



The 26th BSPC (4 Sept 2017, Hamburg)
DG Speaking Points
for the third session 'Science & Research'
Science and Research Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region and
the Baltic Science Network

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Science and Research Thorough the CBSS Chairmanships

It is my great honour to address such a distinguished audience and my great pleasure to engage in a discussion devoted to science and research cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region, since CBSS has a long-standing role in this field. Namely, out of 25 years of its work 10 have been dedicated to discussions about the most optimal transnational measures which would best serve the specific needs of the Baltic Sea Region.

A nuanced dialogue on science and research cooperation was started during the Latvian CBSS Presidency in 2007-2008 and reconfirmed in the Vilnius Declaration "A Vision for the Baltic Sea Region by 2020" adopted in 2010. Thanks to the dedication of the CBSS Polish Chairmanship in 2015-2016, the first CBSS Science Ministerial took place last summer in Kraków. It put into action the two working groups via the Baltic Science Network and Baltic TRAM projects, both funded by the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme.

The recently concluded CBSS Icelandic Presidency had the pleasure to harvest the first results of Baltic Science Network, since the public debate of researchers and administrators on researcher mobility across the Baltic Sea Region during the first CBSS conference Baltic Sea Science Day. During the Icelandic Presidency the Baltic Science Network explored the existing researcher mobility patterns of the macro-region in order to reflect in depth what transnationally coordinated steps should be taken in order to enhance the research potential.

The current CBSS Swedish Chairmanship will benefit from the first results delivered by the Baltic TRAM partnership. Namely, the Baltic TRAM has processed the first business enquiries during the open call which offers free access to the state-of-the-art analytical research facilities across the Baltic Sea Region. Likewise, Baltic TRAM partnership with the kind support of Centrum Balticum has published its overview of smart specialisation governance in a number of Baltic Sea Region countries. This policy brief indicates three smart specialisation

areas – **health sector** with focus on bio technologies, **digital growth** and **sustainable energy** – strongly represented in the key policy documents adopted across the Baltic Sea Region. These first Baltic TRAM results feed into further enhancement of Baltic Sea Region's image as a Europe-wide renowned area for its outstanding innovation performance.

BSPC Role in Supporting Science and Research Cooperation

However, the future success of the on-going transnationally coordinated joint work pursued under the forward-looking leadership in the executive branches across the macro-region is also dependent on a continuous support of the legislative bodies of the Baltic Sea Region countries. Undoubtedly, much has already been done by the 25th BSPC which acknowledged the role of research and innovation cooperation in ensuring the competitiveness and sustainability of the Baltic Sea Region, as well as encouraging synergies among specific areas of science, research, innovation and cluster collaboration.

Here I should point out that the Baltic Science Network has received, I dare say, a landslide of endorsements. Namely, it has been recognised as an outstanding initiative not only during the CBSS Science Ministerial, but also by the Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers. Last but not least, the Baltic Science Network is also a flagship of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Nevertheless, even such an amount of endorsement on its own does not ensure a delivery of tangible results. Now that the Baltic Science Network enters its second half of the project implementation phase, I would encourage you to support its work in delivering transnational added-value through the jointly defined thematic focus areas. These will be practically translated in Baltic Science Network's national action plans drafted and implemented in each participating country. In order to ensure that appropriate resources are allocated for the implementation of these action plans in each country, your support is vital.

Since Baltic Science Network aims at supporting the advancement of the European Research Area, further engagement with the national parliamentary committees responsible for science and research would help to enhance the expert-level national discussion on how each BSN national Action Plan can advance the macroregional and Europe-wide goals.

The CBSS Secretariat would like to further advance the transnational debate through BSPC's engagement in the upcoming CBSS Baltic Sea Science Days. The first CBSS conference Baltic Sea Science Day was held last February in St Petersburg and proved to be a much appreciated event which assembled various key stakeholders of the transnational science, research and innovation cooperation. Therefore, the CBSS Secretariat is glad to launch this format of conference as an annual event. Namely, the second Baltic Sea Science Day will take place in Turku in January 2018 and the third Baltic Sea Science Day will be held in Riga in 2019. The parliamentary perspective on the research and cooperation plans crafted by the Baltic Science Network would serve as a legislative component bringing into the transnational discussion the outcomes of national consultations.

Concluding Remarks

In the concluding part of my speech I would like to once more thank you for the attention the 26th BSPC has paid to the science and research issues, that serves to further bridge the

transnational research and innovation dialogue between legislative and executive branches. Likewise, I would like to highlight the importance of our continuous dialogue, since it is crucial for the delivery of our joint vision that the welfare of the Baltic Sea Region is founded on solid and sustainable research and innovation potential. Therefore, our joint discussion on CBSS supported projects serves as the first step towards bringing the ambitions of the Baltic Sea Region to life.