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Commission, HA Capacity and the Let's communicate project. The event was held at the Polish Baltic Philharmonic and the Królewski Hotel Conference Centre. It offered five plenary sessions, 19 seminars and Networking Village attended by almost 800 participants.

**Participation Day, 11 June 2019**



Euroregion Baltic within the Umbrella project framework was co-organizing back-to-back event on 11th June called Participation Day together with the EUSBSR HA Capacity coordinators and Union of the Baltic Cities. Almost 100 participants from Baltic Sea Region NGOs, academia, municipalities and various transnational projects joined the event and used it for networking and discussing the new transnational and cross-border cooperation project concepts. The Vice-

Marshal of the Pomorskie Region an ERB Executive Board Member Mr Wiesław Byczkowski welcomed participants, followed by Anders Bergstrom, representing both HA Capacity and PA Education as their coordinator. They were followed by three inspirational speeches from the representatives of 3 different sectors: Public sector (Mikko Lohikoski, Union of the Baltic Cities), private industry (Tomasz Szymczak, Starter Incubator and Gdańsk Entrepreneurship Foundation) and Civil society/NGO sector represented by the Head of the International Permanent Secretariat Euroregion Baltic.

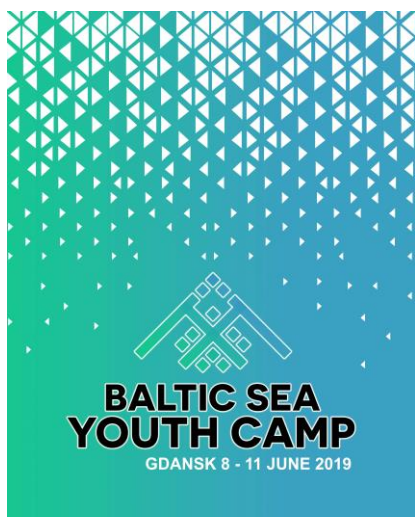


The functional part of the event included five workshops linked to the overall theme of the Annual Forum addressing the growing challenges such as depopulation, ageing, migrations, new production and consumption models, but also new social, cultural, mobility and labour market patterns. The introduction by the PA and HA Coordinators provided an overview of existing development processes in the five thematic areas, including possibilities to take part in existing improvement processes. Among speakers, we also had the representatives of the Council of the Baltic Sea States who shared insight on the issue of competence supply.



A successful collaboration between organisations and people in the Baltic Sea Region requires broadest possible mobilisation and participation of stakeholders in all respective countries. Participation Day, co-organised by Umbrella project, offered this opportunity for local and regional stakeholders and allowed them to get involved in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

### **Baltic Sea Youth Camp 2019, 8-11 June 2019**



Euroregion Baltic was one of the co-organizers of the Baltic Sea Youth Camp. An event designed for young people from all over the Baltic Sea Region worked hard to generate new ideas and projects for the region, back-to-back with the 10th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Gdansk. The main aim of the Camp, organised between 8-11th June 2019 in Sobieszewo, near Gdańsk in Poland, was to ensure youth participation and give a genuine voice to the youth. Participants collectively discussed the current issues and those of tomorrow concerning the Baltic Sea Region. They debated and formulated demands for policy-makers and developed projects to tackle the challenges. One of the possibilities to present these needs was during the Participation Day session on 11th June.





➤ Promoting ERB during other events:



**Workshop on youth civic engagement in Elbląg, 7th March 2019**

Euroregion Baltic, as a project partner in Europe for Citizens programme's funded project "Strengthening civil society rights by information access for European youth" SIA4Y organized a youth event in Elbląg on 7th March 2019 for almost 100 young participants from Poland, Russia, Sweden and Lithuania. ERB Youth Board members were actively engaged and participated in the workshop.

The one-day event was divided into two main workshop sessions, whose main scope was to bring the topic of "right of information access" in the foreground, also through a synergy between SIA4Y, CaSYPoT and SB YCGN projects within whom ERB plays the role of

Project Partner and is actively engaged. The first session on "Responsible relationships and youth civic engagement" was conducted by ERB representatives from all three youth projects and was called "Responsible relationships and youth civic engagement". At their primary task, the participants were divided into eight groups and asked to answer questions on eight youth tools. The tools were: employment mobility, youth information, Youth Centers, youth media, Schools of the Future, School's Youth Zone, Baltic Youth Week, SB YCGN local round-table meetings-suggestions.

