

**Latvian
Presidency
2018-2019**





Latvia 100

In a year that has marked the 100th anniversary of a number of our Member States, including Latvia, the Latvian Presidency can be proud to wrap up its chairmanship in the CBSS with the Jūrmala Declaration and a Roadmap.

30 years since the political changes brought about in 1989, cooperation has moved at a dynamic pace. The Secretariat itself celebrated 20 years in October 2018 in the first half of the Latvian Presidency and the blossoming of interaction between organisations and Member States has multiplied in the region ever since. 2019 marked 10 years of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, and 20 years since the Northern Dimension was founded. The synergy among the Four Councils of the North continues to grow, and the connection to the Russian North-West Strategy is to be built.

After making great strides in the Latvian Presidency's priorities of Integrity & Societal Security, Dialogue and Responsibility, it is now time for the Member States guided by the Danish Presidency to take regional cooperation by the hand and into the future. We are going to do this by being flexible, creating value, working together and building on our unique strengths. Project activities have earned CBSS a reputation on a European, and even on a global level and this will be bolstered in the future.

During the CBSS Presidency Latvia also presided over the formats important for regional development, such as the Baltic Region Heritage Committee, the Committee on Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region, the VASAB – Vision and Strategies around the Baltic Sea intergovernmental cooperation, and the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (BASTUN).

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6 High-level meeting of the Latvian Presidency

The **Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia** accentuated the high importance of regional cooperation formats and organisations, including the CBSS, in the development of a strong Baltic Sea region. *“The Latvian Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, in the framework of its priorities, has brought added value to both the organisation and the region as a whole,”* **Edgars Rinkēvičs** underlined.

At the High-Level Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Jūrmala in June, the participants discussed latest developments and challenges to cooperation in the Baltic Sea region, ensuring balance between political dialogue and practical cooperation in the CBSS, as well as improving cooperation with other regional organisations and cooperation platforms. Representatives reiterated the importance of engaging youth and maintaining commitment towards sustainability issues.

An invited guest to the meeting, the **Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, Oleg Kravchenko**, stressed in his speech the interest of Belarus as a CBSS observer to get actively involved in practical cooperation projects offered by the CBSS.

The co-author of the CBSS Vision Group report, **Prof. Žaneta Ozoliņa** from the **University of Latvia**, shared her reflections on the connection between the Vision Group recommendations and the Roadmap of the CBSS Reforms and on the organisation’s future activity.

The Jūrmala Declaration and a Roadmap were adopted, and the Presidency was handed over to Denmark. Denmark will concentrate on completing the reform.





LATVIAN PRESIDENCY HIGHLIGHTS

1:
CBSS Secretariat's 20th Anniversary

2:
Expert Group on Children at Risk 20 years

3:
Human trafficking - a crime with too many victims
and too few convictions

4:
High-Level Event on Science





Expert Group on Children at Risk 20 years

In December the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk celebrated 20 years of work of advancing children's rights and transforming the Baltic Sea Region into a violence-free zone for children

The evening was hosted by **Solveiga Silkalna, Under-Secretary of State for European Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Latvia**, who values Latvia's participation in the Expert Group. Solveiga Silkalna drew attention to the long-standing experience of the CBSS Children at Risk Group in the implementation of measures to prevent the exploitation and trafficking of children. The working group of experts, established in Riga 20 years ago, has gained regional and global visibility due to providing significant contribution to the protection of children's rights.

The Latvian Ombudsman for Children, Juris Jansons, highlighted during a high-level conference on 15 November 2018 in Stockholm the importance to deal with any violations against children and to cooperate in this field: *"We are all here to help children when there is no one who can help – we are here to educate societies and ourselves."*

12 CBSS Secretariat's 20th Anniversary

In the last 20 years the CBSS Secretariat has grown from a small entrepreneurial unit based on the island of Strömsborg in Stockholm to a larger and established hub in the Baltic Sea cooperation family.

Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden: *"A unique and important organisation, the CBSS serves as a great example of regional cooperation."*

The anniversary celebration was hosted by the **Latvian Ambassador to Stockholm, Mārgers Krams**, at the Latvian Embassy with participation from the Swedish government offices.





14 **Human trafficking - a crime with too many victims and too few convictions**

Sandis Čirģens, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia opened the conference at the Latvian Ministry of Interior. In the evening, at the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the **State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Andris Pelšs**, and the **State Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior, Dimitrijs Trofimovs**, held a reception.

