

**Swedish
Presidency
2017-2018**





SWEDEN

Area:

450,295 km²

Capital:

Stockholm

Population:

10 161 797 (2018) Statistics Sweden

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Sustainability

Sweden strives to be a leader in the implementation of the UN 2020 Agenda and ranked number 1 in 2018 in the Sustainable Development Goals Index as well as in the Country Sustainability Ranking (CSR) in 2017. In 2016, the Swedish Crown Princess Victoria was appointed as a UN advocate to promote the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sweden is also the country in the European Union that has the highest consumption of organic foods, leads the way in recycling drink cans and bottles, and gets the highest share of its energy from renewable sources.

In 1996, the city of Växjö in Southern Sweden became the first city in the world to set the goal of becoming fossil-fuel free by 2030, and has since then managed to decrease the emissions of fossil CO² per capita by more than 54% – an accomplishment which has been honoured by the European Commission through awarding the town with the European Green Leaf Award in 2018.

Continuity

In 2017 Sweden took over the chairmanship in the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Barents Euro-Artic Council, the Nordic Council and in the UN Security Council.

Sweden's work in all the Councils continued to derive from the core values of Swedish diplomacy: international law, human rights, gender equality and a humanitarian and feminist perspective aiming for peace and security for everyone, putting women and children in focus.

Encouraging more international cooperation, not less, is Sweden's way to best tackle the challenges, crises and conflicts of our time.

Adaptability

Sweden is known for being a driving force for global development: the Swedish model's tendency to seek cooperation, an open political culture and a widespread sense of solidarity and a high degree of social trust.

Through combining ecological sustainability with economic growth, and by being a country distinguished by diversity and openness to outside influences, new technology and new innovations, Sweden is a pioneer and a role-model when it comes to adapting to challenges like globalisation or climate change.

In many international rankings, Sweden emerges as a global leader. In 2018 the country ranked third in the Global Innovation index, second in the World Press Freedom Index, fourth in the Climate Change Performance Index and fifth in the World Economic Global Gender Gap Report.

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8 Stockholm Ministerial

The Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Margot Wallström, welcomed representatives of the eleven CBSS Member States and the European Union to Stockholm for the CBSS Ministerial Meeting on 18 June 2018. Being presented with the findings of the CBSS Vision Group, the delegations discussed future reforms of the organisation and expressed continued support for its overall mission – building collaboration and trust in the Baltic Sea Region.

Furthermore, the Heads of Delegation took the chance to raise awareness of the Baltic Sea Region as a pioneer and model region for children's rights. By wearing the pin of the Non-Violent Childhoods project, they showed their support and stated that all children should be treated with respect, dignity and kindness.

The Non-Violent Childhoods initiative is coordinated by the Children at Risk Unit at the Council of the Baltic Sea States in collaboration with the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. The project is implemented with the expertise of amongst others Save the Children Sweden, the Swedish Institute and the Coordination on the Rights of the Child in the Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.





SWEDISH PRESIDENCY HIGHLIGHTS

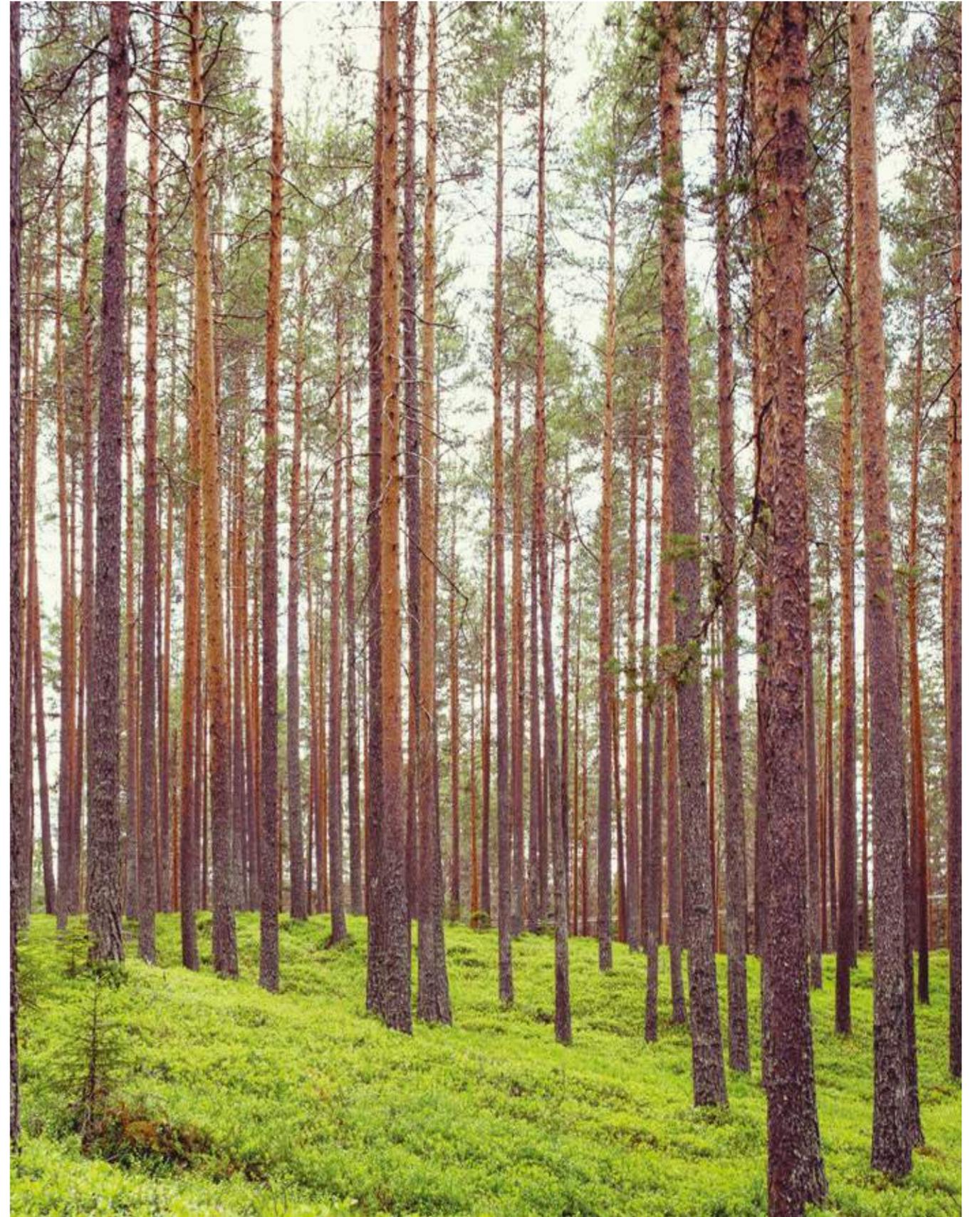
Vision Group

Baltic Sea Counter Trafficking Award 2017

Improved Cooperation on Sustainable Development in the
Nordic and Baltic Sea Regions

Baltic Sea Future Conference 2018

SIPRI Conference “Managing Complexity: Addressing
Societal Security Challenges in the Baltic Sea
Region”





14 **Vision Group**

When meeting in Iceland in 2017, the Foreign Ministers and high-level representatives invited the CBSS to appoint an independent group which should elaborate a report giving recommendations for a vision for the Baltic Sea Region beyond 2020. This “CBSS Vision Group” was tasked to discuss 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.

