

Szczecin 22 October 2005



BSSSC, SZCZECIN Resolution 22 October 2005

Regional representatives from the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), gathered in Szczecin on 20-22 October 2005 to attend the Annual Conference of Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC)

“Growth, Innovation and Competitiveness – Key Challenges for the Baltic Sea Region”

Lisbon Agenda

- underlines the necessity to uphold the balance between the three pillars of the Lisbon Strategy, which are Growth and Employment, Social Cohesion and Sustainable Environment
- stresses that the ambitious objectives of the Lisbon Strategy should be reached only through coherent European policies and through harmonisation and co-ordination of European and national rules
- call for the full inclusion of the regions in the BSR in the formulation and implementation of the national Lisbon action plans.
- is of the opinion that the structural and cohesion funds must be eligible for all regions
- encourage all regions to join forces to exploit potentials in environmental technologies, energy efficiencies and sustainable resource use.
- calls upon all actors in the BSR to contribute to the further development of economical clusters of excellence to strengthen the competitiveness of the region.
- calls for high-capacity transport corridors to link the regions of the BSR and to connect them to European and neighbourhood markets.

Cohesion Policy

The successful and encouraging results given both by the INTERREG III B programme and programmes supporting cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region proves the need to continue those solutions in the new programmes during the period 2007-2013.

The BSSSC stresses the need to

- preserve the existing eligible area in the Baltic Sea Region
- calibrate the coming transnational and cross-border programmes, their priorities, application procedures and managing structures to those to be established for the future “European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument” (ENPI) in the Baltic Sea Region
- expand the transnational objective 3 cooperation programme in the Baltic Sea Region to regional development in general
- adopt a flexible approach concerning maritime borders.

Northern Dimension

Close and constructive cooperation with neighbouring Russian regions is crucial for the development of the Baltic Sea Region and for the implementation of the strategic partnership between EU and Russia in the area. Against this background the BSSSC

- strongly supports the continuation of the political concept “Northern Dimension” (ND) as a regional window for implementation of strategic EU-Russia partnership, in the interests of all the ND partner countries.
- points to the necessity that any ND policy paper to follow the 2nd ND Action Plan from 2007 on shall be elaborated and agreed on between EU and Russia, and be based on equal rights and equal obligations
- stresses the need to programme the future ENPI for the Baltic Sea Region so that practical cooperation between all Baltic Sea Region countries and Russian project partners will be possible.

Youth

Active participation of young people in decision processes and activities on regional and local levels, as well as opportunities for them to exchange knowledge and experiences, is essential to build a more democratic and inclusive Baltic Sea Region. The BSSSC

- Points to the need of the enhanced cross-cultural practical experience of future labour force and calls for inclusion and exchange of practice and trainee-ship for young professionals and vocational students.
- acknowledges the youth point of views and their participation in the work of BSSSC and will support the opportunities for young people to meet and exchange experiences
- Welcomes the establishment of the BSSSC Youth Network and will support its activities

Maritime Policy

BSSSC strongly welcomes the aim to develop a coherent European Maritime Policy and stresses the need.

- to enhance maritime safety by coordinated efforts of the EU and all the Baltic Sea States, as well as of the regions in the area, to improve Maritime Safety with aims to secure a sustainable ecological transport mode in this maritime region of major European importance
- to define a coherent Baltic Sea Region concept in the framework of “Trans European Transport Networks”, “Motorways of the Sea” and “Coastal and Short Sea Shipping”, including both land and maritime transport facilities. This to establish an effective and sustainable transport system in the region.
- to secure the ecological balance of the Baltic Sea, using the knowledge and experience arising from activities and projects at the international, national and regional level in the area. A special focus must be on preserving natural conditions of the Baltic Sea to secure the economy in fishing sector, tourism and leisure.