BSC Exceptional Executive Committee
12 June 2020

A report from the Presidium regarding the recruitment process was sent out on 10 June 2020 and is included in Appendix 1.

List of participants

President: Jari NAHKANEN, Regional Council of Oulu (Finland)
1st Vice-President: Annika SANDSTRÖM, Region Stockholm (Sweden)

Full and Alternate Members
Finland  Talvikki JORI, Regional Council of SouthWest Finland
Germany  Wolf BORN, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
Sweden  Tomas MÖRTSELL, Region Västerbotten

Supporting officers
Evert KROES, Secretary Growth and Regional Planning Board, Stockholm County Council
Jenny MOZGOVOY, Senior Advisor in International Affairs, Norrbotten
Jonas LARSSON, Senior Advisor External Relations, Region Västerbotten
Toivo RIIMAA, Deputy Director, Association of Estonian Cities and Rural Municipalities (AECM)
Toni VANHALA, Head of International Affairs, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso
Sami VIRTANEN, Member of the Board, Regional Council of Kymenlaakso

CPMR/BSC Secretariat
Åsa BJERING, Executive Secretary, Baltic Sea Commission
Clare BOOTH, Policy Assistant, CPMR BSC
Eleni MARIANOU, Secretary General, CPMR

1. Opening of the meeting, Mr Jari Nahkanen, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission

Mr Jari Nahkanen, President of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission welcomed participants and reminded them that, based on the Work Plan decision made last year, the Executive Committee were mandated to deliver a long-term solution for the Baltic Sea Commission Secretariat. This included three things.
1. Find a new Host Region (this has been achieved and Region Västerbotten will be the new Host Region);

2. Ensure that the membership fees cover the cost of the Secretariat (although this has not yet been approved as the General Assembly is postponed, the proposal is ready and after discussions with Members it is likely to be approved); and

3. Recruit a new Executive Secretary based on an open and competitive recruitment process.

Mr Nahkanen acknowledged that the current Executive Secretary, Åsa Bjering informed in February that she will leave earlier than expected, the Executive Committee meeting in Strasbourg was delayed and eventually held online and also that the annual General Assembly has been postponed and will now be organised in October.

During the spring, the Presidium were tasked to find a proposal of a new Executive Secretary and the purpose of today’s meeting is to make a formal appointment.

**2. Decision: Executive Secretary**

**2.1 Information regarding the process (see attached report)**

A Recruitment Report was sent out to all participants prior to the meeting and is available in Appendix 1 for information.

Jari Nahkanen informed the Executive Committee that the previous day he and Annika had had different opinions on how to finalise the decision. Jari was of the opinion that this was a decision delegated to the hosting region. The hosting region had had contact with the favoured applicant and ensured Jari Nahkanen that they will reach a conclusion within the budget that the Executive Committee had decided upon in Oulu, in January 2020.

**2.2 Nomination of the candidate (Jari Nahkanen)**

Jari Nahkanen gave a presentation of Lucille Ehrhart, the candidate that the Presidium suggest for the position. Annika Sandström and Eleni Marianou also shared their opinion on the process, the many candidates and the reason to why Lucille Ehrhart was the Presidium proposal.

Lucille Ehrhart has a Master’s in Administrative and Politics European Affairs. She started her career as a representative of the Cornwall EU Office. She has worked as a Policy Analyst at the CPMR and supported the BSC Executive Secretary during this time. From October 2018 she has worked as a Parliamentary Assistant of a Member of the European Parliament. Due to her previous work experience she has a direct and excellent knowledge of the BSC and the CPMR and could be an outstanding asset for the BSC as Executive Secretary, for instance on EU policy areas of importance for the BSC and the advocacy/lobbying action through the European Parliament and institutions.

**2.3 Decision**

The BSC Executive Committee decided to appoint Lucille Ehrhardt as Executive Secretary.
3. Plan for communication of the decision

The decision will be communicated once the contract is finalised.