The Group met three times during the Swedish Presidency period:

- 4-5 December 2017
- 6-7 February 2018
- 25-26 April 2018

After consulting with the staff of the CBSS Secretariat and hearing their perspectives on the future of the Council and vision of regional cooperation, the Group also initiated consultations with youth representatives. As a result, both their recommendations have been incorporated in the final report of the Vision Group.

The CBSS Vision Group presented its report and recommendations to the CBSS for consideration at the Stockholm Ministerial on 18 June 2018. Further reflections on the report’s implementation will take place during the upcoming Latvian CBSS Presidency, forming the basis for subsequent decisions at the political level.

The members of the CBSS Vision Group are:

- Tobias Etzold, Denmark
- Mati Vaarmann, Estonia
- Astrid Thors, Finland
- Hans - Jürgen Heimsoeth, Germany
- Thorlindur Kjartansson, Iceland
- Žaneta Ozoliņa, Latvia
- Neris Germanas, Lithuania
- Öyvind Nordsletten, Norway
- Rafał Wiśniewski, Poland
- Alexander Vladimirovich Prokhorenko, Russia
- Matilda Dahl, Sweden
- Petteri Vuorimäki, European Union





16 **Baltic Sea Counter Trafficking Award Gala 2017**

On 29 November 2017, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), in cooperation with the Swedish Government Offices, launched the first Counter Trafficking Award across this region.

The counter-trafficking community from the Baltic Sea Region, together with diplomats and ambassadors based in Stockholm gathered at 'Fotografiska' to award and honour the three winners of the Award, Sirle Blumberg (Estonia), Sandra Zalcmane (Latvia) and Maia Rusakova (Russia).

State Secretary to the Swedish Minister of Children, the Elderly & Gender Equality, Madeleine Harby Samuelsson, gave an opening speech in which she highlighted the continued efforts to provide the highest level of assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and improvements to the legislation and administrative structures of the counter-trafficking work. The evening was moderated by the Swedish presenter and media all-rounder Henrik Schyffert and included a performance by the chart-topping Swedish singer-songwriter Rhys, bringing the evening to its culmination.

Throughout the event, the guests were invited to do their bit by donating money to support the Swedish Civil Society Platform against Human Trafficking, which helps victims of human trafficking on a daily basis in Sweden. Ninna Mörner, representing the Platform, gave the guests in her speech a glimpse into the journey, a victim of human trafficking takes on their way to recovery.

Lasma Stabina, the Latvian Delegate to the CBSS Task Force Against Trafficking in Human Beings, also gave out a special award of recognition from the Latvian Ministry of Interior to Vineta Polatside, CBSS Senior Adviser, and Anthony Jay Olsson, CBSS Head of Media & Communications, for their dedication and efforts in counter-trafficking work over the last years.





18 Improved Cooperation on Sustainable Development in the Nordic and Baltic Sea Regions

Cooperation is essential in the work towards the achievement of the UN Sustainability Goals. Therefore, the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit teamed up with the Nordic Council of Ministers and decided to focus a part of their work on the implementation of SDG12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

During a joint seminar on 19 April 2018, national experts from the Baltic Sea and Nordic Region learnt about existing practices on Green Public Procurement (GPP) and were given the opportunity to discuss strategic questions, concrete examples and case studies from their regions. Moreover, EU funding for supporting peer-learning and study visits on environmental challenges, including GPP, was introduced and provided the participants with the chance to follow up on this exchange seminar and to further deepen the cooperation between the two organisations.

Baltic Sea Future Congress 2018

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Following up on an expert seminar on how to integrate the principles of the UN 2030 Agenda into everyday planning at regional level, the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit participated in the second Baltic Sea Future Congress on 8-9 March 2018 in Stockholm.

Krista Kampus, Head of the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit, introduced the Baltic 2030 Action Plan and the collaborative action of the Baltic Sea Region countries towards sustainable development and climate goals.

The second plenary on climate change adaptation, moderated by the Baltic 2030 Unit, reflected on the ongoing revision of the EU adaptation policy and on how to measure success to achieve resilience to climate change. Here, the Baltic Sea Region was praised as a frontrunner in leadership and cooperation, setting benchmarks in climate action and adaptation.

The Swedish Minister of Environment, Karolina Skog, stressed in the concluding session of the Conference that “ecological projects are social projects. Nature-based solutions, done together with citizens, help cities adapt to climate change and also make them more livable”.



20 **SIPRI Conference “Managing Complexity: Addressing Societal Security Challenges in the Baltic Sea Region”**

Many societal security challenges are of transnational nature and hence, require regional and cross-border cooperation. On the 11 - 12 June, the Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute (SIPRI), in cooperation with the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, brought together over 150 policymakers, researchers and experts within the field to discuss the societal security challenges that the Baltic Sea States currently face.

In her keynote, Margot Wallström, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs highlighted the important role regional organisations play as “platforms for dialogue” and that the focus on young people in the region needs to be strengthened.



21 *“The response that I want to promote is that of common security, of building security together.”*
(Margot Wallström)

During the first panel, CBSS Director General Maira Mora urged to discern the difference between actual threats and the perception of threats and showcased the CBSS as an arena to convene dialogue and enhance people-to-people contacts.

Furthermore, Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) Project Officer Endrit Mujaj spoke on gender-based violence and human trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region giving examples of existing local responses and current capacity gaps.



SWEDISH PRESIDENCY OUTCOMES

Stockholm Declaration

Vision Group Report

Seven PSF projects awarded funding under the Swedish Presidency

Three Individuals awarded the Baltic Sea Counter Trafficking Award for their Dedication to combat Human Trafficking

Release of the Report “Baltic 2030 Bumps on the Road: How the Baltic Sea States are performing on the SDGs”

The Oslo Conclusions on Identifying Children at Risk of Exploitation and Trafficking

Renewed Mandate for the Expert Group on Sustainable Maritime Economy

MAIN EVENTS DURING THE SWEDISH PRESIDENCY

9th Annual Forum of the European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

16th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region

Donsö Shipping Meet 2017: HELCOM and CBSS Joint Session on Alternative Fuel

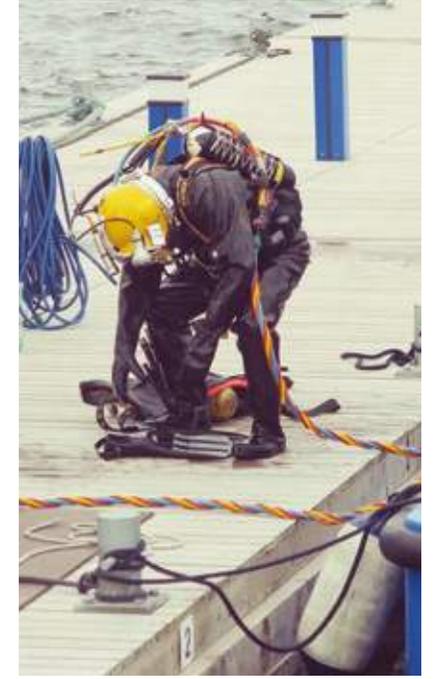
Oslo Conference on Good Practices in Identification and Referral of Children at Risk of Exploitation and Trafficking

Baltic Sea NGO Forum

Baltic TRAM: Mid-Term Conference at KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Meeting of the Ministries of Labour of the Council of the Baltic Sea States





9th Annual Forum of the European Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

During this year’s Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Tallinn, about 800 participants from the political, cultural, economic and business sector discussed the current state of the ecosystem of the Baltic Sea and how to further develop the region as a global digital hub.

