



Klaipėda  
University

Marine Research  
Institute

# KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY AS A PART OF THE REGIONAL BLUE ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM

**Zita R. Gasiūnaitė**

Marine Research Institute of Klaipėda University

Today's expectations for the universities includes *(modified from Fonseca&Nieth, 2021)*:

- **Networking**, learning, shaping institutional capacities;
- **Assisting in** regional planning, strategy design, implementation and management;
- **Multi-level participation in** governing and advisory boards, expertise for regional development;
- **Leadership in** regional development and governance processes;
- **Creating links** between local and global academic and business networks.

# KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1991, only marine-oriented science & education institution in Lithuania

- **Faculty of Health Sciences** (public health, nursing, radiology, recreation and tourism, social work, leisure sports)
- **Faculty of Marine Technology and Natural Sciences** (computer science, marine and classical engineering)
- **Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities** (educology, public administration and political science, social geography)
- **Institute of Baltic Region History and Archeology** (Cultural and social landscapes of prehistoric and historical times in the Eastern Baltic region, changes in societies and cultures in the Eastern Baltic region in the Middle Ages, early modern and recent times)
- **Marine Research Institute** (Marine and coastal environment and biodiversity, marine protected areas, fisheries and aquaculture, blue biotechnology, water transport and air pollution, mechanics and marine engineering)





## MISSION OF KU:

- to promote **harmonious social, cultural and economic progress of the region** with the activities aimed at the development of creative personalities and the welfare of the people.

## STRATEGIC RESEARCH DIRECTIONS:

- towards sustainable technologies, blue and green growth and a healthy sea;
- towards sustainable health and well-being;
- society and culture on the Baltic coast



# MARINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF KU

## Four research labs:

- Coastal Environment and Biogeochemistry
- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Waterborne Transport and Air Pollution
- Mechanical and Marine Engineering Laboratory

## Degree studies:

- **Bachelor, 4 years:** Biology & Marine Biotechnology, Physical Geography & Oceanography
- **Master, 2 years:** Sustainable Management of Aquatic Ecosystems, Marine Hidrology
- **PhD, 4 years:** Ecology & Environmental Sciences, Physical Geography





## KLAIPĖDA 2030: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (Klaipėda City Municipality)

- Marine economics
- Bioeconomics
- Industrial, creative and service economics

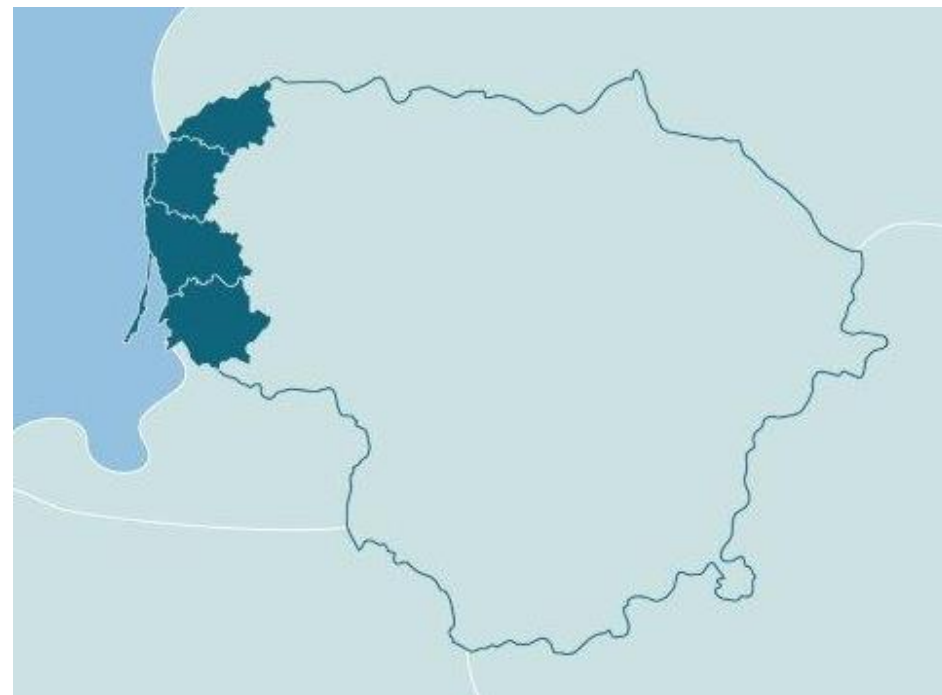


## KLAIPĖDA REGION SPECIALIZATION STRATEGY 2030 (Association „Klaipėda Region“)

- 7 municipalities, 356 000 inhabitants, 5209 km<sup>2</sup>
- Main sectors: aquaculture, energetics and tourism, port logistics and industry, LNG, renewable energy; emerging – blue biotechnology

