



WORKSHOP ON GOOD PLANNING & COOPERATION PRACTICES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

18 September 2025

9:00- 12:00 CEST

in-person in Itawa, Poland & online

Moderator:

Kinga Stańczuk-Olejniak,

Head of Territorial Dimension Unit

Department of Strategy

Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy of Poland

Time CEST	Programme
8:45	Connecting online
9:00-9:10	Opening & Introduction Why a Planners' Forum for land-based planning in the BSR
9:10-9:20	Who is in the room?
9:20-9:35	Baltic Sea Region Spatial Planning Systems of VASAB Member Countries <i>Peter Schmitt, Professor in Human Geography with focus on Urban and Regional Planning, Director of the Master's Programme in Urban and Regional Planning, Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University</i>
9:35-9:50	Land-based Planners' Forum Feasibility Study (incl. survey results) <i>Kerstin Bly Joyce, Senior Research Advisor, Nordregio</i>
5 min	Q&A
	Inspiration talks – Good cooperation (for spatial planning & development) practice examples
9:55-10:05	METREX and Riga experience <i>Guntars Ruskuls, Head of the Strategic Management Division, Department of City Development, Riga State City Municipality</i> Network of metropolitan regions and areas in Europe – sharing urban and regional planning knowledge.
10:05-10:15	MSP Planners' Forum <i>Tina Šipkēvica, Spatial Planning Expert, VASAB Secretariat</i> <i>Elin Celik, Marine Spatial Planner, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM)</i> A platform for maritime spatial planners in the Baltic Sea Region to regularly exchange experience.
10 min	Break



10:25-10:35	Small Town Academy (Kleinstadt Akademie) <i>Carola Thomsen, Advisor for Urban Development at the Small Town Academy</i>
10:35-10:50	URBACT <i>Sylwia Widzisz-Pronobis, URBACT expert and Ad-Hoc expert at the In4Green URBACT Network in Dąbrowa Górnicza</i> <i>Maciej Zacher, URBACT expert and coordinator of the Schoolhoods URBACT Network in Skawina</i>
10:50-11:00	UBC (Union of the Baltic Cities) <i>Katarzyna Wisniewska, Urban Planner, Deputy Mayor of the City of Elbląg</i> A network of local governments promoting sustainable urban development and cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, with a talk on the reconstruction of the Old Town in Elbląg.
11:00-11:10	Estonian Spatial Planners Association (ESPA) <i>Agnes Lihtsa, Adviser, Department of Land and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications; ESPA member</i>
11:10	Panel discussion participants: VASAB CSPD/BSR <i>Tiit Oidjärv, Head of Planning Policy, Land and Spatial Policy Department, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Estonia</i> ARL – Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association <i>Britta Bockhorn, Head of the Staff Unit for International Affairs; Deputy Scientific Director</i> UBC – Union of the Baltic Cities <i>Paulina Szewczyk, Chairperson of the UBC Planning Cities Commission</i> Panelists will start with needs/opportunities, then cover what's missing, and end with what's next. The discussion will be guided by questions to help us understand how existing cooperation(s) works and where there are opportunities for the Land-based Planners' Forum.
11:55-12:00	Wrap-up and next steps; announcement of the final event in Tallinn (February 2026) Moderator

This event is intended for land-based spatial planners working in local, regional, or national public authorities across the Baltic Sea Region, as well as for existing cooperation networks focused on spatial planning issues. During the workshop, key findings will be presented, potential forum formats explored, and—most importantly—participant input welcomed.

Information and registration:

<https://vasab.org/event/land-based-planners-forum-workshop/>

Workshop takes place online – Final Agenda and Teams link will be sent to registered participants.

Organiser contacts:

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