The two key note speakers were **Valeria Galanti**, Office of the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and **Mark J. Kappelhoff**, District Court Judge, Minnesota, USA, who focused on countering the culture of impunity and focusing on the victim's needs.

A number of Member States and Observers, including Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Latvia and the United Kingdom, talked about prosecution cases and the importance of following the money and the confiscation of assets.



15 **High-Level Event on Science**

In February 2019, the **University of Latvia** hosted the CBSS High Level Meeting on Science. The meeting was chaired by **Līga Lejiņa, State Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Science**. She noted that the Baltic Sea Region countries should continue strengthening the cooperation in the region to overcome the innovation divide and improve research mobility.

Eva Gumbel, Deputy Minister of Science, Research and Equalities, Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg spoke about the achievements of the Baltic Science Network.

Commitment to scientific excellence was renewed in a joint statement of the Representatives of the Ministries for Science.





LATVIAN PRESIDENCY OUTCOMES

- 1:
Jurmala Declaration
- 2:
Roadmap of the CBSS Reforms
- 3:
Project Support Facility – five new projects granted funding
- 4:
Four individuals awarded the Baltic Sea Science Award
- 5:
Joint statement on science and innovation
- 6:
Publication: Ageing workforce, social cohesion and sustainable development. Political challenges within the Baltic Sea Region.
- 7:
Publications: 6 guidance reports and a comic on non-violent childhoods
- 8:
Publication: Trafficking along migration routes
- 9:
Publication: Circular Baltic 2030
- 10:
Renewed mandate for the Expert Group on Sustainable Development

MAIN EVENTS DURING THE LATVIAN PRESIDENCY

- 1:
European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction
- 2:
17th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection
- 3:
CBSS Baltic Sea Science Day Award
- 4:
Development of sustainable maritime economy: opportunities
and challenges for small and medium ports in the Baltic Sea Region
- 5:
10th Annual Forum of the European Union Strategy
for the Baltic Sea Region
- 6:
Implementing the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment
– Non-Violent Childhoods Conference
- 7:
Baltic Sea NGO Forum





20 **European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction**

The European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR) was held in November 2018 in Rome, Italy. The State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia, and the Presidency of the CBSS Civil Protection Network, organised a session during the Forum. The session was opened by the **UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, Mami Mizutori**. The CBSS Secretariat's **Director General Ambassador Maira Mora** was invited to represent the Baltic Sea Region at the High-Level Roundtable on “Protecting Europe’s citizens: the social contract on disaster resilience”. The roundtable was co-chaired by the Government of Italy and the UNISDR, and included participation of European Ministers and Deputy Ministers, the European Commission and the World Bank. Ambassador Mora also opened the plenary session “Implementing Sendai Framework, SDGs and Paris Agreement in a Coherent Way” and had a bilateral meeting with Special Representative Mizutori.



21 **17th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection**

In May 2019, the Latvian chairmanship of the CBSS Civil Protection Network hosted the 17th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region. **Chief of the Latvian Fire and Rescue Services, Oskars Āboliņš** chaired the meeting. The Director Generals were briefed on projects such as the Baltic Sea Region research roadmap for societal security, which was developed by the Baltic Sea Region Research Network on Societal Security, alongside the CASCADE project which focuses on community safety action for supporting climate adaptation and development. Notably, the Russian delegation put forward the concept of a cross-border project focused on forest fires in response to increasing wild fires in the region during summer.



CBSS Baltic Sea Science Day Award

For the first time in the CBSS history an award was presented to celebrate the achievements of young promising minds doing research on the topics of great importance to the Baltic Sea Region. The Baltic Sea Science Day 2019 Award was presented to **Pinja Näkki, Emiliya Popova, Andris Bērziņš** and **Savitri Jetoo** for outstanding contributions to transnational research cooperation within the Baltic Sea Region and promotion of the CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda. The CBSS Secretariat had the pleasure of engaging with the following key partners to identify the best candidates for the award: the Baltic Sea Region University Network, the Baltic University Programme, the Baltic Science Network, the Ministry of Science, Research and Equalities of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Baltic TRAM and DESY.





