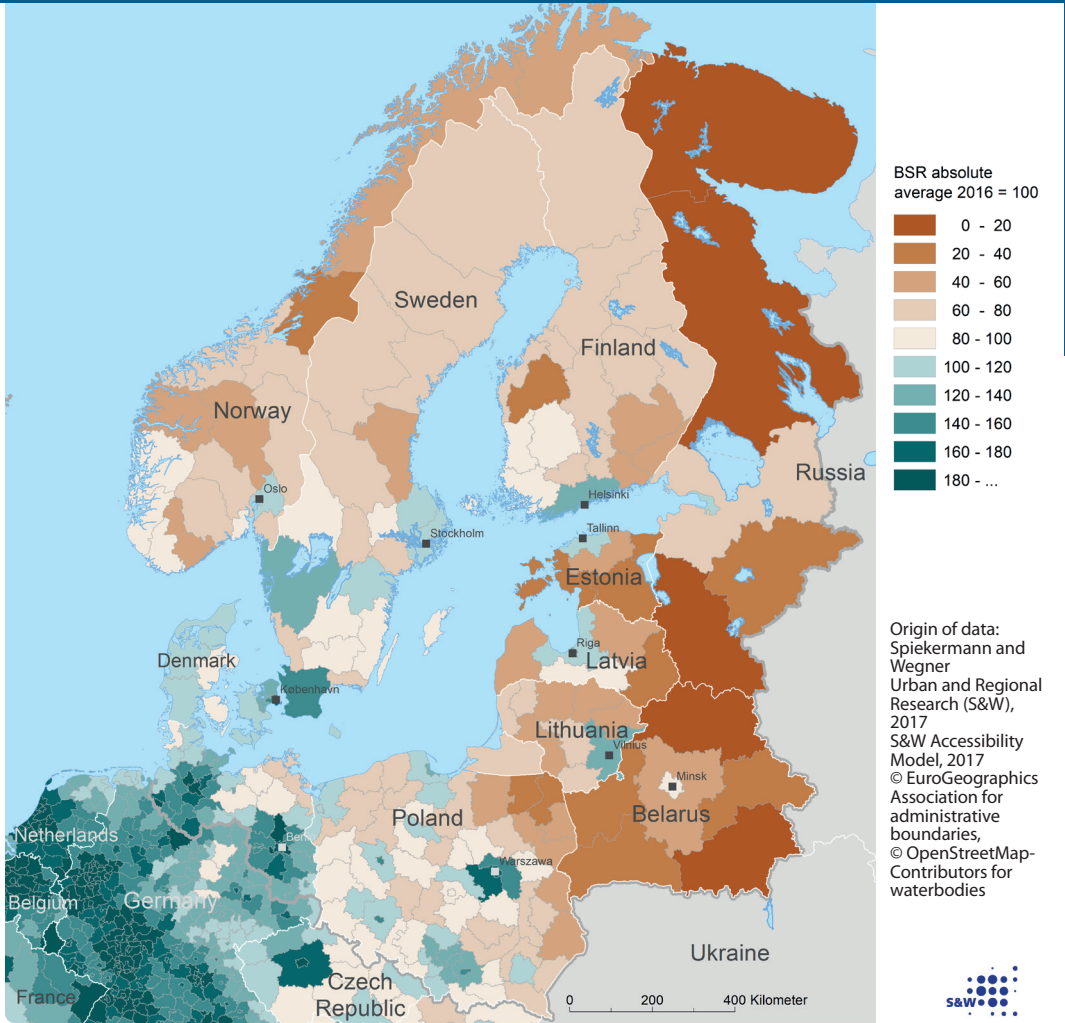


Recommendations

- The current distribution of passenger flows and demographic potential confirms the usefulness and advisability of the development of high-speed rail transportation in the following corridors: a) Hamburg - Copenhagen - Stockholm; b) Berlin - Warsaw.
- The introduction of a new level of high-speed rail services between BSR agglomerations would be of enormous benefit for the connected cities, and with appropriate secondary networks also of benefit for the surrounding regions.
- Connections to second and third tier cities should be supported, and strategic investments and tools for their better accessibility and connectivity should be developed.
- Under the framework of the BSR cooperation, the liberalisation of rules regarding travelling between the EU, Belarus and Russia should be, as far as possible, pursued.
- The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) mechanism should be evaluated positively as an instrument allowing for the construction of infrastructure sections, especially rail that links the states of the BSR. CEF should to a larger degree support multimodal solutions, in particular in goods transport in the West-East direction, as well as in relation to crossing over the Baltic Sea.
- It is advisable to create and support the TEN-T corridor running directly along the southern coast of the Baltic Sea (Via Hanseatica).
- The concentration of shipping traffic in large ports of the Baltic Sea coast poses a threat to the road and rail networks that serve them. Special attention and solutions are needed in this regard, modal changes should also, advisably, be considered, i.e. increasing the role of the railway.
- The initiated investments (railway and road) in countries with less developed infrastructure (i.e. Poland, the Baltic states) should not be interrupted, to avoid a significant accessibility polarisation.
- There are sections of the road and rail network in the transport system, where influence on the level of accessibility in the whole BSR is definitely higher than others. Future investments should focus on such sections (e.g. Via Baltica and Rail Baltica on the Polish-Lithuanian section).
- Multi challenged regions need comprehensive strategies to develop their assets and to establish them as attractive locations to live as well as to develop competitive economic activities. The development of high-quality transport infrastructure and connections is only one element in such strategies aiming at territorial cohesion and a balanced development of the BSR. And, with respect to the environment and combating climate change, the environmental consequences of new transport infrastructure and ever rising transport volumes have to be seriously taken into account.



