



Conference Resolution

Adopted by the 26th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC)

The participants, elected representatives from the Baltic Sea Region States*, assembling in Hamburg, Germany, 3-5 September 2017,

- welcoming successful steps taken to re-establish full-scale and comprehensive political dialogue in the Baltic Sea Region, in particular within the Council of the Baltic Sea States, highlighting the importance of the Foreign Ministers' meeting on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the CBSS hosted by the CBSS Icelandic Presidency in Reykjavik on 20 June 2017 and the call for maintaining the momentum and spirit of these positive developments;
- supporting the appointment of an independent group of wise persons, including representatives from civil society by the CBSS to elaborate a report with recommendations for a vision for the Baltic Sea Region beyond 2020 and on the future role of the CBSS and the means to expand its impact as a forum for political dialogue and practical cooperation in the region;
- welcoming the High-Level Meeting of the Representatives of the CBSS Labour Ministries and the Declaration adopted on 15 June 2017 in Berlin;
- welcoming the adoption of the CBSS Action Plan - "Realizing the Vision: The Baltic 2030 Action Plan" as an important step towards ensuring sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region;
- welcoming the decision by the CBSS to continue operation of the Council's Project Support Facility for 2017-2019, noting in particular its role as a tool for supporting the strategically important project activities in the Baltic Sea Region;
- further promoting and encouraging 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 the continuous progress made by the Saint Petersburg initiative;
- continuing involving youth into the procedures of the BSPC working groups. Especially during the second half of a two-year mandate of a working group the vivid

debate with young people nominated by the member parliaments can be an enriching also with regard to the annual conference;

- expressing deep concern about the growing number of terrorist attacks that have occurred since the last BSPC in Riga namely in Stockholm, St. Petersburg and Berlin and - by reaffirming the position in the 25th resolution - utterly condemning terrorism in all its forms as an increasing common threat for our citizens and our shared values, a threat which can only be eliminated by joint efforts;
- being convinced that the issues of Migration and Integration pose a tremendous challenge to all countries in the Baltic Sea Region as well as a great chance for their further development. Those issues call for intensive dialogue as well as close cooperation and coordinated policies also between the Baltic Sea States;

discussing Cooperation and Participation as well as Innovative Science and Sustainable Tourism in the Baltic Sea Region,

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

Regarding Cooperation in the Region, to

1. intensify the cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region including the Northern Dimension, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Strategy for the socio-economic development of the North-West Federal district of Russia in addition to other regional actors by identifying common priorities and developing respective regional strategies and action plans in fields of common interest and mutual benefits. Since macro-regional strategies gather stakeholders and actors from all sectors and levels of governance, macro-regional strategies offer efficient instruments to improve relations between neighbouring countries and thereby support European Neighbourhood Policy;
2. further strengthen and develop HELCOM as the coordinator of the regional implementation of ocean-related goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations, through the strengthened implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan and further commitment to achieve a Baltic Sea in good environmental status by 2021 and if applicable, by renewing the Baltic Sea Action Plan in line with the UN Sustainable Development Agenda with a time perspective until 2030;
3. support HELCOM in elaborating a regional action plan on underwater noise as well as in implementing the marine litter regional action plan and in its battle against eutrophication; concrete measures to reduce the input of plastics into the marine environment should be taken on;
4. support the significance of the Science, Research and Innovation Agenda as it is outlined by CBSS Science Ministers' Conference held in 2016 in the Chair's Conclusions: Baltic Science: Renewing the Commitment to Science/Research Joint Actions in the Baltic Sea Region;
5. elaborate a common programme based on a strategy within the framework of the CBSS to develop sustainable tourism in the Baltic Sea Region, considering the following aspects

- the reduction as far as possible of obstacles to cross-border travelling to promote the freedom of travel including promotion of the local border traffic regime on outer borders of the EU
- facilitating border and visa regime for youth and organized tourist groups
- the improvement of sustainable transport and tourism infrastructure
- support for the idea of Baltic Sea Region States creating a common Baltic Sea Brand, based on cultural and natural heritage, to strengthen tourism competitiveness
- the improvement of travel options especially for young people (e.g. interferry);

Regarding Democratic Participation and the Digital Age, to

6. further improve and develop means of democratic participation, e.g. through transparency, comprehensive information, government accountability and other instruments of citizen participation;
7. commit to strengthening the involvement of youth in all areas of society, including, but not limited to, government, science, education and culture. To this end, the BSPC will continue to work towards establishing a Baltic Sea-wide youth forum;
8. stimulate a common dialogue and debate in the Baltic Sea region on ethical conditions for the digitization of states and societies and the possibilities of a common legal framework in this policy field. The task of the Parliaments is to guarantee fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law in the digital world as well. Parliaments and governments are encouraged to ensure that there is no gap between the digital society and the state;
9. work with the aim to make the Baltic sea region a global frontrunner in making new digital technologies work for democracy and political development;
10. stimulate policies to enhance digitization of democratic activity and processes with the aim to increase public participation in decision-making through sharing of technology and best practices by governments and parliaments;
11. draw attention to training and education for the youth with regard to digitalization opportunities in order to foster a competent and responsible use of the evolving technological innovations - thereby contributing to democratic societies in the digital age;
12. understand state coordination of innovation policies in terms of a social progress and not only as a technological process;
13. support the social partners in the Baltic Sea Region in their pursuit to use the chances of digitalization for decent and sustainable working and living conditions;
14. draw special attention to the gender and generation aspects of digital innovation and the consequent societal changes;
15. bearing in mind the importance of freedom of expression, explore legal possibilities and a common approach to react against "Hate Speech" and "Fake News";