24 **Development of sustainable maritime economy: opportunities and challenges for small and medium ports in the Baltic Sea Region**

Representatives from different ports in the Baltic Sea region came together at the conference in Jūrmala, Latvia in April to share their experiences of port development using modern technology and adapting to the rapid pace of global development. Good practices on solving environmental issues and maritime safety were shared – topics relevant to any one of the Baltic ports. **Tālis Linkaits, Minister of Transport of Latvia**, participated in the conference through a video message and **Reka Rozsavolgyi, Policy Officer at the European Commission Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries** reaffirmed the EU’s commitment to promote blue growth and support coastal communities.



25 **10th Annual Forum of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**

The 10th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region brought all those passionate about the Baltic Sea Region together in Gdańsk, Poland to commemorate a decade of the strategy’s achievements and focus on the future of the Baltic Sea Region. The “Reuse, reduce, rethink” theme of this year’s forum put the spotlight on circular and sharing economy in the Baltic Sea Region and its wider implications to environmental and demographic challenges. Over 700 participants from governmental, international organisations and NGOs, academia and businesses weighed in on the issue.

Director General Ambassador Maira Mora shared her insights on demographic challenges in a plenary session “Demography and circularity in the Baltic Sea Region: interdependent or disconnected?”. The demographic change was also discussed in a seminar “Sustainable Working Life in the Baltic Sea Region”, led by **Senior Adviser for Sustainable and Prosperous Region, Daria Akhutina**. A parallel seminar by CBSS’ Baltic 2030 unit looked at how creativity can bring about innovative solutions to today’s issues in “Localising Circular Economy”.



Implementing the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment – Non-Violent Childhoods Conference

“Violence against children is not a fate and it can become a part of a distant past if we invest in strong child protection systems.”

Marta Santos Pais,
UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children

In cooperation with the **UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Marta Santos Pais,** and the **Government of Sweden,** the CBSS Children at Risk Unit held a high-level conference on implementing the prohibition of corporal punishment in November. The two-day conference in Stockholm was attended by high-level UN and EU officials, who spoke to raise attention to the fact that it is possible to change policies, attitudes and behaviours towards corporal punishment: making children’s voices heard, promoting positive parenting and educating parents is the way forward.

Baltic Sea NGO Forum

This year the Forum in Riga in May, opened by the **Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica,** focused on security, sustainability and identity to strengthen civil society in the region by building a common identity and trust among citizens and stakeholders. Activists, government, academia and media representatives gathered in Riga to network and exchange successful practices from engaging citizens in public debates and connecting them to decision-makers, to fostering social innovation, to localising sustainability practices.

“Strong NGOs are the mainstay of any democratic society. Decisive action by NGO members increase the resilience of civil society against populist sentiments among politicians and the media in the present-day Europe”.

Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica
Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia

COMMITTEE
OF SENIOR
OFFICIALS





30 **Latvian Presidency Team**

- Juris Bone,**
Chair of the Committee of Senior Officials
- Inga Ozolina,**
MFA of Latvia – CSO Member, Latvia
- Mārtiņš Legzdins,**
Coordinator of the Latvian Presidency

During the Latvian Presidency 2018-2019 the Committee of Senior Officials met six times. They met in autumn in Stockholm for the Annual Observer States Consultation.

Committee of Senior Officials

- Juris Bone,** Chair and CSO Member, *Latvia*
- Inga Ozolina,** MFA of Latvia – CSO Member, *Latvia*
- Ida Heimann Larsen,** MFA of Denmark – CSO Member, *Denmark*
- Raul Mälik,** MFA of Estonia – CSO Member, *Estonia*
- Kristina Pingoud,** MFA of Finland – CSO Member, *Finland*
- Simon Stermann,** MFA of Germany – CSO Member, *Germany*
- Emil Breki Hreggviðsson,** MFA of Iceland – CSO Member, *Iceland*
- Kornelija Jurgaitienė,** MFA of Lithuania – CSO Member, *Lithuania*
- Dag Werno Holter,** MFA of Norway – CSO Member, *Norway*
- Michał Czyż,** MFA of Poland – CSO Member, *Poland*
- Sergey Petrovich,** MFA of Russia – CSO Member, *Russia*
- Eva Ekmehag,** MFA of Sweden – CSO Member, *Sweden*
- Aaretti Siitonen,** European External Action Service – CSO Member, *European Union*

CBSS remembers the former Committee of Senior Officials Chairman Hans Olsson

Ambassador **Hans Olsson** served as the CBSS Swedish Ministry representative for a number of years and he coordinated the presidency during 2017-2018 for Sweden. It is with great sadness that we learnt that he passed away in the spring of 2019. He brought wisdom, humour and intelligent diplomacy to the table throughout his long tenure at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.



