



# Annual Report

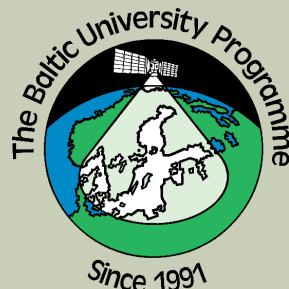
*The Baltic University Programme*

**Internationalisation in  
practice for a sustainable  
Baltic Sea Region**

**2020**



UPPSALA  
UNIVERSITET



**The Baltic University  
Programme**

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## This is us

The Baltic University Programme (BUP) is a lively network of 89 universities located in 12 countries of the Baltic Sea Drainage Area. It started in 1991 as an enthusiastic effort to bridge the information divide left by the Iron Curtain. We gathered around our common interest: the environment. We have been growing ever since, and thirty years of a fruitful cooperation later, the BUP and its mission can hardly be more topical: a sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

## This is our aim

The main aim is to develop regional co-operations between universities as an inter-university programme. The BUP support cooperation among researchers, teachers, and students from the Participating Universities, but extends as well to international offices and other university bodies. It assist university leaderships in strategic issues related to internationalisation. Within the programme, we are strongly convinced that universities play a central role in the development of our societies. Through education of the young generation, focus on life-long learning, and by conducting relevant research, we contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals as indicated by the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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# The Baltic University Programme in 2020:

## Approaching 30 years of work on sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region

The Baltic University Programme is established as an inter-university programme in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) with the aim to develop and support regional co-operation between universities and corresponding institutions of higher learning. Thirty years of a fruitful cooperation, the BUP and its mission can hardly be more topical working for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. Both within academia and society at large.



Within the Programme, we are strongly convinced that universities play a central role in the development of our societies. Through education of the young generation and by conducting relevant research contributing to sustainability. The United 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 goals with indicators to monitor progress. The Academia and research community constitute a crucial group of stakeholders who can strongly support the achievement of the SDGs. Together we are building a sustainable future on different levels and from different perspectives. The Programme promote and encourage inter-, multi- and trans-disciplinary co-operations where academic disciplines and perspectives of sustainable development meet. The purpose of the Programme is to contribute as a regional actor in this work.

The year 2020 is always going to be remembered as the time of Covid-19 pandemic, and by the turmoil it brought. Some of the planned BUP activities had to be postponed and some had to assume an on-line format. This forced us to learn how to be best friends with Zoom and other programmes. Moving an increasing number of activities on-line represents a kind of “paradigm shift” and a challenge for universities and scholars, both when it comes to education and to research. Hosting a successful – that is interactive, enjoyable, and energising – online event is a challenge which has gained our focus. Due to travel restrictions and our concern for the health of the participants, the BUP Symposium 2020, which was scheduled to take place in Visby, Gotland in August 2020, was moved online. Despite the size of the event, with more than 200 colleagues contributed and with over 80 oral presentations, it turned out well, and we learned how to tweak the organisation for the next years BUP Symposium 2021. In general, 2020 was both a steep learning curve for the Programme and a way to revisit our beginnings when we worked online and remotely across long distances, as during the first space bridge held 1991.

The past year also marked the end of our previous Strategic Plan 2017-2020. The BUP Coordinating Secretariat reviewed what was achieved during the period and took time to pause and reflect on all parts of the past Strategy. But not only did the previous Strategy come to an end, a new one emerged. The year 2021 is a celebratory year and there are many events and activities taking place. In 2020 the BUP was planning for the approaching 30 years of its existence. We prepared a series of “space bridge” - events that commemorate the space bridges used in the childhood of the BUP. The space bridges 2.0 is an updated version, consisting of a chain of 11 online seminars and hosted by individual BUP National Centres. We are also planning a Book of BUP stories. Through the eyes of the enthusiastic people thanks to whom the BUP is now thriving: you, our friends and colleagues, we are going to portray the history of the Programme and its unique atmosphere.

However unexpected and challenging the situation in the world has been, the BUP remains strong, full of energy, and ready to enter its 30s! New online courses for teachers and students, the opportunity for students to represent the BUP as Student Ambassador and assist with the digitalisation of our education, and the BUP Symposium 2021 are just some of the many things that await us. We are very happy that you are with us, grateful for your time, and delighted that, together, we are making a difference in the area of sustainability!

With these words, I want to thank all of you colleagues who have contributed in 2020 to the BUP activities. In all the 12 participating countries of the Programme and beyond. I wish you a new fruitful year ahead. Don't forget that BUP grew to become one of the biggest university networks in the world, with close to 100 universities included, because of our successful regional team work.

Sincerely yours,  
Madeleine Granvik,  
Director, Associated Professor

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Madeleine Granvik". The signature is fluid and includes a long, sweeping underline.



# Organisation structure of the BUP 2020

The extensive network is supported, as for administration, organisation, and strategic planning, by a Coordinating Secretariat at Uppsala University, Sweden, and three Associated Secretariats situated at Łódź University of Technology (Poland), Åbo Akademi University (Finland), and Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (Germany). Impulses for strategic decisions and ideas about the overall direction of the BUP come mainly – but not exclusively – from an International Board and are implemented by the Secretariats. All participants of the Programme are, however, welcome to contribute or intervene with their own suggestions. Every country has as well its National Centre, which, since 2016, take turns in holding the BUP Presidency, each lasting one semester. To find out more about the individual bodies of the Programme, please see following pages.

## National Centres 2020

Belarus  
Belarusian State University  
Elena Pilgun

Czech Republic  
Technical University of Ostrava  
Jana Kodymova and Alena Labodova

Estonia  
Euroacademia  
Tatyana Põlayeva  
Tallin University (from May)  
Helen Sooväli-Sepping

Finland  
Åbo Akademi University  
Cecilia Lundberg

Germany  
University of Applied Sciences Zittau/Görlitz  
Bernd Delakowitz

Russia  
Kaliningrad State Technical University  
Pavel Kovalishin

Latvia  
Riga Technical University  
Juris Iljins

Lithuania  
Kaunas University of Technology  
Visvaldas Varzinkas

Poland  
Technical University of Łódź  
Ireneusz Zbicinski

Slovakia  
Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra  
Barbora Cakovska

Sweden  
Södertörn University  
Joakim Ekman

Ukraine  
Ivan Franko National University of Lviv  
Iryna Kriba

## The BUP Board 2020

Olle Jansson, Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor, Uppsala University, Sweden (Chair)

Ireneusz Zbicinski, Prof., Łódź, University of Technology, Łódź, Poland (Vice Chair)

Tapio Salmi, Prof., Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Walter Leal, Prof., Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Hamburg, Germany

Hele Kiimann, Affiliated researcher, IRES, Uppsala University, Sweden

Magdalena Kuchler, Associate Senior Lecturer, Uppsala University, Sweden

Eva Friman, Adjunct Prof., Director SWEDESD, Uppsala University

Joakim Ekman, Prof., Södertörn University, Sweden

Elena Kropinova, Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Kaliningrad

Student Representatives:  
Mirjam Weituschat, University of Greifswald, Germany

Ellen Chkhitadze, Marii Curie Skodowska University, Lublin, Poland

## The Coordinating Secretariat 2020

Director: Madeleine Granvik, PhD, Assoc. Prof.

Project Coordinator: Lyudmyla Babak, MA

Web Master: Christian Andersson, PhD - *retired in October 2020*

Project Administrator: Pontus Ambros, MSc

Communications Officer: Ulrika Jansson Klintberg, BA

Intern: Dušan Bálint, Master student, Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Nitra, Slovakia

Intern: Markéta Tomášková, Master student, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

# BUP Presidency

Since 2016, National Centres have been taking turns in holding a six-month BUP presidency. The presiding Centre is responsible for the content and organisation of the BUP's annual events, promotes the BUP, and strengthens its position in the given country. It is also an opportunity for the Centre to add a unique flavour to the months of its presidency. Side by side with the usual annual events, the Centre organise any academic events and activities it wishes to launch. Its initiatives receive a financial, administrative, and other support from the Programme.

As of 2020, the countries that have so far presided are in chronological order: Latvia, Finland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, Estonia, and Russia. The two presidencies scheduled for 2020 have been, due to the unusual world circumstances, postponed until 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions surprised all of us and the rescheduling provides the Centres with the time necessary to adjust their presidency plans. In spring 2021 it is the Slovakian National Centre that will hold the torch, and then pass it to Sweden in autumn 2021.

## Plan of the BUP presidency

Spring 2021 – Slovakia  
Autumn 2021 – Sweden

Spring 2023 – Latvia  
Autumn 2023 – Finland

Spring 2025 - Germany  
Autumn 2025 - Poland

Spring 2022 – Belarus  
Autumn 2022 – Czech Republic

Spring 2024 - Ukraine  
Autumn 2024 - Lithuania

## Student representatives 2020



Mirjam Weituschat,  
University of Greifswald, Germany



Ellen Chkhitadze,  
Marii Curie Skłodowska University, Poland

There are two Student Representatives on the BUP International Board so that students have their say in the direction the Programme takes. They are elected by the BUP Student Parliament by democratic vote and their mandate is two years. The elected student becomes Deputy Students' Representative for the first year of their mandate and then Students' Representative for the second.

The BUP Student Parliament was established already in 2000s and has convened on a regular basis as a part of the annual spring Student Conference. It is a way of encouraging students to take part in planning and decision-making as well as letting them experience democratic principles and procedures in action. An example is the possibility to submit motions, that if approved by the Student Parliament will be forwarded to the BUP board.

On top of that, it is a great opportunity to network, to practice international communication and other soft skills, and a petri dish for new ideas and initiatives.

# The National Centres

National Centres have been a stable part of the organisational structure of the Programme since the mid 1990's. As of 2020, there are twelve National Centres.

The existence of the National Centres greatly benefits the Programme in several ways: they make coordination of activities at a local level easier, work as communication hubs between the Secretariats and Participating Universities in the given country, and, at the same time, students, teachers, and researchers can easily, via National Centres, get in touch with the BUP. They are located at Participating Universities and always include at least one person with an expertise and academic background in one or several of the BUP focus areas (or the so-called BUP Themes).

The Centres are led by Centre Directors who gather at least twice a year to discuss and coordinate their activities as well as offer their suggestions concerning the direction and future plans of the BUP. In the course of 2020 the Directors convened online, the first time in May and the second time in December.

