



## **Conference Resolution**

Adopted by the 25<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)

The participants, elected representatives from the Baltic Sea Region States\*, assembling in Riga, Latvia, 28-30 August 2016,

taking into account a significant number of acts of international terrorism that have occurred since the last BSPC in Rostock, August 2015,

- condemn terrorism in all its forms as a common threat for our citizens and our shared values,
- deplore the loss of innocent lives, express sympathy and solidarity with the victims of all terrorist attacks, their families and all those who suffered in these inhumane attacks,
- express the crucial need for the joint fight against this major threat to our societies and to uphold our democratic values, while stressing that this fight has to respect the rule of law and civil and human rights,

discussing Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, Innovation and Competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region by linking Education and Labour Market, Employment Opportunities, Labour Mobility and Youth Unemployment, and Sustainable Tourism,

- against the background of the BSPC's Silver Jubilee recognizing the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference's model character as a platform for inter-parliamentary cooperation in the region in the face of the current political climate;
- committed to adapting experiences from the past to a common future so that the integration of the Baltic Sea Region shall be carried on while preserving regional identities;
- convinced that respecting the rights of minorities would provide a benefit for all regions in the Baltic Sea Area;
- welcoming that the implementation of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference resolutions has progressively become more comprehensive;

- affirming the importance of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that is devoted to the people, the protection of the planet, prosperity in harmony with nature, peace and partnership, and believing in the necessity of the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 14 which targets to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;
- welcoming the adoption of the Warsaw Declaration: Regional Responses to Global Challenges at the Meeting of Deputy Foreign Ministers of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) in Warsaw on 8 June, 2016;
- welcoming the adoption of the Declaration Baltic 2030: Renewing the Commitment to Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region adopted by the high representatives of the CBSS government institutions responsible for sustainable development on 6 June, 2016;
- welcoming the acceptance of Chair's Conclusions of CBSS Science Ministers' Conference called Baltic Science: Renewing the Commitment to Science/Research Joint Actions in the Baltic Sea Region in Kraków, on 16 June, 2016;
- welcoming the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) decision that the Baltic Sea special area for sewage discharges from passenger ships under Annex IV or the MARPOL Convention will take effect by latest 2021 for IMO registered passenger vessels, in line with previous BSPC resolutions;

call on the governments in the Baltic Sea Region, the CBSS and the EU,

## **Regarding Cooperation in the Region, to**

1. welcome mutual cooperation and peaceful solutions of international disputes taking into account best practises for example in the Baltic Sea region;
2. take further steps to re-establish mutual trust and dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region, in particular within the Council of the Baltic Sea States in order to ensure the most efficient use of the organization's potential as a forum for multilateral intergovernmental cooperation as well as political and policy dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region;
3. further enhance regional synergy and cohesion through deepening collaboration and structured dialogue between organizations and cooperation formats in the Baltic Sea Region;
4. further promote and encourage public-private practical interaction as a tool for cross-border cooperation, economically viable actions and projects for the benefit of the Baltic Sea Region, taking into account and advancing the success of the Saint Petersburg Initiative and encouraging fuller use of the CBSS Pilot Financial Initiative, if the situation permits;
5. build on success of the CBSS Project Support Facility as a tool for supporting the strategically important project activities in the Baltic Sea Region, taking particular note of Russia's and Finland's voluntary contribution to the Facility for 2016, and to

explore the possibilities for a continuation of the CBSS funding facility in a form of the Baltic Sea Cooperation Fund after 2016;

6. further strengthen and develop HELCOM as the main coordinating body in the effort to protect the Baltic marine environment, and to strongly support and encourage a fast implementation of the Marine Litter Action Plan, as well as the implementation of the NOx emission control area Roadmap for the Baltic Sea, and to stress the importance of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) as one of the environmental pillars of the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region;

7. discuss mutual definitions regarding sustainable development throughout the Baltic Sea region and to support innovations within green and blue technologies as well as to create a joint web portal for the Baltic Sea region for sharing good examples regarding research, education and environmental best practices;