CBSS PROJECT
SUPPORT
FACILITY



Project Support Facility

In 2019, the call for applications was dedicated to the priority area “Safe and Secure Region”. Out of the 12 applications received by the deadline of 31 March 2019, the PSF Selection Committee and Committee of Senior Officials decided to support five projects.

Pilot project for institutionalizing research end-user cooperation

Lead Partner: Sweden (Swedish Defence University) in partnership with Finland and Norway.

The initiative promotes more institutionalized cooperation between the variety of Baltic Sea Region end-users and stakeholder organisations, including societal security research institutions, sub-regional, national and local authorities as well as civil society organisations. The underlining philosophy is that this cooperation should be founded upon a mutual learning approach, generating a win-win situation for the involved actors.

Youth for Safer Youth

Lead Partner: Latvia (Liepaja Municipal Police) in partnership with Finland and Lithuania.

In collaboration with safety experts and youth representatives from Latvia, Finland and Lithuania, research about youth safety in the Baltic Sea Region will be conducted with the aim of getting answers to questions relating to safety concerns and how to reach youth. The main aim of the project is to prepare for a larger scale project in which youth in the Baltic Sea Region will be educated about how to increase their safety in the physical and virtual world.

If you speak up, I will join!

Lead Partner: Norway (ECPAT Norway/Invisible Children Forum) in partnership with Latvia, Russia and Sweden.

The project aims to identify and empower childhood survivors of human trafficking in the Baltic Sea States. By establishing a regional forum and a digital platform, survivors can be informed, express their opinions, get support from peers and be heard in relevant decision making.



36 **CAPE – Competence building,
Assistance provision and
Prosecution of labour
Exploitation cases in the Baltic
Sea Region**

Lead Partner: Latvia (Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia) in partnership with Denmark, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Norway and Poland.

The project addresses human trafficking for labour exploitation in all the CBSS Member States. The aim is to support stakeholders in combating and disrupting human trafficking for labour exploitation by analysing and consolidating information, improving assistance to victims and stepping up prosecution of traffickers.

**Strengthening the Prevention
of Child Trafficking and Child
Sexual Exploitation Related to
Information and Communication
Technologies in the Baltic Sea
Region**

Lead Partner: Russia (Regional Public Organisation of Social Projects in Sphere of Population's Well-Being "Stellit") in partnership with Finland and Latvia.

The project is aimed at providing specialists in the sphere of child protection with relevant information and strategies regarding the prevention of child trafficking and sexual exploitation online. The synergy of the combined expertise will contribute to advancing the child protection system and the safety of children in the Baltic Sea Region.



REGIONAL IDENTITY





40 **Senior Officials Group for Culture**

The CBSS Senior Officials Group for Culture met in Gdansk in June together with the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture, ARS BALTICA and EUSBSR PA Culture and Creative Sectors Steering Groups to discuss the future of cultural funding available in the Baltic Sea Region, evaluate projects such as the Baltic Sea Youth Camp and discuss future endeavours, one of which is the Swedish Institute funded Baltic Sea Cultural Cities project led by CBSS, aiming to connect Baltic Sea Region cities and highlight their cultural significance.



Baltic Region Heritage Committee

The Committee met in October and discussed the necessity to work more closely with CBSS and partners, improve digital accessibility of cultural heritage, strengthen the involvement of the Baltic Sea region in the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes initiative, as well as activities for the upcoming Baltic Sea Region Cultural Heritage Forum 2020. Steps to greater digitisation were taken by launching the CBSS Project Support Facility supported project "Digital approaches to cultural heritage; towards a Pan-Baltic cooperation network". In March, the Baltic Region Heritage Committee actively participated in the Routes4U Consultation in Helsinki.

The Latvian Presidency called for a broader inclusion of cultural heritage in the future, through mainstreaming, especially within those policies and disciplines where initially a focus on cultural heritage has not been prioritized.

"By ensuring knowledge transfer, highlighting and valorizing our regional and national treasures, not only in a broader perspective, but firstly, for ourselves, our local people, we foster the capacity of all stakeholders. By developing and maintaining our best regional practices in cultural heritage, we believe that by being conscious of our roots we can contribute to regional welfare and quality of life", **Baiba Mūrniece, National Heritage Board of Latvia**



42 **Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue 2018**

In November, 23 young people from the Region discussed identity, migration and minorities in the Baltic Sea Region. The Danish-German border region of Sønderjylland-Schleswig provided the perfect setting, being an interesting example of co-existence and cooperation, and gave an opportunity to explore the experience of German and Danish minorities and Denmark – EU relations. Working together, the participants developed policy recommendations and experienced what it is like to put European cultural policy into practice and be a CBSS official for one day in simulation games.