The CBSS Secretariat’s Director General, Ambassador Maira Mora, contributed to the panel discussion “A sustainable future for the Baltic Sea – updating the Baltic Sea Action Plan beyond 2021” which focused on the upcoming renewal of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP).

Furthermore, the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit co-organised the session “EUSBSR post-2020: Defining joint challenges as drivers for change” and moderated the seminar “Transport sector responses to emerging climate risks” bringing forward the 2030 Agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals as subjects of discussion.

“The renewed Action Plan should take proper account on the need to deepen cooperation between the sectors and more integrated policy planning.”

(Maira Mora)

In close connection to these, Policy Area Secure coordinated by the CBSS Secretariat and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) organised the “Exercises as tools for building a resilient BSR post-2020” roundtable discussion, focusing on risk reduction and different aspects of cooperation through various exercises. As a follow up to this discussion, a live demonstration of a rescue exercise was organised at the Seaplane Harbour of Tallinn. The audience had the unique opportunity to see all the manoeuvres of the vessels, divers and the rescue services and to experience how international cooperation can improve the countries’ preparedness for all sorts of hazards and prevention of loss of lives and money.

“To conduct these exercises and to train staff across national borders are essential to increase the countries’ preparedness for all sorts of hazards.”

(Jürgen Kremplin, Hamburg Fire & Rescue Service)



“Transnational cooperation is not only important – it is absolutely necessary – to build a common societal security culture in the region, with high standards and reliability.”

(Maira Mora)



16th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region

The CBSS Secretariat hosted the 16th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region, chaired by the new Director General for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Dan Eliasson. To open this year’s meeting on 7 – 8 May 2018, Ambassador and Chair of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), Hans Olsson, welcomed the representatives and stressed that “the success of the implementation of the Joint Position on Enhancing Cooperation in the Civil Protection depends on engagement and commitment of all countries in the region.”



At last year’s meeting under the Icelandic CBSS Presidency, all eleven Member States agreed on eight priority areas where cooperation between the national crisis management agencies must be increased and adopted a Joint Statement on the matter. This year, the participants were briefed on the progress in each country’s efforts in advancing the priority areas stated in the Joint Position and the Action Plan, discussed the potential of better utilisation and coordination of problem-focused research and reviewed the achievements and the future of the Baltic Leadership Programme in Civil Protection.

The traditional Presidency Bell Handover Ceremony from Sweden to Latvia concluded the meeting.



30 **Donsö Shipping Meet 2017:
HELCOM and CBSS Joint Session
on Alternative Fuels**

At the Donsö Shipping Meet – the meeting place for the entire maritime cluster – the CBSS Expert Group on Maritime Policy (EGMP) held its first meeting under the Swedish Presidency on 5 September 2017.

During the Shipping Meet’s Regional Cooperation Day, HELCOM and the CBSS jointly hosted a session on alternative fuels, green ship technologies and incentives in the Baltic Sea. CBSS Senior Adviser, Daria Akhutina, presented the Swedish Presidency priorities and drew attention to the requirements which support and outline a new standard for the industry regarding green investments in the Baltic and North Sea area.



“The one who delivers the solutions first will have the market – and our region is well placed to deliver [these solutions].”

(Mattias Rust, Swedish Chair of the EGMP)

The Expert Group discussed further maritime collaboration in the Baltic Sea Region and concretised the actions taken on SDG14 which Sweden chose as the main focal point of the EGMP’s work during its Presidency year.

As a part of this, a site visit to the newly built ship-to-ship bunkering ship ‘Coralius’ was organised. This bunkering vessel is the first one of its kind built in Europe and will provide ships with the most viable alternative fuel (LNG) in the Baltic and North Sea, helping to reduce emissions tremendously.



32 **Oslo Conference on Good Practices in Identification and Referral of Children at Risk of Exploitation and Trafficking**

Hearing the child’s story – this seemingly little, but in reality, huge and challenging task stood in focus during the multi-year process of analysis and consultation in the Baltic Sea Region on strengthening child-sensitive communication and best interests’ determinations.

On 29 – 30 May 2018, the CBSS Children at Risk Unit gathered policymakers, practitioners, advocates and researchers from the Nordic and Baltic Sea Region, in Oslo for a regional expert conference and for reviewing the current state of knowledge, policy and practice in identifying children at risk of exploitation and trafficking.

Amongst the panellists and participants were the Norwegian Deputy Minister for Children and Equality, Tom Erlend Skaug; UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale and Sexual Exploitation of

Children and President of “Missing Children Europe”, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio; and Petya Nestorova from the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings – all of them urged for renewed efforts to solve known challenges: still, too often, child victims are not correctly identified and remain excluded from the assistance and support they are entitled to.

The results of the Conference and the previous consultation process with child victims of exploitation and trafficking were incorporated in the Conference Statement as well as in the Oslo Conclusions which will guide the continued work of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and provide inspiration for the cooperation with national stakeholders, civil society and other partners to safeguard child victims of exploitation and children at risk.



“We need long-term, sustainable solutions that ensure that all children, including unaccompanied and separated children, can develop into adulthood in an environment that will meet their needs and rights, including recovery and (re)integration.”

(Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children)



Baltic TRAM: Mid-Term Conference at KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Tighter collaboration between the industry/small & medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the research sector can contribute to a fuller and broader capability of the knowledge and innovation system in Europe. Bearing in mind the outstanding innovation performance showcased by the Baltic Sea Region, the Baltic TRAM partnership brings forward the science-business cooperation in our region.

In light of this, the Baltic TRAM Mid-Term Conference presented an extensive overview of various activities, projects and framework conditions for a better support of access opportunities for the industrial sector/SMEs to analytical research facilities.

CBSS Director General Maira Mora highlighted during her welcoming words Baltic TRAM as one of the driving forces behind the regional consultations on the Baltic 2030 Action Plan and one of the key implementers of its thematic strands namely SDG 9.



“Baltic TRAM influences the future transnational cooperation and in the macro-regional context of innovation governance is one of the driving forces behind the focus area ‘Transition to sustainable economy’ of the CBSS Baltic 2030 Action Plan.”

Baltic Sea NGO Forum

The focus of the XVI Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Uppsala this year was on how to strengthen NGO participation in the Baltic Sea Region. The participants from civil society organisations and public authorities discussed the importance of broader and deeper inclusion of NGOs in the decision-making processes in the Baltic Sea States cooperation.

At the Forum, Head of the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit, Krista Kampus, introduced the 2030 Agenda and the actions taken by the CBSS. Further, she highlighted the important role NGOs play in the SGD implementation and of the Baltic 2030 Action Plan, by translating the global goals in concrete local actions and strengthening the participation of marginalised groups.

The core recommendations from the workshops held during the Forum on 17-18 May 2018 included the establishment of a youth component within the Baltic Sea NGO Network in order to enhance youth participation; the creation of an anti-poverty network within the Baltic Sea Region in order to prevent the increase of poverty; and mainstreaming of gender equality in all efforts of the Network.



