Contents

Danish Presidency nr: 1
Safe & Secure Region nr: 9
Regional Identity nr: 16
Sustainable & Prosperous Region nr: 20
Project Support Facility nr: 25
Reports nr: 27
Denmark took over the Presidency from Latvia on July 1st 2019. Together with Germany, Denmark founded the CBSS in 1992, and the third Danish Presidency was devoted to concluding the reform process of the Council and the Secretariat initiated in 2018. The overriding priority of the Danish Presidency was to ensure the implementation of the CBSS Reform Roadmap, in order to bring more focus and flexibility in the work of the CBSS, improve cooperation with other international fora and formats active in the region, and enable concrete results in areas in which the CBSS in uniquely suited to add value.

OUTCOMES:

- All CBSS Foreign Ministers met to discuss regional issues and adopt the Bornholm Declaration and revised terms of reference for the Council and the Secretariat
- Orientations for the CBSS role and engagement within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region and the Northern Dimension
- Operational Guidelines for CBSS Practical Cooperation
- Guidelines for CBSS Fundraising
- Renewed mandate and new regional strategy for the Expert Group on Children at Risk 2020-2025
- New terms of reference and strategy for the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings 2020-2025
- Appointment of a new Director General for the CBSS Secretariat
- New premises for the CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm
“I am proud that Denmark presides over the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Denmark, together with Germany, was the initiator of the organisation, and we feel a special responsibility to show the value of the CBSS as a regional dialogue forum. Our first priority will therefore be to ensure that the organisation is best equipped to promote dialogue and cohesion throughout the Baltic Sea Region.”
On 19 May 2020, all 11 Foreign Ministers of the Council and the Secretary General of the European External Action Service gathered online to conclude the CBSS reform and exchange views on some topical issues for the region. They adopted revised terms of reference of the CBSS and of the CBSS Secretariat and discussed the COVID-19 outbreak in a regional context, environment and climate-related challenges, engagement of young people and the fight against cross border organised crime. The meeting was originally scheduled to take place on Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod’s native island of Bornholm.

Council members highlighted the role of the CBSS as a platform for intergovernmental dialogue and practical cooperation between all countries in the region. They welcomed important ongoing regional initiatives to promote sustainable development, address climate change and protect the marine environment. Green industries and green tourism were identified as offering important opportunities for revitalising Member States’ economies. They also welcomed the establishment of the Baltic Sea Youth Platform and directed CBSS to give increasing emphasis to its work with young people. The fight against cross border organised crime, including human trafficking, and the protection of children were reconfirmed as important areas of regional cooperation.

The Ministerial session concluded with the adoption of the Bornholm Declaration.
Observer State Briefing

The Annual Briefing of the CBSS Observer States took place at the Residence of the Danish Ambassador to Sweden, Vibeke Rovsing Lauritzen, in Stockholm. With almost all Observer State representatives attending, the general briefing was held by Ms. Ida Heimann Larsen, Chair of the CSO. She informed the representatives about the implementation of the CBSS reforms and important events during the Danish Presidency. Director General Maira Mora briefed the Observers about the activities of the CBSS Secretariat, and several Observer States expressed a wish to participate more actively in the work of the CBSS.

Committee of Senior Officials

The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) focused its work on the implementation of the CBSS reforms. It met five times during the Presidency. Three meetings took place at the Foreign Ministry in Copenhagen, and two were held online.

The Danish Presidency team consisted of Ms. Ida Heimann Larsen, Chair of the CSO, Mr. Anders Henriksson, Danish representative to the CSO and Ms. Camilla Munksgaard. On April 1st, 2020, Ms. Heimann Larsen was replaced by Ambassador Ove Ullerup and Ms. Munksgaard by Ms. Ninna Katrine Holm Sandén.
High-level Labour Meeting

A High-Level Meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs took place on the 26th of August 2019, during the 28th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Oslo, Norway. The event was a continuation of the successful meeting of Ministers and high-ranking representatives of labour ministries in Berlin in 2017, resulting in the Berlin Declaration. The meeting followed-up on the implementation of the declaration, focusing on the future of work, demographic challenges and sustainable inclusive labour markets in the Baltic Sea region. The representatives contributed to the vision and strategy for the future of working life on national and regional level.