“I grew up near the Baltic Sea, so it has always been important for my identity. I enjoyed exploring it and discussing minority issues with other participants from the region.”

Johanne, one of the participants of the programme.



Baltic Sea Youth Camp 2019

In June, ideas developed at the Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue were finalised in the Baltic Sea Youth Declaration at the Baltic Sea Youth Camp. The three-day event, organised by the Baltic Sea States Sub-Regional Cooperation and supported by the CBSS saw about a 100 young people come together in Gdansk to not only explore their regional identity, but to learn about and develop sustainability initiatives and recommendations. Young people had the chance to bring these ideas closer to reality by meeting and working with Baltic Sea Region decision-makers.

SUSTAINABLE
AND PROSPEROUS
REGION





Expert Group on Sustainable Development (EGSD) Baltic Capacity Building Programme

The **Baltic 2030 Capacity-Building Programme - Localizing SDGs**, organised by **CBSS Baltic 2030** and Swedish think tank **Global Utmaning**, had as an aim to strengthen the sustainability leadership of subnational actors, and the capacity to integrate the 2030 Agenda as a general framework for strategic planning at local and regional levels. During the two modules in Riga and in Stockholm, representatives from local authorities and decision makers from the region exchanged circular economy success stories and together worked towards solutions, drawing on the diversity of their experiences.

Workshop: Life cycle approach in public procurement – Peer learning in the Baltic Sea Region



The workshop was organised by the **Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia** and the **CBSS Baltic 2030**. The aim of the workshop was to support exchange of knowledge and good practices within the Baltic Sea Region countries to advance the integration of sustainability principles and life-cycle cost assessment in public procurement within national guidelines and criteria. Participants from all CBSS member states shared thoughts and reflected on existing challenges, as well as provided their own experience to improve sustainability in the public procurement process.



Baltic Sea Science Day

At this year's CBSS Baltic Sea Science Day the first Baltic Sea Science Day Award was presented to four young promising minds doing research on the topics of great importance to the Baltic Sea Region. The event commenced with the Rectors' Panel "Prospects for Smart Specialisation Strategies" moderated by **Indriķis Muižnieks**, Rector of the University of Latvia. Among the speakers of the Rectors' Panel were **Wolfgang Schareck**, University of Rostock, **Rimantas Jankauskas**, Vilnius University, **Tālis Juhna**, Riga Technical University, **Tiit Land**, Tallinn University, **Igor Maksimtsev**, Saint Petersburg State University of Economics, **Kalervo Väänänen**, University of Turku.

SCIENCE, RESEARCH & INNOVATION AGENDA

Baltic Science Network Final Conference

The Final Conference was a prominent occasion which brought interested stakeholders, key decision-makers and influential thinkers together to debate what the agreed way forward is for the Baltic Science Network. Among the speakers were **Valdemaras Razumas**, Vice-Minister of Education, Science and Sport of Lithuania, **Anders Ødegaard**, Head of the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science, **Boris Zhelezov**, Deputy Director of the Department of the International Cooperation, Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation and **Sebastian Skuza**, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland.





50 REGIONAL COOPERATION

Horizontal Action Neighbours Seminar on the role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States in maintaining Baltic Sea Region cooperation



Baltic Area Legal Studies (BALEX), together with European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region HA Neighbours organised a seminar in Turku in November on the future of Baltic Sea Region cooperation, with a special focus on the CBSS. The CBSS Vision Group Report, published in 2018, was used as framework for discussion. **Petteri Vuorimäki**, Chair of the CBSS Vision Group and **Astrid Thors**, former Finnish Minister of Migration and European Affairs and member of the CBSS Vision Group shared their thoughts on the role of the CBSS in future Baltic Sea Region cooperation.

LABOUR COOPERATION

Launch of the report “Ageing workforce, social cohesion and sustainable development. Political challenges within the Baltic Sea Region”

“Ageing workforce, social cohesion and sustainable development. Political challenges within the Baltic Sea Region” is a report developed by the **Max Planck Institute**, with the support of CBSS, that explores the demographic changes in the region, and the challenges they bring. The report provides a number of policy recommendations on how to prolong working life, and it was presented by **Dr Andreas Edel** and **Dr Paul Becker** from the Max Planck Institute at a launch event at the CBSS Secretariat in September 2018.