## The BUP National Centre Directors 2020



Russian National Centre  
Pavel Kovalishin,  
Kaliningrad State  
Technical University



Lithuanian National  
Centre  
Visvaldas Varzinskas,  
Kaunas University of  
Technology



Belarus National Centre  
Elena Pilgun,  
Belarusian State  
University



Swedish National Centre  
Joakim Ekman,  
Södertörn University



Latvian National Centre  
Juris Iljins,  
Riga Technical University



Slovakian National Centre  
Barbora Čakovská,  
Slovak University of Agri-  
culture in Nitra



Czech National Centre  
Jana Kodymová,  
VSB - Technical  
University Ostrava



Czech National Centre  
Alena Labodová (Acting  
Director until May),  
VSB - Technical  
University Ostrava



Estonian National Centre  
Helen Sooväli-Sepping,  
Tallin University  
(from May)



Estonian National Centre  
Tatyana Pölayeva,  
Euroacademy  
(until May)



German National Centre,  
Bernd Delakowitz,  
Hochschule Zittau/  
Görlitz



Polish National Centre  
Ireneusz Zbicinki,  
Łódz University of Tech-  
nology



Finnish National Centre  
Cecilia Lundberg,  
Åbo Academi University



Ukrainian National Centre,  
Iryna Kriba,  
Ivan Franko National  
University of Lviv

# The Secretariats

## The Coordinating Secretariat 2020

Consisting of 89 Participating Universities, the BUP represents an extensive cooperation which, in order to run smoothly, requires a central body for an administrative and organisational support as well as for strategic planning. This role belongs to the Coordinating Secretariat which is located at Uppsala University, Sweden, and its tasks and responsibilities are currently divided among four people: a Director, a Project Coordinator, a Project Assistant, and a Communications Officer. These stable members of the Secretariat were, in 2020, joined by two interns.



Director  
Madeleine Granvik

The BUP Director heads the Coordinating Secretariat. The main responsibilities are strategic aspects of the Programme, planning, implementing and acting as a chair in Centre Directors', and Working Committee Meetings, and co-organising the BUP Presidency with the National Centre Director in question. The Director also support the Programme at an academic and research level by being part of Scientific Committees, hosting scientific conferences, editing scientific journals, and seeking new ways of strengthening the scientific impact of Programme participants. Madeleine Granvik has a PhD in Landscape planning and is Associate Professor in Food planning with a focus on local food systems and agricultural land. She has been directing the Programme since 2017.



Project Coordinator  
Lyudmyla Babak

The Project Coordinator is responsible for individual projects, such as Internationalisation in Practice in recent years, and represents a key figure in the practicalities of running the Programme. Welcoming new universities to the cooperation, economic matters, practical arrangement of BUP meetings and events and keeping in touch with the Programme's many contact persons are only some of the Coordinator's tasks. Lyudmyla Babak has been in charge of projects and acted as a glue of the Programme since 2008.



Project Administrator  
Pontus Ambros

The Project Assistant focuses primarily on designing and executing projects and organising activities aimed at students from Participating Universities. Coming from the background of Earth Sciences and with a special interest in food security and climate resilience, Pontus Ambros joined the Secretariat in 2018. It is also thanks to his enthusiasm that the number of activities and events for students has doubled during the past three years and his current focus is on digitalising the BUP education.



Communications Officer  
Ulrika Klintberg

The Communications Officer maintains the presence of the BUP in social media and acts as an administrator of its Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube accounts. She also, among other things, edit the BUP Newsletter, Research Notes Letter, and Annual Report and take care of the issue of informational and promotional materials. Ulrika Klintberg joined the Secretariat in 2018 and has helped the Programme to achieve significantly more visibility.



Christian Andersson – retired Web Master. Christian has a research background in botany and contributed to the Programme with his IT and other forms of expertise from 1990s until 2020. He took care of the main BUP website and other IT matters, became the first ever editor of the Research Notes Letter, and coordinated BUP awards and grants. We were also very happy we could benefit from his photography talent and devotion to document BUP events.





Intern

Dušan Bálint

Working as an Erasmus+ intern at the Secretariat from August till December 2020, Dušan assisted e.g., with the organisation of the BUP Symposium, edited video material, helped arrange online events, and worked with Pontus Ambros on digitalisation. His steps led to the Secretariat all the way from a BUP conference in Estonia that he attended as a student of Environmental Management at the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, through the International Sea Yawl Voyage and Summer School in Lviv, Ukraine.



Intern

Markéta Tomášková

Intern at the Secretariat from November 2020 till the beginning of 2021 and a student of English at Uppsala University, Markéta helped by proofreading texts to be published, assisted with the issue of new informational and promotional materials, and worked on the present Annual Report and Student Ambassadors project. Coming from Ostrava, Czech Republic, she heard about the BUP from local students and came to Uppsala with the idea of applying for an internship with its central coordinating body.

## The Associated Secretariats

As the scope of the BUP activities, projects, and events is wide and ranges from those targeted at students to those aimed at university teachers and researchers, there are also three Associated Secretariats, each in charge of a specific BUP domain. Their budgets are independent of the Coordinating Secretariat and come from local funding.

### Łódz University of Technology

It is, to name one of its most prominent activities, the main organiser of the PhD Student Training which is held every year in Rogow, Poland. The training has been offered since 2012 and represents an opportunity for PhD students to meet and discuss sustainable development in an interdisciplinary, international, and regional context at once. The training includes lectures and workshops as well as a chance for students to present their PhD work and consult their PhD projects with international experts.

The Secretariat has also been successful in bringing an increasing number of Polish universities to the Programme.

### Hamburg University of Applied Sciences

The Secretariat located in Germany hosts the BUP Research and Publications Office (BUPRaP), which assists Participating Universities in fostering their research activities and enhancing their publications output and profile.

BUPRaP operates in two main areas:  
*Research:* BUPRaP gathers and makes available information regarding open calls for funding programmes, both from the EU (e.g., Horizon 2020, ERASMUS+, Europe-AID, and INTERREG) and from other grant-awarding bodies, such as CBSS. When interested in a particular call, researchers from Participating Universities contact the BUPRaP team and discuss their involvement.

*Publishing:* BUPRaP coordinates publications on sustainable development and related issues and topics. It focuses on refereed journals with impact factors to help scientists from Participating Universities boost their careers.

### Åbo Akademi University

The Secretariat in Finland is located at the Centre for Lifelong Learning of the Åbo Akademi University, whose core mission is professional development of university teachers. Equipped with this expertise, it provides the Programme with an efficient and innovative platform for the BUP teachers' professional growth.

One of its largest recent enterprises was a course Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education, lasting from September 2019 till March 2020. It focused on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in learning methods in higher education and the participants learned how to better integrate the UN SDGs into their own courses and study programmes. The Secretariat has also since 2013 organised and funded SAIL for Teachers.

# Participating Universities 2020

The BUP has, over the three decades of its existence, grown into one of the biggest university networks in the world. In 2016, it dropped its status of a project and became a permanent institution. During 2020 the bilateral agreements with Participating Universities were reviewed by the Uppsala University legal department and the term “Participating University” replaced the formerly used “Member University”. Individual universities participate in different ways according to the interests of their students, teachers and researchers, and their areas of specialisation. The BUP offers a wide range of events, activities, and forms of support to match the needs and likes of the participants.

At the end of 2020, the Baltic University Programme consisted of **89** Participating Universities. We are looking forward to seeing even more higher learning institutions participate and benefit from the Programme by the end of 2021!

## Belarus

Baranovichi State University, Baranovichi\*  
Belarusian State Agricultural Academy, Horki\*  
Belarusian State Economic University, Minsk  
Belarusian State University, Minsk  
International Sakharov Environmental Institute of Belarusian University, Minsk  
Minsk Branch of Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Minsk  
Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno, Grodno

## Czech Republic

University of Ostrava, Ostrava  
VSB-Technical University of Ostrava, Ostrava

## Estonia

Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tartu  
Tallinn University, Tallinn  
University of Tartu, Tartu

## Finland

Åbo Akademi University, Turku  
Åland University of Applied Sciences, Mariehamn  
Arcada University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki  
Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki  
Novia University of Applied Sciences, Vaasa  
Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Pori  
Turku University of Applied Sciences, Turku  
University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä  
University of Turku, Turku

## Germany

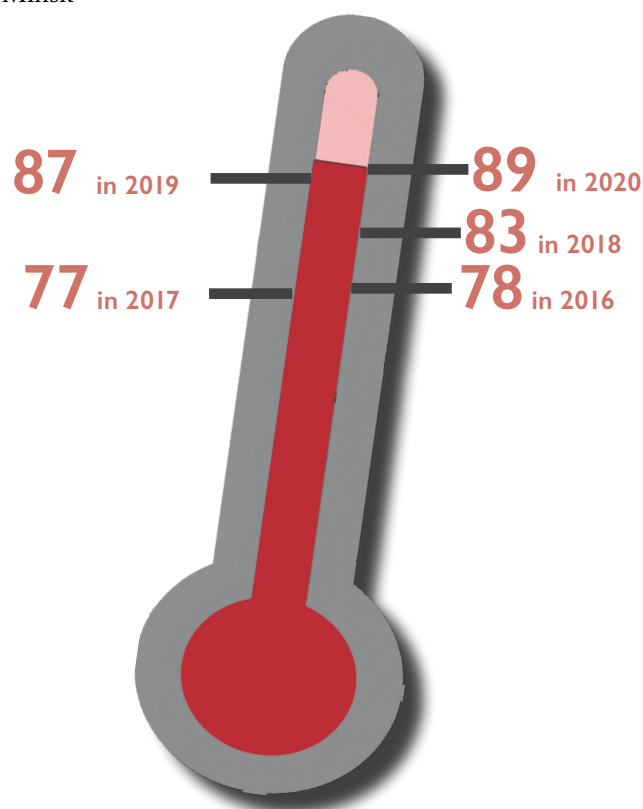
Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Hamburg  
Kiel University, Kiel  
University of Greifswald, Greifswald  
University of Rostock, Rostock  
Zittau/Görlitz University of Applied Sciences, Zittau

## Latvia

Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Jelgava  
Liepaja University, Liepaja  
Riga Technical University, Riga  
University of Latvia, Riga  
Ventspils University of Applied Sciences, Ventspils

## Lithuania

Kaunas University of Technology, Kaunas  
Klaipeda University, Klaipeda\*  
Vilnius University, Vilnius





## Poland

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan  
AGH University of Science and Technology, Krakow  
Bialystok University of Technology, Bialystok  
Gdansk University of Technology, Gdansk  
Jagiellonian University, Krakow  
Lodz University of Technology, Lodz  
Lublin University of Technology, Lublin  
Lublin University of Technology, Lublin  
Maria-Curie Sklodowska University, Lublin  
Maritime University of Szczecin, Szczecin  
Medical University of Gdansk, Gdansk\*

Medical University of Lodz, Lodz  
Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poznan  
Poznan University of Technology, Poznan  
President Stanislaw Wojciechowski State University of Applied Sciences, Kalisz  
Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities, Siedlce  
State University of Applied Sciences, Elblag  
Stefan Batory State University, Skierniewice  
University of Lodz, Lodz  
University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw  
University of Szczecin, Szczecin  
University of Warsaw, Warsaw  
UTP University of Science and Technology, Bydgoszcz  
Warsaw School of Economics (SGH), Warsaw  
West Pomeranian University of Technology, Szczecin  
Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, Wroclaw  
WSB University in Poznan, Poznan

## Russia

Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Kaliningrad  
Kaliningrad State Technical University, Kaliningrad  
Russian State Hydrometeorological University, St. Petersburg

## Slovakia

Slovak University of Agricultural in Nitra, Nitra

## Sweden

KTH, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm  
Luleå University of Technology, Luleå  
Lund University, Lund  
Malmö University, Malmö  
Södertörn University, Huddinge  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Uppsala  
Umeå University, Umeå  
University of Gävle, Gävle  
Uppsala University, Uppsala  
World Maritime University, Malmö

## Ukraine

Bila Tserkva National Agrarian University, Bila Tserkva  
Chernihiv Polytechnic National University, Chernihiv  
Ivan Franko National University of L'viv, Lviv  
Lviv National Agrarian University Volodymyr Snitynsky, Lviv  
Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv  
National Aviation University, Kyiv  
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv  
Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Odessa  
Sumy State University, Sumy  
Ternopil Ivan Pul'uj National Technical University, Ternopil  
Ternopil State Medical University, Ternopil  
Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil  
Ukrainian National Forestry University, Lviv  
V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, Kharkiv\*  
West Ukrainian National University, Ternopil

\* New Participating University

# Why become a BUP Participating University

Side by side with providing academic support, the Programme cooperates as well with international offices and university leaders on strategic issues related to internationalisation. It is not only its individual students, teachers, and researchers who will benefit from joining the Programme, but the university as a whole. The BUP acts on the fact that the academic and research community has the capacity to affect positive changes in society and supports its growth, productivity, and impact.