Baltic Excellence Programme in Civil Security

The Danish Emergency Management Agency, DEMA chaired the CBSS Civil Protection Network during the Danish Presidency, and the priorities of the presidency included climate change and volunteerism. DEMA hosted a module of the Baltic Excellence Programme (BEP) in Civil Security at its training facility in Tinglev on 18-20 November 2019. 17 participants from 8 countries took part in the course, moderated by the Head of DEMA Division for Municipalities and Citizens, Henrik G. Petersen. The course was densely packed with theory, practice and study visits, all planned to explore different aspects of crisis management in connection with climate change adaptation and engagement with civil society.
Conference on Harmonizing Anti-Trafficking Practices

The final event of the transnational project “Paving the Way for the Harmonized Operational Framework in the Baltic Sea Region (HOF-BSR)” was organised together with the Ministry of the Interior and Administration of Poland in Warsaw, Poland. At the conference, the results of the project were launched in the form of a Transnational Referral Mechanism for the Baltic Sea Region, a Human Trafficking Glossary and Guidelines for Journalists reporting on cases of human trafficking. The event was also an opportunity to share good practices with partners and authorities.

Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue 2019

As part of the Körber Foundation’s EUSTORY Next Generation Summit “Winds of Change – Transitions in Europe”, the 2019 Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue (BSYD) took the form of a three-day long creative workshop, in which the international BSYD participants explored the cultural, political and economic development of the Baltic Sea Region since 1989. 20 young adults from the CBSS Member States, as well as the Observer States of Belarus and Ukraine, participated in this year’s dialogue.
Barnahus Network launch

Barnahus colleagues and stakeholders from all over Europe gathered in Helsinki on the 25th of November 2019 to celebrate the first steps towards a more formal network of Barnahus and similar services in Europe, represented by the signing of the statutes for the PROMISE Barnahus Network. An exhibition showcased strong support for the network in the testimonials of both professionals and children about the impact of Barnahus in their lives. The exhibition enhanced the visibility of individual Barnahus from all around Europe.

A Clean and Global North: strengthening regional cooperation in the Arctic and Baltic Sea regions

In November 2019, the Finnish Presidency of the EU Council organised a high-level event on how to strengthen sustainable international cooperation in Europe’s northern regions. Together with the EU Commission and the European External Action Service, the CBSS contributed to the event. Many high-level Baltic Sea Region officials and CBSS Council members spoke at the event, including then Finnish Prime Minister Antti Rinne, Pekka Haavisto, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Gudlaugur Thór Thordarson, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland.
Forum Strategov 2019

The CBSS was actively engaged in many parts of the 2019 Forum Strategov in St. Petersburg. The forum is regarded as Russia’s main platform for discussion of methods and tools of strategic planning and attracts a lot of Russian and international participants. CBSS Director General, Maira Mora, spoke in the opening session. She confirmed the CBSS’ commitment to promoting sustainability and the SDGs in Russia and also outlined the CBSS’ role and engagement in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Sustainable & Prosperous unit organized, participated in, and moderated several events and panel discussions on the topics of sustainability, circular economy and sustainable urban development. The CBSS also had an active role in the Forum’s Youth Platform.
Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings

Copenhagen, Denmark

Three meetings of the CBSS Task Force of Trafficking in Human Beings were organised during the Danish Presidency. In November 2019 and March 2020, the Task Force met in Copenhagen and in May it held a meeting online. The Presidency provided the Task Force with an opportunity to evaluate its previous projects and initiatives as well as to organise a two-day workshop “Developing effective regional anti-trafficking strategies and programmes”, in order to create a new and comprehensive Strategic Plan for the work of the Task Force during the next mandate period. The process involved evaluation of previous efforts, which was very valuable for Task Force members and served to further align Member States’ perspectives on the role of the Task Force in the anti-trafficking work in the Baltic Sea Region.

Conference on harmonising anti-trafficking practices

Warsaw, Poland

The final event of the transnational project “Paving the Way for the Harmonized Operational Framework in the Baltic Sea Region (HOF-BSR)” was organised together with the Ministry of the Interior and Administration of Poland in Warsaw, Poland. At the conference, the results of the project were launched in the form of a Transnational Referral Mechanism for the Baltic Sea Region, a Human Trafficking Glossary and Guidelines for Journalists reporting on cases of human trafficking. The event was also an opportunity to share good practices with partners and authorities.
Media and trafficking seminars

Stockholm, Sweden

The CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) hosted two panel discussions for students of journalism on media coverage of human trafficking. The experienced panellists included the editor in chief of Södertörn University’s “Baltic Worlds” magazine Ninna Mörner, Swedish Radio’s journalist Maria Ridderstedt, lawyer Karin Gyllenring from Asylbyrå and Per Englund from the Swedish Police Authority. Among topics discussed were the status of the media coverage of human trafficking in Sweden, the legal difficulties when working with victims of trafficking without legal stay in their county of destination as well as the importance of victims telling their stories.
Barnahus Network Launch