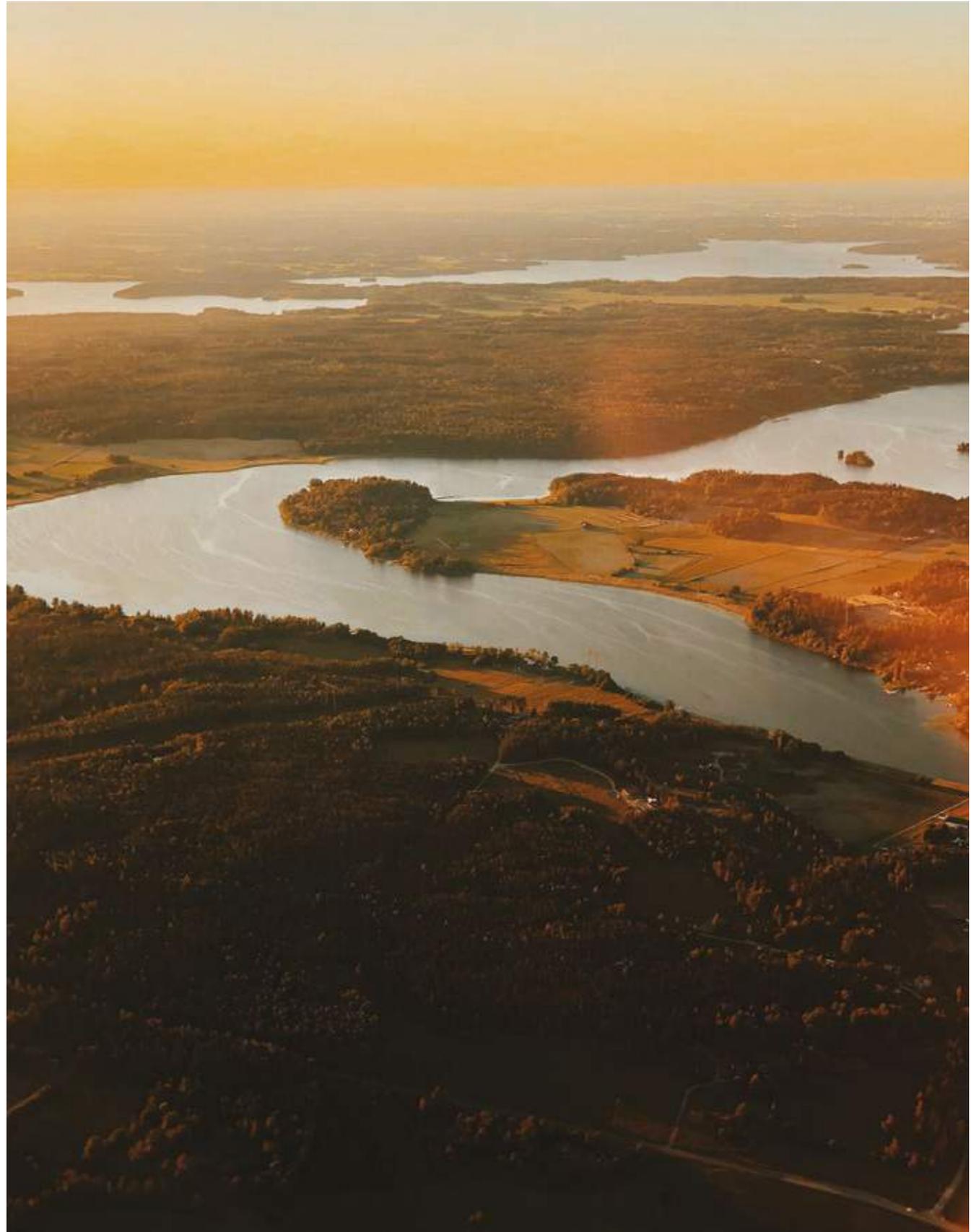
36 **Meeting of the Ministries of Labour of the Council of the Baltic Sea States**

The High-Level Meeting of the Labour Ministries of the CBSS Member States was organised by the CBSS Secretariat in cooperation with the partner organisations, the Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK) and Latvian NGO Shelter House "Drosa Maja" in Riga on 18 April 2018.

In connection to the Labour Ministries Meeting, the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (BSLF) gathered and discussed an optimal format to facilitate cooperation in the field of labour and employment in the region, which brought forward the idea of establishing a CBSS/BSLF Coordination Group on Labour and Employment (CG).

The CG would be a joint group with the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (social partners) and envisages the participation of key actors in the field, such as representatives from, for example, the Ministries (Labour, Education or Health) from the CBSS Member States, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference or the Northern Dimension Partnership on Public Health and Social Well-being.

Representatives from the BSLF social partners called in their presentations for increased interaction in the areas of common concern, for example, labour mobility, future work and digitalisation, new qualifications and life-long learning.



COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS



The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) is the governing body of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and decides upon the direction of the organisation between the Ministerial Sessions. The CBSS Ministerials give political guidance to support the implementation and agenda which is carried out under the leadership of the Committee.



Swedish CBSS Presidency Team

Hans Olsson, Chair of the Committee of Senior Officials

Eva Ekmehag, Swedish CSO Member 2017-2018

Jóna Dögg Thordardóttir, Coordinator for the Swedish CBSS Presidency 2017-2018

During the Swedish Presidency the Committee of Senior Officials met seven times. They met in autumn in Stockholm for the Annual Observer States Consultation, and in spring in Brussels for their yearly consultations with the European Union.

Committee of Senior Officials

Hans Olsson Chair and CSO Member, *Sweden*
 Kim Vinthen, MFA of Denmark - CSO Member, *Denmark*
 Jonathan Bugge Harder, MFA of Denmark - CSO Member, *Denmark*
**as of 01/05/2018*
 Raul Mälk, MFA of Estonia - CSO Member, *Estonia*
 Kristina Pingoud, MFA of Finland - CSO Member, *Finland*
 Michael Däumer, FFO of Germany - CSO Member, *Germany*
 Guðmundur Árni Stefánsson, MFA of Iceland - CSO Member, *Iceland*
 Juris Bone, MFA of Latvia - CSO Member, *Latvia*
 Kornelija Jurgaitienė, MFA of Lithuania - CSO Member, *Lithuania*
 Per Kjell Mannes, 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*

Other CBSS Member representatives

Christoph Wilhelm Deissenberger, First Secretary (Economic affairs) at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, *Germany*

Inga Ozola, Head of Minister's Office, MFA of Latvia, *Latvia*



CBSS PROJECT SUPPORT FACILITY





CBSS Project Support Facility (PSF)

In 2018, the call for applications was dedicated to the priority area “Regional Identity”. After careful consideration, the 43 applications received by the deadline of 31 March 2018, were whittled down by the PSF Selection Committee and Committee of Senior Officials to the final seven projects.

Baltic Sea Festival Advisory Board (2018-2019)

Lead Partner: Sweden (Swedish Radio Berwaldhallen) in partnership with Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia.

The Baltic Sea Festival has been running since 2003, offering both a cultural programme (focusing on music) and a seminar programme concentrating on leadership and sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. Through music and discussions, the festival hopes to create a platform for democratic dialogue focusing on regional issues.

This funding will help establish an Advisory Board, comprised of key decision makers and lobbyists from the region, that can help pinpoint a new aim for the festival, making the event more relevant and significant by developing the programme as well as engaging new partners and audiences.