The regional perspective is highlighted and the approach is mainly interdisciplinary. Colleagues from a Participating University will not only have priority to take part in all BUP activities, but will get access to our events without any extra cost. Our hope is that our Programme will lead to more regional cooperation and foster a greater awareness on sustainability and democracy issues as well as facilitate exchange and mobility. In turn, we believe that this leads to more common projects and more success in funding and publications.

*A University and Higher Education Institution becomes a Participating University upon signing a contract between Uppsala University and your University (Rectors level). For more information on how to join, contact Lyudmyla Babak at the Coordinating Secretariat in Uppsala.  
Lyudmyla.Babak@balticumiv.uu.se*

Find out more



## **By joining,**

your university and your colleagues can:

- take part in conferences for university teachers, researchers, students, staff, and rectors,
- benefit from PhD students' training and tutoring, as well as apply for a PhD Award,
- participate in summer schools for master's and bachelor's students,
- attend courses for students and teachers (online as well as in-person),
- attend scientific conferences and symposium,
- contribute with scientific papers in special issues as authors and editors (depending on BUP up-to-date cooperations with open access scientific journals with impact factors)
- have their research disseminated across the network via a regular Research Notes Letter,
- become involved in projects for the university as a whole (focused on, e.g., implementation of sustainability and internationalisation), and more.

## Before SAIL



## After SAIL



As evident from the photos, taking part in a BUP and networking within the programme can have positive effects. Not only in terms of learning new things, often from a unique Baltic Sea Region perspective, but also new cultures and making new friends. Experiencing amazing things. This can also be illustrated in a story as the one below. This is a contribution to the Book of BUP stories, sent in by Elena Korshuk. She has contributed to the BUP for example by being editor in chief for the book *English for Environmental Science*, and she received the Educator of the year award from the BUP in 2005.

**“It was December 2000.** I had boarded the overnight train to go back home to Minsk from a great conference in Moscow. My only desire was to have a quiet night’s sleep. So, seeing a man in my compartment was not exactly good news, as communication was the last thing on my list of priorities. Then I saw him reading a little booklet “Ecology for primary school” or something like that. OK, I thought. A teacher. Well, it turned out to be Siarhei Darozhka, the National Centre Director in Belarus. We started discussing how to create an “English for Environmental studies” textbook and other projects all the way to Minsk. Later I honestly forgot all about it. Then he invited me to a conference in Vitebsk on that very English book. So, the overnight discussion led to many years and many projects that have given me a feeling of professional and personal development, pride and satisfaction.

The most meaningful discoveries I made were both intellectual (in the way of what I have learnt), organizational (it was quite unusual to be in the same conference with people with so many different professional backgrounds), and cross-cultural (never before had I been thanked in public for what I have done - even if it was paid for).

The BUP has always been a great way for me to learn and then teach more about various cultures, and how to better communicate with each other. It is a true professional and personal pleasure to see how yesterday’s BUP kids turn into BUP teachers. It is cool to see how students who took part in BUP events change, become responsible citizens. And needless to say, that the amazing people I meet through the BUP make life so much better! I will mention no names here - BUP is a FAMILY, where every member is precious.

So many funny and educative stories are connected with BUP. I remember Maria Winkler giving the presenters ...fly-catchers as signs of appreciation for their input into the conference. It was so weird. BUT! Later I have learnt the value of those Alessi design utensils. This is a lesson I keep teaching my students about. Always explain the value your present has for your culture. To anyone who considers joining the BUP family I would say they must grab this unique opportunity to develop yourself as a human being, as a professional.”

-Elena Korshuk, Associate Professor, Department of English and Speech Communication, Belarusian State University.

# PhD Award



*To support talented students from the network more directly, the BUP Board decided in 2013 to introduce a PhD Award that would find its first laureates in 2014. Since then, young researchers writing a high quality thesis that promote sustainable development in a Baltic Sea Region context has received the distinction. The award is established in two research areas. Winners of the PhD Award receive a distinction in the form of a diploma, a statuette and a sum up to 500 Euro to cover travel costs and/or accommodation for attending a research conference. In addition, the BUP will also cover travel costs and accommodation for presenting the research during one of the BUP events. In 2020 The Baltic University Programme decided to grant two PhD students.*

## Winner in the category of Social Sciences and Humanities

Dr. **Jolita Ceicyte**, Department of Strategic Management, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

Thesis: Implementing Responsible Innovation at the Firm Level

The PhD thesis by Jolita Ceicyte is entitled "Implementing Responsible Innovation at the Firm Level" and presents research on implementation of the concept Responsible Innovation (RI). RI is aimed at mitigating possible negative consequences of innovation by considering ethical and societal concerns and including a wider range of firm's stakeholders into the innovation implementation. Quantitative research was performed at the Medical Engineering company situated in the Baltic Sea Region. According to the evaluation committee the thesis meets the criteria of interdisciplinary approach, novelty, innovation and importance for sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

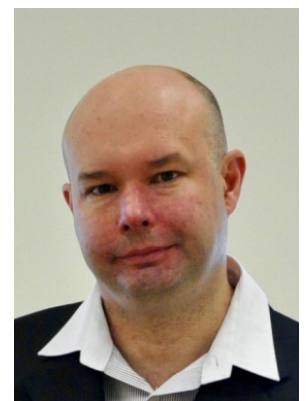


## Winner in the category of Natural Sciences and Engineering

Dr. **Vladislavs Žavtkevics**, Riga Technical University, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Transport and Aeronautics, Institute of Aeronautics, Latvia

Thesis: Use of remotely piloted aircrafts (RPA) for solving the tasks of ecological monitoring of sea aquatoriumbatch reactor with anammox granular biomass.

The PhD thesis by Vladislavs Žavtkevics entitled "Use of remotely piloted aircrafts (RPA) for solving the tasks of ecological monitoring of sea aquatorium" presents comprehensive research on development and application of the tools, devices and methods for monitoring the sea area to detect and control oil spills. Novelty elements of the thesis are confined in elaborating of the procedure for optimal flight route of remotely piloted aircraft which allows continuous monitoring of oil spills and development of technology and devices for taking water samples from sea aquatorium by RPA. The thesis meets the criteria for supporting of sustainable development delivering innovative, unmanned aerial platform and methodology for detecting and continuous monitoring of oil pollution of sea aquatorium.





# Mobility Grant

*As internationalisation in practice is one of the main long-term goals of the Programme, young scholars (PhD students and Post Docs) have, since 2017, been able to apply and compete for the Mobility Grant. The grant enables the winner to undertake a research stay at an institution of higher education abroad, where they have access to information and/or resources that are crucial for a successful outcome of their endeavours. This will develop and strengthen cooperation among young researchers in the Baltic Sea Region. The grant support young scholars from BUP Participating Universities promoting research within sustainable development. In 2020, the Mobility Grant went to two laureates:*



## Winners of BUP Mobility Grant

**Liliia Hrytsai**, PhD student, Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, Department of International Security, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS), Lublin, Poland

In order to develop her research on sustainable urban development and sustainability policies in Gdansk and Stockholm, she will visit the KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. While in Stockholm, she will work on her project under the supervision of Associate Professor Andrew Karvonen (Division of Urban and Regional Studies), collect material, and develop her research networks. Liliia's project – "The Improvement of Sustainable Urban Development of the Baltic Sea Cities" – will also be based on interviews with representatives of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) in Stockholm, and the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) in Gdansk. The mobility will thus encompass visits not only to the KTH Royal Institute of Technology, but also to the Gdansk University of Technology. The research project will contribute to our understanding of sustainable development strategies, smart cities, and sustainable urbanization in the Baltic Sea Region.



**Jenna Senecal**, PhD student, Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences, Department of Energy and Technology, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Uppsala, Sweden

Senecal's project on "Safe Nutrient Recycling of Human Urine" will contribute to research on circular economy, waste water and finite resources, as well as to actual improvements of sustainable everyday life. She has helped developing a technology that concentrates the plant nutrients from human urine into a dry fertilizer that is equivalent to mineral fertilizers. The drying system is installed in the bathroom and connected to a urine-diverting toilet where no extra piping is required. The technology has already been piloted in Sweden, Finland and France, with more implementation planned for fall 2020. In order to further develop her research, Senecal will visit the Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) in Finland.



# Report on Strategic Plan 2017-2020

*In 2016, the Baltic University Programme left the status of a voluntary network and became a permanent institution. At the time, the BUP had been active in the Baltic Sea Region for 25 years. Together with structural changes in organisation, a strategy was called for. The Strategic Plan 2017-2020 was developed and approved by the International Board. This is a short summary of what has been done.*

A new way of structuring the work of the BUP was developed: BUP Themes. The 10 themes work as an organising principle of the BUP events, information and networks. The plan was to gather information around the themes on the web page as a platform where materials could be submitted and found. We also started to gather researchers in research networks, organised on the basis of the themes.

## Target groups

University teachers, students, and researchers have been the main target groups throughout the existence of the Programme. During last period, a new target group has been added: international offices at universities. As this group are working with university representatives and bodies active in the internationalisation area, they are of strategic importance to the BUP.

The Programme also sees the potential in developing and expanding cooperation with stakeholders that share the same interests as the Programme. During the period, it has been achieved mainly through a cooperation with the Council of Baltic Sea States and the Policy Area Education of the EUSBSR (the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region).