CLIMATE CHANGE

9th Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Dialogue Platform Roundtable

The 9th Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Dialogue Platform Roundtable meeting took place in Riga in November at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development. The main focus of the meeting was the progress of the national adaptation and mitigation policy developments in the Baltic Sea Region countries and the role of the local government on rising resilience to climate change.

SAFE AND SECURE REGION





Civil Protection Network Senior Experts Meeting

In February the Deputy Chief of the State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia, **Intars Zītāns**, hosted a meeting of the CPN Senior Experts in Riga. 18 experts representing 9 countries in the Baltic Sea Region spent two days discussing challenges and successes in the implementation of the Joint Position on Enhancing Cooperation in Civil Protection Area. The group discussed the follow up and results of the recently finalised projects HAZARD, which focused on mitigating the effects of hazardous emergencies in Baltic Sea ports and EVAPREM, which developed an evaluation model to assess prevention measures.

Policy Area Secure Steering Group Meetings

The Policy Area Secure Steering Group gathered twice during the Latvian Presidency, once in Riga and once in Stockholm. The Stockholm gathering was combined with a workshop on effective strategies for stakeholder engagement.

ResQU2 Project Platform was granted a Flagship status by the National Coordinators of the EUSBSR at their meeting in Copenhagen in May. It focuses on best practices for rescue operations in hazardous and noxious substances incidents. Other projects such as FIRE-IN – the first European Fire and Rescue innovation network, Strengthening the Transnational Capacity of the Management of CBRNE agents related Emergencies (STAC-CBRNE) and Goldfinger were also discussed.

Baltic Leadership Programme in Civil Protection

The chair of the CBSS Civil Protection Network – the State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia, hosted the Baltic Leadership Programme in Civil Protection Alumni conference Societal security in the Baltic Sea Region – Challenges and Solutions. It took place in November in Riga in cooperation with the Swedish Institute, European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Secure and Riga Stradiņš University. The course covered different perspectives on societal security: from social anthropology to a gender-responsive disaster risk reduction concept. A live demonstration of augmented reality for use in public awareness raising campaigns also took place.

Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime

Latvia held the chairmanship of the task force until the end of 2018. In September, representatives from Police, Customs and Border guards from all the CBSS Member States gathered in Jūrmala for their last Operational Planning and Coordination Meeting, before the handover to the German Chairmanship with operational support from Poland from January 2019. The participants discussed irregular migration, lessons learned from the FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia, illicit drug trafficking, the possibility to establish a new expert group on customs cooperation, organised mobile crime groups and crimes against property. Strategic intelligence analysis and regional intelligence-led policing for the Baltic Sea Region were also part of the agenda.



58 **The Network of Prosecutors on Environmental Crime in the Baltic Sea Region (ENPRO)**

During the period of the Latvian Presidency two annual meetings of ENPRO took place, one in June 2019 in Gdansk. Here the Prevention of and Sanctions on Illegal Waste Disposal from Ships at Sea report was presented. The other Annual Meeting took place in September 2018 in Oslo and was led by Økokrim, the Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime. The meeting focused on the continual updates to the Manual on Prosecuting Environmental Crime in the Baltic Sea Region, a database of pollution cases as well as collective and national action plans addressing marine litter in coordination with OSPAR and HELCOM.

Fire services demonstration at the Baltic Sea Youth Camp in Gdansk

A practical exercise organised by the **Gdansk Municipal State Fire Service (KM PSP w Gdansku)** led by **Deputy Commander Jacek Noga** was carried out for twenty participants at the Youth Camp for twenty participants at the Youth Camp. They had an opportunity to use fire extinguishers, practice first aid techniques and try the basics of operating a water hose all under the close guidance of the professionals from the KM PSP in Gdansk.

The Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC)

The BSRBCC Head's Conference in Stockholm in November concluded the year long Swedish presidency, summarizing the activities carried out in 2018. Here the Annual Threat Assessment Report was presented addressing the importance of continued joint operations. The conference also marked the shift of presidency as it was successfully handed over from Sweden to Denmark. The Swedish Presidency was managed by the Swedish Coast Guard.