Accessibility potential, multimodal, 2016



The full background Report is available at:
<https://vasab.org/theme-posts/accessibility/accessibility-research-report-2018/>

This publication has been prepared on the basis of the Report prepared by Spiekermann&Wegener Urban and Regional Research, Germany

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Accessibility of the Baltic Sea Region



Accessibility is a key concept for territorial development and an essential location factor. It holds significance on various spatial scales. Even in the areas geographically distant from the European core, where accessibility is generally poor, its local constituents have the decision-making rights on development.

The VASAB Ministerial Conference in 2014 in Tallinn underlined that connectivity and

accessibility in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), as well as the links between the Region and Europe's core areas, and between the Region and other neighbouring regions are amongst the key development issues in the BSR. The key challenge for the countries and regions is to interconnect Trans-European, national and regional intermodal transport networks in the best way possible.

Accessibility potential



The concept of accessibility potential is based on the assumption that the attraction of a destination increases with its size and declines with distance, travel time or cost. Accessibility potential to the population can be seen as an indicator for the size of market areas for suppliers of goods and services and thus as an indicator showing the competitive position of regions.

There are two basic possibilities to look at changes of accessibility over time. One is to analyse the relative changes, the other is to use absolute changes. Both approaches might yield different results as one region might perform in different ways depending on the way the change is looked at.

The two most influential factors affecting past accessibility are demographic changes and the development of the transport market. This trend will continue in the same direction.

The future accessibility trends of the BSR are determined by the future demographic changes and the planned trans-European transport networks of the European Union - TEN-T policy¹ defining infrastructure developments as well as development in the East and South East Asia. The planned TEN-T is laying the groundwork for future scenarios for road and rail up until 2030.

TEN-T corridors in the BSR are:

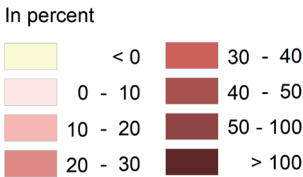
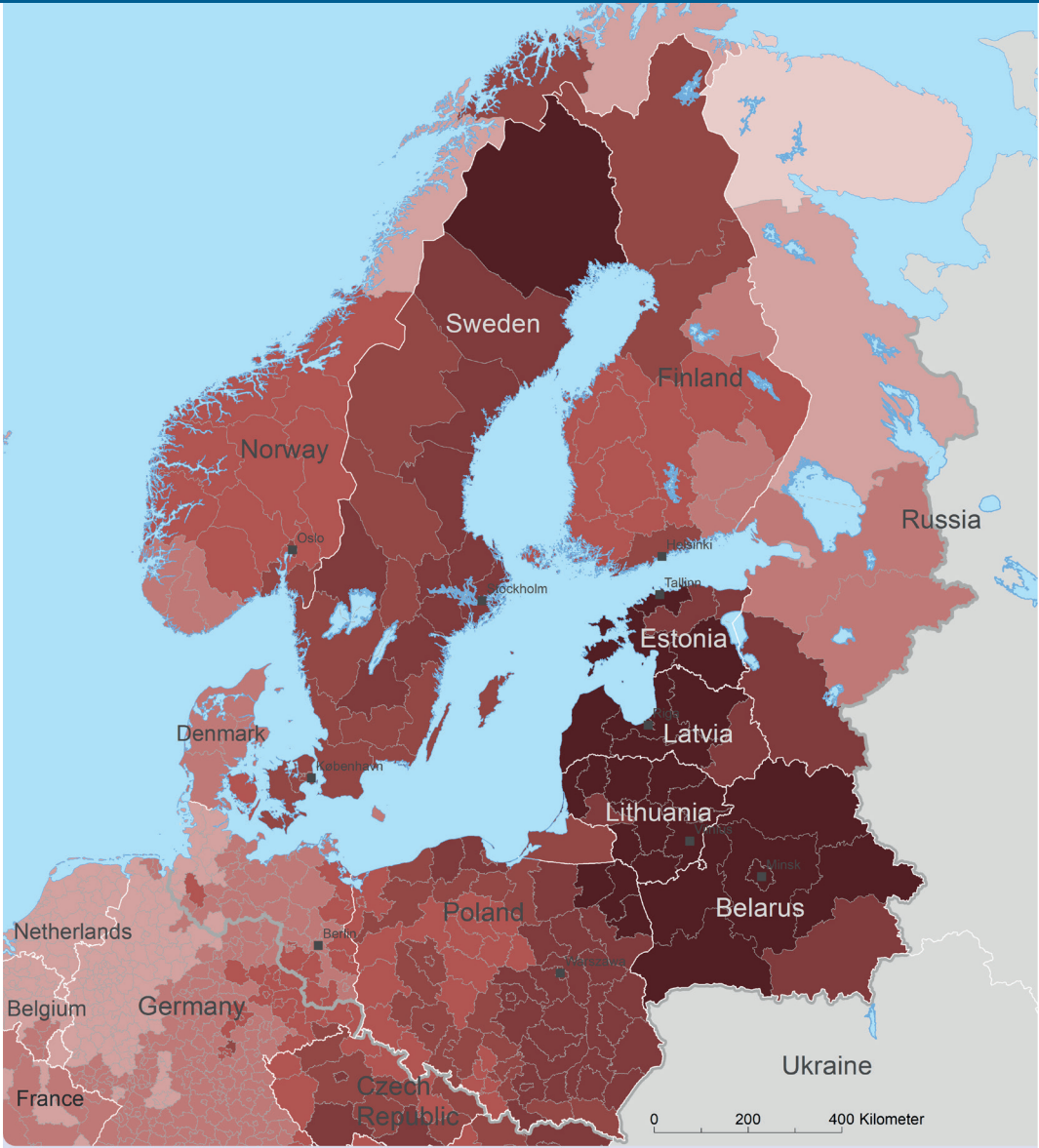
- Scandinavian-Mediterranean
- North Sea-Baltic
- Baltic-Adriatic