**The Association “Klaipėda Region”** operating since 2012, aimed:

- To represent the interests of the members;
- To ensure implementation of the tasks that require joint efforts;
- To attract investments to the region.



# KRSS Structure

## DIRECTIONS FOR REGIONAL SPECIALISATION UNTIL 2030:

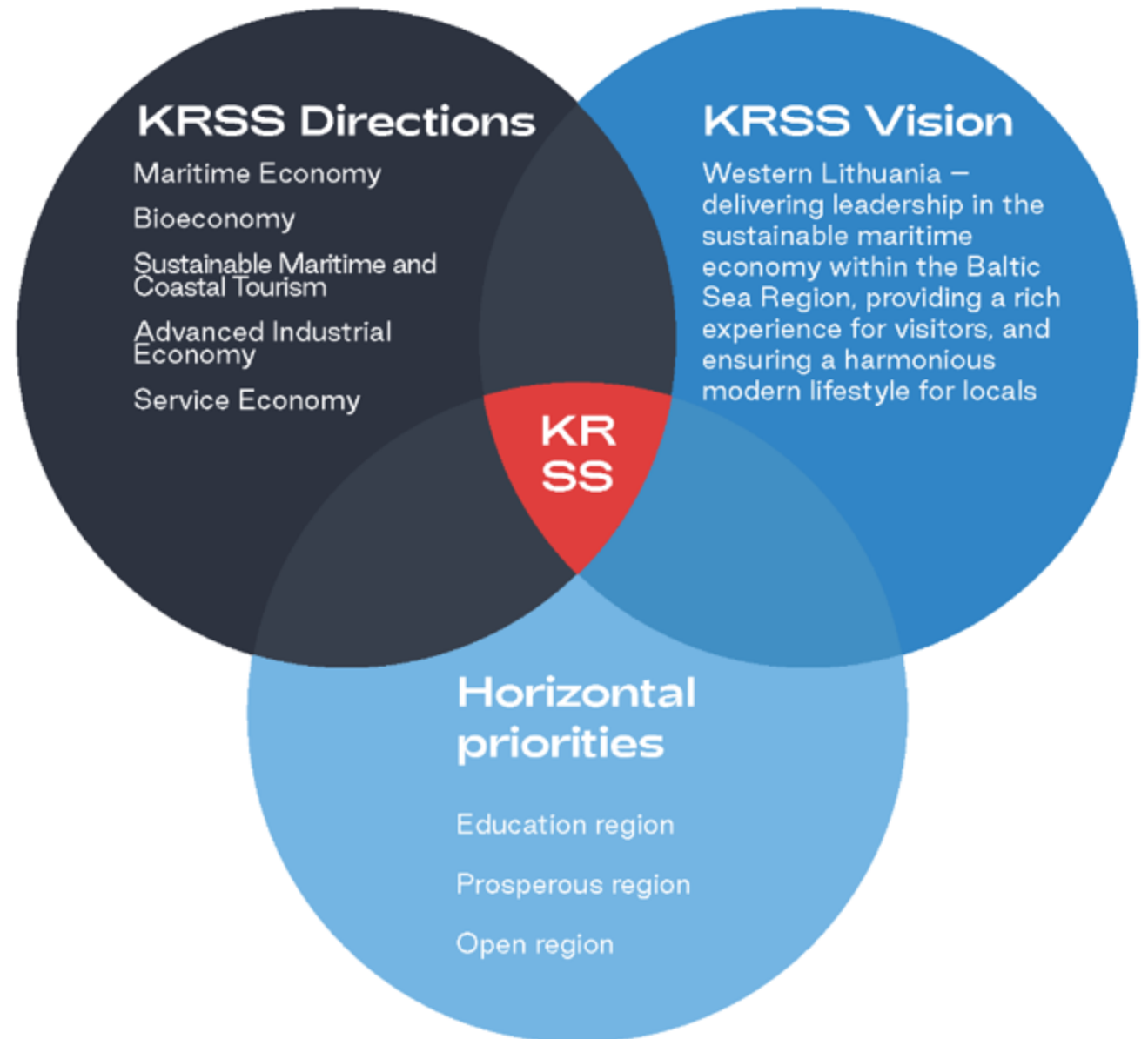
**Maritime Economy:** to become a modern and attractive investment leader in the maritime economy in the South-Eastern Baltic Region by 2030