Expert Group Children at Risk

In the meeting in Riga in May, the Expert Group thanked **Turid Heiberg** for 6 years of advocating for children's rights as the CBSS Head of Children at Risk Unit and welcomed **Olivia Lind Haldorsson** to the position. The meeting also marked the achievements of Non-violent Childhoods, Pro-Guard and PROTECT projects, that aim to implement the ban on corporal punishment, ensure guardianship for unaccompanied children and quality support to child victims of trafficking. Continuation of PROMISE project series expanding the Barnahus child-friendly justice services in Europe was embraced.



Non-Violent Childhoods Conference

Even though the Baltic Sea Region can be considered a model region for children's safety, learning from global experiences can accelerate the way to childhoods with zero violence. Among the international experts who addressed the conference was **H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro**, President of Malta, **Lena Hallengren**, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality of Sweden, **Ásmundur Einar Daðason**, Minister of Social Affairs and Equality of Iceland, **Linas Kukuraitis**, Minister of Social Affairs and Equality of Lithuania, **Annika Saarikko**, Minister of Family and Social Services of Finland, **Marija Pletikosa**, State Secretary, Ministry for Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy of Croatia, **Sandra León Alfonso**, General Director of the High Commission against Child Poverty of Spain, **H.E. Neziha Laabidi**, Minister for Women, Families and Children of Tunisia, **Marta Santos Pais**, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children, **Anna Maria Corazza Bildt**, Chair of the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights, who shared their insights into ongoing efforts to make non-violent childhoods a reality in their countries and lessons learned from the Global Conference on the Universal Prohibition of Corporal Punishment.

Comic: A Non-Violent Childhood

The Non-violent Childhoods programme concluded in April with the release of a graphic novel in 12 languages, spreading the message of positive parenting around the world. Based on the latest research about the harmful effects of corporal punishment to brain development, as well as physical and psychological health, it is part of an awareness campaign including a series of 6 guidance reports – also available in 12 languages – on bringing the ban on corporal punishment from law into practice.



Conference: Following the traces between migration and human trafficking- from exploitation to integration

The conference was held in November 2018 in Stockholm as a part of the international project Trafficking along Migration Routes (TRAM): Identification and Integration of Victims of Trafficking among Vulnerable Groups and Unaccompanied Children. The keynote speaker was **Farah Abdi, author, human rights activist and a Somali refugee**. During the gathering examples of successful integration of migrants and exploited migrants, as well as the main challenges in Finland, Germany and Sweden, were presented. A report on bridging the gap between migration, asylum and anti-trafficking and a Road Map for integration of victims of Human Trafficking among migrants in Finland, Germany and Sweden were launched.



Harmonised Operation Framework in the Baltic Sea Region (HOF-BSR)

In September 2018 a new 2-year international project against Human Trafficking: *Paving the Way for a Harmonized Operational Framework in the Baltic Sea Region (HOF BSR)* was launched. The project, funded by the **Swedish Institute** and the **Swedish Government**, aims at strengthening and expanding counter trafficking cooperation networks by establishing direct contacts with the main countries of origin for victims of human trafficking. Three study visits were organised in early 2019 to some of these countries. The visits gathered professionals from the CBSS member states working against Human Trafficking and with victim assistance on an operative level. The final product of the HOF-BSR project will be a Transnational Referral Mechanism for the Baltic Sea Region.

Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings

The Latvian chairmanship of the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings ended with a third and final expert meeting taking place in Jūrmala in June. The priority of the Latvian chairmanship was two of the most important aspects of counter trafficking work; prosecution and investigation.

The international conference *Human Trafficking - a crime with too few convictions and too many victims* took place in Latvia in February 2019. **Sandis Čirģens, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia**, gave the keynote speech and representatives from Prosecution authorities and Police authorities from all CBSS member states were present.



