CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION
25 years in pictures!
FOREWORD

This photo album provides a glimpse into history of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission over the years, highlighting key events and committed people to drive regional cooperation forward.

Once upon a time, in 1996, on the Silja Symphony ferry from Helsinki to Stockholm, in the middle of the Baltic Sea, the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission was founded, as part of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe. Its very first aim was to enhance the subnational levels and stakeholders around the Baltic Sea, as vital participants in the political arena and shape the future of the Baltic Sea Region.

At the time, the Baltic Sea Region faced tough challenges following the lifting of the Iron Curtain. For more than 50 years, exchanges of culture and trade across the Baltic Sea had been hindered. At the same time, there was a strong belief in opportunities in the future, and a deep wish to join forces. The level of enthusiasm for taking advantage of the new opportunities for cooperation and exchange was high. After 25 years of trustful cooperation, the enthusiasm and strong willingness to make the Baltic Sea Region more prosperous and ensure the Baltic Sea perspective is reflected in EU policies, are still the driving forces of Member Regions in the daily work of the organisation.
List of CPMR Baltic Sea Commission General Assemblies

Over the years, the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Members have held an annual General Assembly, bringing regional politicians, experts, partner organisations and representatives of the EU institutions together to discuss Baltic Sea issues.

These yearly events have been an opportunity to highlight the work of the year and exchange about territorial matters while visiting amazing places around the Baltic Sea Region.
Thank you to everyone who helped collect pictures and dig into memories.
In the middle of the Baltic Sea on 12 September 1996, 67 delegates representing 34 regional or county councils from eight countries gathered in the conference room of the Silja Symphony ferry. Also present at the occasion were some of the major cooperative networks in the area, a representative from the Finnish Government and representatives from the head office of CPMR in France.

When the Assembly began, the ferry had left the harbour of Stockholm and was crossing the Baltic Sea on its voyage to Helsinki. The task at hand was to hold the first General Assembly of the Baltic Sea Commission and in so doing to launch the new organisation. The Assembly was opened by Mr Hannu Tapiola, member of the CPMR Political Bureau, Chairman of the Provisional Executive Committee of the Baltic Sea Commission, Chairman of the Executive Board of the Regional Council of Kymmenlaakso and Mayor of Kotka. Mr Tapiola emphasised the crucial role of the democratic local and regional authorities in encouraging economic development, environmental protection and cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. Mr Tapiola also underlined the long-term aim of furthering peace and stability in the region. Mr Tapiola called for the regional and local authorities to be fully involved in the preparation of the European Union programmes for interregional cooperation.

The Assembly elected Mr Hannu Tapiola from Kymmenlaakso as President and Mr Bo Krogvig, Stockholm County Council, as Vice-President. The General Assembly accepted the proposal made by Mr Krogvig, that Stockholm County Council would put at the disposal of the Baltic Sea Commission and finance a secretariat in Stockholm, which would work in close collaboration with the President and his staff.

*Extract from the leaflet for the 15th anniversary of the BSC*
### The Executive Committee 1996-1998

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Mr Hannu Tapiola, Kymmenslaakso</td>
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<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Mr Bo Krogvig, Stockholm City Council</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Mogens Sommer, Bornholms Amt</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Orla Kristiansen, Bornholms Amt</td>
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<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Hannes Danilov, Läänemaa</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Toomas Kivimägi, Pärnumaa</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Stig Östdahl, Ostrobothnia</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Kimmo Kajaste, Itä-Uusimaa</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Ligita Zacesta, Jurmala</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Agris Jaunkjavins, Tukums</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Sarunas Lauzilkas, Silute</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Alaxendras Agafonovas, Klaipeda</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Jerzy Mokrzycki, Kozalim</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Joanna Soroka-Kloczko, Kozalim</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>Member:</td>
<td>Jan Lundgren, Gotland</td>
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<td>Subst:</td>
<td>Rose Eriksson, Gävleborg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Dag Boman, Stockholm County Council (1996-1997)</td>
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<td>Tommy Karlsson, Stockholm County Council (1997-1998)</td>
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The BSC made great efforts to establish interregional working groups. One of these was the BSC working group known as the Spatial Development Group. The Spatial Development Group was originally launched at the 27th CPMR General Assembly in Vaasa in September 1999. The main objectives of the group were decided to be observation and monitoring of important spatial development initiatives that have an impact on the member regions. The other objective was to launch and develop new project ideas and proposals.

