



**BALTIC SEA REGION
YOUTH FORUM**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

June 2025

Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum (BSRYF)

Terms of Reference

Contents

1. Background	2
2. Purpose of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum	3
3. Activities of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum	3
4. Structure and Role of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum.....	4
a. Participation Structure.....	4
b. Committee of Youth Representatives (CYR).....	4
c. Steering Group.....	5
d. BSRYF Election Meeting.....	5
5. Role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States.....	6
6. Further Clarifications.....	7

1. Background

The Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum (BSRYF) was established in 2023 to enhance youth engagement in policy development for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). This initiative supports the CBSS Ministerial Declaration, "A Vision for the Baltic Sea Region by 2030 – the Vilnius II Declaration," by fostering meaningful youth participation in institutions and decision-making processes to promote a resilient, gender-equal, and safe region.

This document replaces the Terms of Reference and BSRYF guidelines adopted in 2022 and serves as a guiding framework for the BSRYF operations.

2. Purpose of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum

The primary aim of the BSRYF is to contribute to the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) objectives by promoting societal resilience and democratic values through youth participation in regional institutions and policymaking.

The BSRYF focuses on:

- Facilitating networking for youth organisations, initiatives, and individuals.
- Educating youth and decision-makers on meaningful participation.
- Cooperating with existing structures to organise youth events and enhance youth participation.
- Conveying youth opinions to decision-makers.
- Strengthening youth cooperation by coordinating with national, regional, and pan-Baltic youth structures to avoid duplication.
- Involving young people in decision making processes in the BSR

3. Activities of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum

BSRYF activities aim to promote the CBSS objectives, the EU Youth Strategy the EU Youth Goals, and the UN Agenda 2030.

Key activities may include:

- Coordinating youth working groups in support of CBSS objectives.
- Organising regular online networking meetings.
- Publishing youth-led policy recommendations.
- Advocating for youth priorities in the Baltic Sea macro-region
- Hosting an annual stakeholder meeting and regular online meetings for youth organisations.
- Supporting the CBSS presidency in organising an annual youth ministerial, should the presidency decide to hold such an event.
- Implementing a communication strategy to ensure broad representation.
- Advising political bodies on youth participation.

All activities are subject to the availability of financial resources. A key priority of the BSRYF is to obtain and/or source third-party funding for its activities.

4. Structure and Role of the Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum

a. Participation Structure

BSRYF membership is open to pan-Baltic organisations, national and regional youth councils, and individuals focusing on CBSS-related topics. Membership can be acquired by signing up on the CBSS Youth website, with eligibility reviewed annually by the CBSS Secretariat. There are no membership fees. Organisations and individuals outside the region can register as associated partners.

b. Committee of Youth Representatives (CYR)

The CYR comprises 10–20 representatives aged 16–30 and citizens of a CBSS member or observer state, elected annually at the BSRYF Election Meeting. The CBSS Secretariat issues an annual open call in March for CYR members. The call must be open for application for at least 15 days and send to all BSRYF members at least 15 days prior to the application deadline.

The chair of the CYR is elected annually by the BSRYF Election Meeting prior to the election of additional CYR members. CYR members serve one-year terms, with the possibility of extending to a two-year term. A maximum of 8 members can serve a second term without seeking re-election, in this case at least 8 additional members need to be elected. A maximum of three years can be served by any CYR member.

CYR positions are distributed among the members between the Election Meeting and the start of BSRYF term on 1 July. Personal Working Plans are submitted by all members of the CYR to the CBSS Secretariat by latest 31 July. The CYR rulebook serves as the basis of internal organisation of the CYR.

The CYR is responsible for implementing BSRYF initiatives, conducting an annual assessment of its operations, and establishing Working Groups in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

The CBSS Secretariat issues certificates and letters of recommendation to CYR members upon completion of their terms and submission of a final report.

c. Steering Group

The Steering Group comprises five members (three CYR representatives and two organisations) who guide BSRYF activities. All youth-driven organisations with a legal status and active in the Baltic Sea Region are eligible to apply as Steering Group members.

