



**GENERA conference**  
**"Accelerating ERA Development in STEM by Promotion of Gender Equality in Research"**

Vilnius, Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania

20 November 2017

Panel Session 1 "The Role of Gender Equality in ERA Development"

**Role of Gender Parity in Supporting Prosperity  
in the Baltic Sea Region and Beyond It**

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a great honour for the Council of the Baltic Sea States and me personally to be invited to the GENERA conference. Your efforts in strengthening gender equality in the European Research Area are of great importance to the Baltic Sea Region. They correlate well with the **CBSS Swedish Presidency**'s focus on **sustainability**. This priority, among its various strands, captures a vision of gender equality being a cross cutting aspect of the CBSS supported activities.

Thereby, the CBSS Swedish Presidency builds on the discussions which took place during the Icelandic CBSS Presidency. The previous CBSS Presidency prioritised **equality** as one of its three thematic highlights. Once looking back at the agenda of the **CBSS Icelandic Presidency**, one of the most outstanding events that comes to my mind is the High Level Event "Women in Innovation and Connectivity: The Role of the Private Sector". It took place last spring during the ECOSOC Science, Technology and Innovation Forum at the United Nations Headquarters. I was delighted to introduce the participants to the GENERA consortium.

Today I would like to present you some insights in the on-going initiatives overseen by the Council of the Baltic Sea States with good examples of gender parity. The day-to-day work of the Council is affiliated to the priority focus area of the **CBSS Baltic 2030 Action Plan** - "**Equality and Social Wellbeing for All**". Since you might not be closely following the everyday work of the CBSS, I should explain that this Plan was endorsed last summer by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Baltic Sea Region. The CBSS Baltic 2030 Action Plan serves as the key Baltic Sea Region-wide

framework for transnational implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is supported by the **CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda**, being the Council's umbrella of science and research-specific cooperation. It is aligned with the guidance crafted during the first CBSS Science Ministerial which took place in 2016.

One of the two cornerstones of the CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda is the **Baltic TRAM** project. It is an exemplary partnership which illustrates how the spirit of **Sustainable Development Goal 5 "Gender Equality"** is put into action among science cooperation administrators. Namely, most of the Baltic TRAM Work Packages are led by women.

Last but not least, I am proud to highlight that the science and research cooperation organised under the auspices of the Council of the Baltic Sea States presents an exceptional example of like-mindedness among the executive and legislative branches. Roughly two months ago I had the pleasure of taking part in the **26<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference** which recognised the value of the results achieved so far and endorsed both the **Baltic 2030 Action Plan** and the **CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda**.

I should add here that the GENERA discussions on gender equality in research are taking place shortly after the celebrations of the **World Science Day for Peace and Development 2017**. This year's theme "**Science for Global Understanding**" can also be viewed as a further guidance that the promotion of gender parity among scientists might serve as a source for inspiration for other domains to follow suit.

There are two factors which testify to the potential of the Baltic Sea Region to create such spill-over effects. On the one hand, the Baltic Sea Region already houses an immense research and innovation potential to which the findings of the **European Innovation Scoreboards 2016 and 2017** serve as the most telling proofs. Likewise, the capacity of the Baltic Sea Region as a renowned European innovation powerhouse with a global competitiveness potential is further strengthened by the fact that the region hosts **two ESFRI landmarks** – the **European Spallation Source** and the **European XFEL**.

On the other hand, the CBSS Member States excel globally in showing to the rest of the world what gender parity looks like in real terms. For example, for the second year in a row Iceland is noted by the World Economic Forum as the global pioneer in the implementation of gender parity. Moreover, as demonstrated by this year's **Global Gender Gap Report**, other CBSS nations, such as Norway, Finland and Sweden are among the top five model nations, while Germany and Latvia are among the top 20 performers and Lithuania among the top 30 performers.

So, let me conclude my remarks by wishing you a swift implementation of GENERA gender equality plans. I am sure that the translation of these plans in action will serve as a notable support for further advancement of the **CBSS long-term priority Sustainable and Prosperous Region**.

Thank you for your attention.