At the BSC Executive Committee meeting in Florence in October 2000, the Spatial Development Group was changed from a nominated group to a network of contacts. Each region could choose its representative depending on the current issue to be addressed at the Spatial Development Group meeting. This was an amendment to the charter of the Spatial Development Group which was originally adopted at a BSC Executive Committee meeting in Mariehamn in November 1999. The first Chairman of this group was Mr Ulf Johansson, Gotland County Council, and the Secretary was Mr Jaakko Mikkola, BSC Executive Secretary.
In the pictures: Jaakko MIKKOLA, (Executive Secretary of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Tommy KARLSSON (Former Executive Secretary of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Alain LAMASSOURE (Member of the European Parliament), Xavier GIZARD (CPMR Secretary General), Stig ÖSTDAHL (CPMR President, President of the Council of Ostrobothnia), Claudio MARTINI (Presidente Regione Toscana), Gunn Marit HELGESEN (Deputy Mayor Telemark), Tarmo PIKNER (Vice-Governor of Saaremaa County), Anders GUSTAV (Member of Stockholm County Council, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Bente NIELSEN (County Councillor of Arhus)
For Mr Jaakko Mikkola, the most memorable moment during his 2½ year period as an Executive Secretary (1 July 2000 – 31 Dec 2002) was organising a BSC General Assembly in Klaipeda, Lithuania, on May 27-29 2002. “Lithuania was not an EU Member State then. We were lucky to have a good liaison in Klaipeda, Ms Roma Stubriene, who greatly helped us. I also met the regional Mayor Ms Virginija Lukosiene during a “politeness visit” that was a must in Eastern Europe in old times. As Finns we did have some experience from the old times of Soviet Union and felt very much sympathy for Lithuanians. We were also lucky to have an active Executive Board member from Klaipeda, Mr Alexandras Agafonovas, who made all this “politically possible”.

BSC General Assembly, Klaipeda, 28 May

Transport Conference, Santiago de Compostela, 22 March
The Executive Committee of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission held its meeting in Lahti, Päijät-Häme (FN) on 15 October 2003. During the meeting, the Executive Committee supported the intentions of the Lithuanian BSC member region of Klaipeda where the region turned the attention to the question of safe exploitation of oil fields in the Baltic Sea Area. A supporting letter was sent to all Ministers of Environmental Affairs of the Baltic Sea States.
The 9th annual General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission was held in a magnificent fairy-tale castle in Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (DE) on 4th June 2004. The beautiful scenery of Schwerin and the hospitality of the locals made the Assembly a total success. The Assembly adopted resolutions on transnational interregional cooperation and maritime safety in the Baltic Sea Area. The Assembly elected a new President, Mr Inge Andersson, Chairman of the Board, Västerbotten (SE) and re-elected Ms Bente Nielsen, County Councillor, Århus (DK) as a Vice-President. Mr Marko Mälly, Päijät-Häme (FI) was nominated as the Executive Secretary of the BSC.
At the CPMR General Assembly in Madeira, President of the European Commission, Mr José Manuel Barroso, and President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Mr Inge Andersson (Västerbotten, Sweden), exchanged about priorities for the Baltic Sea regions regarding EU policies. In the other picture, Ms Christel Liljestöm President of the Board of the Regional Council of Itä-Uusimaa, and BSC contact person on HELCOM, made a presentation at the CPMR General Assembly and took part in the panel discussion on regional involvement in maritime safety bodies.