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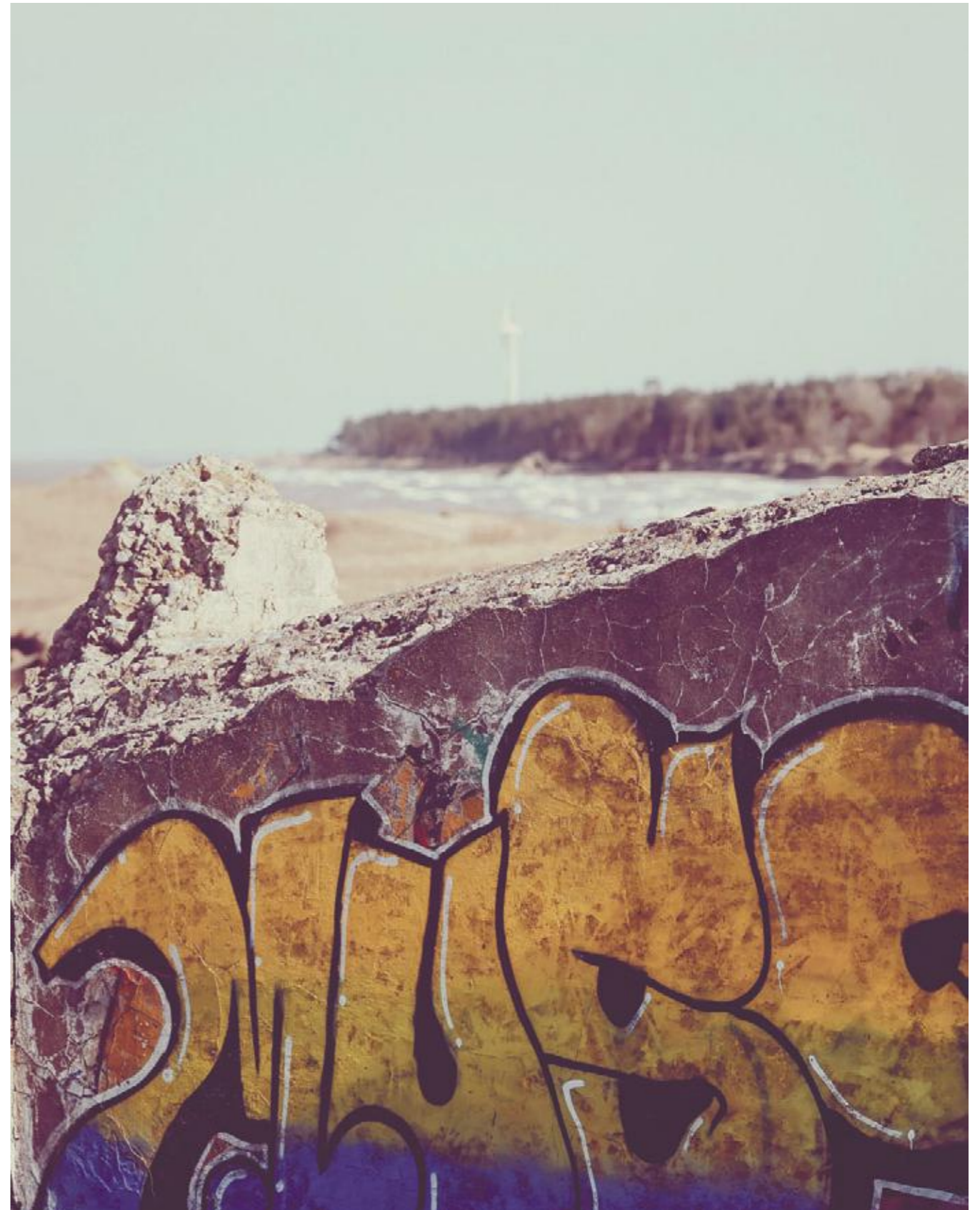
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Jūrmala Declaration

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the European Union met in Jūrmala, Latvia on 3 June 2019.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives affirmed the role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) as a platform uniquely suited to add value to the development of the Baltic Sea Region, through intergovernmental dialogue and practical cooperation between all countries in the region, by fostering mutual understanding, building trust, ensuring stability and promoting people to people contacts.

In the context of the three CBSS long-term priorities the Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives recognised the achievements in the areas of sustainable development, climate change, civil protection, fight against trafficking in human beings and organised crime, child protection, gender equality as well as sustainable maritime economy, labour and employment, science and research, education, cultural heritage and youth involvement.

They welcomed continuation of the CBSS Project Support Facility for the next financing period of 2020-2022 as an instrument for the implementation of the CBSS priorities.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives endorsed the Roadmap of the CBSS reforms 2018-2020 and requested the CSO to conclude the implementation of the document by the end of the Danish Presidency in 2020. The Roadmap enables the necessary flexibility of the Council, higher adaptability, preparedness and effectiveness of the CBSS, increases the focus on synergies between cooperation formats in the Baltic Sea Region and, furthermore, promotes the facilitating role of the CBSS in this regard.

The Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives expressed their gratitude to Latvia for its successful 2018-2019 Presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and for organising this meeting.