The accessibility scenarios of this VASAB study “Accessibility of the Baltic Sea Region” are meant to describe realistic future situations according to planned transport infrastructure development changes.

¹ The Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) is a European Commission policy directed towards the implementation and development of a Europe-wide network of roads, railway lines, inland waterways, maritime shipping routes, ports, airports and rail-road terminals. It consists of two levels:

- The Core Network, containing the most strategic parts/connections linking the most important nodes to be completed by 2030. For the implementation of the core network, a multimodal corridor approach has been adopted.
- The Comprehensive Network, covering all European regions shall ensure good accessibility of all regions to be implemented by 2050.

Accessibility potential, rail, relative change 2016-2030



Origin of data:
Spiekermann and Wegner
Urban and Regional Research (S&W), 2017
S&W Accessibility Model, 2017
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries,
© OpenStreetMap-Contributors for waterbodies



Conclusions

- The area of the BSR is characterised by a very strong internal differentiation of accessibility levels. At the same time, the BSR plays an important role in Europe’s transport system which is gradually increasing. The past EU enlargement to include the countries of the southern and eastern Baltic coast played an important role in this regard.
- Transport infrastructure projects can have substantial impacts on the accessibility of individual regions and cities. In particular, high-speed rail has and will be able to reshape the BSR by enhancing accessibility to regions outside the European core.
- In the last decade the BSR road and rail accessibility has improved, but with an uneven territorial distribution. Transport investments in one part of the BSR through a wider network also positively affect other parts of the macro region.
- In all BSR countries there has been a dynamic growth of air traffic, and thus a demand has grown for appropriate infrastructure. Air transport is an important factor balancing the level of multimodal accessibility in the BSR on the national scale. At the same time, it polarises regional spatial systems by favouring metropolises served by international airports. The capital region having an international airport belongs to the highly accessible group of regions and the air connectivity of the BSR is a decisive factor for competitive accessibility.
- In the BSR as a whole, urban regions have higher accessibility potential by road than other regions. They also have higher rail accessibility than rural regions.
- Rail accessibility decreases steadily towards the northern and eastern regions of the BSR.
- The general transport accessibility within the BSR has improved mostly in the vicinity of capitals and a few other large

- agglomerations. Disparities in accessibility did not rise between countries but between urban and rural regions within countries.
- Access to local and regional centres and their services is better in the south-west and decreases gradually going north-east in the BSR. The polycentric settlement structures provide good access for the inhabitants to reach various services. Accessibility to jobs is the highest in the star-shaped axes connecting the agglomeration centres into their hinterland. Accessibility to jobs and many services of general interest is determined not only by the existence of extensive transport infrastructure, but also by appropriate connections to secondary networks.
- The role of ports on the southern and eastern Baltic Sea coast is growing but only in particular locations. In spite of the decreasing importance of ferry lines, they are still an essential element of mutual accessibility between Baltic Sea coastal regions.
- Besides the development of the TEN-T, including 2nd level nodes and the additional national infrastructure developments, the future development of the BSR will also be influenced by possible transport route developments North and East of the BSR for cargo transport between the countries of East and South-East Asia and Western Europe.
- The development of population and transport infrastructure are the crucial elements of future accessibility potential changes. The challenge will be to service less and less populated peripheral zones and to ensure the efficiency of the transport system in and around the metropolises.
- Mainly due to the completion of the Rail Baltica project, the highly spectacular improvements in rail accessibility in the BSR will become apparent in the next fifteen years.