The day before the BSC General Assembly, the Conference “How to improve sustainable accessibility in the Baltic Sea Region?” took place. Mr Bernth Johnson, Chairman of the Region Blekinge and Mr Inge Andersson, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, opened the Conference and welcomed the participants to Blekinge.
During the General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, political representatives discussed and agreed on key policy messages addressed to decision-makers from the national and European level. In Bodø, Member Regions called for promoting further sustainable transport infrastructure in the Baltic Sea Region.
In the pictures: Carl-Ewert OHLSSON (County Councillor, County Council of Gävleborg), Annika ANNERBY-JANSSON (Chair of the Regional Council, Region Skåne), Anne STAHL-MOUSAA (Executive Secretary, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Christel LILJESTRÖM (Itä-Uusimaa President, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission).

BSC Plenary meeting, CPMR General Assembly, Bayonne (Aquitaine), 1 October

CPMR Employment and Training Working Group, Bayonne (Aquitaine), 1 October

2008
Sabine MAYER (North Sweden EU Office) and Janne VIRTANEN (Regional Planning Engineer, South West Finland) represented Baltic Sea Regions’ perspectives in the discussion about EU Transport policy in Murcia. Open discussion and sharing of regional experiences with other CPMR regions coming from all parts of Europe are at the cornerstone of CPMR membership.
The seminar aimed to show the impact that EU innovation and research policies have today in the Regions of the Baltic Sea Area and stimulated the debate on the future of these policies after 2013. The seminar also addressed the issue of the Regions as key partners in the design and implementation of the next generation of EU and national instruments which will implement the EU2020 strategy and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) of the Baltic Sea.
In the presence of the CPMR President at the time, Jean-Yves Le Drian, currently French Foreign Minister, the General Assembly was a particular festive event since it marked the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission. The event was held on a ferry between Stockholm and Helsinki, as a tribute to the first General Assembly in 1996.

The Baltic Sea Commission in 2011 encompassed 26 regions in seven countries around the Baltic Sea, including Nordland in Norway.
The CPMR General Assembly is an opportunity for BSC members to voice the interests of the Baltic Regions. In 2012, the BSC delegates participated in high-level debates with Mr Jean-Yves Le Drian, President of the CPMR, French Minister for Defence and Mr Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Regional Policy.

In the pictures: Richard SJÖLUND and Jerker JOHNSON (Ostrobothnia), Janne TAMMINEN (Helsinki-Uusimaa), Annika ANNERBY-JANSSON, Per-Olof PERSSON, and Maria LINDBOM (Region Skåne), Juho SAVO and Talvikki KOSKINEN (SouthWest Finland)
2013

Atlantic Forum, university College Cork, 4-5 March

In the pictures: Jens SUNDSTRÖM (CPMR Baltic Sea Commission President, Region Norrbotten), Jenny MOZGOVOY (Senior Advisor, Region Norrbotten), Fredrik GUNNARSSON, Strategic Manager of international Affairs, Region Västerbotten