Baltic Sea Region Youth Camp 2019 (2018-2019)

Lead Partner: Norway (Eastern Norway County Network as Chairman of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (BSSSC)) in partnership with Denmark (UBC) and Poland (ERB).

How can policymakers better integrate young people in the decision-making process in the Baltic Sea Region? About 100 young people from all countries across the Baltic Sea Region would take part in a three-day camp in Gdansk in June 2019 leading up to the Annual Forum of the EUSBSR in 2019. The Baltic Sea Region Youth Camp 2019 will focus on topics like sustainable development and the European Year of Cultural Heritage by organising cultural workshops, panel discussions as well as offer the chance to meet politicians and experts. It will also allow the participants to strengthen and formulate an idea of Baltic Sea regional identity through an interactive cultural programme.

The outcome of the camp will be used for the continued effort to strengthen the voice of youth and actually involve them.

Digital Approaches in Cultural Heritage towards a pan-Baltic Cooperation Network (2018-2019)

Lead Partner: Latvia (National Library of Latvia) in partnership with Estonia, Germany, Lithuania and Sweden.

The project highlights the growing demand for access to cultural heritage and, therefore, the need to digitalise our common heritage. It seeks to establish a sustainable framework for pan-Baltic cooperation in using digital approaches. The network will interlink institutions, experts and young professionals working in these fields.

The project supports the vision of the Baltic 2030 Action Plan which aims to improve access to excellent educational opportunities and a high quality of life for people of every age and background.

Integrating Belarusian Business Studies in Baltic Sea Region Higher Education (2018-2019)

Lead Partner: Finland (University of Turku) in partnership with Belarus, Germany, Latvia, and Russia.

The overall aim of the project is to expand teacher and researcher resources in order to shape an international network focusing on Master level executive education with a specific perspective on international business and entrepreneurship. The resources would take new digital technology into consideration.

The project will provide a way to integrate Belarusian Higher Education more closely into a Baltic Sea Region Higher Education context, building on the experiences from the CBSS EuroFaculty concept and current teaching and learning methods.

Nordic Authors crossing borders in the Baltic States (2018-2019)

Lead Partner: Denmark (The Confederation of Nordic Associations/FNF) in partnership with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The project aims at strengthening the cultural identity and branding between the Nordic and Baltic countries through visits to schools, high schools, universities, libraries and other cultural institutions across the Baltic Sea Region focusing on children, young people and adults in both urban and rural areas. The awarded funding will enable the Confederation of Nordic Associations to further develop this concept. The visits help to create social cohesion by promoting common values like democracy, artistic freedom and equality.

Well-being Residency Network (2018-2020)

Lead Partner: Latvia (Association Sansusī) in partnership with Finland, Russia and Sweden.

The Well-being Residency is an evolving concept which merges arts residencies and socially engaged art. The project wants to create an artist-in-residence programme where culture is used as a tool for recovery, ameliorating social inclusion and well-being. The project will qualify and document the interaction between artists and the target group, in a situation of recovery (care homes, hospitals, prisons or reception centres). The project operates in rural and remote areas and is organised in collaboration with local communities, social and healthcare institutions.

NordicBaltic Festival Platform (2018-2019)

Lead Partner: Sweden (Sweden Festivals) in partnership with Denmark, Estonia, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Poland.

The NordicBaltic Festival Platform (NBFP) has been in development since 2011 and has gathered so far eleven partners from nine different countries. The NBFP has the role of an incubator and network for arts & culture festivals in the region.

The project aims at engaging up to 500 festivals in its activities (dance, theatre, puppetry, film), enhancing their audience, connections and visibility. The platform allows the various festivals and respective organisers to share experience on working in the region and business strategies in order to maximise efficiency when tackling common challenges in the field like audience development and increasing employment/revenue streams.



REGIONAL IDENTITY





Senior Officials Group for Culture Meeting

The meeting of the CBSS Senior Officials Group for Culture (SOGC) was held on 4 June 2018, back-to-back with the 9th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Tallinn. Chaired by David EK from the Swedish Ministry of Culture, the event was attended by delegates from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Russia.

The meeting served as a platform for discussing pertinent regional cultural cooperation matters among all states of the Baltic Sea Region and featured reports from ARS BALTICA which marked its 25th anniversary in 2017, and from the Baltic Region Heritage Committee which celebrated its 20th anniversary in April 2018.

Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue 2017

From 20 – 26 November 2017, the CBSS invited 15 young teachers from the Baltic Sea Region and beyond to Finland and Russia for the fourth edition of the Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue. The first half of the programme took place in Helsinki, hosted by the Aleksanteri Institute of the University of Helsinki, and highlighted the changing context, the country of Finland experienced during the past 100 years.

During the days in Helsinki, the participants also had the chance to become a CBSS Senior Official for one day and simulated a CSO meeting “under the BSYD Presidency”.

The Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue continued in Saint Petersburg, exploring the cultural and historical relations and roots in the Baltic Sea Region with lectures and presentations by amongst others, representatives from Saint Petersburg City Administration and the Leontief Centre.

“The CSO simulation game gave great insight into the real work of intergovernmental organisations – it was an experience which had more worth than the simply theoretical courses in International Relations at university,”

one participant explained.