## Objectives and activities

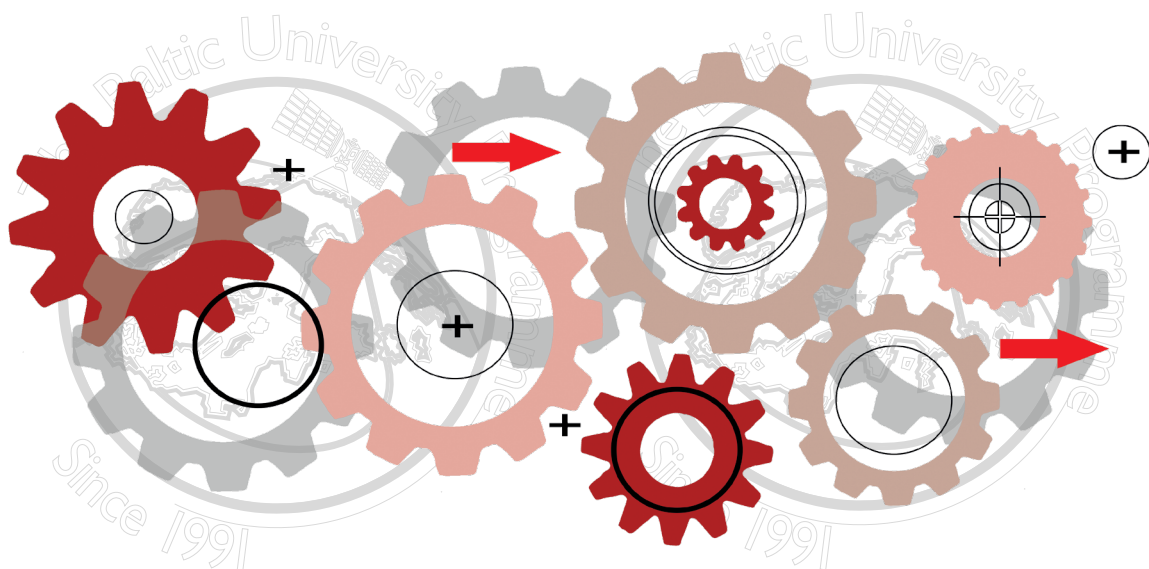
With the change of the organisational status, the priority was given to clarifying and developing internal organisation and management. Several documents were reviewed and updated as well as policies regulating the quality, roles and responsibilities within the Programme.

The Programme was bound to go through a generational shift and so, in 2018, the Coordinating Secretariat, Uppsala, was passed on to a new team. The BUP National Centres went, during the same year, through a process of renewal and formalisation, and the Programme had the pleasure of welcoming six new Centre Directors. Also, a new BUP International Board was appointed.

## Supporting the target groups

*An objective to support university teachers* within the BUP was fulfilled by a number of activities. Some took (and still take) place on an annual basis, such as the ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) and SAIL courses. Several projects, such as the Module Pool, have given us the opportunity to move forward and be more relevant. *An objective to support students and PhD students* has been pursued by an increasing number of students' events. These have given this group the chance to deepen their knowledge of sustainable development and the Baltic Sea Region (Student Conference, Summer School, SAIL, Sea Yawl Voyage, PhD Training). They have also had the opportunity to experience hands-on policy-making events (the Annual Forum for EUSBSR and Re-generation 2030). *An objective to support researchers* has been given priority to meet the wishes of Participating Universities. The BUP launched initiatives such as: the Research Notes Letter, establishing the BUPRaP (BUP Research & Publication Office), the Mobility Grant, the researchers' profiles on the BUP website, and special issues in several scientific journals.

Finally, we cannot leave out the BUP Symposium that was held for the first time in August 2020 and is to become a regular BUP event.





# BUP strategy 2021-2025

The Strategic Plan 2021 -2025 is called to define objectives and priorities for this period, and will be followed by action plans for each year of the period, describing concrete activities and events to launch and hold. At the time of writing, the new strategic plan for the BUP is only beginning to take shape. The next step is to listen to comments and ideas from representatives from the Participating Universities in the Programme, and incorporate them. Below you can see several basic points on which we are going to elaborate:

## Common objectives

The BUP will have main focus on activities that support university teachers, students and researchers within the Programme. The BUP will develop new co-operations with the Participating Universities by broadening our focus to include university strategic bodies in our agenda.

The BUP content will be related to the UN Sustainable Goals in a Baltic Sea Region context and education for sustainable development (ESD). The BUP will give priority to inter-and trans-disciplinary education and research. The BUP will stress critical thinking as a part of scientific knowledge and democracy.

## The BUP will support university teachers by:

- Provide information on SD, ESD through offering teachers courses, modules, conferences and other activities,
- develop, experiment and practice teaching methods for ESD,
- arrange activities where university teachers and students meet,
- transform education material to online education,
- bridge education and research.

## The BUP will support students by:

- Arrange activities that support knowledge on the Baltic Sea Region in general and particular in a SD context (examples of possible activities are: courses, conferences, summer camps, BUP student ambassadors, E-Tutors Programme, Master Thesis Training),
- develop a concept of Students Ambassadors at Participating Universities,
- Include students in organisation of events,
- Host interns at the Secretariat and encourage other BUP units to do so as well.

## The BUP will support researchers by:

- Provide a platform for the build of strong research co-operations,
- arrange activities such as scientific conferences and host an annual Symposium,
- disseminate recent research in, and on, the region,
- provide information about applicable opportunities within the Participating Universities,
- invite authors to contribute to scientific journals and special issues,
- continue to develop mentorship model via the BUP Supervisor Collegium.

## The BUP will support stakeholders in society by:

- support and participate in activities related to EUs Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR),
- welcome co-operations with public authorities such as municipalities, industry/business as well as non-governmental organizations.

## Regarding organisation and management, we will

- continue to develop policies on quality assurance for activities, enhance transparency and visibility (keep records on statistics, standardized evaluation form),
- implement sustainability by a “sustainability check list” for all BUP events, develop policy on sustainable expenditures,
- complete the list of BUP contact persons at Participating Universities, organise regular informational meetings with the contact persons,
- provide Participating Universities with relevant communication and PR material to inform about the BUP.



# Deep dives into future strategic steps

## A yearly focus

During 2019, the BUP focused on *students* and among other ways to support this group, arranged five major student events. During 2020, the BUP focused on *research and researchers* at our Participating Universities. This focus is a request from the Rectors Conference in 2018 and the aim is to strengthen international research cooperations. An outcome of this focus is the BUP Symposium 2020, that is to become a yearly event. It is, among other things, an opportunity for researchers to network and a vehicle for forming networks of researchers around each of the ten BUP Themes.

To help researchers and research groups achieve a greater visibility, as well as to facilitate research dissemination, the BUP website now features lists of researchers' profiles grouped under the BUP Themes.

During 2021 we plan to focus on giving support to *university teachers*. This will be done by:

- modules of teaching material
- courses
- e-tutors
- and publishing a new introductory course on ESD

Due to the restrictions in connection to the pandemic, the time frame of the above mentioned support might be somewhat altered.

## Launch of the BUP Supervisor Collegium

The BUP Supervisor Collegium will allow participating PhD students to get input from BUP mentors/supervisors. The idea builds on the existing mentorship model used during the annual BUP PhD Training, where each PhD student get input. The BUP Supervisor Collegium will allow for mentorship during a longer period and a formalized supervision. This is an opportunity for PhD students to get a co-supervisor from another university in the Baltic Sea Region, but also an opportunity for researchers to take on the role as co-supervisor. This is an academic merit, especially for young researchers with ambition to become Associate Professor and something the BUP is eager to offer. The BUP PhD Supervisor Collegium will arrange meetings and seminars for PhD students and also PhD supervisors to exchange knowledge and experience in the role being a good supervisor. Furthermore it will serve as a forum for support, mediation of supervision, and to encourage researchers to take the role being co-supervisor and/or mentor for PhD students at other Participating Universities within BUP. The BUP Supervisor Collegium will be launched during 2021.



## Student Ambassadors

The BUP is introducing a position of Student Ambassadors at Participating Universities. An ambassador will promote the programme at their home university and assist the local BUP staff in their work. The scope is to create a network with engaged students, that can support the Programme and recruit new students to courses, conferences and other events. In return, ambassadors will receive a travel grant to participate in a BUP activity.

The BUP originally intended to kick off the Ambassador programme in spring 2020. It was postponed because of the ongoing pandemic. In part due to the postponement of a number of BUP activities and events. Ambassadors would have otherwise promoted.

We are looking forward to hearing from even more students enthusiastic about international cooperation and sustainable development. Students that are interested in becoming an ambassador are welcome to contact the BUP Coordinating Secretariat in Uppsala for further information.

# Annual BUP activities

Every year the Baltic University Programme organises a large number of events and activities that are interspersed throughout the year, some of them taking place on an annual basis. Certain events have already a long tradition, while they keep evolving as new findings, methods, and new generations of students and instructors arrive.

However versatile, all BUP activities are designed so as to bring us closer to achieving the goal of the Programme: a successful implementation of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. As we believe that strong regional research communities and ground-breaking teaching methods are key to this mission, the Programme offers every year activities and events targeted both at students and university teachers and researchers. Alongside with these, the BUP continually supports scientists regarding research publication, gives a boost to young researchers in the form of a PhD Award and a Mobility Grant, and lets students make decisions and practice their communication and other skills through the Student Parliament and/or by becoming BUP student representatives.

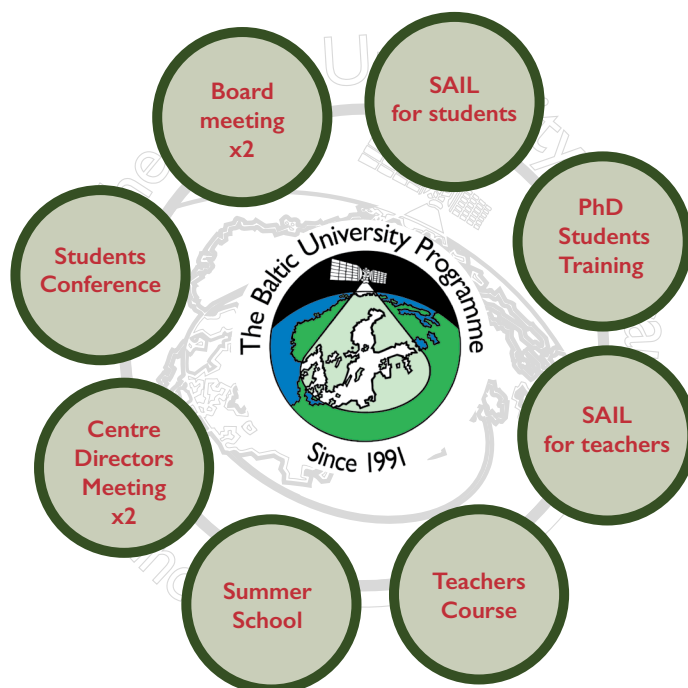


Diagram indicating the BUP annual events, and meetings that are vital for a successful continuation of the Programme.