BSC Executive Committee, Helsinki, St Petersburg, 19-21 March

BSC General Assembly, Bodø (Nordland), 31 May
In the pictures: When Mr Jens SUNDSTRÖM from Region Norrbotten passed the Presidency to the newly elected President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Mr Jari SAINIO (Helsinki-Uusimaa Region). Ms Annika ANNERYBY-JANSSON (CPMR President, Chair of the Regional Council, Skåne Region), Mr Ossi SAVOLAINEN (Regional Mayor of Helsinki-Uusimaa Region), Mr Janne TAMMINEN (Executive Secretary of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission)
In the pictures: Åsa BJERING (Executive Secretary, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Wolf BORN (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), Janne TAMMINEN (Region of Helsinki-Uusimaa), Marko MÄLLY (Regional Council of Päijät-Häme), Richard SJÖLUND (Regional Council of Ostrobothnia), Kai HOLMBERG (Regional Council of Kymenlaakso), Jari SAINIO (Helsinki-Uusimaa Region, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Mr Melle KRUIJSDIJK, Director Market Development, Wärtsilä Power Plants, Pirjo-Liisa KOSKIMAKI (European Commission), Olav JERN (Regional Mayor of Ostrobothnia), Miapetra KUMPULA-NATRI (Member of the European Parliament), Markku MARKKULA (President of the Committee of the Regions, Helsinki-Uusimaa Region)
In the pictures: Markku MARKKULA (President of the Committee of the Regions, Helsinki-Uusimaa Region), Jari SAINIO (President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission), Kalev KALJUSTE (2nd Vice-President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Estonia).
In 2017, the General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, hosted by Mecklenburg Vorpommern was held in Berlin, back to back with the Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Annual Forum was hosted by the Federal Foreign Office together with the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission and in close cooperation with the European Commission in June 2017. About 800 participants from governments, international organisations, NGOs, universities, local and regional administrations and business discussed a broad range of issues relevant for the Baltic Sea Region.
At the General Assembly in Oulu 2018, Mr Jari NAHKANEN (Oulu Region) was elected President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, following the mandate of Mr Jari SAINIO from Helsinki-Uusimaa Region. The two Vice-Presidents were Ms Annika SUNDSTRÖM (Stockholm Region) and Mr Cezary CIESLUKOWSKI (Podlaskie Regional Assembly).
The General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission was held back to back with the 10th EUSBSR Annual Forum in Gdansk in Poland.
In January 2020, the CPMR BSC Executive Committee met in Oulu (FI) together with Ms Tytti Tuppurainen, Minister for European Affairs, who stressed that regions have a pivotal and important role to play in European Cooperation. Member Regions and Minister Tuppurainen exchanged also about the role of regions in the Green Deal. In her speech, Minister Tuppurainen gave an overview of the Finnish EU Presidency and touched upon specific issues regarding the Baltic Sea and the Arctic.
Due to the health situation, meetings of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission were held over the year online. Even in a digital format, regional cooperation still continued, and Member Regions worked together to influence EU policies, and promote a swift recovery of the Baltic Sea Region.
The Working Groups of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission gather together regional politicians and experts from the Member Regions. Over the years, the Transport Working Group has fed into the CPMR work on transport and ensures a Baltic Sea Region’s perspective in EU transport policies. Lively discussions, exchanges of experience and also visits of projects have characterised the Transport Working Group.
All the working groups of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission are run by a Chair and Vice-Chair from the Member Regions, ensuring different perspectives in the discussions. Regional politicians and supporting officers are committed to drive regional cooperation forward, in a studious and enthusiastic manner.

In the pictures, representatives from Ostrobothnia, Skåne, Helsinki-Uusimaa and the BSC Secretariat, met with the CPMR Secretary General and staff in Brussels.
Working Groups of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission serve as a platform for exchange with partners organisations and representatives of the EU institutions. They also work closely with Policy Area Coordinators of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. In Berlin, the Maritime Working Group exchanged with Policy Area Tourism.
PRESIDENTS OF THE CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION

1996 - 2020
Hannu Tapiola
Kymenlaakso, Finland

2000-2004
Anders Gustav
Stockholm, Sweden

2004-2006
Inge Andersson
Västerbotten, Sweden

2006-2010
Christel Liljeström
Itä-Uusimaa, Finland

2010-2012
Erik Bergkvist
Västerbotten, Sweden

2012-2014
Jens Sundström
Norrbotten, Sweden

2014 – 2018
Jari Sainio
Helsinki-Uusimaa, Finland

2018-2022
Jari Nahkanen
Oulu, Finland
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES OF THE CPMR BALTIC SEA COMMISSION