Regarding Innovative Science and Research, to

16. intensify scientific cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region qualitatively and quantitatively and therefore

- promote the development of more credible projections of the future of the Baltic Sea, based on the best basic marine research as well as the most plausible socioeconomic development scenarios and associated alterations in human pressures, and the complex impacts of climate change on the ecosystem,
- promote the delivery of new comprehensive knowledge on true long-term effects of various human pressures on all organizational levels - from genes to an ecosystem, as well as suggestions on ways to mitigate these effects,
- provide a scientific foundation for innovative cross-border policy making, including potential internalization of the costs of marine ecosystem services into the economic system;

17. promote the further development of the Baltic Sea Science Network to enhance macro-regional dimensions of science and research policy from which higher education and research institutions should benefit and to thus create a supra-regional network that provides an "administrative network" in addition to the existing "scientific network" to manage the scientific cooperation in a useful and targeted way, especially in the framework of the project "Baltic Science Network";

18. take a more active role with regard to providing sustainable resources for research and development in order to further innovations by developing e.g. common standards, data security and intellectual property rights within the Baltic Sea Region;

19. continue to support the efforts in building closer ties between analytical research institutions and businesses in the framework of the Baltic TRAM (Transnational Research Access in the Macro-region) project;

20. further improve the conditions of the Baltic Sea Region in global scientific competition through joint strengthened efforts by increased investments in innovative science and research;

21. recognize the EUSBSRs Policy Area Innovation and Policy Area Education commitment to ensure a prosperous, sustainable and competitive region based on front running innovation, research and higher education activities as "a common good" and highlight the importance of developing measures to overcome innovation and performance gaps in the region;

22. strengthen citizen awareness of education and science as important innovation resources through suitable measures;

23. referring to the success of the Baltic Sea Science Day held for the first time in St. Petersburg on 8 February 2017, to support and promote the continuation of this initiative as a useful tool for the intensification of scientific cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region and for improving the visibility of the Region's achievements and potential in the field of science, research and innovation;

24. support BONUS II;

25. intensify measures to facilitate cross-border border integration of interdisciplinary Earth system science in the Baltic Sea region;
26. call for seeking synergies and measures for developing the Arctic-Baltic joint vision, collaboration and scientific performance;
27. improve the short-term mobility possibilities of researchers by providing unbureaucratic support outside of large funded projects to allow for more flexibility in visibility and international research collaboration and a better integration of the Baltic Sea Region research landscape, to intensify the mobility of teaching professionals and students by stipend programmes for mobility within the Baltic Sea Region imparting the benefits of scientific and cultural exchanges and while strengthening and to promoting summer schools as well as exchange programmes in the Baltic Sea Region;

Regarding Sustainable Tourism, to

28. work towards the vision that the Baltic Sea Region will become the first eco-region in the world, conceiving the Baltic Sea Region as the first region where ecology and economy work together in a balanced and integrated manner to sustain societies and culture.
29. ensure that the consequences of tourism are sustainable by adopting models and methods to save and protect nature and orient work along the principle that sustainability is the guiding principle and standard practice in all types of tourism in the Baltic Sea region;
30. further examine the use of carbon footprints to improve the comparability and attractiveness of tourism products and their ecological and economical impacts; further improve the transparency of tourism products as to their quality in terms of sustainability, e.g. by using common labels and standards;
31. promote wastewater facilities at harbours in the Baltic Sea Region;
32. improve intermodal, to promote the use of alternative sources of energy and foster a sustainable multimodal split (sea, road, rail), and to improve bike infrastructure including bicycle stands and Ebike charging stations at transport hubs as examples for ecological forms of tourism;
33. jointly task a Tourism Transport Impact Assessment Study to analyze continuously the output of different political action to increase the level of sustainability;
34. counteract the lack of skilled workers in the tourism sector in the Baltic Sea Region, e.g. by establishing an international winter school to increase labour skills, language and intercultural skills;
35. fully use the possibilities of the circular and fair sharing economies creating new jobs in the service sectors;
36. foster a joint promotion by private and public stakeholders of the Baltic Sea Region as a tourism destination especially in new source markets and to foster cooperation in the region as a main key for the successful development of the Baltic Sea Region;

37. better use the potential of digitalization in promoting sustainable tourism and further support the development of the Baltic Sea Tourism Center into a permanent platform for information and exchange of know-how at the transnational level, especially with regard to the long-term priorities of the CBSS;

38. sustain a sound environment, safeguarding the recreational quality of natural and man-made landscapes and integrating natural, cultural and human environments within the BSR so that tourism activities do not endanger the natural and cultural heritage of the BSR and instead actively contribute to their preservation;

39. promote and sustain the competitive quality and efficiency of the tourism business while also creating satisfactory social conditions for tourists, the workforce and the local population;

40. involve citizens in the development of tourism strategies.

Furthermore the Conference Decides to

41. welcome with gratitude the kind offer of the Parliament of Åland to host the 27th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Mariehamn on 26–28 August 2018.

* Parliaments and Parliamentary Organizations:

Baltic Assembly,
 Free Hanseatic City of Bremen,
 Denmark,
 Estonia,
 Federal Republic of Germany,
 Finland,
 Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg,
 Iceland,
 Kaliningrad Region,
 Karelian Republic,
 Latvia,
 Leningrad Region,
 Mecklenburg-Vorpommern,
 Nordic Council,
 Norway,
 Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE PA)
 Poland,
 City of St. Petersburg,
 Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation,
 Schleswig-Holstein,
 Sweden,
 Åland Islands.