

BSRUN for Strategy and Practice for the Friends of the Baltic Sea Region



*Kari Hyppönen,
BSRUN President*

From the very beginning in 2000 BSRUN has endeavoured to be a platform for an open discussion between institutions which are genuinely interested in cooperation in the Baltic Sea region (BSR). In the current political situation this is even more important than ever before. We tend to say the Baltic unites us. Yes, in a way it does, since it creates an opportunity, but only if the people around it want to use it with an open mind. Otherwise, the opportunity is lost and it is always more difficult to start again structures which have been demolished on purpose by unnecessary confrontations.

At the very well attended Plenary Meeting (PM) in Warsaw on 25 October we took decisions which we hope will enhance our role on this particular respect. The secretariats will from the 1st of January 2017 be located at the University of Warsaw and at St. Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON). As you will have noticed during the last couple of years, we have organised two Annual Forums in addition the Plenary Meeting at the University of Warsaw (UW) for both academic and logistical reasons. We are very grateful for the new opportunity to work even more closely with UW and to continue with UNECON after the very successful past three years.

The decision of the Plenary Meeting in Riga in March 2013 to have two joint secretariats has proved to be a very good solution in practice together with some new services for our members like the BSRUN Bulletin which we are now developing further to cover better the interests of our members. The pattern of two vice-presidents is now introduced to develop more appropriate activities not only in administration and management but also academically.

We also decided to extend our membership to universities of applied sciences and corresponding

institutions and right away approved one institution for Berlin and one from Lappeenranta in Finland. We also introduced a new membership category of associate members for other higher education organisations (networks, ministries of education, research centres etc.) which BSRUN cooperates with.

The new Steering Committee will face the eternal and important task of bringing the wishes and expectations of the members in different countries to be discussed and decided at the committee meetings. In addition, it is our obligation to establish a smooth feedback also between the members and the secretariats. This is both a challenge and a promise.

BSRUN was never intended to be a network for EU universities only. We have now seven members in Russia and six in Belarus. This year we assisted in putting together an Erasmus+ project application for fostering competencies in Belarusian higher education which was approved for funding. The EU partners in project come from Finland, Lithuania, Poland and Spain. We have already started working for the current application round hoping to repeat the same end result.

The University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (UWM) has been our legal representative for the three year period which ended 2016. Without their kind cooperation we could never have established the current secretariat structure at the PM in Riga. In my opinion, it is always better to negotiate and agree than to vote, if a viable solution can be found without voting. This was a very important decision in the life of BSRUN. Thank you very much indeed for the time we managed the network together.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to wish you all a most refreshing holiday season and a very Happy New Year!

BSRUN BEYOND 2016

University of Warsaw and Saint Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON) are elected as coordinating bodies of the BSRUN for 2017-2019.

On 25th of October in the Faculty of Management of University of Warsaw was held the Plenary Meeting of the Baltic Sea Region Universities Network (BSRUN). Members from Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Russian Federation took part in the Meeting. Representatives of 18 universities-members of the Network were registered in total.

Plenary Meeting was opened by president of Network, Kari Hyppönen, with report about Network's activities for the last three years. Vice-president Dmitry Vasilenko informed about plans and strategy of the Network development in 2017-2019.

First of all, it was offered to change BSRUN Rules and Regulations in order to approve to the Network not only classical academic universities, but as well universities of applied sciences. Due to it new institutions were approved: Berlin School of Economics and Law (Germany) and Saimaa University of Applied Sciences (Finland).

As well some changes happened with composition of the Steering Committee for the next three years. From 2017 members of the Steering Committee from each country will be: from Belarus – Belarusian State University and Yanka Kupala Grodno State University, from Estonia – Estonian University of Life Sciences, from Finland – University of Turku and Saimaa UAS, from Germany – Berlin School of Economics and Laws, from Latvia – Riga Technical University and University of Latvia, from Lithuania – Klaipeda University, from Poland – University of Warsaw and Gdansk University of Technology, from Russian Federation – Saint Petersburg State University (UNECON) and The North-West Institute of Management of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration.