1996-1997
Dag Boman, Finnish

1997-1998
Tommy Karlsson, Swedish

1999-2002
Jaakko Mikkola, Finnish

2003-2006
Marko Mälly, Finnish

2006-2010
Anne Ståhl Mousa, Swedish

2011-2014
Janne Tamminen, Finnish

2015-2020
Åsa Bjering, Swedish

2020-now
Lucille Ehrhart, French
ther, Hannu and me, on a simple park bench in a rainy Riga park after our 2nd BSC General Assembly in 1997. We both were pondering: “Will this ever be something?” – The reason for such pessimistic thoughts was the General Assembly that had just finished. All our hosts and members had disappeared immediately after the event. Not a word of next steps with anyone. We both got a very painful feeling that no-one really cared about the CPMR or its Baltic Sea Commission. The BSC was a young organisation, established in the PB meeting in our home city Kotka, Kymenlaakso, on 7 May 1996. The first General Assembly had been on board a in Helsinki - Stockholm the next autumn 1996. - There was a lot of hope in the air, most of all we still rejoiced the recent fall of the Iron Curtain some years before, but was it enough? How could we get the new members of the European family to get interested in organisations like the CPMR? Why did it seem that our different policies didn’t attract our friends around the Baltic Sea? Only regions of EU member states Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Germany seemed to be interested. We planned missions to Baltic States, and not only there but also to Saint-Petersburg which all succeeded. Russia also was different in Yeltsin’s time in the 1990’s. We got Estonians interested and active members. All these three Baltic States got also EU members later in 2004. The bigger country Poland was another story. We started cooperation with the BSSSC and other EU organisations in which they were most active.”

Jaakko Mikkola
Regional Mayor of Kymenlaakso

A souvenir shared by Mr Jaakko Mikkola, Regional Mayor of Kymenlaakso about the early years of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission

“One anecdote is from my time as an adviser for the first President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission Mr Hannu Tapiola (1996-2000). This period proceeded my time as an Executive Secretary in 2000-2002/2003. We were sitting toge-
MLG appeared on the agenda because of the EU Cohesion Policy and because most countries around the Baltic Sea had become EU members. Through the emergence of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) the term MLG is now widely used in political discussions.

My work as an Executive Secretary in the BSC from 2003–2006 led to the academic dissertation on international cooperation organisations of regional governments (ICORGs) in the MLG system of the Baltic Sea macro-region. The practical work in the CPMR BSC had raised several questions about the mandates and interests of subnational actors in the international arena. The study showed that the MLG system is not unproblematic. The findings made obvious that the current MLG system of the Baltic Sea macro-region can be defined as rather state-centric and top-down driven, and does not function properly from the ICORGs ’ and their member regions ’ points of view.

The ICORGs still have multiple tasks in developing their work in the MLG system of the Baltic Sea macro-region. If you wish you may learn more of my research findings on https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/104102

Wishing all the best success for the future work of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission!

Dr Marko Mälly
LOGO THROUGH THE YEARS

1999-2008

2008 - 2016

2016 - now

25th anniversary
In 2021, an unformal BSC TEN-T sub-group has been established to follow the revision process of the TEN-T regulation. The group is made up of civil servants from the BSC Transport Working Group interested to work on that topic. Among key activities have been the preparation of the BSC contribution to the EU public consultation on TEN-T and the preparation of a joint transport seminar with the North Sea Commission Transport Working Group.
If you have been involved with the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, you have most probably enjoyed liaising with Clare Booth, who is mastering all the details about the organisation. Since 2006, Clare is working for the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, and supporting several Presidents, Executive Secretaries and committed Member Regions. Thank you Clare for your contribution in driving the Baltic Sea regional cooperation forward, and bringing your unique British touch in Baltic Sea issues!
This photo album was elaborated by the BSC Secretariat at the occasion of the General Assembly of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, that took place on 23 September 2021, online. Hosted virtually by Helsinki-Uusimaa Region, the event is the occasion to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the organisation.

Thank you to all the Member Regions, partner organisations and BSC friends that have contributed for 25 years to drive the regional cooperation forward. Let’s build together another 25 years of cooperation ahead!