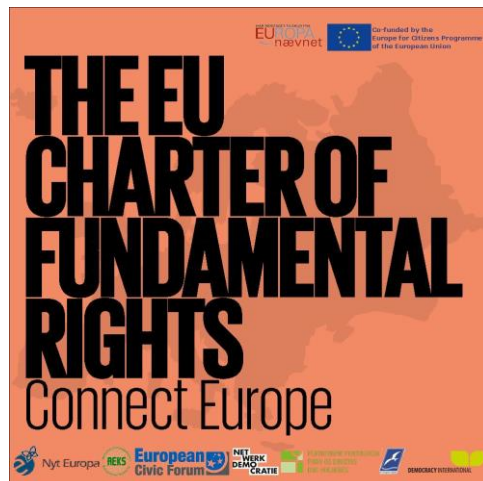
The second session was led by Mr Sergejus Muravjovas and Ms Ieva Duncikaite's moderation from Transparency International Lithuania with the title: "Model Your Municipality: Participatory Budgeting Session". In this part, participants were divided according to their home towns and asked to think of and create the budget for a joint project that would benefit their municipalities. The allowed budget for the participants was 100 000 euros, and they had to present their idea along with the expenses that it'd require. Afterwards, each group gave the idea they came up with and finally, the audience had the chance to vote for the concept they considered most exciting and likely to be implemented. The team from the Tricity area presented a beach cleaning system and received the most votes. Special mention should be made of the participants from the Elbląg-Kaliningrad group who proposed an international cultural festival.

In general, it was an educational workshop where youth participants had the chance to get more informed about their rights and opportunities to communicate with and influence their municipalities.

## Connect Europe event on „Solidarity”, 3rd December 2019

On 2nd and 3rd December 2019, within another Europe for Citizens project, where Euroregion Baltic is committed, project partner meeting and youth conference on the issue of solidarity was organized.

„Connect Europe” aims to connect citizens and civil society representatives with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights since the European values are often threatened with increased populism and nationalism around Europe. The meeting aimed to raise awareness (especially among youth) about the EU charter and discuss fundamental rights as citizens of the EU.



The event took place in the European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk, Poland and gathered almost 40 young representatives and project partners. ERB Youth Board was invited to the meeting and took this opportunity to meet and further discuss their project concept.

Participants took part in a tour around the Old Town and the shipyard, followed by full-day workshop and exhibition in the ECS. When asked to reflect upon the meaning of solidarity, the young participants came up with many responses – it's about teamwork, coming together, acceptance. Mr Jacek Koltan, deputy director of European Solidarity Center in his crucial message, stated that one of the most critical demands today is the need for physical spaces where people can create a sense of community and debate the struggles of today. The issues we face, such as climate changes and social division, are those of high complexity that we need to come together around if we are to find sustainable solutions.

## 12th Baltic Sea Tourism Forum, 13 November 2019

For the first time in the history of the annual tourism conference, the venue of BSTC was located outside the Baltic Sea region – in Brussels.



With the support of the European Union, this year's forum aimed to bring together stakeholders from the Baltic Sea region within institutions and representatives in Brussels. In the context of international cooperation, successful examples from the Baltic Sea Region were presented, suggestions for strategic and innovative approaches were delivered, and insights about the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 provided. Under

the motto SHARE | INSPIRE | CREATE the forum emphasised the reasons for cooperation beyond national borders in a macro-regional context. The Head of the ERB IPS moderated the session "SHARE achievements", focused on the potentials and challenges of cross-border work by

concentrating on the overarching macro-regional strategies as well as on examples of interregional project initiatives. The exchange of experiences included projects from ERB partners (from Ystad & Gdańsk). It served to clarify commonalities as well as emphasising the advantages of sustainable cooperation at the macro-regional level.

A more detailed insight into innovative approaches was given in the session "INSPIRE partners". BSR tourism market data and trends, as well as international product and service development, were underlined. In terms of the new multiannual financial framework of the EU for the period 2021-2027, the third session was dedicated to CREATE perspectives. The coming EU funding period will not just affect international cooperation, as it influences the funds available in programmes such as Interreg, but will also define thematic priorities of EU policy. Thus the outcome of the session was that a comprehensive outlook provided a better understanding of how conditions need to be adjusted for the future of BSR tourism cooperation.

## Focus area 2: Strategic actions

### **Strategic objective: enhancing the added value of ERB cooperation**

#### ➤ 11th Annual Forum of ERB Stakeholders

On the 13th and 14th of May CaSYPoT, final conference and Euroregion Baltic Forum of Stakeholders was held in Kalmar, Sweden. Approximately 100 participants from all Euroregion Baltic regions, including CaSYPoT project partners from Poland, Lithuania, Sweden and Russia had the opportunity to meet and discuss the results of CaSYPoT project. The conference also gathered several youth participants who took the floor to explain the reasons behind answers from the CaSYPoT survey and discussed how the project had influenced the youth situation in their home towns.

