

Closing speech at the EUSBSR Annual Forum 2019 in Gdansk, Poland

Secretary General Ann Irene Saeternes, on behalf of BSSSC Chairman Mr. Roger Ryberg

Ladies and Gentlemen – dear Baltic Sea Region colleagues and friends

First of all – thank you for these wonderful days here in Gdansk. For contributing to a successful Annual Forum as speakers, seminar organisers and active participants in discussions and networking.

It has been a great pleasure for the BSSSC to be co-organisers of this forum - and I want to thank the Pomeranian region and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for great cooperation in the preparation and execution of the forum.

As Norwegian Chairmanship of BSSSC – we hope that this event also has visualised the interest and active role of Norway and its regions within the framework of the EUSBSR.

Circular and sharing economy as an answer to demographic changes and environmental challenges in the Baltic Sea Region has been the focus of this Annual Forum. As organisers, we wanted the jubilee forum;

- To be focused.
- To stimulate more cooperation cross Policy Areas and Horizontal Areas – as well as more cooperation cross-levels and structures in the seminar programmes
- Better involvement of youth

I think I can say that we have succeeded!

So what now?

The Action Plan of the EUSBSR is under revision.

A new programming period of EU funding is approaching and programming work and preparations are about to start.

A new European Parliament is elected – and soon a new European Commission will take seat and start their work.

How can we make use of this momentum – making this annual forum a springboard for further development of macro regional cooperation and the EUSBSR?

What can you do?

What if we all - take the knowledge, the discussions, the inspirations and the personal reflections with us back to our daily work?

- Inform and include our co-workers and leaders.
- Talk about the achievements.
- Develop new ideas and initiatives.
- Communicate and interact!
- Make better use of virtual as well as physical platforms.

Thank you in advance for not letting this forum be a conference among many – but a kick off for future initiatives and cooperation.

The EUSBSR enables us do things better together – through connecting people!

Let's therefore work together and make sure that the Baltic Sea Region Strategy becomes an even better framework for cooperation with more vivid engagement and more concrete results to be delivered.

Thank you and have a safe journey home!