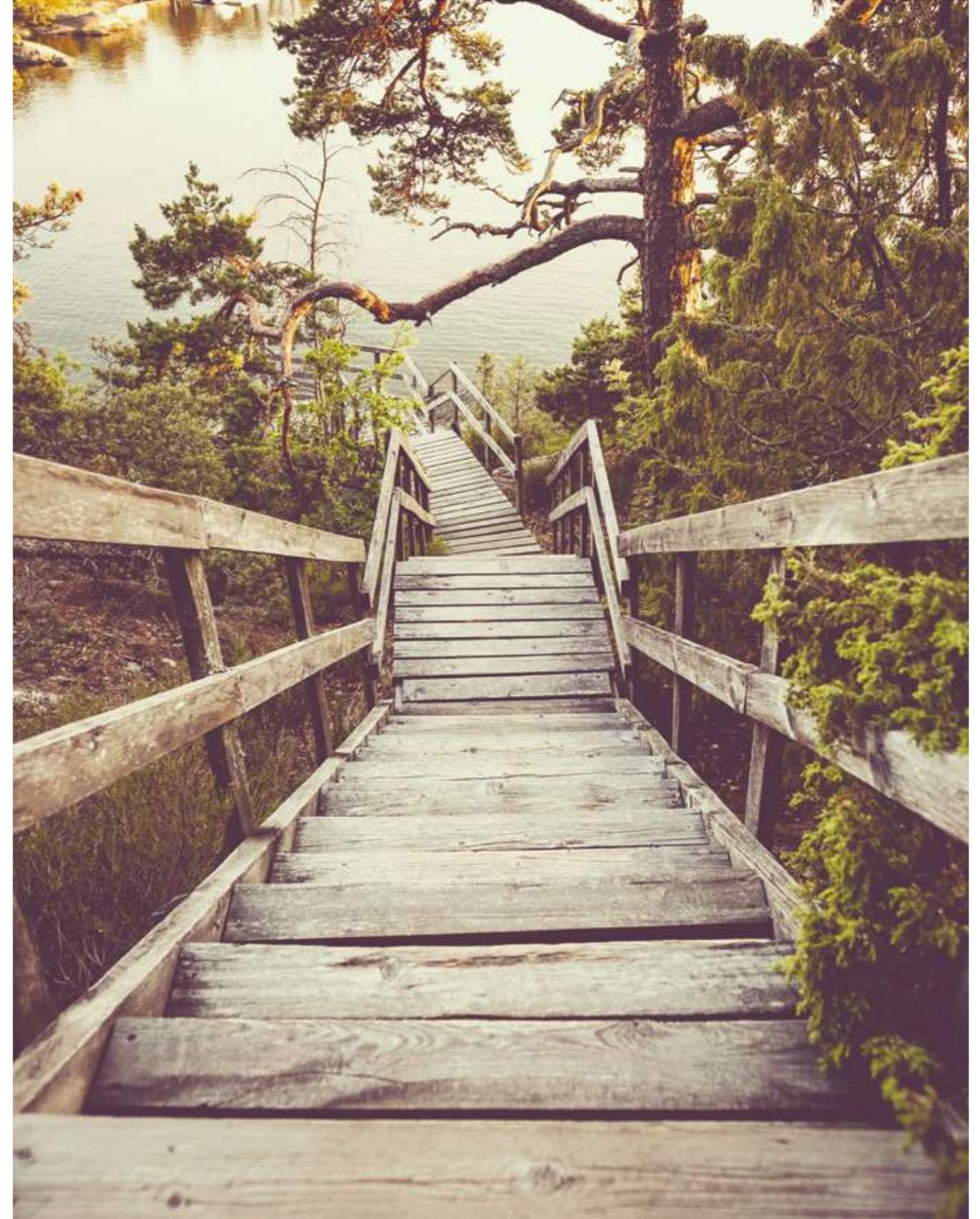
CBSS Summer University

In 2018, the CBSS supported five Summer Universities spread across the region focusing on sustainable development, energy, or journalism, media and populism.

The CBSS Summer Universities took place this year at:

- **Novgorod State University**, Russia:
3 June – 11 June 2018
- **Södertörn University**, Sweden & **University of Gdańsk**, Poland:
9 June – 21 June 2018
- **Uppsala University**, Sweden:
10 June 2018 – 16 June 2018
- **Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences**, Latvia:
19 June 2018 – 30 June 2018
- **St. Petersburg State University of Economics**, Russia:
15 August 2018 – 29 August 2018

Two study visits to the CBSS Secretariat took place in mid-June as part of the CBSS Summer University programmes of Södertörn University's CBSS Summer Course and Uppsala University's CBSS Summer School. The students partook in seminars on the practical work of an intergovernmental organisation in the Baltic Sea Region regarding security topics. These workshops provided hands-on training in addressing current issues in civil security cooperation, and the students were to elaborate on and suggest concrete solutions and recommendations, both to practitioners and the policy level.



SUSTAINABLE &
PROSPEROUS REGION





56 **Expert Group on Sustainable Development**

“We must base our work on solidarity, tolerance and friendship. We need each other to succeed in forming a sustainable society!”

(Roger Ryberg, BSSSC)

Baltic 2030 Action Plan: Localizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit co-organised and moderated the session “Baltic 2030 Action Plan: Localizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” during the 25th Annual Conference of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC) “Cohesion = Togetherness” on 20-22 September 2017.

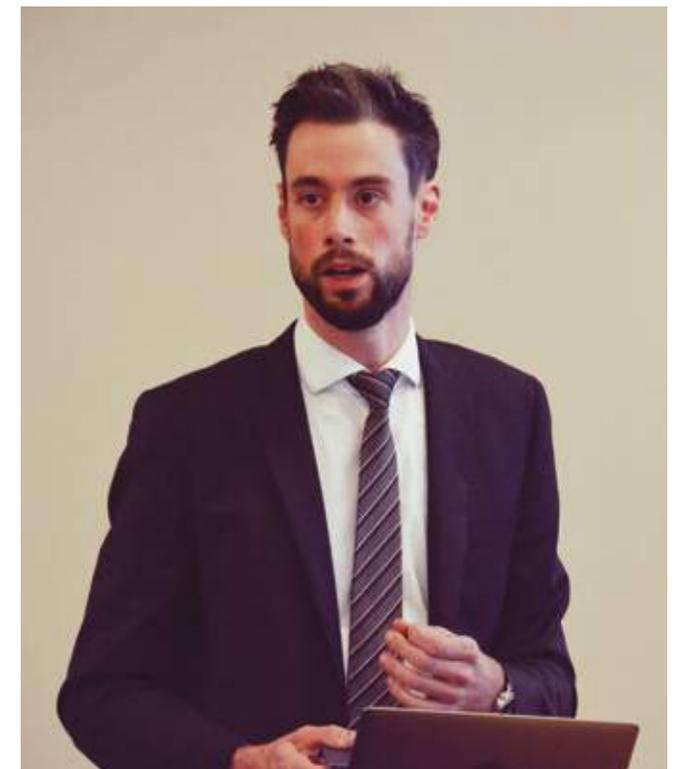
During these days in Potsdam, the BSSSC committed itself as the voice of sub-regions in the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development (EGSD) and to advocate and fully support the implementation of the Baltic 2030 Action Plan.

Anne-Cerise Nilsson from the Swedish Ministry of Environment introduced the Baltic 2030 Action Plan in her keynote speech and supported the idea of having it as a common framework throughout the region, for implementation on local to regional to national level.

Launch of the report “Baltic 2030 Bumps on the Road: How the Baltic Sea States are performing on the SDGs”

“Baltic 2030: Bumps on the Road”, a report developed by the advisory firm “Nordic Sustainability” as a support for the discussions of the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development (EGSD), explores the most pressing challenges for the Baltic Sea Region using the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report provides a macro-regional overview on all 17 goals and analyses in-depth five critical SDGs on the basis of existing comparable indicators provided by the SDGs Index Dashboards by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and Bertelsmann Stiftung.

On 14 June 2018, the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit hosted a breakfast seminar on the newly published report, offering stakeholders and representatives from our Member and Observer States embassies the opportunity to learn more about the report itself and get insight on how we all can support the work of our countries in achieving the SDGs through macro-regional cooperation.





58 **Baltic Leadership Programme (BLP) on UN Agenda 2030**

The Baltic Sea Region has been a frontrunner in supporting the implementation of SDGs since their launch in January 2016. Still, a lot needs to be done to make the region truly sustainable, especially considering the interconnected and transboundary nature of the goals, which calls for coordinated action of the nations on all levels.

Therefore, the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit supported the Swedish Institute in developing a new edition of the Baltic Leadership Programme (BLP) on the UN 2030 Agenda in 2017. The BLPs are tailor made training programmes designed to promote the implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and to support thematic networks.

The three modules took place in Stockholm, Tallinn and Brussels and increased the participants' skills for sustainable leadership and cross-sectorial cooperation and taught them how macro-regional strategies – like the Baltic 2030 Action Plan - can support and add value for national implementation of SDGs.



59 **Expert Group on Sustainable Maritime Economy**

At its second meeting during the Swedish Presidency, on 21 March 2018, the name of the Expert Group was formally changed to Expert Group on Sustainable Maritime Economy. Moreover, the Expert Group's mandate was renewed.