Members serve terms aligned with the CBSS presidency, starting annually on 1 July, and organisations may serve up to five consecutive years within the Steering Groups. The group provides advice to the CYR, proposes topics, and approves projects. It meets at least three times a year with support from the CBSS Secretariat.

The CBSS Secretariat issues an annual open call in March for Steering Group (organisations) members, the same timeline as for CYR members applies.

d. BSRYF Election Meeting

Held annually in April, the Election Meeting elects CYR members, Steering Group representatives, and votes on strategic documents. Voting is open to BSRYF members aged 16–30 and citizens of a CBSS member or observer state. The CBSS Secretariat oversees the voting process, ensuring transparency and geographical and gender balance.

An invitation to the meeting will be sent at least 10 days prior to the meeting to all BSRYF members and will be published on the CBSS website (cbss.org). Eligible for voting are BSRYF members, both individuals and organisations. One vote can be cast by individuals aged 16–30 and citizens of a CBSS member or observer state. Three votes can be cast by youth structures with a legal status and active in the Baltic Sea Region.

The legal representative or coordination point can register the structure via a vote delegation form – available on the CBSS Youth website (cbss.org/youth) and submitted at least 24 hours prior to the Election Meeting.

Observer status is granted to associated partners and interested individuals not eligible to vote. The meeting is opened by the CBSS Secretariat, while the chair of the meeting is elected by the attendees.

The agenda of the Election Meeting includes the following items:

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

2. Overview of Baltic Sea Region Youth Forum
3. Activity report for the ongoing term
4. Possible amendments to the guiding documents of the BSRYF
5. Possible introduction of new guiding documents of the BSRYF
6. Voting procedure explanation and Q&A session
7. Election of two vote counters and two scrutinizers"
8. Candidates' presentation for the CYR
9. Decision on the size of the CYR for the upcoming term
10. Election of Chairperson for the upcoming term
11. Election of CYR members
12. Candidates' presentation for the Steering Group
13. Election of Steering Group members
14. Conclusion of the meeting

CYR members, Steering Group members and the vote on the implementation of strategic documents require a simple majority to be elected.

5. Role of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

The CBSS coordinates and supports BSRYF activities within the approved budget. The CBSS Secretariat acts as the coordination point and may apply for funding or engage in activities on behalf of the BSRYF if legal status is required.

The CBSS Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) exerts an advisory role, endorsing guidelines, inviting national youth structures to participate as appropriate, and deciding on financial support. The CBSS presidency country may decide to organise a CBSS Youth Ministerial. The CSO may invite CYR and Steering Group members to attend CSO meetings when relevant topics are discussed.

The CSO will be updated on the activities of the BSRYF through the CBSS Annual Report and updates on events and policy recommendations. The annual CYR and biennial BSRYF assessment reports shall be submitted to the CSO for information.

The CBSS Secretariat ensures financial transparency, maintains the BSRYF website, and collaborates closely with the CYR and Steering Group.

6. Further Clarifications

These Terms of Reference are valid from 1 July 2025. Amendments to these Terms of Reference can be proposed by any CBSS member country, the Steering Group, or CYR for CSO considerations.

The CSO – after consultation with the Steering Group – can at any time decide to change the format or make other alterations to the Terms of Reference or functioning of the relationship between the CBSS and BSRYP.

A biennial assessment of the BSRYP's effectiveness will be conducted by the CBSS Secretariat involving the BSRYP Steering Group and the CYR. The CBSS Presidency shall oversee this assessment which shall be presented to the CSO for consideration. The observations and opinions of the CYR shall be reflected in the assessment.

The CSO, after consultations with the Steering Group – can at any time decide to suspend or discontinue the BSRYP. In case of suspension or termination, on-going BSRYP activities may only continue if explicitly decided by the CSO.