As the world was in the early 2020 hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in long-lasting travel restrictions and a need to keep social distance, many of the annual events had to be postponed. The unexpected situation also worked for us, nonetheless, as a strong learning impulse. We managed to move some of the events, such as the BUP Symposium 2020, online, and realized the importance of online work, digitalisation, and related skills for the BUP and identified them as one of our new goals.

## Participation statistics

For every BUP event there is always more received applications than there are places. The high demand is a good sign for the Programme, which is in return working on enlarging its offer. With every event the BUP strives to create a diverse group of people, from as many countries, Participating Universities, and disciplines as possible. We keep track of the participation levels of individual countries and universities, and to achieve balance we incentivize and encourage those who participate less than the rest by pinpoint to them certain calls for applications. Usually in the Annual Report, we include statistics on the involvement of Participating Universities according to countries in 2020 BUP events. Please take into consideration, nonetheless, that 2020 did not take its expected course, and we will therefore leave out the statistics for 2020.

## Calendar of activities in 2020

### March

5 - 6 March  
BUP Teachers Course on ESD in Higher Education II  
Lviv, Ukraine

### August

25 - 26 August  
BUP Symposium 2020  
The BUP, Online

22 - 24 August  
BUP Student delegation and BUP seminar at the Re-Generation 2030 Summit  
Online

### October

20 October  
BUP Student delegation at the 11th Annual Forum of the EUSBSR  
Åbo Akademi, Online

29 October  
International Research Seminar: Baltic Sea Region - cooperation without limits?  
Belarusian State University

### November

11 November  
Scientific Conference of PhD Students  
Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra

In the following pages, the annual activities in 2020 are presented alongside other more specific events.

# The BUP Student Delegation at the EU's Annual Forum for the Baltic Sea Region:

- A positive learning journey

Text by: Cecilia Lundberg

*"If BUP cannot bring the students to Åbo Akademi University, then we have to bring Åbo Akademi to them". So went my thoughts at the beginning of May, and this seemed to be both a Covid-safe and climate friendly way for students to interact and take part in our BUP student delegation at the EU's Annual Forum for the Baltic Sea Region.*



We would have loved to welcome the BUP Student Delegation to Turku, but to meet virtually was a good compensation: Photo by: Cecilia Lundberg.

About thirty students from the entire Baltic Sea Region met virtually for the three-day-long program in the middle of October 2020. Besides attending the EU forum, they had an opportunity to meet and actively take part in our special BUP program a half day before and a half day after the EU event.

As part of the organizing team – BUP Finland at Åbo Akademi University together with the secretariat at Uppsala University – it was a pleasure to welcome students from twenty different BUP member universities in ten countries (Belarus, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Slovakia and Sweden) to our delegation. Of course, there is a value in meeting in reality, but there is also

an aspect of equality when no cost for travel is included. This was the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EUSBSR, EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, which this time had the city of Turku as host and took place on the 20 October 2020. The forum is a platform for politicians, researchers, NGO's and business companies to meet and discuss the common future of the Baltic Sea Region.

Our aim arranging a BUP student delegation to take part in the EUSBSR forum is to give an insight for the students to the collaboration and common work that take place within and between the states around the Baltic Sea. There is much going on also outside the academic world, and it is important to be aware of that. At events such as the EUSBSR, a diverse bunch of stakeholders come together. Therefore, it is a perfect arena for networking and gathering knowledge from new angels. The theme of the Annual Forum was "Our Region, Our Future – Towards a Decade of Innovation and Sustainability". In total, the forum gathered almost 800 followers and consisted of a dense program of panel debates, speeches, workshops and networking opportunities.

All the arrangements and the program of the forum were very well adapted to the on-line format. Most of the organizers were in Turku, but all the other contributors took part from their home countries, perhaps from their own homes. A special bonus for our delegation was that the BUP Director, Madeleine Granvik, was one of the panellists together with among others the Finnish Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Krista Mikkonen, at one of the plenaries. That gave BUP nice visibility in the EUSBSR.

During the latest months, we have learned how challenging it can be to sit alone by our computer and take part in webinars for a whole day, or even several days in a row. Therefore, I think that our common half days before and after the Forum was very valuable for our BUP participants.



About thirty students from twenty universities and ten countries in the Baltic Sea Region took part of our BUP Delegation. Photo by: Pontus Ambros.



## The first day, a sustainable Baltic Sea

During our first day, the student delegation was offered a scientific background to various aspects of the Baltic Sea. Researchers from the strategic research profile The Sea at Åbo Akademi University presented their work. The Baltic Sea was regarded from different angles when a marine biologist presented the ecological state and the biological challenges, followed by two political scientists talking about the political governance of the Baltic Sea Region. From the perspective of industrial management, we got a presentation of the situation of sustainable shipping in the Baltic Sea. The day ended with a presentation including practical tips in how to communicate science to various groups of audience.

Our BUP student representatives at the international board, Mirjam Weituschat and Ellen Chkhitadze, had an important role in providing us with relaxing ice-breaking exercises and games to lighten up the program and to give the feeling of connection on distance. A big thank to both of you for that!

## The final day, discussions among participating students

The third and last day was the most interactive and challenging for the students. The university teacher Johanna Lindström from international marketing at Åbo Akademi University is very experienced in “projectificating” her courses instead of traditional lecturing. Therefore, it was an honour for us in having Johanna as the facilitator of our workshop with the topic “What’s the next step to an innovative, sustainable and connected Baltic Sea Region?”

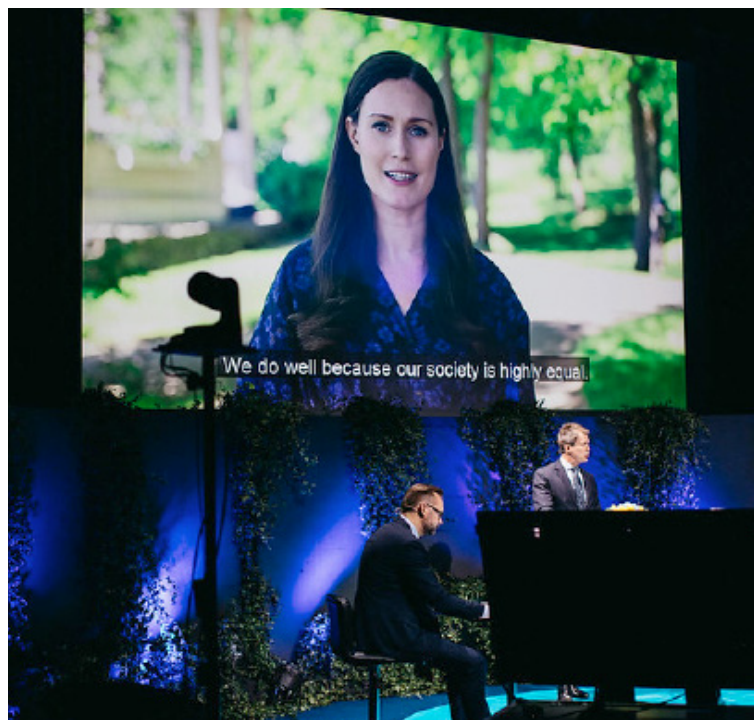
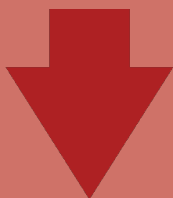
The students started to discuss the theme very broadly in smaller – but diverse seen from nationality and field of study – groups. They have the responsibility themselves to choose an angle of their interest, it could be young people, bioeconomy, environment etc. When the discussions had started up, the challenge of the day was presented. The groups had about an hour to produce and present a 3-minute film on the suggested topic.

## Outcomes of the delegation

It was inspiring to follow this process. The students worked at the task with positive energy and engagement. The result was also amazing: to see people that did not know each other previously to work together on distance and come up with brilliant films during a very limited amount of time!

The total number of applicants for our delegation was almost one hundred students. Due to the of the workshop, it impossible for us to welcome everybody this time. However, the number of interests clearly shows the need and willingness to broaden knowledge and create new contacts. Especially during times of social distances and locked down societies. Also, from the organizing side, this inspired us to arranging similar events in the future. All the participants received a certificate, after successfully completed the three days of sessions, submitting a short reflection of their learning process, and finished a short film together with other students about their experiences at the Annual Forum.

**Watch the films on  
the BUP YouTube  
channel**



The Annual Forum of EUSBSR was well organized with presentations and greetings of many stakeholders in the region. Here the Finnish Prime minister Sanna Marin. Photo by: Jaska Poikonen)

# The BUP Symposium 2020

*In late August, the Baltic University Programme held the BUP Symposium 2020, which was moved on-line due to health concerns combined with travel restrictions. The arrangement was hosted by The BUP Coordinating Secretariat in Uppsala for the first part, the second part hosted by the BUPRaP office in Hamburg. The focus areas of the symposium were: The BUP Research Forum: Research and Innovation for a Sustainable Baltic Sea Region (taking place from 25<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020); and: 5<sup>th</sup> World Symposium on Sustainable Development at Universities.*

The goal of the scientific conference, which focuses on the ten BUP Themes, is to facilitate the spread and sharing of new findings and ideas among researchers and students in the Baltic Sea Region, pertaining mainly to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has also the potential to become an arena for future cooperations leading to innovations that have the power to initiate changes and transformations in society. The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains 17 goals with respective indicators to monitor progress. The academic and research community represents a crucial group of stakeholders who can strongly support the achievement of the SDGs. Whether it is at the global, regional, or local level, universities can contribute in multiple ways; through the generation of knowledge, innovations, data, technical analyses, and, above all, by training the next generation of students in building a sustainable future. The Baltic University Programme participates in these efforts as a regional actor.

Working for sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region context requires an inter- and transdisciplinary approach to overcome challenges and to create new possibilities. The BUP Research Forum at the BUP Symposium 2020, held on-line in August last summer, documents and promotes scholarly research that stresses sustainability challenges. It also shows how efforts within different research fields can contribute to the implementation of sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region. It is great to see that so many researchers submitted their abstracts to the BUP Research Forum. As many as 84 oral presentations were held at the Symposium, while the number of the researchers involved in the presented research is around 219 people. On top of that, we published a poster session on our web page.

One of the outcomes of the research forum is the Book of Abstracts that represents a collection of the presented research. We coordinated, supported and acted as guest editors for special issues in scientific journals. We invited BUP colleagues to publish full articles in different journals.

You are warmly welcome to watch the recordings of some of the top conference presentations on our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/Balticuniversity>).

Our hope is to establish active research networks within this group of people and to extend the cooperation to include even more researchers. Together as academics and a research community, we can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.