The meeting was chaired by Mattias Rust from the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise and featured presentations by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and the WWF giving their perspectives on the Maritime Sustainability Indicators and the state of the Baltic Sea.

Furthermore, the Expert Group declared to ensure a cross-sectorial and integrated approach also in its future work, to engage business and to keep a balance among the economic, social and ecological aspects within maritime economy.



CBSS Science Research Innovation Agenda

Baltic Sea Science Day

The second CBSS Baltic Sea Science Day was organised in Turku on the occasion of the 5th Baltic University Programme Rectors' Conference and the centenary of Åbo Akademi University. Due to the wide representation of universities' leadership, the event also drew attention to macro-regional researchers' mobility.

The event gave insights to the latest developments of macro-regionally embedded projects, not at least the two cornerstones of the CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda, Baltic Science Network and Baltic TRAM.

Furthermore, the second CBSS Baltic Sea Science Day marked another step towards building a closer alignment between research activities carried out across the Baltic Sea Region and the implementation of the Baltic 2030 Action Plan. Likewise, in the context of the Baltic TRAM project work focused on open access and open science, the conference encouraged other relevant research hubs based across the Baltic Sea Region to follow its leading example.



Baltic Science Network Transnational Seminar

Following the Baltic TRAM Mid-Term Conference held in October 2017, one of the next milestones for the CBSS endorsed research cooperation projects was the Baltic Science Network transnational seminar "New Tools for Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation in Research and Innovation Programmes" in November 2017 in Tallinn.

The aim of this transnational seminar was to inform the public about the barriers that cause scientific performance discrepancies within the countries of the EU, and to suggest directions for political interference to increase participation in research and innovation initiatives in the European Research Area, in particular in the Baltic Sea Region.

SAFE &
SECURE REGION





European Civil Protection Forum 2018

As coordinators for the Policy Area Secure of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), the CBSS Secretariat and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) organised a break-out session at the European Civil Protection Forum 2018, in Brussels, Belgium. The session “Transnational cooperation for effective disaster risk management” took place on 5 March under one of the four pillars of the Forum: Scaling up prevention.

In the session, all four existing EU macro-regional strategies presented their unique perspectives on transnational cooperation, and how they use their respective strategy as a platform for initiating and carrying out various types of cooperation activities.

The main themes, addressed by all the speakers, included the importance of involving all policy levels and the citizens in cooperation efforts; cultivating joint goals, values and a common societal security culture; intensifying cooperation by nurturing personal contacts, and widely disseminating the lessons learned.

Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Baltic Sea Region: Baltic Leadership Programme in Civil Security

This year, the Baltic Leadership Programme in Civil Security focused on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

On 27-30 November 2017, representatives from civil protection and law enforcement organisations coming from the CBSS Member States, gathered in Sigtuna to increase their institutional knowledge, to strengthen the ties between the agencies playing a central role in the crisis management in the BSR and elaborated on a shared security culture in the Baltic Sea Region.



Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (EGNRS)

The Expert Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety held a meeting in October 2017 in Freiburg, Germany, addressing key questions related to the future functioning of the Group.

Prevention and preparedness to radiation and nuclear accidents were identified as the most promising responsibilities for the EGNRS in the following years. Therefore, it became evident to develop a strategic vision of radiation and nuclear safety in the Baltic Sea Region and to place the Expert Group's core activity in the CBRNE* context in the future.

*Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive materials



“A dialogue in this format [needs to] be constructive, as it addresses the most problematic and acute security issues: terrorism, drug trafficking and threats from transnational organised crime.”

(Igor Zubov, Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation)

68 **Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC)**

The Heads of the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC) met in Oslo to receive the latest information on the activities which had taken place under the Norwegian Presidency in 2017, and the plans of the Swedish Presidency in 2018.

On 27-29 November 2017 the participants from ten Member States, the Baltic Sea Task Force Secretariat and Frontex learnt about the Annual Threat Assessment 2017 for the region, Frontex current and planned joint operations, and Finland’s state of play on the CoastNet system.

The conference ended with the formal handover of the Presidency from Norway to Sweden.

17th Meeting Prosecutors General of the Baltic Sea States Network

The Prosecutor General’s Office of the Russian Federation hosted the 17th Conference of Prosecutors General of the Member States of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on 19 – 21 September 2017 in the Kaliningrad Oblast. Representatives of the prosecution authorities gathered in the city of Svetlogorsk to address the role of prosecutors in countering challenges and threats to security such as irregular migration, environmental crimes and terrorism.

The participants discussed the challenges arising from migration and integration such as the lack of interpreters for migrants, the identification of victims at the border crossing points and collecting evidence.

Terrorism as a rather new area of criminality was recognised to be one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The participants expressed their concern that due to a growing number of cases, the need to train specialised prosecutors will become more pressing even in the future.

Pursuant to the decision of the 15th Conference of the Prosecutors General of the CBSS in 2012, it was agreed that the 18th Conference would be held in Estonia in 2019.

Baltic Sea Task Force on Organized Crime (BSTF-OC)

During the Annual Strategic Meeting in Jurmala, Latvia, the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organized Crime (BSTF-OC) discussed modern challenges and threats in the Baltic Sea Region. In particular, topical issues of combating drug trafficking and irregular migration were in focus of the meeting.

The event, held on 30 November – 1 December 2017, considered options for expanding the BSTF-OC’s cooperation with external partners, in particular with the Coordinating Council of Heads of Competent Authorities for Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).

Annual Meeting of the Network of Prosecutors on Environmental Crime in the Baltic Sea Region (ENPRO) in Oslo

On 29-30 November 2017, the Network of Prosecutors on Environmental Crime in the Baltic Sea Region (ENPRO) held its Annual Meeting in Oslo, hosted by Økokrim, the Norwegian National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime.

Opened by Dr. Ewald Brandt, President of ENPRO and Head of the Public Prosecutor’s Office in Hamburg, Germany, the meeting focused on pollution and sampling in criminal cases, and provided a follow-up discussion on the ENPRO Database, collecting environmental crime cases in the Baltic Sea Region.



70 **Task Force Against Trafficking in Human Beings**

STROM II

The STROM II Final Conference “Local responses to human trafficking in the spotlight” in Birštonas, Lithuania, focused on hearing the national experiences from the project, the challenges and results achieved, as well as ways forward for potential future cooperation.

The conference on 12-13 October 2017 included a presentation of the methodology for estimating the costs of victim assistance in municipalities, developed by the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI), as a part of the STROM II project. The participants also worked in national groups on local cooperation mechanisms through example cases. In their respective groups, they also tried out the newly developed Human Game, which focuses on the difficulty of distinguishing between malicious and benevolent employers in everyday life. In the future, the Human Game – at the moment available in English, Estonian, Latvian and Russian – will be accessible to the wider public, providing a hands-on learning tool for counter-trafficking actors across the region.

Trafficking along Migration Routes (TRAM)

The years 2015 and 2016 were unprecedented in terms of the numbers of people migrating by sea and overland to the European Union (EU). Almost one and a half million people entered the EU irregularly.

The CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) partnered in the new project Trafficking along Migration Routes (TRAM): Identification and Integration of Victims of Trafficking among Vulnerable Groups and Unaccompanied Children, in which it works on strengthening integration efforts for the victims of trafficking among migrants, refugees and unaccompanied children in the current asylum and migration context in Finland, Germany and Sweden.

