

# The Comprehensive Ports Group



Photo: BPO

by Ewelina Kroll

**The main focus of the BPO's recently formed Comprehensive Ports Group (CPG) will be to familiarise various EU institutions with the specifics of managing a Comprehensive Port in the Baltic, hence help to drive the development dynamics of the TEN-T map with our region's best practices. In order to achieve this goal, the CPG will carry out a number of meetings both with EU authorities and other port business representatives, organize seminars and study visits, as well as initiate multi-partner projects.**

**T**he term "Comprehensive Port" was introduced by the EU within the TEN-T Comprehensive Network, which in the Baltic encompasses 76 ports, accounting for 21% of all the EU's ports with this status. In order to further develop the European port business in general, and that of our region in particular, all TEN-T ports, irrespective of their sizes and handled volumes, have to enjoy a similar market, regulatory, and policy conditions. It is both the BPO and CPG's firm belief that

meeting the needs of Comprehensive Ports lies in the EU's best interest, and as such their needs should be duly taken into consideration when future distributing funds from the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

Recently, the Associated Danish Ports' Fredericia hosted CPG's second meeting, where participants discussed the position of Comprehensive Ports across the TEN-T network, analysed the state of the market and how it relates to Comprehensive Ports' current situation, talked about port

infrastructure development and environmental issues, as well as shared their thoughts on the difficulties when applying for CEF funding. "The meeting was very fruitful, and the discussions showed the complexity of being a Comprehensive Port within the EU system. The Group will now work together, focusing on the issues of future classification and roles of Comprehensive Ports," Björn Boström, the Port of Ystad's Managing Director and Chairman of the CPG, said. ■

The next CPG meeting is scheduled to take place at the Port of Ystad on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

## The BPO's debate in the European Parliament

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**On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, the Baltic Ports Organization together with Merja Kyllönen, MEP and Finland's former Transport Minister, hosted an annual lunch debate in the European Parliament (EP) entitled "Baltic ports in TEN-T network – meeting the future."**



Photo: BPO

**T**he event joined together EP members and port and industry representatives to talk about Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) possibilities, the TEN-T policy and its importance to the EU economy, as well as take a fresh look at the Baltic's role model as a region for green solutions. Merja Kyllönen opened the meeting

with an overview on the EP's current areas of interest regarding transport issues, such as shipping emissions, decarbonisation, and the circular economy. Bogdan Ołdakowski, the BPO's Secretary General, said, "We are glad that the European Commission is open to discuss maritime transport, which operates under a stricter regulations regime in the

Baltic compared to other EU seas. The industry is now focusing on TEN-T policy review and the EU's next financing period." Wojciech Sopinski, DG MOVE's Policy Officer, highlighted the new so-called Transport Blending Call, aimed at coupling EUR 1.0 bln together with other EU support mechanisms and most importantly the private sector. ■