BUP director Madeleine Granvik, preparing for the opening speech at the BUP Symposium 2020. Photo by: Ulrika Jansson Klintberg



Technical host Markella, giving support to Theme Coordinator Joakim Ekman running the Sustainable Societies panel at the BUP Symposium 2020. Photo by: Pontus Ambros



# Research and innovation for a sustainable Baltic Sea Region

- On-line event
- 25 - 26 August 2020
- Research presentations
- International outreach

BUP Symposium 2020 web page with further information and material:



Technical hosts Marketa and Joel, giving support Sustainable Water Resources panel and Circular Economy panel at the BUP Symposium 2020. Photo by: Pontus Ambros



Technical host Dusan giving support to Theme Coordinator Henner Busch running the Urban-Rural Development panel at the BUP Symposium 2020. Photo by: Pontus Ambros

## Outcome of the BUP Symposium 2020

**84** oral presentations

**17** scientific posters

**19** presentation videos

Book of Abstract

ca **52** full papers published

**We would like to thank once again all our speakers, organisers, and volunteers, who made this event possible.**

# BUP Teachers Course on ESD in Higher Education 2019-2020

*Text: Sinikka Suomalainen, BUP Associate Secretariat, Åbo Akademi University*

The third longer BUP Teachers course in ESD with two workshops in place combined with online participation ended in Lviv in March. The participants had worked with their Change projects on sustainability during this 6-month course online with each other after the first workshop at the Łódź University of Technology in October. In Lviv, the programme consisted of local presentations, further working with the change projects led by Dr. Shepherd Urenje, SWEDESD, and finally reporting of them. We were extremely happy that we were able to conduct this final workshop just before the COVID-19 situation started influence all travel and arrangements. We were also very happy that it was possible to organise the workshop at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, kindly hosted by the BUP Centre director of Ukraine Iryna Kriba. We had also possibility to visit Lviv Polytechnic National University near-by. Totally 22 participants, as professor, lecturers, PhD student, from six countries completed the course. Some of the participants published an article about their change projects in the journal *Studia Periegetica* (3(31)/2020). The BUP Associate Secretariat at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, organised this course.



Participants gathering at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv.

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The course, with the title Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Higher Education, has now been running with more or less the same shape three times. The learning outcomes for the participants are divided into five parts. There are materials, exercises and interactions online, two workshops, an individual project, and an (optional) possibility to publish the project work and the individual learning process in an peer-reviewed journal.

All participants from former courses in 2017-2020, will be invited to an on-line conference in 2021. To share experiences, get new insights, and examine how the different Change projects have met the reality.

# CASCADE

## – a Project promoting the awareness of Climate Risk Reduction in the Baltic Sea Region

Text and photo: Cecilia Lundberg, BUP Centre Director in Finland

*Have you heard about the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction? The global changes in climate are both unpredictable and extreme. The need for strategies to prevent disasters and address risks increases. The UN Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction was adopted in Sendai, Japan in 2015. In connection with the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework emphasis on disaster risk management.*

The project CASCADE – Community Safety Action for Supporting Climate Adaptation – deals with risk management of climate change at the urban level in the Baltic Sea Region. The focus is to increase the practical risk management capability. By developing positive cascading effects at the fire and rescue services by training programs, a connection between local administrations and national civil protection authorities is strengthened. That is of importance both for the awareness of the Sendai indicators and the challenges of climate change risks. CASCADE will also further contacts between local practitioners and experts at universities and governances, contributing to mutual learning processes.



**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After this lesson you will:

- Understand what the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is, how it came to be and how it can be implemented in the BSR.
- Know how Sendai Framework is connected to Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement.
- Be able to raise awareness of the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and its implementation in the BSR.

BUP Finland is developing an open curriculum on Risk management due to climate change in the Baltic Sea Region consisting of three lectures, exercises and glossary, available on the website of BUP Finland in spring 2021.

CASCADE develops a risk assessment methodology, applicable to the Baltic Sea Region climate change risks. The activities are training courses and policy dialogues. The trainings are aimed at local decision makers, spatial planners, and rescue services for example. To ensure the continuity and a general interest of the material produced, Cascade will also provide a course curriculum for continuing education at university level.

The content of CASCADE is important for a wider group of people, not only academia. The role of BUP Finland is mainly to develop a course curriculum that can will be available for use. The curriculum will consist of materials for three lessons, exercises, and a terminology glossary. It will be available on the webpage of BUP Finland, with links on the BUP main web site.

The CASCADE project is running for 2.5 years, started in 2019 and ends in the summer of 2021. Due to the pandemic situation, the work has been delayed, and therefore the project time was prolonged with 6 months. CASCADE is funded by European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (DG Echo). The City of Turku/Southwest Finland Emergency Service functions as the lead partner. In total there are nine project partners from the Baltic Sea Region, among them BUP Finland/Åbo Akademi University. CASCADE is appointed as a flagship project of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region under Policy Area Secure.



The crew from Åbo Akademi university behind the curriculum: Cecilia Lundberg and Sinikka Suomalainen from BUP Finland, and Johanna Fredenberg from the Open University.

For more information,  
visit web sites:

BUP Finland: [bup.fi](http://bup.fi)

CASCADE: [cascade-bsr.eu](http://cascade-bsr.eu)

BUP main: [balticuniv.uu.se](http://balticuniv.uu.se)





# BUP projects 2020

## Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Curriculum: Towards a regional climate change education

*For more than a year, a group of 30 researchers and university teachers from nine countries and more than 14 academic institutions, have been cooperating to develop a new BUP course module with the focus on Climate Change in the Baltic Sea Region*

The project, that goes under the name “Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Curriculum”, is financed by the Swedish Institute and aims to create a holistic and regional material for teaching climate change at the undergraduate level. So far, 15 transdisciplinary lectures on fundamental climate change knowledge is under development. The 30 participants in the project are divided into smaller working groups, focusing on topics according to the participants expertise. Each lecture includes a text, presentation, a teacher’s guide and additional materials, such as exercises, workshop materials and links to additional reading.

During the spring, the project group has met twice online to continue the development of the project. Initially, the aim was to launch the course module at the BUP Symposium 2021 in Visby, Sweden. However, due to the ongoing pandemic, the project hasn’t been able to progress according to plan. With generous support from the project financier Svenska Institutet, instead the launch of the module is postponed until August 2021. All materials will then be published online at the BUP web page.

The following partners have contributed:

- Baranovich State University, Belarus
- Belarusian State University, Belarus
- EKAPRAEKT NGO, Belarus
- Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany
- Hochschule Zittau / Görlitz, Germany
- Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University, Russia
- Kaliningrad State Technical University, Russia
- Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania
- Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine
- Russian State Hydrometrological University, Russia
- University of Greifswald, Germany
- University of Tartu, Estonia
- University of Turku, Finland
- Uppsala University, Sweden
- Vilnius University, Lithuania
- WSB Wroclaw, Poland
- Åbo Akademi University, Finland



Meeting held on-line with host and Project Leader Pontus Ambros



## Digital at home: new steps in internationalization of education

*We are happy to inform that the BUP has received support from the Swedish Institute. The Swedish Institute is a government agency that works to increase the outside world's interest to Sweden and promotes cooperation and long-term relations with other countries by supporting among others educational projects.*

This grant was given to the project “Digital at home: new steps in internationalization of education”. Internationalisation has become one of the main priorities for universities and other educational establishments. As it is widely discussed, most universities work on the implementation of this notion into their structure and work. At the same time, digitalisation of education has been on the agenda for many years. And a need for digitalisation became urgent due to recent circumstances brought on by Covid-19.

Thus, this new project will deal with Internationalization of higher education, aiming at rethinking the concept of internalisation and how it is being conducted in education at universities. The project will touch upon the concept of Internationalization at Home, Internationalization of Learning and Teaching, and Virtual Exchange with the main focus on enhancing the digitalization of education.

The partners will develop and apply a relevant methodology for internationalisation and virtualisation on the thematic areas of Climate Change and Baltic Sea Regional Studies. Working in international groups the partners will use existing, or develop new digitalised content for the courses, integrating them in their existing syllabi at university. Furthermore, the piloting of two semi-virtual course and virtual exchange will be done by the partners. The project will result in a guidebook for on-line internationalised teaching, which will be spread among BUP Participating Universities.

## The BUP Module Pool

*The vision of the BUP Module Pool-project is to create an interdisciplinary pool of study modules that address sustainability and which all students of the Baltic Sea Region can benefit from.*

In the end of 2019, Greifswald University, the University of Applied Sciences Zittau/ Görlitz, the University of Rostock (BUP participating universities from Germany) and Eberswalde University of Sustainable Development have joined forces to develop this vision. By each providing two modules (approximately 6-8 ECTS) already existing at their universities for the module pool, an interdisciplinary mix of different aspects of sustainability was accomplished. The short-term goal is to make these courses available for all students at the BUP Participating Universities in a digital format (as videos or video conferences) and thus suitable for remote learning. All courses are offered in English to ensure the possibility to expand the module pool to other BUP universities. We aim to enlarge the course offer for international students and provide the opportunity for all students to develop their sustainability expertise and language skills.

One of the contributions to the module pool is a course in which students independently develop a project and present their concept as a video they shoot and edit themselves. The course is applying the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and thus is designed to empower the participating students to actively shape the society they live in, in a sustainable and creative way.

# BUP communication short facts

One of the most important traits of the BUP is the ability to communicate and cooperate with a large number of people and facilitate their networking and communication. The Programme's growing impact and reach affirms that we can accomplish great things in relation to the ten BUP Themes and sustainable development in general. We are delighted to see an increasing number of people follow and join our events and activities and hope to welcome even more!

Below you can see an overview of the Programme's online and social media presence as well as of the communication channels utilised in 2020.

- We run two web sites: [balticuniv.uu.se](http://balticuniv.uu.se), and [bupsymposium2020.se](http://bupsymposium2020.se).
- The total number of visitors during 2020 was lower than the year before: 17.787 compared to 23.865. The historical statistics show an increase in visitors to the web page when there is a greater number of BUP activity, and therefore the fact that there were not as many during 2020 explains the decrease.
- The most frequent visitor during 2020 was: female (63%), age 25-34 (35%), from Ukraine, Poland or Sweden.
- We published 83 more research profiles during 2020.

## BUP Reach 2020

The reach of information from The Baltic University Programme is interesting as it tells us something of how many colleagues that are interested in the BUP and what we do. It also indicates the size of an audience for our news, calls and material. The numbers here gives an overview that indicates the situation.

- Facebook: The BUP Facebook page was established in 2011 and had 1853 followers at the end of 2020. It means an increase with 12% during the past year. Of the followers, 65% are women, age 25-34, from Poland, Ukraine or Sweden. The total of 43 posts were published.
- YouTube: This channel was established 2008, and had 288 subscribers at the end of 2020. This is an increase with 70% during the past year. 22 new videos were published during 2020, and featured e.g. oral presentations at the BUP Symposium 2020, and EUSBSR student opinions.
- LinkedIn: This channel was established in 2016 and had 115 followers at the end of 2020. The number of published posts were 57 in the course of the year.
- Instagram: This channel was established in February 2020, and had 100 followers at the end of 2020.