**Bioeconomy:** to become a leading bioeconomy region by 2030 at both national and Baltic Sea macro-regional level

**Sustainable Maritime and Coastal Tourism:** to strengthen the regional competitiveness of maritime and coastal tourism in accordance with the principles of sustainable development

**Advanced Industrial Economy:** to develop an internationally competitive industry in the Region based on innovative solutions

**Service Economy:** to increase the share of service economy in the Region by ensuring the necessary preconditions for sustainable competitiveness and development



## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE KU IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF KRSS:

- Establishment of Klaipeda State Seaport technology competence centre
- Promoting industrial change in the maritime sector Industry 4.0
- Development of the innovation ecosystem
- Consolidation of Klaipeda University's leadership as a **centre of science and technology in marine bioeconomy** in the South-East Baltic region (aquaculture and marine biotechnology)
- Establishment and operation of the Klaipeda Region Bioeconomy Council
- Systematic monitoring of national and international financing instruments relevant to bioeconomy development, informing and consulting potential applicants in the Region regarding the submission of applications
- Support for **industrial doctoral studies in the fields of bioeconomy** of strategic importance to the Region
- Development of a modern **blue bioeconomy competence centre** inline with the R&D activities and infrastructure development strategy of Fishery and Aquaculture Laboratory of the Marine Research Institute of Klaipeda
- Establishment and operation of a centre of excellence for industrial symbiosis
- Development of cooperation model with educational and training institutions of the Region, strengthening the competencies of tourism specialists and matching the needs of market
- Strengthening the Regional Digital Innovation Centre in the following areas: competencies, infrastructure, and international networking
- Strengthening the technological / digital competences and skills of employees in industrial enterprises



# INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTATION TO THE REGIONAL NEEDS: CHALLENGES

- lack of professionals in municipalities;
- high political engagement;
- bureaucracy;
- the problem of continuity of project activities after project implementation;
- stakeholder fatigue;
- language
- ...

# BLUEBIOCLUSTERS: SUPPORTING COASTAL REGIONS IN TRANSITION TO THE BLUE BIOECONOMY

- **12** Project Partners
- **9** Regions
- **3** Sea Basins: Baltic & North Sea, Atlantic
- **36** Months (August '22-July '25)
- **2.3** Million EUR Budget (Horizon Europe Programme)
- Coordinated by SUBMARINER

<https://bluebioclusters.eu/>



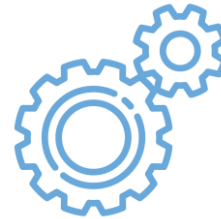
# Expected Project Outcomes



Stimulate the development of a **sustainable blue bioeconomy** by enabling **startups and SMEs** in the participating regions to realise their circular, eco-friendly business ideas



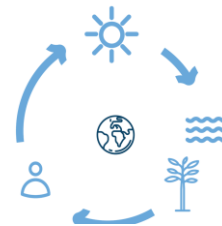
Showcase integrated and **circular blue bioeconomy value chains**, to serve as inspiration to European coastal communities



**Develop tools** for supporting businesses in integrating ecosystem services into novel ecology-driven business models and induce cross-sector collaborations along the value chains.



Foster **stakeholder engagement** through dedicated activities in the 9 project regions and beyond



Provide regional actors **access to the technologies** to realise their transition to blue bio-based solutions across their chosen value chains

## TOGETHER WITH AKR:

1

To identify potential of the regional blue bioeconomy development  
(possibility for Blue bio value chains optimization)

2

To identify regulatory barriers in regional policymaking (to enable the transition towards socially / environmentally responsible behaviour)

3

To facilitate small scale business to enter blue bioeconomy sector (needs for education & training; funding programmes)



THANK YOU!