- Website, newsletter (Secretariat to prepare before end of June)
- Formal information to the Members (Report attached in Appendix 1)
- Regarding the General Assembly, Jari Nahkanen proposed that there should be a report on all the tasks that the Executive Committee received in the Work Plan. Åsa Bjering has started to draft documents and they will be discussed and finalised during the next Executive Committee meeting in Schwerin in October. This proposal was unanimously approved.

4. Closing of the meeting

4.1 Recalling dates and decisions from last meeting
The deadline for nominations of President and Vice-President is set for 1 September 2020. Next Executive Committee meeting will be hosted by Mecklenburg Vorpommern on 6 October 2020. The General Assembly will be hosted by South West Finland on 20 October 2020.

4.2 Closing the meeting

Jari Nahkanen concluded by acknowledging that this was the final meeting for Åsa Bjering. He thanked her for all the hard work she has invested in the BSC.

He wished everybody a good summer.
APPENDIX 1

Recruitment Report

1. CPMR BSC Executive Secretary

The CPMR BSC Work Plan 2019-2021 states that the Executive Committee at the General Assembly 2020 should present:
- a Region or Regions to host the BSC Secretariat for the 2021/2022 mandate period.
- a corresponding draft budget which, on the basis of the expected cost for the BSC Secretariat, aims to have the BSC Secretariat staff costs covered by the BSC membership fees.
- a mandate for the recruitment of an Executive Secretary for the 2021/2022 mandate period based on an open and competitive recruitment process.

During autumn 2019, the Executive Committee tasked the Presidium to initiate and start this process. In February 2020, the current Executive Secretary informed she will leave the post six months earlier than planned. The Presidium therefore proposed that the Executive Committee advance the recruitment process to have a proposal for Executive Secretary for the General Assembly, planned for June 2020. Due to the coronavirus situation, the BSC General Assembly was postponed.

At the Executive Committee meeting on 18 May, the Executive Committee decided to request confirmation from its Members to bypass Article 7 of the CPMR BSC Internal Rules, which states that the Executive Secretary should be appointed by the General Assembly, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee. Instead, the proposal from the Executive Committee was that the Executive Committee appoint the Executive Secretary for the period June 2020–December 2022. This was confirmed in a written procedure with the Members.

The CPMR General Secretary, Eleni Marianou, has been consulted in the process as stated in the CPMR Internal Rules.

2. Report from each stage of Recruitment

2.1. 31 March – 17 April: Call for Applications

The Call for Applications for the position of BSC Executive Secretary was published on 31 March and closed on 17 April, with a total of 30 applicants for the position. In general, all applicants had a base competence for the position. 20 applicants were women and 10 men. 15 applicants had citizenship in one of the Member States with BSC Member Regions, 10 applicants in other EU Member States and 5 applicants in countries outside the EU.
2.2. 20 April – 3 May: First selection

On 28 April, the CPMR BSC Presidium, (Jari Nahkanen and Annika Sandström) had the first online meeting for the recruitment process. Supporting officers Hanna Honkamäkilä and Evert Kroes, Executive Secretary Åsa Bjering, and representative of the host region Västerbotten, Jonas Lundström, also attended the meeting. During this meeting the Presidium agreed on the recruitment process. Eight applicants were selected based on their motivation letters and CVs. All eight applicants fulfilled the four requirements of essential work experience and educational background and at least three requirements of advantageous and desirable experience, as stated in the Call for Applications (see Appendix). On 3 May, the Presidium selected a shortlist of six candidates for the first round of interviews.

2.3. 8 – 13 May: First round of interviews

The panel of interviewers for the first round of interviews was made up of Hanna Honkamäkilä, Civil Servant delegated by Jari Nahkanen, President of the CPMR BSC, Evert Kroes, Civil Servant delegated by Annika Sandstrom, Vice-President of the CPMR BSC and Davide Strangis, Executive Director at the CPMR. Interviews were carried out in a structured way and questions were distributed content-wise among interviewers on the following headings: candidate’s motivation, regional and Baltic Sea Region dimension, European policies and decision-making process, management of a member network, managing and monitoring cooperation projects and appointment as Executive Secretary. After the first round of interviews, the 6 shortlisted candidates showed overall a medium to high level of preparation, motivation, and interest. Three of them were considered excellent and were nominated to the Presidium for the second round of interviews.