Helsinki, Finland

Barnahus colleagues and stakeholders from all over Europe gathered in Helsinki on the 25th of November 2019 to celebrate the first steps towards a more formal network of Barnahus and similar services in Europe, represented by the signing of the statutes for the PROMISE Barnahus Network. An exhibition showcased strong support for the network in the testimonials of both professionals and children about the impact of Barnahus in their lives. The exhibition enhanced the visibility of individual Barnahus from all around Europe.

Promise 3 launch

During May and June 2020, a series of 14 online meetings brought together more than 70 of the PROMISE project colleagues to inform and be informed about the activities and opportunities that a third phase of PROMISE activities brings to the expansion of Barnahus in Europe. PROMISE 3 is an EU co-funded project which is designed to kickstart the activities planned in the 5-year strategy of the PROMISE Barnahus Network. These activities include university level training in the areas of forensic interviewing and therapy, with a view to establishing a European Competence Centre for Barnahus.

New mandate and strategy

During the last CBSS Children at Risk Expert Group meeting under the Danish Presidency, the Expert Group finalised the new Children at Risk Mandate and Strategy for 2020-2025. In these documents, the Expert Group agreed that it will continue to stimulate dialogue and exchange on cross-border concerns, to develop and nurture strategic partnership and to contribute to the development and implementation of projects promoting children’s rights and bolstering national child protection systems.
Excellence Programme in Civil Security

Tinglev, Denmark

The Danish Emergency Management Agency, DEMA chaired the CBSS Civil Protection Network during the Danish Presidency, and the priorities of the chairmanship included climate change and volunteerism. With these priorities in mind, DEMA hosted a module of the Baltic Excellence Programme (BEP) in Civil Security at its training facility in Tinglev on 18–20 November 2019. 17 participants from 8 countries took part in the course, moderated by the head of DEMA Division for Municipalities and Citizens, Henrik G. Petersen. The course was densely packed with theory, practice and study visits, all planned to explore different aspects of crisis management in connection to climate change adaptation and engagement with civil society.

18th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region

On 8 June 2020, the Danish chairmanship of the CBSS Civil Protection Network hosted the 18th Meeting of the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region. This meeting concluded the yearlong Danish chairmanship, which was dedicated to climate change, resilience as well as cooperation with civil society. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Directors General met virtually. The meeting was opened by the acting Director General of the Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), Flemming Klokager. The discussion focused the role of national civil protection agencies in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as project work and developments in the field of civil security in the Baltic Sea Region.
The CBSS Secretariat commissioned the report “An Evaluation of the Development and Effectiveness of Policy Area Secure 2013-2019”, in order to assess the overall achievements throughout the entire PA Secure 2013 – 2020 period, and to work out the premise for formulating recommendations for the operation of this policy area in the coming years. The report identified current challenges in the work of PA Secure as well as opportunities for its development.

Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime meeting

In October 2019, the annual strategic meeting of the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime was organised in Berlin. The meeting was hosted by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community of Germany under the patronage of Parliamentary State Secretary Prof Dr Günter Krings. The CBSS was represented at the meeting by Mr. Simon Stermann, German representative in the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials. Mr. Stermann provided the Task Force members with an update on current priorities within the CBSS and on the progress of the reforms of the organisation, led by the Danish Presidency. First steps were taken to align closer the work of the Task Force with that of the CBSS.
REGIONAL IDENTITY

DANISH PRESIDENCY 2019-2020
“Water connects us, but culture unites us” is the motto of the Baltic Sea Cultural Cities project which is trying to increase citizens’ ownership of Baltic Sea culture and identity. The key idea of the project is to biannually nominate a “Baltic Sea City of Culture” that relies not on competition, but rather on cooperation between cities, encouraging them to find similarities and synergies between each other. An important part of the project is also to enable not just the capitals, but also citizens in smaller cities or regions in the periphery to participate in and showcase their unique cultural landscapes. The project was kicked off in Malmö, Sweden in October 2019, and met in Kaunas, Lithuania in December for a workshop.