When publishing BUP Newsletter, Research Notes Letter and BUP Weekly, we distribute them via our mailing lists. We have different lists for contact persons at our Participating Universities and for a wider spectrum of subscribers – anybody who is interested in the BUP can subscribe and receive news. The contact persons e-mail list has 575 subscribers (an increase with 32% during the past year), and the generic list has 2329 subscribers (an increase with 5% during the past year) at the end of 2020. We never add e-mail addresses to our lists without consent.

Communication material that was published during 2020 comprised: three issues of Newsletter, 15 issues of BUP Weekly, three issues of Research Notes Letter, one updated version of the BUP general brochure, and of course the previous Annual Report on 2019. The Newsletter included information on past activities, The BUP Weekly included upcoming activities and calls from BUP and its Participating Universities. The Research Notes Letter highlighted recent research findings by colleagues at our Participating Universities, within our BUP Themes and the Baltic Sea Region as context.



# Published educational material and research papers

Since its beginning, BUP colleagues have been active in producing BUP material on sustainability and the Baltic Sea Region. Publications include text books and booklets intended for education purposes. The materials also extend to videos that in many cases is a complement to the text books, but also as an outcome of some of the BUP events (such as research presentations and lectures). Much of the material is still being used and can be accessed via our web page as on-line material. We even have some printed copies to give away. You are welcome to contact the Coordinating Secretariat if you are interested. Unfortunately we will not be able to pay or book any shipments.

In 2020, we started to plan and produce new educational material. The goal is to first issue an online module course and then, as the end result, an updated BUP module pool.

The BUP has also entered into a cooperation with the scientific journals Sustainability and Baltic Region. Within the former journal, we have published a special issue "Environmental Education for Sustainable Development" (consisting of 23 papers) and a special issue "Challenges and Possibilities for Sustainable Development in a Baltic Sea Region context" (around 15 papers) is currently in the publication process. Within the latter journal, Baltic Region, we are about to publish a special issue "Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region" (around 10 papers). These publications are one of the outcomes of the BUP Symposium 2020. As researchers from Participating Universities have expressed their interest in this kind of support, we are planning on continuing in this direction and broadening the types of publications assistance we offer.

## Presentation of researchers within BUP


One of the main aims of the BUP is to help researchers achieve more visibility and to boost research cooperation among experts from Participating Universities. The BUP main website therefore features profiles of individual researchers which are categorised according to the ten BUP Themes. We hope it will help you find colleagues with whom you can discuss your research as well as your future project partners. At the end of 2020, the website listed the total of 83 profiles.

We would like to invite you to join the growing list and let your colleagues from the Region know about your areas of expertise. All you need to do is to fill in a form available on our website. Your published research profile would feature:

- Your academic title
- First name and last name
- Position at university (e.g. researcher, senior lecturer, professor etc.)
- Department
- University and university logotype
- Keywords (max 10)
- Slogan
- Link to profile on ResearchGate or similar
- A professional photo

The profile can also include your e-mail address, but only if you explicitly convey your wish to do so.

**BUP THEME COORDINATOR**




PhD.  
**Cecilia Lundberg**  
Åbo Akademi University

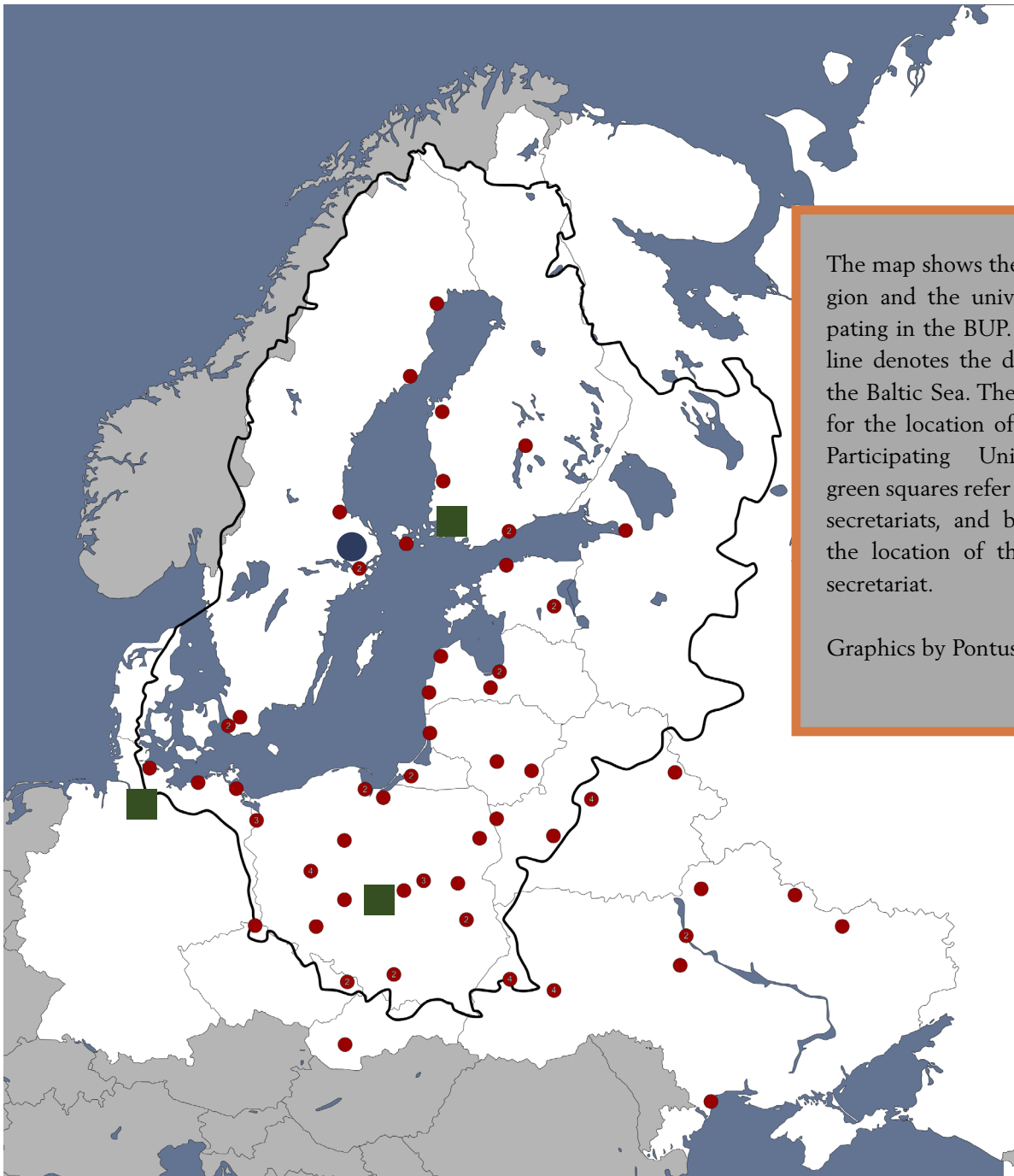
*"Develop ESD within BUP"*

Keywords: ESD, Higher Education, Baltic Sea

[Research Profile at Åbo Akademi](#)



# BUP map 2020



The map shows the Baltic Sea Region and the universities participating in the BUP. The thin black line denotes the drainage area of the Baltic Sea. The red dots stand for the location of one or several Participating Universities. The green squares refer to the associate secretariats, and blue dot marks the location of the coordinating secretariat.

Graphics by Pontus Ambros.



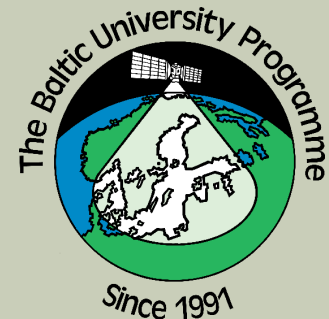
# Explaining the BUP logotype

The satellite that figures as a central feature in the BUP logo refers to the beginnings of the Programme in 1990s.

In the late 1980s, several academic meetings and conferences were held with the vision to spur academic cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. At the time, little was known about each other. There was both a keen interest in becoming more familiar with colleagues in the region and their work, but also a necessity in order to secure a healthy region and environment. Out of several ideas on how to get to know and to learn from each other, the design to use novel technique won ground. This would secure a larger number of participants able to attend. The decision fell upon using a satellite TV broadcast system that would facilitate the creation of a university programme designed to spur cooperation.

The first satellite TV broadcast was launched in October 1991. It lasted two hours and featured documentaries from several Baltic Sea Region countries accompanied with comments from researchers. By May 1992, ten such broadcasts had been held with a total of 3600 students from nine countries participating. Gradually, the broadcasts were staged not only from Sweden but from all countries in the Region, from St. Petersburg to Gdansk and Berlin.

Even though technology advanced fast and it has been a long time since satellite broadcasting was used, the BUP chooses to keep the satellite in its logo to honour its history. It was the satellite that connected people living far apart and across a sharp information and political divide and so we let it keep uniting and enlightening the Baltic Sea Region in the logo.



# BUP history

*The following texts are extracts from texts on the BUP history, written by three different directors: Lars Rydén, Paula Lindroos and Madeleine Granvik. The full texts are published on our web page, where you are welcome to read more.*



## 1991-2001: Dramatic years of political change

*The Baltic University Programme originates from the years of dramatic political change at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s. Until then, the East-West divide had been very solid, a real iron curtain, which offered few opportunities for academic cooperation.*

### **Dramatic years of System Change**

Uppsala University had however, exceptional and long-term exchange programmes that were operational during the Cold War. But in general, we lived in a divided world which the students of today never experienced and probably have difficulties imagining. The changes started with glasnost and perestroika in the late 1980s. East-West inter-university contacts slowly developed. The interest for contacts specifically in the Baltic Sea region soon mounted. In April 1989 my proposal to develop a university cooperation in the Baltic Sea region based on satellite TV was supported by Uppsala University. The first conference devoted to develop a satellite-TV university network, was in February 1991. The invitation to this meeting had not been easy. The knowledge of universities in communist Central and Eastern Europe was minimal. Where to write invitation letters and to whom?

### **The first Satellite TV Course on Environment**

A conference in Kalmar was unanimously deciding on developing a Baltic Sea region university network to produce a satellite TV based course. It was focusing on the environment and to be called "The Baltic Sea Environment". The title had intentionally a double meaning, both alluding to environmental science and the geographical area. In the spring and summer of 1991, the number of universities which wanted to take part increased all the time. In the month of May, it had reached 70. The participating universities were offered satellite receivers and satellite discs for a reduced price. Some were shipped and I personally brought many to the universities. On the brink of boarding the ferry to Tallinn 21 August 1991, the trip was interrupted as news on the putsch in Moscow came. Streets were occupied by tanks. The failure of the putsch was in practice the beginning of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the independence of the three Baltic States were recognized a few days later.

The first satellite TV broadcast was staged in October 1991. It had two hours filled with documentaries from many of the countries in the region. Up to May 1992, ten such broadcasts were performed including two so-called space bridges, discussions between three universities in the network, each with many students taking part. For each broadcast, a small book on the topic was produced and distributed. Student music bands entertained in the breaks and researchers formed panels.