2.4. 19 May: BSC Executive Committee and Presidium

The recruitment process was presented during the meeting of the BSC Executive Committee, the Committee approved the process. The Presidium met the same day and agreed on the process for the second round of interviews and the questions to be asked. The three candidates were asked to submit a written test as part of the recruitment process.

2.5. 25 May – 1 June: Second round of interviews

The panel of interviewers was made up of Jari Nahkanen, President of the CPMR BSC, Annika Sandstrom, Vice-President of the CPMR BSC and Jonas Lundström, representative of the host region Västerbotten as an observer. Interviews were carried out in a structured way and questions were distributed content-wise between the President and Vice-President. After the second round of interviews the Presidium agreed upon a candidate to propose the Executive Committee to appoint as Executive Secretary.

3. Decision on appointing Executive Secretary

3.1. 12 June: BSC Executive Committee

On 12 June the BSC Executive Committee had an online meeting. The CPMR General Secretary, Eleni Marianou, attended the meeting. The BSC Executive Committee decided to appoint Lucille Ehrhart as Executive Secretary for the Baltic Sea Commission in accordance with the proposal of the Presidium.
3.2. Biography Lucille Ehrhart

Lucille Ehrhart has a Master’s in Administrative and Politics European Affairs. She started her career as a representative of the Cornwall EU Office. She has worked as a Policy Analyst at the CPMR and supported the BSC Executive Secretary during this time. From October 2018 she has worked as a Parliamentary Assistant of a Member of the European Parliament. Due to her previous work experience she has a direct and excellent knowledge of the BSC and the CPMR and could be an outstanding asset for the BSC as Executive Secretary, for instances on EU policy areas of importance for the BSC and the advocacy/lobbying action through the European Parliament and institutions.

APPENDIX

Requirements for the Executive Secretary (as stated in the Call for Application)

Essential work experience and educational background:
2. Minimum five years’ experience working professionally after studies.
3. Professional spoken and written proficiency in English.
4. Possess adequate knowledge of societal conditions in countries and regions surrounding the Baltic Sea Region.

Advantageous and desirable experience:
1. Work experience within public authorities (especially Regional Authorities) and/or politically-led EU, transnational or international organisations.
2. Work experience of secretariat work in a politically led organisation or network (e.g. preparation of agendas and meeting materials, monitoring of key policies of interest, dialogue with government officials and politicians, budgetary experience).
3. Knowledge and understanding of regional interests in relation to EU policy areas including transport, climate, maritime affairs and the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.
4. A wide network of contacts at EU and/or territorial stakeholder level in the Baltic Sea Region as well as the capacity to build and develop strong, structured, and long-lasting alliances.
APPENDIX 2

See special declaration of vote, Annika Sandström
Referring to abstention of vote at 2.3

“I did not participate in the decision of the recruitment of the new Executive Secretary due to the following reason:
The abstention had nothing to do with the person whom the President and I, as Vice-President, proposed to the Executive Committee on the contrary we were in full agreement on whom to suggest.
My objection is in relation to the decision-making process. The Presidium had a mandate to select a candidate to the Executive Committee for the position of Executive Secretary. Since the Baltic Sea Commission is not a legal entity it is necessary to have one who could take on the formal employer’s task although it is the BSC who has the financial means and stands any financial risk. This task was taken on by one of the Member Regions, Västerbotten in Sweden. I have asked several times for information about the overall content of the deal with our candidate, that is salary, social costs, EV benefits which will later be in the formal contract. The only answer I have got “it will be within our budget”.That goes without saying, anything else would have been sensational. In my opinion the Presidium should have had this information about the content before we proposed the final candidate to the board/Executive Committee of the BSC.”
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.

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