Roundtables in these countries were organised throughout spring 2018, alongside pilot simulation exercises to test and validate the model strategic plans for integration. The main project objective of the project is to support and enable the integration of victims of trafficking, by establishing a multidisciplinary and transnational approach for early identification, referral, service provision and protection.

Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings at the Swedish Political Week in Almedalen 2018

How can we ensure that children and young people who are victims of human trafficking get the help they need?

What existing solutions can be observed in Sweden and within Nordic-Baltic cooperation to counter human trafficking with a particular focus on children and young people?

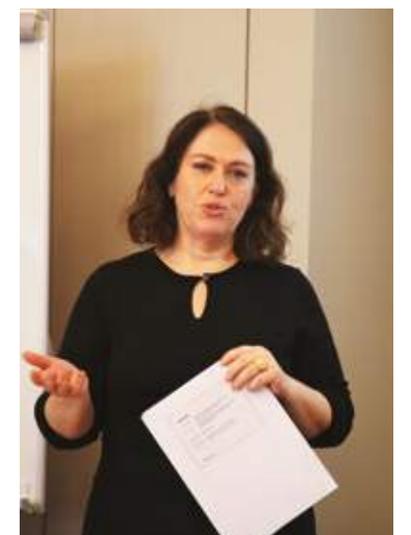
Project Officer for the Task Force Against Trafficking in Human Beings, Endrit Mujaj joined as panellist the seminar on Human Trafficking at the Swedish Political Week Almedalen on 2 July 2018 on Gotland. Together, the representatives of the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Swedish Border Police and Swedish Governmental Agencies focused in their discussion on victims of human trafficking that are often overlooked – children and young people – and how to make sure that they receive the help and support they are entitled to.



72 **Expert Group on Children at Risk**

On 19 – 20 April 2018, the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk held its second meeting during the Swedish Presidency discussing national and regional developments as they relate to the mandate and priorities of the Group as well as the upcoming 20th anniversary of the CBSS cooperation on children at risk, which shall be celebrated during the CBSS Presidency held by Latvia.

In this light, Ingrid Åkerman, Head of the Special Group for Children at Risk during 1999 – 2002 and Agneta Björklund, responsible from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, reflected on the beginnings of the Expert Group and shared memories about the challenges and priorities of that time: The core work at the start was building networks and working with a broad professional group. There was a strong emphasis on working with NGOs, which was key to be able to understand how the countries were working with sexually abused children. The Barnahus was on the agenda from the beginning. The two originators concluded that the work of the Expert Group looks different today as it has refined its way of working to respond to rapid changes and to work concretely with officials and professionals on all levels.





PROMISE 2

PROMISE 2 is a continuation of the PROMISE project, which developed practical tools and facilitated mutual exchange and learning to promote interagency and multidisciplinary services for child victims and witnesses of violence. In its second phase, the project has a strong focus on national level implementation, promoting progress in establishing and operating Barnahus or similar models in the partner countries.

The project team met in Stockholm on 25 January 2017 to plan the core tasks and has since then co-organised several webinars as part of the ChildHub's child protection webinar series.

In this Webinar Series, topics covered in PROMISE I are revisited and expanded, and best practices and lessons learned from the activities of PROMISE 2 are shared with a wider public audience.

The Vision of the PROMISE project has been updated, describing a Europe where the human rights of children to protection from violence, support and to be heard are fulfilled. To this end, child victims and witnesses of violence in Europe are protected by child-friendly interventions and rapid access to justice and care.



Non-Violent Childhoods

It was historic when Sweden in 1979 became the first country in the world to ban corporal punishment of children in all settings – a move which inspired the world to follow suit. Today, most CBSS Member States have a full prohibition and they are now involved in preventing and responding to violence against children through the Non-Violent childhoods project, led by the CBSS Children at Risk Unit.

The project promotes the translation of the legal ban into actions that influence the attitudes and behaviour of the public at large. The result will further empower children to live and develop in a safe environment.

During the first half of the year, expert meetings in Riga, Warsaw, Tallinn and Stockholm had been organised, serving as feedback sessions for the upcoming Guidance Reports on e.g. best communication practices and implementing the legal ban on corporal punishment of children.

Children's involvement in any prevention, education or care programmes has proved to be essential. In Tallinn, the participants got input from members of the Estonian Union for Child Welfare and were moved by the bravery and authenticity of the young guests. Their wisdom and advice will be reflected in the report "Parenting for non-violent childhoods" and carried on in the follow-up activities of the project.

Special attention to the cause was furthermore given during the Stockholm Ministerial when the Heads of Delegation wore the project's advocacy pin.



LATVIAN PRESIDENCY 2018 - 2019

**The priorities of the CBSS
Latvian Presidency 2018-2019
are Integrity & Social Security,
Dialogue and Responsibility.**

The report of the CBSS Vision Group prepared during the CBSS Swedish Presidency will be taken further and an implementation plan elaborated.





78 **Integrity & Societal Security**

Today more than ever, the population and government agencies in the Baltic Sea Region, especially the law enforcement and civil protection authorities, all have one joint need and responsibility: to work together to establish a culture of a secure society.

Based on the positive results achieved by previous CBSS Presidencies, and in order to advance this process, the Latvian Presidency will focus on enhancing cooperation in the civil protection area to strengthen resilience in the region against major emergencies and disasters; on fighting against trafficking in human beings to prevent and mitigate consequences of this severe crime; and on combating organised crime and strengthening border management.

Latvia will support all efforts aimed at building a comprehensive mechanism for operational cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the Baltic Sea Region, in particular, the Baltic Sea Task Force against Organized Crime (BSTF-OC) and the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC) which will ultimately benefit from increased day-to-day cooperation using a multidisciplinary approach.

Dialogue

We share a common asset – the Baltic Sea coast with its special character and cultural heritage enriched by diverse contributions from each country.

There is a tendency of growing understanding of cultural heritage as an important element in the development of democratic, law-based, culture-oriented societies. Thus, cultural heritage plays a role in shaping a regional identity and ensuring sustainable growth – both long-term priorities of the CBSS.

Additionally, the notion of cultural heritage has expanded. It is no longer something exclusive to be revered, it is becoming an integral part of our societal living space. This space is constantly evolving which means that heritage systems should be flexible and able to adapt to these changes. The preservation of cultural heritage calls for an interdisciplinary approach which looks at the wider context beyond particular objects or sectors. A dialogue among experts and other stakeholders is necessary in order to discuss cultural heritage preservation systems, including systems for recent cultural heritage as well as the use of contemporary methods and technologies to find models that best serve these contexts.

Responsibility

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the Baltic 2030 Action Plan depends on a responsible approach both on a national and regional level. Responsibility is multifaceted – it has political, administrative, environmental, economic, social, cultural and moral aspects. For the CBSS, as a regional organisation, it comes naturally to take care of our common house and its future. The proposals for an implementation framework elaborated during the Swedish CBSS Presidency will serve as a basis for the new mandate of the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development to be approved during the Latvian Presidency.

Further, Latvia will focus on circular economy and responsible consumption and production that is particularly interlinked with aspects of green procurement. Smart governance of our cities is something that united the interests of urban planners in the countries of the region. The Latvian Presidency of the VASAB Committee on Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region (CSPD/BSR) will address gaps in the development of various types of urban areas.

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