The Baltic Sea Youth Platform was an idea that was developed at the 2018 Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue, and was further elaborated by young people during a workshop in the CBSS Secretariat in December 2019. The Platform was granted funding from Erasmus+ in January 2020. It has three focus areas: to improve the political impact of youth on decision-making in the Baltic Sea Region, to develop tools for better knowledge transfer and to serve as a facilitator for various innovative projects relying on the interests and capacities of youth in a broad range of policy areas. Since the launch, the platform has engaged many different youth organisations in the Region.
Baltic Sea Youth Dialogue 2019

As part of the Körber Foundation’s EUSTORY Next Generation Summit “Winds of Change – Transitions in Europe”, the 2019 Baltic Sea Youth dialogue took the form of a three day long creative workshop, in which the international BSYD participants explored the cultural, political and economic development of the Baltic Sea Region since 1989. 20 young adults from the CBSS Member States, as well as the Observer States of Belarus and Ukraine, participated in this year’s dialogue.

The youth summit was full of reflections about the decisive events that shaped Europe during the past 30 years. It opened with “The Value of Europe – 30 years after the Iron Curtain” with renowned international speakers, including former Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga.

A special event was also devoted to how youth can contribute to policy-making. The panel discussion “Give us a seat at the table!”, co-organised by the CBSS and Forum Northern European Politics, explored this topic. It featured young activists from trade unions, promoters of LGBT rights and Baltic Sea cooperation organisations in dialogue with policymakers such as Johannes Schraps, Head of Delegation of the German Bundestag at the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference and Simon Stermann, member of the CBSS Committee of Senior Officials from the German Federal Foreign Office, as well as National Coordinator for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in Germany. Together, they discussed the role of youth movements and youth activism in the Baltic Sea Region and generated possible solutions on how to better integrate young people’s voices into today’s policy-making.

Baltic Sea Youth Camp 2020

The 2020 Baltic Sea Youth Camp was planned to take place back-to-back with the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Forum in Turku, Finland, but due to the global pandemic, the event was moved online. The 2-day-webinar was opened by the President-in-Office of the CBSS, Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jeppe Kofod, who spoke to 80 young adults about his own experience of growing up on the island of Bornholm in the middle of the Baltic Sea. During the camp, the participants discussed young leadership, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region as well as the opportunities and added value of Baltic Sea Region cooperation.
SUSTAINABLE & PROSPEROUS REGION

DANISH PRESIDENCY 2019-2020

Copenhagen, Denmark
The promotion of land-based power generation for vessels was the priority of the Danish Presidency of the Expert Group on Sustainable Maritime Economy, and the last expert group meeting of the Presidency was fully devoted to this topic. The group concluded that this transition is still in its infancy, but the first steps in the Baltic Sea Region have been taken with several land-based power generation projects already completed and more on the way. The approach holds a great potential to improve urban environments and can further cement the Baltic Sea Region as a model region for sustainable ocean tourism. The Expert Group also published a Joint Statement after the meeting. An international conference on this topic organised by the Danish Presidency had to be postponed due to the pandemic and is foreseen to take place before the end of 2020.

High-level Labour meeting

Oslo, Norway

A High-Level Meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs took place on the 26th of August 2019, during the 28th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Oslo, Norway. The event was a continuation of the successful meeting of Ministers and high-ranking representatives of labour ministries in Berlin in 2017, resulting in the Berlin Declaration. The meeting followed-up on the implementation of the declaration, focusing on the future of work, demographic challenges and sustainable inclusive labour markets in the Baltic Sea region. The representatives contributed to the vision and strategy for the future of working life on national and regional level.
An extension of the Baltic Science Network project was kicked off at the CBSS Secretariat in October 2019. With representatives from 12 partner and 5 associated organisations from 8 different Member States in attendance, the new project and the future of the Baltic Science Network as a sustainable platform for international research cooperation was discussed. The BSN_Powerhouse project aims to increase young researcher mobility in the Region and help small research infrastructures scale up their operations to improve research outputs in the project’s previously identified priority research fields of Photon and Neutron Science, Life Sciences and Welfare State.