In conclusion the elections of the President and Secretariat were held. Unanimously **Kari Hyppönen** was appointed on the post of the President for the next three years. Finally, **University of Warsaw and Saint Petersburg State University (UNECON)** were elected as Coordinating bodies for 2017-2019.



BSRUN ANNUAL FORUM

“University Branding and Rankings”



The Baltic Sea Region University Network held the Annual BSRUN Forum “University Branding and Rankings” in the Kazimierz Palace of the University of Warsaw on 26th of October 2016.

The forum was opened by welcome speeches by **prof. Anna Giza-Poleszczuk**, Vice-Rector for Development, University of Warsaw, **Kari Hyppönen**, BSRUN President and **Prof. Alojzy Nowak**, Dean of the Faculty of Management, University of Warsaw.

The Plenary session was devoted to different aspects of university rankings. **Mr. Waldemar Siwiński**, President of the Perspektywy Education Foundation made a detailed review of international and national ranking systems and informed about popular Polish ranking – Perspektywy.

Mrs. Zoya Zaitseva, Regional Director Eastern Europe & Central Asia of QS Quacquarelli Symonds presented comprehensive report “University Rankings & International Visibility” showing the principles of the QS ranking system and explaining measures to be taken improve university position.

The Forum continued by discussion of the different aspects of university branding. **John Eriksson**, Director of Turku Centre for Biotechnology made a presentation about Euro-bioimaging project in Turku its development and challenges including unwillingness of the universities to share their information and equipment.

First Deputy Chancellor of the Government of Lithuania, **Dr. Rimantas Vaitkus** presented the governmental view on branding processes in Lithuania with special focus on various problems in university community including false branding strategies and misunderstanding between universities and society.

The case of re-branding the Baltic Federal University was presented by **Mrs. Ksenia Prasolova**, Director of the 5-100 Project Office of the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University. The special focus was made on Immanuel Kant as a brand name for local, federal and global university.

Dr. Olli Niemi from University Properties of Finland made an extremely comprehensive report on the higher education need for change – in curricula and methodology and thus in campus development.

In the end of the session **Prof. Anna Giza-Poleszczuk** from University of Warsaw explained how the Forum host – the University of Warsaw is planning the development of the campus including construction of brand new buildings and adjustment of existing ones to students needs and wishes.

The Forum ended by the Panel session on the rebranding cases of different BSR universities – Estonian University of Life Sciences, Gdansk University of Technology, Kaunas University of Technology, Riga Technical University and Peter the Great Polytechnic University presented their rebranding policies, showed the challenges they had to deal with and explained the social impact of rebranding process.

Member Profile

[WWW.
hwr-berlin.de](http://www.hwr-berlin.de)



Hochschule für
Wirtschaft und Recht Berlin
Berlin School of Economics and Law

Berlin School of Economics and Law (BSEL)

With approximately 10,000 students, the Berlin School of Economics and Law (BSEL) is one of the largest institutions of higher education in Germany's capital city. The BSEL is distinguished by a clear focus on providing academic education strongly linked to real world skills, an intensive and diverse programme of research, high quality standards and a strong international approach.

The University offers over fifty study programmes in private and public sector business and economics, administration, law, public administration, social sciences and security management. Nearly all of them now lead to a Bachelor's or Master's degree, have been quality controlled and bear the seal of an accrediting agency.

Research at BSEL is conducted in the University's five Departments, two Central Institutes, seven internal research institutes and five associated research institutes. In addition, the BSEL employs an internal system of targeted research funding to support research activities. The BSEL has always regarded an international approach as an integral part of its vision. At present, the BSEL has approximately 160 partnerships with universities around the world, a network that is steadily growing.

The BSEL also follows the guiding principle of connecting academic education and real world practices. With over 2000 places for cooperative study students, the BSEL is the largest cooperative degree provider in Berlin and thus solidly linking academic theory and business practices.



The BSEL's mission and values are:

- We contribute to Berlin's attractiveness
- We live the spirit of internationality
- We teach skills with a practical application
- We believe in lifelong learning
- We expect and encourage high achievement
- We are committed to research
- We work together and learn from each other
- We take up responsibility

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