



Director General's Statement

Celebrating the Baltic Sea Science Day Ahead of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science

The first CBSS conference [Baltic Sea Science Day](#) in St Petersburg, dedicated to discussing the CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda, will be taking place shortly before the world-wide celebration of reinforced women's career advancement in the academic and research setting.

The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) is among the intergovernmental foras, which cherish such celebratory occasions, as well as aspire to fully engage in female advancement not explicitly mentioning it as a primary goal per se, but streamlining its efforts in a number of ways, on which I would like to elaborate in further detail.

First of all, the commitment to advance the cause of the [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#) lies at the heart of **Icelandic CBSS Presidency**. One of the three priorities of the Icelandic CBSS Presidency is **equality** which recognises that "[only through the active participation of both women and men on an equal footing, can we ensure the prosperity and sustainability in the region](#)". Iceland is best placed to take a cross-sectoral lead on women's advancement, since Iceland emerges as the world-wide champion on the [Gender Gap Calculator of the World Economic Forum](#) due to its exemplary performance in such aspects as female political empowerment and facilitated economic participation. Thus, I would like to express my appraisal to Iceland for actively engaging men in the gender parity discussion, where the Baltic Sea Science Day serves as one of the best examples with a focus on stirring the Baltic Sea Region-wide discussion among researcher and academic communities.

Furthermore, the CBSS aspirations to advance gender equality through science are enshrined in the work of a number of institutions involved in one of the cornerstone projects of the CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda called [Baltic TRAM](#) (*Transnational Research Access in the Macregion*). Namely, the Lead Partner of this project, DESY (*Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron*), contributes to the advancement of gender equality in the European Research Area through [GENERA](#) project which aims at facilitating women's career advancement specifically in physics research field. Likewise, the University of Southern Denmark, being based in a country with an outstanding track record in terms of gender parity matters, has decided to expand the scope of its approach on equality matters. Namely, the university focuses not solely on gender matters, but treats equality issues more broadly by addressing also employment conditions of international staff. It serves as an example how female career advancement goes hand in hand with a number of factors spanning beyond the mere women advancement discourse. Whereas, the University of Tartu took gender mainstreaming actions through EURAXESS [TANDEM](#) (*Talent and*

Extended Mobility in the European Innovation Union) project with a focus on elaborating Dual Career and Integration Services in the European Research Area in order to prevent young women researchers from abandoning a promising scientific career due to challenges in reconciling their professional advancement goals with family-related considerations.

Last but not least, the CBSS recognises the cross-cutting character and interdependence of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), where successful implementation of one Goal is inseparable from smooth progress in the advancement of the other Goals. The Icelandic CBSS Presidency has put to the fore the Goal 5, which specifically targets gender equality and women's empowerment matters. One of the Goal 5 targets is to "[ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decisionmaking in political, economic and public life](#)". Through comprehensive work of the CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development – Baltic 2030 on transnational advancement of the 2030 Agenda and Baltic TRAM's focused approach towards elaborating the macro-regional relevance of the SDG 9 "Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure" and its subsection 9.5, the CBSS embraces the full complexity of what it means to support a specific target of Goal 5 with concerted transnational actions aligned with the implementation of other SDGs.

In line with the global perspective enshrined in the UN resolution [A/RES/70/212](#), I hope that the first Baltic Sea Science Day will serve as a promising start for a continuous dialogue on how the CBSS supported research and science initiatives serve to advance also academic careers of women across the Baltic Sea Region. The CBSS Science, Research and Innovation Agenda is well-placed to take stock of the gender mainstreaming lessons learned by its Member States and bridge in a joint manner the remaining gender parity gaps in order to ensure that the Baltic Sea Region remains the world's leading area known for exemplary combination of sustainability and prosperity.