The conference started with the presentation of the international results of the CaSYPoT survey by representatives of Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University and Klaipeda University. These results were used as a basis for project activities, such as the development of youth strategies and implementation of tools for better dialogue with youth.

The conference continued with several sessions devoted to spreading CaSYPoT project results:

- Local youth strategies – from municipalities of Svetlogorsk (Russia), Słupsk (Poland), Emmaboda (Sweden) and an action plan from Klaipeda (Lithuania)
- Euroregion Baltic Youth Strategy,
- Tools for dialogue with youth,
- Capacity building process in CaSYPoT
- New youth project ideas

As well as sharing good examples of work with youth participation and youth issues from Euroregion Baltic area and beyond, such as:

- [SB YCGN](#) (*South Baltic Youth Core Groups Network*) project,
- [We Stand APP](#) project counteracting online hate in Kalmar County,
- [Klaipeda the European Youth Capital 2021](#),
- And an example of youth participation in the Alps – [GaYA \(Governance and Youth in the Alps\)](#) project.

Participants also had the opportunity to get to know local examples from Kalmar municipality during study visits to two youth clubs: UNIK and Funkabo gender smart youth club.

Representatives of Youth discussed together with adults and experts the results emerging from the survey, as the political interest, leisure time, health, schools, trust and safety. Young people said that opportunities and projects for youngsters are not well known, in all the cities. They feel the need for stronger dissemination through different channels, better adjusted to reach youth.

On the last day of the conference organised were the Euroregion Baltic Board meeting and partner meetings of CaSYPoT and YCGN projects. During this session, CaSYPoT project partners jointly evaluated the project work as a summary of 3 years of cooperation.

#### ➤ [ERB Executive Board meetings](#)

The Executive Board of Euroregion Baltic met in Klaipeda on [13th February](#) 2019 to discuss the progress, the challenges and the priorities of the organisation in the coming year. For the first time, representatives of the Skåne Association of Local Authorities took part in ERB Executive Board meeting as new ERB members. Due to changes in the ERB members, the Statute of the Euroregion Baltic was changed and accepted by the Board. During the meeting, ERB Board thanked Ms Anne Thomas for energetic and fruitful ERB Presidency, led by Bornholm in 2018. In 2019 the ERB Presidency was transferred to the Association of Klaipeda Region, and Mr Vytautas Grubliauskas, Mayor of Klaipeda, assumed the position of ERB President. At the same time, the ERB Youth Board presidency was handed to the representative of Pomorskie Region, and Ms Julia Orluk became the Chairwoman of ERB Youth Board.

The main topic of the meeting was the popularisation of the ERB policy paper on future of the Interreg South Baltic Programme, updates in the most significant ERB projects – Umbrella, Youth Core Groups Network and Interconnect and administrative changes in the International Permanent Secretariat. Mr Sebastian Magier decided to leave the position of the Head of IPS in February 2019; therefore he reported the results of the recruitment for the new Head of ERB International Permanent Secretariat and introduced the candidate selected in the process, Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło. ERB Board accepted the chosen candidate. New Head of the IPS started work in Euroregion Baltic since 1st April 2019.

The Executive Board of Euroregion Baltic met on [14th May](#) for the second time this year, to jointly discuss the new opportunities of the re-established ERB Water Core Group and to discuss their Work

Plan 2020-22 concept. Mr Facchini from Region Kalmar County informed about the WCG working meeting that took place earlier that day and briefly explained the interests expressed by the ERB members who participated in the meeting regarding the future water-related projects and initiatives.

As the whole ERB Annual Stakeholders conference was centred around youth issues, Ms Julia Orluk, Chairwoman of the ERB Youth Board, presented the goals, mission and vision of the Youth Board prepared during the recent online meetings and concerning the ongoing youth projects: Casypot, YCGN and Baltic Sea Youth 2030. She also presented a list of the planned activities: exchange of young people between regions, connecting young people by their interests on a social platform, exchange of experiences by creating a platform and an Event Calendar consisting of events in each region that might be interesting to the youth. Much discussion was dedicated to the question of the ways to engage more young participants from their regions and methods of supporting the ERB Youth Board.

During that meeting, ERB Board Members also discussed the proposal for the sequence of ERB Presidency transfers post-2020 and updated each other on the lobbying for the future scope of the Interreg South Baltic Programme.

It is crucial to notice that the Water Core Group meeting took place back-to-back to ERGB Board meeting in Kalmar and new members of the WCG were appointed. WCG decided to meet more often, work jointly on the WCG Work Plan 2020-22 and possibly engage in joint water-related project initiative. This resulted in the Interreg Seed Money Facility project concept "Climate Resilient Water and Wastewater Management in the BSR (WaterMan) that was sent to the EUSBSR PA Nutri coordinators in December 2019 and received their support in January 2020.