8. take the lead and coordinate development of a new regulations framework for autonomous vessels with the aim to make proposals to IMO as well as to support research, technology development and standards for autonomous vessels;

9. continue cooperation between each other in areas where mutual benefits and synergies can be achieved among relevant regional strategies and action plans;

10. against the background of the general competitive situation in the tourism economy as well as the current tense situation in Europe to encourage transnational strategies and long-term commitments for fostering cross-border approaches primarily in the field of sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region;

11. closely work together in coping with the ongoing challenges connected with the refugees in the region and to continue to ensure the decent treatment of and the right to safe asylum for these refugees in the countries of the Baltic Sea Region;

12. foster closer cooperation and, as far as necessary, following EU respectively UN declarations in tackling illegal and irregular migration;

13. foster cooperation in the field of research and innovation towards more competitive and sustainable region;

14. pay greater attention to the issue of ensuring predictability that could be strengthened through reciprocal transparency and risk reduction measures. This is important in order to avoid any unnecessary risks and tensions, including with regard to the movement of military vessels and planes in the Baltic Sea Region;

## **Regarding Competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region by linking Education and Labour Market, to**

15. recognize the need to link education and the labour market more closely;
16. against this background to support the New Skills Agenda for Europe;
17. provide vocational training and skills development opportunities to young people which are geared to the needs of industry and which, by way of generally recognized formal qualifications, form one of the most important prerequisites for workplace success;
18. strengthen the contacts between schools, universities and business in order to make sure that university education and vocational education and training are closely and concretely oriented towards labour market and to identify as well as to prevent labour market mismatches;
19. build on success of the CBSS EuroFaculty programme as an example of long-term project-based cooperation in higher education and science for the benefit of the people of the Baltic Sea Region and to explore the possible steps forward for this programme;
- 20 foster the further development and upgrade of skills (basic and specialized) and employability through establishment of a right for lifelong learning;
21. improve transparency and comparability of qualifications, and thereby to further develop the mutual recognition of formal qualifications;
22. facilitate anticipating labour markets' skills needs;
23. explore the need for a Northern Dimension Partnership for Labour Market and Education to further develop education and labour market in the Baltic Sea Region;
24. support business and education cooperation for a sustainable economic area in the Baltic Sea Region, especially a systematic exchange of expertise in the labour market and education sectors;
25. strengthen the cooperation between social associations, the social partners and governmental organisations in a social dialogue;
26. support research and standardization within cyber security, with focus on maritime context and applications and to foster data governance in order to enable a fair and fertile environment for new data driven services that will capitalize our regions technology excellence and trigger high skill job creation;
27. implement the Baltic Sea Region as a leading learning region;
28. call for more intensified "bottom-up" collaboration and networking in order to pursue development and synergies in specific areas of science, research, innovation and clusters collaboration;

29. facilitate continuous dialogue and collaboration in science, research, innovation and higher education using existing political and regional formats and initiatives;

### **Regarding Employment Opportunities, Labour Mobility and Youth Unemployment, to**

30. work towards the creation of a joint, collaborative labour market in the Baltic Sea Region;

31. support a common jobs platform and to raise its awareness in order to harness its full potential for the labour force of the Baltic Sea Region;

32. bring together national employment services and private employment agencies, including the social partners, in order to boost job seekers' chances;

33. use and further develop good approaches such as the EU's Youth Guarantee scheme in order to develop sustainable and broad-based concepts for tackling youth unemployment and promote the transition from school to working life;

34. provide targeted measures to NEETS to integrate them successfully into training and work;

35. promote the integration of the long-term unemployed in the labour market, using tried and tested methods based on a coordinated and individualized approach which includes employers;

36. also use for this purpose good approaches such as the recommendation of the Council of the European Union on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market;

37. pursue the goal of stepping up efforts to encourage in particular low-skilled, long-term unemployed and older employees to take part in continuing vocational education and training;

