INTRODUCTION

Dear Member Regions, Dear Partners,

In this pre- Mid-Summer Newsflash, you will get an update on recent activities of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, related to its key areas of work, namely transport, maritime affairs, energy and climate, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, and Arctic issues.

We also draw your attention to the recent policy messages adopted by the Executive Committee of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, ahead of the submission of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans, asking Member States of the Baltic Sea Region to act together with regional authorities, to act beyond national borders, to coordinate in order to enable a recovery of the Baltic Sea Region, based on territorial strengths. The document is available HERE.

Wishing you a good reading!

Lucille Ehrhart, Executive Secretary of CPMR BSC
Clare Booth, Policy Assistant

In the Newsflash

- Spotlight on Region Jämtland Härjedalen with an interview with Ms Elise Ryder Wikén, Chair of the Regional Development Board

- News about the BSC Maritime Working Group and the Sustainable Blue Economy

- News about the Energy and Climate Working Group and Smart Specialisation Strategies linked to a green recovery

- News about the BSC Transport Working Group

- Save the dates for CPMR and BSC activities
On 25 May, about 40 regional representatives attended the BSC Transport Working Group, which welcomed Ms Henna Virkkunen, Member of the European Parliament. She provided an update about recent transport work of the European Parliament to foster sustainable mobility in light of the Green Deal.

The meeting was the occasion to also present regional examples contributing to boost sustainable mobility on land, sea and in the air, including the transport system from Lahti as European Green Capital 2021, but also the Interreg FAIR project related to commercialisation of electric regional flights in the Kvarken region, as well as the Interreg BSR Exoprodigi about sustainable mobility in the maritime sector.

At the meeting, Ms Elise Ryder Wikén, Chair of the Regional Development Board in Jämtland Härjedalen, presented the key issues related to the Atlantic Corridor. The CPMR Transport Director also provided an update of the TEN-T revision process, including the BSC amendments to the TEN-T maps, collected by the CPMR Secretariat to submit to the European Commission.

The presentations are available HERE

On 31 May, the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Maritime Working Group discussed the new communication setting a new approach for a “Sustainable Blue Economy”, published by the European Commission on 17 May 2021, following a consultation process in which the BSC Maritime Working Group took part (read here).

The Blue Economy includes all economic activities related to oceans, seas and rivers. At the meeting, a representative from the European Commission (DG MARE), highlighted the new Blue Economy sets a vision for a transformation along the Green Deal’s axes of decarbonisation, zero pollution, circularity, biodiversity and climate adaptation. She also stressed the Blue Economy is an integral part of the Europe’s green recovery.

Overall, the BSC Maritime Working Group welcomed the communication which put emphasis on the specific role of coastal regions in achieving the SBE objectives. Guest speakers, Policy Area Bioeconomy of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region but also SEA Europe, also commented on the new document and welcomed positively the communication.

The presentations are available HERE
On 3 June, the BSC Energy and Climate Working Group discussed the topic of Smart Specialisation as a driver for the green transition and recovery. Since Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) have a growing role in the new programming period 2021-2027, and there are new targets set by the EU Green Deal agenda, while at the same time the overall UN SDG’s goals, the BSC Energy and Climate WG explored to what extent the S3 are taking into account the sustainable dimension.

A representative from the European Commission (Joint Research Centre) presented also the concept of Smart Specialisation Strategies for Sustainability (S4), which is a voluntary approach, and new methodology currently being developed by the European Commission.

The second part of the meeting focused on the green dimension of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs), which should be integrated at minimum 37% of a green pillar. A CPMR analysis of the NRRPs from the Baltic Sea countries was presented, and a representative from the Finnish Ministry of Finances presented the Finnish plans.

More information [here](#).
SAVE THE DATES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION
Guest speaker: Mr Pyry Niemi, President of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference
15 JUNE, 09:00 to 11:30 CET, online

ARCTIC TASK FORCE OF THE CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION
An ambitious future EU Arctic Policy to realise the Green Deal Agenda
Co-organised together with Mr Urmas Paet, Member of the European Parliament
22 JUNE, 09:00 to 11:30 CET, online

The Agenda will be available soon on the BSC website
Registration is now open – click here to register

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION
23 SEPTEMBER, online, all day

More information will follow soon
Can you please tell us about your work with smart specialisation in Jämtland Härjedalen?

In December 2018, the Regional Development Board decided that the Regional Development Strategy would be reviewed. During the revision process, we made the assessment that a review of the work with Smart Specialisation also needed to be made. In the revision process, a broad approach was taken where the region’s actors were involved right from the start, and several of these actors were active through projects in which we gathered knowledge and input from the entire region and from many sectors.

