

## Baltic Sea Region –Towards Sustainable Economic transformation

### HIGH-LEVEL AGENDA

“Smart Specialisation for Economic Transformation and SDGs Implementation – for sustainable future in 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 Baltic Sea Regions.

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 neither inter-regional collaboration nor Sustainable Development Goals implementation, nor economic transformation- - is 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 two main contributions to the European Smart Specialisation Policy, by launching two books for helping understand the Smart Specialisation contributions in the Baltic Sea Regions.

## **Participation**

The virtual event will bring together speakers from the EU and Baltic Sea Region and the Member States. It is directed in applying smart specialization 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 do Smart Specialisation strategies and processes drive sustainable and cross-regional economic transformation?
- How the Baltic Sea Regions' innovation performance with science and education will be turned to smarter and greener cross-regional solutions?
- How to make the Baltic Sea macro-region meaningful for youth, citizens, businesses etc.?

## **HIGH-LEVEL AGENDA**

### **10.00 – 10.30 EEST *Opening remarks***

**Mariya Gabriel**, Commissioner, Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, European Union

**Paula Lehtomäki**, Secretary General, Nordic Council of Ministers

**Markku Markkula**, Former President, European Committee of Regions

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

### **10.30 – 11.20 *Policy discussion of Sustainable Economic Transformation in the Baltic Sea Region***

**Aleksandra Dulkiewicz**, Mayor, City of Gdansk, Poland

**Katrin Lange**, Minister, Ministry of Finance and European Affairs of the State of Brandenburg, Germany

**Sari Rautio** Chairwoman, Association of Finnish Municipalities, CoR member, Finland

**Dainis Turlais**, City councillor, Member of CoR, Riga, Latvia

**Steen Bording**, City Council Member in the City of Aarhus, Member of CoR, Denmark

**Moderated by Markku Markkula**, Former President, European Committee of Regions

### **11.20 – 11.35 *Book Launch of 'BSR Towards Economic Transformation by Smart Specialisation Strategies'***

### **11.35 – 11.50 *Virtual coffee break***

**11.50 – 12.40 Panel of Leadership, Innovation, Design and Youth in Baltic Sea Region**

**Inge Relph**, Executive Director, Global Choices

**Satu Haapanen**, Chair of Education and Culture Board, City of Oulu, Vice President, CoR

**Marianne Ping-Huan**, Professor, Aarhus University

**Jakub Hamanowicz**, President, Youth Council of Gdansk, Poland/ **Jonna Rönn**, Finnish Youth Agenda 2030

**Giedrius Viliunas**, Managing Director, Strata, Lithuania

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

**12.40 – 12.50 Discussion of “BSR Strategic instruments for capacity building”**

**12.50 – 13.20 Key Learnings & Insights of partners**

**13.20– 13.30 Closing remarks and next steps**

**Mikel Landabaso Alvarez**, Director for Growth and Innovation, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

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

**13.30-> Virtual Cocktails**