Third ERB Executive Board meeting in 2019 took place on 12th September in Iława, Poland. ERB Executive Members welcomed new Board members and decided on the final sequence of ERB Presidency transfers post-2020. The final sequence for ERB presidency for the year 2021-2030 is as follows:

*2021 Blekinge, Sweden*  
*2022 Warmia and Masuria, Poland*  
*2023 Bornholm, Denmark*  
*2024 Skåne Association of Local Authorities, Sweden*  
*2025 Kaliningrad region, Russia*  
*2026 Kronoberg, Sweden*  
*2027 Pomorskie, Poland*  
*2028 Kalmar, Sweden*  
*2029 Klaipeda Association, Lithuania*  
*2030 Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic, Poland*

During the meeting, ERB Board accepted the Water Core Group Work Plan for 2020-2022 and took notice on the ERB Youth Board Strategy prepared as the outcome of the Casypot project. ERB Youth Board strategy will be discussed more in details during the upcoming months, with concrete actions proposed by the Youth Board members.



One of the ERB Board meeting guests, Mr Michał Ostrowski, Programme Officer from the Joint Secretariat of Interreg South Baltic Programme, presented slides with information on the current status of the Programme and the results of the survey they did with the SBP project partners. This was followed by a discussion on the future of Interreg cross-border programmes.

➤ ERB position papers

„Euroregion Baltic Position Paper on the future of the Interreg South Baltic Programme after 2020” adopted in September 2018 was extensively promoted and disseminated among ERB members and stakeholders during 2019. The Paper was presented, among others, to the representatives of the Managing Authority, Interreg South Baltic Programme Monitoring Committee members, representatives of Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation, Union of the Baltic Cities and Council of Baltic Sea States, but also to the representatives of the EU Offices of Euroregion Baltic member regions in Brussels. They were all asked to lobby for amending the draft regulation on Interreg, as well as the continuation of the programme in its current form.

In October 2019 new position paper was agreed among ERB members due to the request of the Interreg South Baltic Programme Managing Authority to deliver more arguments for the Interreg South Baltic Programme, since its future was still not sure. The document “Future of the Interreg South Baltic Programme. The arguments supporting the cross-border cooperation” was prepared and agreed on 16th October 2019 and immediately distributed among ERB Members and stakeholders, including the Programme Managing Authority and European Commission, DG REGIO Unit 2 representatives.

➤ Administrative changes in the IPS

Mr Sebastian Magier vacated the position of the Head of the International Permanent Secretariat on 15th February 2019. Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło was elected as new Head of the IPS and began to work on the position on 1st April 2019.

**ERB Annual Budget between 1st Jan - 31st December 2019 (EUR)**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Planned for 2019 EUR</b>	<b>Actual for 31.12.2019 EUR</b>	
Balance as of 1-01-2019	2 233,03 €	2 233,03 €	
Blekinge	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Bornholm	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Kaliningrad	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Klaipeda	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Kalmar	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Kronoberg	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Pomorskie	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Skane Association of Local Authorities	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
Association of Communes ERB	5 500,00 €	5 500,00 €	
CaSYPoT Project refund	22 399,00 €	22 821,58 €	102%
INTERCONNECT refund	10 268,00 €	3 424,05 €	33%
SIA4Y prepayment	7 000,00 €	7 050,00 €	101%
UMBRELLA refund	64 315,00 €	45 197,72 €	70%
Connect Europe project		2 500,00 €	
Invoice (travel reimbursements for project meetings)		1 229,89 €	
<b>Income total</b>	<b>161 215,03 €</b>	<b>139 456,27 €</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>Planned for 2019 EUR</b>	<b>Actual for 31.12.2019 EUR</b>	
<b>Personnel:</b>	<b>31 400,00 €</b>	<b>25 764,96 €</b>	<b>82%</b>
Overhead including office rental	5 000,00 €	4 142,86 €	83%
Phone	1 000,00 €	1 277,17 €	128%
Salary	25 400,00 €	20 344,93 €	80%
<b>Travels, meetings</b>	<b>7 500,00 €</b>	<b>7 893,78 €</b>	<b>105%</b>
IT	2 000,00 €	719,20 €	36%
Youth Board	5 500,00 €	0,00 €	0%
Training and skills development	1 500,00 €	0,00 €	0%
Banking charges	250,00 €	251,19 €	100%
Reserve (projects)	106 691,00 €	82 332,31 €	77%
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>154 841,00 €</b>	<b>116 961,44 €</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>6 374,03 €</b>	<b>22 494,83 €</b>	



Editor: Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło

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