



# BALTIC SEA REGION UNIVERSITY NETWORK

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

### Minutes

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 January 2021, 10.00-11.00 CET

**Place:** online / Zoom

#### Members

Kari Hyppönen, **President, Chairman**

#### **Belarusian State University**

Konstantin Kozadaev

Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs

#### **Estonian University of Life Sciences**

Mait Klaassen

Rector

#### **University of Turku**

Mika Hannula

Vice-Rector for Partnerships and  
Strategic Engagement

#### **Berlin School of Economics and Law**

Andreas Zaby

President

#### **University of Latvia**

Jānis Stonis

Director of Institutional Research

#### ~~**University of Warsaw**~~

~~Maciej Duszczyk~~

~~Professor~~

#### **St. Petersburg State University of Economics [UNECON]**

Dmitry Vasilenko

Vice-rector for International Relations

#### Substitutes

#### ~~**Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno**~~

~~Aleh Ramanau~~

~~First Vice-Rector~~

-

#### **LAB University of Applied Sciences**

Pasi Juvonen

RDI Director of Innovation

-

#### **Riga Technical University**

Jans Šlihte

Deputy Rector for Digital Transformation

#### **Gdansk University of Technology**

Dariusz Mikielewicz

Vice-Rector for Organisation and  
Development

#### **The North-West Institute of Management of the Russian Federation Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration [RANEPA]**

Nataliya Muyzinik

Head of the Department of International  
Cooperation

**Secretariat:**

Annija Apsite, **University of Latvia (UL)**

Alyona Zainullina, **St. Petersburg State University of Economics (UNECON)**

**Invited persons:**

Mārgers Počs, Director of the Department of Infrastructure, **University of Latvia**

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The meeting was opened by Chairman, Kari Hyppönen.

**2. Adoption of the agenda**

Agenda circulated to SC on 15 January 2021 was adopted.

**3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

Minutes of the SC meeting held online in Zoom on 10 December 2020 were approved.

**4. Announcements**

Chairman made several announcements:

- BSRUN secretariat online meetings were held on 16 December 2020 and 18 January 2021 to discuss current issues;
- 20th anniversary issue of BSRUN bulletin was circulated on 23 December 2020. SC is welcome to send a feedback about it;
- Jānis Stonis has been nominated Director of Institutional Research as of January 2021. Chairman told SC about institutional research in American and European universities and proposed that it could be a topic for a future BSRUN event.

**5. Membership situation, payment of membership fees and budget of 2020**

The budget of 2020 (Annex 1) was approved at the SC online meeting on 10 December 2020. All payments to the University of Latvia have been done.

Vice-President Vasilenko reported about payments to UNECON. There are still six missing payments. Herzen university is processing with documents. St. Petersburg State University is planning to pay the fee to the University of Latvia and waiting for the permission of Rosimushchestvo. Letters from UNECON Rector will be sent to BSU and BSEU Rectors in January in order to remind about the necessity to pay despite

COVID-19. An appropriate letter will be sent to Pskov State University because despite their decision to leave the Network, they have to pay the fee in accordance with the Rules&Regulations. Grodno State Agrarian University refused to pay fee for 2020 as they received the bill and contract too late, but it was decided to approach them again and ask to pay according to the Rules&Regulations. The payments of 2020 membership fee from six universities are expected in early 2021.

## **6. BSRUN budget of 2021**

Vice-President Vasilenko reported that the six missing payments of 2020 membership fee were included in the budget of 2021 (Annex 2). It was decided to send out the fee bills along with invitations to two online events (item 7) when they are ready. There were no other amendments to the draft budget approved at the SC online meeting on 10 December 2020.

## **7. BSRUN 20th anniversary event and other future events**

BSRUN Anniversary event in Turku on 2-3 June 2021 and postponed seminar on University Governance in Riga are planned to be held. The concept of both events will be developed.

Mārgers Počs presented the concept of the event on student housing and dormitories (Annex 3) and proposed questions for discussion. Mārgers Počs proposed to invite as speaker Mr. Samuel Vetrak, CEO of BONARD, a global market research and investment intelligence firm assisting with data, strategies and assessments in student housing, micro-living and co-living. The seminar could be a platform for discussion between university representatives and private developers.

Vice-President Zaby added that there were different models of providing student housing in different countries. E.g. in Germany universities cannot provide student housing – it is provided by state-run government agencies, which means that the vast majority of students are relying on the private market. Vice-President Zaby proposed to invite an economist to speak about optimal economic models to provide student housing.

Dariusz Mikieliewicz commented that in Poland, most of dorms used to be owned by universities but the private companies were also entering the market. There is surplus of students in comparison to dormitories, but the private offers are at least three times more expensive than dormitories provided by universities, and the university dorms standards are decent. There was also a huge market for renting flats by private owners to students in academic cities – these days it is collapsed due to COVID-19. Dariusz Mikieliewicz proposed that it could be nice to have different views from different countries.

Chairman added that in Finland, there was a foundation for the university dormitories and there was a couple of companies like University Properties of Finland (SYK). This

organisation can be used as example how to do campus development and management through a company.

Mika Hannula made a remark about an idea to combine student housing and learning environment and supported organisation of BSRUN event on dormitories. Chairman and Mr. Hannula proposed to invite Mr. Olli Tapio Niemi as speaker.

Vice-President Vasilenko informed that in St. Petersburg students were mostly coming from other cities and they preferred universities providing dormitories. There are different dorms, there is one inter-university student village in St. Petersburg. There are also interesting cases of private-public partnership. Vice-President Vasilenko proposed that the seminar shouldn't be longer than 2,5 hours. He proposed to start with report of Mr. Počs to be continued by two other keynote speeches (BONARD and SYK representatives) and a panel discussion with one case per country. It was offered to hold the seminar in late March.

Vice-President Vasilenko reported about preparation of the seminar on Sustainable Development Goals. The seminar's aim is to understand how universities can effectively use SDG; to learn national SDG approaches and strategies; to study the successful cases in research, teaching and management; to understand the role of community cooperation; to measure possible impact on international recognition and position in rankings (i.e. Times Higher Education SDG). The plan is to have three keynotes and a panel discussion for 2,5 hours. It was offered to invite as speaker a representative from SDSN Northern Europe, a network uniting about 60 universities and research centres mainly from Norway, Denmark and Sweden with few members in Finland including the University of Turku. SDSN Northern Europe aims at promoting acceleration of SDGs in universities and also collects cases. An invitation was sent to this organisation. In addition, it is planned to invite Turo Kilpeläinen, LAB University of Applied Sciences, to present recently approved programme on Finnish university's carbon neutrality and sustainability goals and objectives until 2035. Cases of universities known for SDGs implementation should also be presented, e.g. case of Technical University of Valencia, traditional partner of BSRUN. The event is planned for the end of April.

## **8. Date of the next meeting**

Thursday, 18 February 2021 at 10.00 CET was appointed as the date of the next meeting.

## **9. Any other business**

Chairman informed that there was a weekly issue called Members' New circulated to BSRUN administrative contacts. Admins also have opportunity to choose and send information to be included in the Members' News. The Members' News could also be circulated among SC members in case of their interest. This topic along with bulletins and marketing issues will be discussed at the next SC meeting.

## **10. Closing of the meeting**

Chairman closed the meeting at 11.00 CET.