### **The continuation - our common regional history**

During this first year of the Baltic University Programme, the first fully free election in Poland was held in October 1991. The Soviet Union was dissolved in December 1991. And a second and much stronger Convention for the protection of the Baltic Sea was adopted in spring of 1992. The number of BUP participating universities had increased to 84 and universities in Belarus and Ukraine had been invited to take part. In the fall of 1992 plans were made for a second course. This time on the region itself, its peoples, history, languages and religions. It was much more of a challenge since here we started to run into sensitive areas. How to deal with Nazism and Stalinism? Some argued that this should not be done. My thinking was that we need to talk about this, especially young people need to talk about this. And then who should stage this if not universities?

### **The basic idea - Regional university networking - spreading around the world**

The Baltic University Programme as a regional university cooperation became a success. Several others have explored and developed university networking during the years using the Baltic University Programme as a model and supporter. Examples include Uniadriion, and Black Sea Universities Network. Several networks are still active but all much smaller than the Baltic University Programme.





Some participants from the Baltic Family Conference in Lithuania in October 1990. On their way to Klaipeda - called Memel until the Soviet occupation in 1940. The lady to the left fled Memel as a refugee, but now lives in Los Angeles. Lars Rydén in the middle with a cup of coffee. Geographer Prof. Thomas Lundén, who took the photo, enjoyed coming to areas he never thought would be possible to visit.



Student group onboard the Tall Ship Pogoria, during the Course BUP SAIL. Photo: BUP

## 2001-2011: The new Millenium

*A decade since its foundation, BUP courses needed to be updated. This resulted for example in the issue of the book *Environmental Science: Understanding, Protecting and Managing the Environment in the Baltic Sea Region* (2003), co-authored by 80 scholars. Often projects also led to production of new course materials. One example is the BUUF - Baltic University Urban Forum, another was SUPERBS – Sustainable Urban Patterns around the Baltic Sea. The BUP Coordinating Secretariat in Uppsala coordinated several applied projects together with cities, authorities and organisations.*

### **Sustainable Development and Higher Education**

In 2002, the UN conference on Environment and Development, or the Rio+10, was organised in Johannesburg. The concept of sustainable development now broadened. Action plans and follow up was often organised (meta-) regionally. A regional university network like the Baltic University Programme was well positioned to take part in this work. The BUP became a member of the Baltic 21 network in late 1990's, and later also leader of a Lighthouse project (EHSA). The BUP also participated in the project EcoRegion (2007-2011), which developed and tested practical solutions for sustainability, economic growth hand in hand with environmental integrity and social justice. Later, the BUP became a strategic partner for higher education to the Council of Baltic Sea States. The BUP also participated in the shaping of the first EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

In many different policy discussions, the role of education was underlined. Understanding of the wide and complex concept of sustainable development (SD) was in focus in many of the BUP meetings, conferences and discussions. The role of education, contents and methods were often on the agenda. It was noted that SD is an evolving concept which changes over time. Differences were also visible among the universities and countries in the BSR, where differences in focus typically could range from environmental security to demography and economy. There was an observable gap between the universities' activities and the goal. Identified problems included: an already crowded curriculum, too demanding topic, and limited institutional commitment. The big question was how universities could change their organisation, research and education in a way which was organisational-ly feasible, academically acceptable and educationally sound?

### **Consolidation of the network**

The Baltic University Programme further expanded, and in this period the number of participating universities (non-paying, editors note) exceeded 200. The BUP became connected through nodes in each participating country. The nodes started to play an important role for the network, in discussions and arrangements and information sharing.

There was at this time a demand from academics to share experiences regarding ideas, resources, networks, and opportunities. As a consequence, internationalisation became an important asset for university leaders to further support and consolidate the network.



## Students enter the Stage

In addition to the courses given at their home universities, the BUP organised each year two international conferences. The topics were sustainability-related and followed the political currents. Students learned how to cooperate in international teams, and to shape their own international contacts and networks. The spring conference included the Students' Parliament, where students gave their opinions and recommendations on BUP's activities, and they also elected one member to represent the students at the BUP international board. The BUP students have aired their views on sustainability at presentations during the BUP Rectors' Conferences. They have also pushed the borders with politicians and decision makers, as done by the student representative Marek Szponik, when presenting the BUP students' view of the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

## Teachers' Competence Development

As part of the UN Decade for ESD, quality guidelines were produced by UNESCO. They included the use of interdisciplinary and holistic approaches, the use of several teaching and learning methods etc. Within the BUP, teachers were annually offered 1-2 conferences on SD and ESD-related topics, many of which were organised by the Finnish BUP Centre. From 2013, teachers were invited to a summer course, similar to the students SAIL. Guides for teachers were published on the learner centred approach and methods for teaching and learning complex issues, such as the problem-centred approach.

## Challenges and Drivers for Sustainability

After the first decade, the BUP further established the position as producer of modern courses and learning environments. Furthermore, the network offered new opportunities for contacts, competence development and internationalisation for students and teachers. These activities were also mirrored in BUP's role in international cooperation and capacity development in higher education and as a strategic partner in policy development.

## 2011-2021: Generational shift - The BUP 2.0

*Sooner or later, it happens in all organisations, and The Baltic University Programme is no exception: the time for a critical mass of colleagues engaged in the Programme to begin their retirement years. For us, this generational shift started around 2015 and led to several changes regarding organisation and management. New academic initiatives took place. During a transitional period, our priority was first to develop the cooperation within the BUP, to focus on the Participating Universities, and to have functional National Centres, Secretariats, and to employ new staff. To tweak the old and adopt new routines and policies.*

## Heading into a new period

During 2016, the Programme celebrated 25 years of cooperation, and left its status as a project to become a permanent institution. Bilateral contracts between the BUP and universities were signed at the level of Rectors, and the participating institutions started to contribute with an annual fee. Universities were now paying participating of the organisation. The BUP National Centres also went through a process of renewal and formalisation. The BUP presidency was introduced as a new organisational feature. Holding a BUP Presidency, is done by every BUP National Centre during a six months period. The National Centre give its own signature shape to BUP events, enriching the network with new ideas and practices, while itself gaining more visibility.



In spring 2018, the BUP Research and Publication Office (BUPRaP) was established at the Associated Secretariat at Hamburg University of Applied Science. It gathers and makes available information on open calls for funding programmes, both from the European Union and from other grant-awarding bodies. The Office also coordinates publications related to education for sustainable development, environment, sustainable development, and climate change in scientific journals.

In this time period, there were discussions concerning the work of the BUP in relation to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 goals. It was decided that the Programme should give the goals even more attention and to state clearly that we promote and encourage inter-, multi- and transdisciplinary co-operations where different academic disciplines and perspectives on sustainable development meet. In connection to the SDGs, the BUP also defined and adopted 10 focus areas, the 10 BUP Themes.

### Focus on researchers

University teachers, students and researchers have been the primary target groups since the start. In the recent years, researchers have been given more attention and various forms of support. One type of support is the BUP Research Notes Letter, a publication that features contributions from researchers who are based at Participating Universities. Publishing helps the authors achieve a greater impact with their research findings. It also represents a space where experts from the region inform and learn from one another, as well as learn about one another.

Another such support was the BUP Symposium in 24-25 August 2020. The restrictions linked to the pandemic Covid-19 put an end to the plans to meet in Visby, and so it was moved online. Still, the symposium attracted over 200 colleagues. The topics they brought up both stressed the challenges we face and how efforts within different research fields can contribute to the implementation of sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region.

### New ways of supporting young scientists

Since 2012, the BUP has offered a training for PhD students, organised by the Associated Secretariat in Łódź. It is an opportunity for PhD students from all disciplines to meet and discuss sustainable development in an interdisciplinary, international, and regional context. The training includes lectures and workshops, and a chance for students to present their PhD work and consult their PhD projects with international experts acting as mentors. Through the PhD Award, established in 2013, the BUP promote novelty research with an interdisciplinary approach, and relevant in a sustainable development perspective in a Baltic Sea Region context. It would find its first laureates in 2014. Since then, the distinction has been given every year to young researchers who successfully competed with their finished PhD projects. So far, ten promising PhD holders have received the prize. This prize was soon followed by the introduction of the Mobility Grant. This enables the winner to be a guest researcher for a certain time period at a university in the Baltic Sea Region and a chance to broaden, or establish, their own research network.

### Twice as many events for students

The Programme has for many years been hosting a set of regularly organised student activities. The number of student activities has in general increased since 2016 and doubled in 2019. To name one of them, BUP students got a chance to embark, for the first time, on a Sea Yawl Voyage. Students have been also becoming gradually more involved in the organisation of the Programme itself. The BUP Student Parliament convenes on a regular basis and clear statutes were developed for its organisation.





## Teachers in the Programme

Different forms of training for teachers have for several years been organised on a regular basis. To highlight some of the things that have been achieved, I mention two projects: EduBalt and EduBUP. At the same time, the BUP Associated Secretariat in Finland has been running the course Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education for teachers, on an annual basis. The participants learn how to integrate the UN Sustainable Development Goals into their own teaching, courses, and study programmes.

Attention has also been paid to teaching materials/courses as the core support for the teachers' work. It has been concluded that new materials are needed in the form of modules, available online. The development of modules has been initiated by the Climate Change project BSRCCC, coordinated by the BUP Coordinating Secretariat as well as the German group of colleagues.

## Projects for Participating Universities

The BUP has also worked on strengthening the cooperation with Participating Universities as a whole. The project Internationalisation in Practice improved our ties with university international offices and university leaderships through specific projects. In 2019, the Coordinating Secretariat started to build a network of people working at international offices. This work has been developed into a co-operation among 10 universities focused on internationalisation at each respective university. The BUP see this group as important in fostering cooperation between the universities at different levels and we will continue to work with this group of colleagues in the near future.

## Still taking advantage of new technology and innovative ways

A factor that forced us to learn and use new technology is the Covid-19 pandemic. The year of restrictions influenced our everyday lives as well as the work within the BUP. The need to move an increasing number of activities online represented a kind of "paradigm shift" in the BUP, with the positive effects of being more inclusive, and being able to give more colleagues the opportunity to attend activities.

The intensive use of technology is also a way to revisit our past, of working online and remotely across long distances. In the 1990s the BUP connected members of academia through satellite seminars. Now we are again interconnecting the teachers, researchers, and students of the Baltic Sea Region with the help of technology.

## The BUP 3.0

The Baltic University programme has become one of the Biggest University Programme in the world. There is undoubtedly more to say about these past years of the Programme, and even more to predict and wish for future. I am convinced, that the BUP is ready for the future!

As a result of passion for internationalisation, regional co-operations, teaching, research, and hard work of hundreds of enthusiastic colleagues, the BUP is in good hands. Together we learn from each other. By communicating, cooperating and contributing to the Programme with the aim to support a sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.



*How we celebrate BUP 30 years is told on our web page:*





# The Baltic University Programme

**Would you like to know  
more about us?**

[www.balticuniv.uu.se](http://www.balticuniv.uu.se)