38. further develop the promotion of continuing training and improve the conditions for continuing training provision geared to the acquisition of vocational training qualifications, including for young adults;

39. facilitate mobility especially in cross-border regions and to provide information services to frontier workers who are subject to different national practices and legal systems;

40. utilize cross-border capacities for commuters in education and studies thereby understanding cross-border commuting as a means to reduce the risk of unemployment;

41. make better use of the resources of an ageing society;

42. facilitate cooperation between education and business to enable young people to find work and employers to fill vacancies;

43. rigorously and continuously pursue the goal of reducing youth unemployment and opening up job prospects and life chances for all young people, to use financial funds by the European Union to this and to monitor results;
44. intervene at an early stage to inform young people making the transition from school to work about pathways and possibilities with respect to career development and promote successful entry into the jobs market;
45. strive to ensure fair wages and to work towards the reduction of subcontracted, temporary agency work and temporary service contracts where permanent jobs are possible;
46. educate and integrate refugees into the labour market as soon as possible and to exchange experiences with best practice examples within the Baltic Sea Region. And also embed the social partners comprehensively and at an early stage in these efforts;
47. promote the participation of people with disabilities in working life, where possible in business in the general labour market, having regard for the principle of inclusion in the meaning of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
48. support their public labour administrations to promote the mobility of their citizens in the entire Baltic Sea Region;

### **Regarding Sustainable Tourism, to**

49. against the background of the unique natural environment of the Baltic Sea and the vulnerability of many habitats, to work on cross-border strategies in order to minimize existing conflicts between tourism, marine and coastal protection;
50. strengthen the rural development and agricultural production in accordance with the environment in such a way, that the natural landscape and sound environment as precondition for a sustainable tourism in rural areas are protected and restored;
51. support transnational strategies which promote the development of tourism in the Baltic Sea Region and to include the creation of synergies between projects and a communication strategy for the Policy Area Tourism;
52. ensure the better inclusion of all Baltic Sea countries in joint projects and strategies as well as of the private sector to improve direct economic impact;
53. work towards increased coherence with regard to approaches to Sustainable Tourism in the region;
54. in order to help mobilize the full potential of Sustainable Tourism to establish the Baltic Sea Region as a common and coherent tourism destination;
55. jointly work towards a common understanding of Sustainable Tourism and to strive to establish joint marketing and joint labels;

56. support the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum and its newly-established project for a permanent platform for information and know-how exchange – the Baltic Sea Tourism Center – as coordinator for the implementation of activities on Sustainable Tourism in the region;

57. especially support the application for the 2nd call by the Baltic Sea Tourism Center for financial support via the EU-INTERREG-Programme South Baltic 2014-2020 to achieve the establishment of an operational service unit for Sustainable Tourism cooperation and permanent platform for information and know-how exchange at transnational level, the so-called "Baltic Sea Tourism Center";

58. support the objectives of the Policy Area Tourism in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region to facilitate and strengthen the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum process as well as to facilitate coordination with stakeholders through joint workshops;

59. facilitate the networking and clustering of tourism stakeholders;

60. reinvigorate and update existing but untapped knowledge in the Baltic Sea Region about Sustainable Tourism, for instance the Agora Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Baltic Sea Region;

61. work towards creating longer-term impacts and benefits, thus increasing public acceptance;

### **Furthermore, the Conference Decides to**

62. welcome with gratitude the kind offer of the Parliament of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg to host the 26<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Hamburg on 3 - 5 September 2017.

\*Parliaments and parliamentary institutions:

Baltic Assembly,

Free Hanseatic City of Bremen,

Denmark,

Estonia,

European Parliament,

Federal Republic of Germany,

Finland,

Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg,

Iceland,

Kaliningrad Region,

Latvia,

Lithuania,

Mecklenburg-Vorpommern,

Nordic Council,

Norway,

Poland,

City of St. Petersburg,

Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation,

State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation,

Schleswig-Holstein,

Sweden,

Åland Islands.