In November 2019, the Thematic Working groups of the project met at the CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm to launch the project’s implementation phase. The event marked the beginning of the work for the two thematic working groups “Age Management and Working Conditions” and “Future Job Opportunities for an Ageing Work Force, including Entrepreneurship”. The groups will identify good practices and assess ongoing initiatives to come up with actionable policy recommendations to better address the demographic challenges of ageing populations and lower fertility rates and their effects on the labour markets in the Baltic Sea Region. The groups will further focus on finding measures to strengthen synergies between education and employment for people aged 55+ in order to meet the skills requirements of the future labour market in the region.
The CBSS was actively engaged in many parts of the 2019 Forum Strategov in St. Petersburg. The forum is regarded as Russia’s main platform for discussion of methods and tools of strategic planning and attracts a lot of Russian and international participants. CBSS Director General Maira Mora spoke in the opening session. She confirmed the CBSS’ commitment to promoting sustainability and the SDGs in Russia and also outlined the CBSS’ role and engagement in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Sustainable & Prosperous unit organized, participated in, and moderated several events and panel discussions on the topics of sustainability, circular economy and sustainable urban development. The CBSS also had an active role in the Forum’s Youth Platform.

The CBSS and the Centrum Balticum Foundation, as co-coordinators of the EUSBSR Horizontal Action Neighbours, together with the Leontief Centre and the Swedish Institute, organised an event in conjunction with the Russian Forum Strategov on October 30th 2019 in St. Petersburg. The aim of the event was to network and promote cooperation possibilities. The event gathered both Russian and EU stakeholders (roughly 50/50). The main activity of the meeting was a match-making session, during which the participants were distributed according to their organizations’ expertise to discuss and develop cooperation possibilities either in existing cooperation platforms or new ones.
In line with the focus on climate adaptation of the Danish Presidency of the Expert Group on Sustainable Development, the group met on 17 October 2019 back-to-back with a set of seminars addressing urban storm waters, managing flood risk and resilience in the face of floods. Following a request from the group, statistics officers met informally online in March 2020 and agreed, in the perspective of the review of the “Baltic 2030 Bumps on the road” report, to explore the idea of using national data sources to report on the progress of SDG implementation in the region.
DANISH PRESIDENCY 2019-2020

PROJECT SUPPORT FACILITY

Køge, Denmark
This innovative 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 where survivors can be informed, express their opinions, get support from peers and be heard in relevant decision making.

If You Speak Up, I Will Join!

Lead partner: Norway (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT) Norway, Invisible Children Forum) in partnership with Latvia, Sweden and Russia

This innovative 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 where survivors can be informed, express their opinions, get support from peers and be heard in relevant decision making.
Youth for Safer Youth

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

This project will research the safety concerns of the youth in the Baltic Sea Region. The research will help prepare for a larger scale project in which youth in the Baltic Sea region will be educated on how to increase their safety in the physical and virtual world, especially in fields where they feel less secure. Special attention will be paid to the collaboration between safety experts and young people to demonstrate the value of such cooperation.

Competence Building, Assistance Provision and Prosecution of Labour Exploitation Cases (CAPE)

Lead partner: Latvia (Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia) in partnership with Estonia, Finland and Denmark

The project addresses human trafficking (THB) for labour exploitation in all CBSS Member States. The main objective of the project 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 Sexual Exploitation

Lead partner: Russia (Regional Public Organization of Social Projects in Sphere of Population’s Well-Being “Stellit”) in partnership with Finland and Latvia

The project’s aim is to provide child protection specialists with relevant information and strategies regarding the prevention of child trafficking and sexual exploitation regarding ICT. The synergy of the combined expertise will contribute to advancing the child protection system and the safety of children in the Baltic Sea Region.

Pilot Project for Institutionalising Research End-User Cooperation

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

The initiative promotes a more institutionalized cooperation between the variety of Baltic Sea Region end-users and stakeholder organizations, including societal security research institutions, sub-regional, national and local authorities as well as civil society organizations.
The Human Trafficking Glossary was developed to help stakeholders navigate through the complexities of human trafficking and speak the same language about human trafficking. The glossary is available in seven languages.

The CBSS Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings commissioned a study in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Russian Federation and Sweden to examine how human trafficking is framed in mass media.

These guidelines aim to help editors and reporters to better understand the issues of human trafficking and to shape their stories in ways that avoid the dangers lurking in an aggressive and competitive media landscape. The guidelines are available in 6 languages.
During the 2019–2020 Danish CBSS Presidency, the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) marks its 14th year of working to combat human trafficking in the Baltic Sea region and launches the 3rd Human Trafficking 2020 – Baltic Sea Region Round-Up.

How can local governments adapt to climate change? The report focuses on legislation and support mechanisms on the local level for Climate Change Adaptation and puts forward recommendations for future work.

An overview of the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the Baltic Sea Region, focusing on challenges, good practices and paths to strengthen the work. The aim of the report is to provide an overview of the implementation of the Sendai Framework in the BSR – focusing on challenges, good practices and potential paths for strengthening the work.