During the revision, we realised that this is not only about revising a governing document and finding out and understanding what we should prioritise, but rather focus on how we should work with the areas of strength we have in the region. Thus, the focus shifted on to finding new ways of working that create the effects we want to see and gain from our work with smart specialisation and the strengths we have in our region. When we compiled all the knowledge that we had acquired during this process, together with current statistics and enhanced analysis, we found four prioritised areas of strength in our region. These areas of strength are now being further developed together with regional shareholders through a quattro-helix collaboration (public sector, private sector, academia, and civil society).

What are the identified areas of strength in the region and why?

**Land, forests, and water** - Our region consists of large natural resources and location-based assets that are of importance when implementing the green transition that we are up against. Jämtland Härjedalen has great potential in this area to strengthen competitiveness and resource refinement while at the same time contributing to local, regional, and global societal challenges.

**Digital solutions** - Digitalisation is a megatrend that affects the whole of society. Jämtland Härjedalen consist of sparse structures, which creates perfect conditions for test beds in the field of digital solutions.

The region is also home of habitats that creates and entices attractiveness, and more and more people are moving to the region from a lifestyle perspective, bringing their jobs with them, creating new sectors that are in demand of new digital solutions.
About JÄMTLAND-HÄRJEDALEN

Population: 130 810 (Eurostat, 2020)
Size: 49 341 km²
Biggest city: Östersund

Sustainable energy - Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time. Jämtland Härjedalen is well equipped to be a leader of the movement towards a more sustainable future and be part of the process as both a national and international player and developer of sustainable energy. The region has good prerequisites to produce bio-based materials, sustainable fuels, and heat energy in combination with modern hydropower plants, which is the largest resource of sustainable energy in the region.

Experiences - Jämtland Härjedalen is the contrast between city, countryside, mountains and has a combination of Swedish and Sami (the indigenous people) culture and tradition. The light in the summer, the darkness in the winter, the tranquillity of nature, important cultural environments, fish-rich waters, creative entrepreneurs in broad business communities, an ambitious university, local gastronomy, events and much more. Jämtland Härjedalen has long been prominent in producing various kinds of experiences.

What is the next step in your process?

Due to our challenge to operate in sparse structures, with long geographical distances and with fewer actors than in dense structures, we have chosen to build and expand our work into broader areas of strength. It is important to create a critical mass and in a quattro helix collaboration, together with these actors, develop action plans for each area of strength to identify sub-areas, loans, and initiatives and from there look at how we should do follow-ups with continuous learning from our work. Smart specialisation, and the method on which it is based, is our tool for creating a sustainable regional development and we can also see that the entire region carries great potential in all four prioritised areas of strength.

How do you benefit from your membership in the CPMR?

CPMR is an excellent example of an organisation that provides us, as a peripheral region, with a broader context and partnership with similar regions throughout the European Union. It is of great importance to get to know other regions, be part of working groups and to get a current perception of current affairs and areas of focus in CPMR as well as receive new knowledge and foster an economical and territorial cohesion throughout the whole of Europe. The CPMR is also an excellent organisation that provides us with important forums where we have the opportunity to address shared issues that are of interest for us and as part of a larger congregation to be able to influence in common topics.

Jämtland Härjedalen is a region that in the west borders Norway and it is not far to the Atlantic from our most western areas, which places us in a truly advantageous but also challenging region in northern Europe. Being a member of the Baltic Sea Commission is strategically relevant for our region. For example, our number one priority, in the field of infrastructure, is increased investments on the railway corridor connecting the Baltic Sea with the Atlantic Ocean, the Atlantic Corridor. This will enable further growth in the identified prioritised area of strength in our smart specialisation process, like increased accessibility to natural experiences or provide a reliable mode of transport for the produced goods in our region.
# BSC AND CPMR UPCOMING EVENTS

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# CPMR BSC SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission...

- [CPMR_BSC](twitter account)
- [CPMR Baltic Sea Commission](Facebook page)
- [https://cpmr-baltic.org](website)

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) represents more than 150 regional authorities from 24 countries across Europe and beyond. Organised in Geographical Commissions, the CPMR works to ensure that a balanced territorial development is at the heart of the European Union and its policies. One of these Commissions is the Baltic Sea Commission, made up of 18 Regions from Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Germany.

For more information on the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, please contact Lucille Ehrhart, BSC Executive Secretary ([lucille.ehrhart@cpmr.org](mailto:lucille.ehrhart@cpmr.org))