
BSYP – YOUTH DECLARATION 2020

presented at the EUSBSR Annual Forum 2020



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Introduction

We, the participants of the Baltic Sea Youth Camps 2020, young people from all over the Baltic Sea Region, have worked hard to develop new ideas and projects for the region. We met already in June for a two-day online event and then met again on October 17, back to back with the 11th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Together we discussed the current issues and future ones concerning the Baltic Sea Region, we invited decisionmakers and experts to get an in-depth knowledge about the region. We discussed and formulated our priorities within the policymaking of the Baltic Sea Region, and we hope that these priorities are taken up by those who are in the position to make change happen. We will gladly support this process through our engagement.

The **Baltic Sea Youth Camp** was organised by the partnership of the Erasmus+ project: Baltic Sea Youth Platform (BSYP). The core partners are the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), The Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation (BSSSC), the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC), Euroregion Baltic (ERB), ESN Finland and the Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT).

The vision of the platform is to ensure youth participation on all levels in our region.

This declaration is **a follow-up of the [2019 Youth Declaration](#)** and goes deeper into the Policy Areas than previous youth declarations, and combines the various demands of the previous declarations.

The authors of the declaration strongly support **[the Youth Manifesto](#)** by young people to contribute to improve the European territorial cooperation (Interreg).

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Our vision for the Baltic Sea Region

We envision our region to be a forerunner when it comes to solving environmental challenges.

We envision a region that is acting in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.

We envision our region being the one where the least amount of waste per person is produced globally.

We envision a safe place to live together and create formats for dialogue and economic collaboration.

We envision a region that is dealing with today's challenges together and includes our neighbouring countries into the discussion.

We demand to see the current pandemic as a turning point to rethink our activities and our use of resources, especially when it comes to traveling and organising meetings in a more sustainable way.

We demand to foster digitalisation all over our region and share our experience within the region.

We demand a stronger cooperation with other EU macro-regional strategies to generate synergies and collaborate on common challenges.



EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea from a youth perspective

We acknowledge the efforts of the actors within the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) to strive for a more sustainable, prosperous and safer Baltic Sea Region. We are glad that such a strategy exists to connect the various actors within our region, and we support the EUSBSR.

We hope and demand that through the **new Action Plan, youth participation** within the EUSBSR will be **well structured and that for young people and social minorities accessing the EUSBSR will be easier.**

We demand that the **new Strategy Point** will **ensure more youth participation on all levels and coordinate the youth participation together with the BSYP** to safeguard the interests of all parts of society, including minorities and youth.

We demand an explicit **mention of youth and their role** within the EUSBSR.

We demand **a seat at the table of all steering groups of the PAs**, as well as a **youth representative within the National Coordinators** group, as other macro-regional strategies are planning to do so.

We demand to sustain our effort and ensure youth participation in the future. Hence, we call for the **inclusion of the Baltic Sea Youth Camp in future EUSBSR Annual Forum** budgets when applying for Interreg.

We demand a high level of **youth representatives during the Participation Days** of the EUSBSR Annual Forum, **youth representation in all workshops** and in **all panel discussions** during the actual event.

We demand a more **youth-friendly communication about the EUSBSR** and ask the people in charge to share more content on social media.

We demand that **youth-inspired activities within the EUSBSR**, meaning activities inspired by youth or implemented by young actors, are promoted as such and that there is an award for the PAs that implement the most youth activities.

We demand that the **cooperation with youth organisations is mainly coordinated by the Baltic Sea Youth Platform** to ensure a sustainable, long-term involvement of youth and to streamline the activities within the EUSBSR.

We demand **more citizens' engagement** when implementing new projects, flagship processes or reforms within the EUSBSR.

Save the Sea

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Demand a stricter legislation concerning maritime pollution,
 - We envision common standards for biological wastewater purification and waste reduction on land.
- Improve Ocean Literacy of the people living around our sea
 - We envision a close cooperation with the [EU4Ocean Coalition](#) for Ocean Literacy and [Youth4Ocean](#)
- Awareness campaigns on how to protect the sea on a personal level
 - We envision to start from teaching kindergarten kids until the elderly in our society.
- Reduce the amount of plastic in our everyday life.
 - We envision a common pant system, the prohibition of plastic and common regulations on usage of plastic, as well as the promotion of alternatives.
- The Baltic Sea Region shall produce the least amount of waste in the world.
 - We envision concrete measures regarding tap water, maritime transport, education and green choices.
- Cooperation to preserve and restore the health of the sea
 - We envision interdisciplinary research projects, including young people with various backgrounds, as well as social minorities and senior citizens.
- The wood consumption should be more balanced
 - We envision a better forest education, support of youth initiatives and the ban of clear cuts.

It is important for us to focus on environmental aspects on land as well, as our region is much more than only a sea.

We therefore want to emphasize the importance of actions on land to reduce pollution in our sea!

PA Nutri

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Development and use of fertilisers from sea biomass
- Development of information materials and public campaigns targeting companies / producers who contribute to nutrient inputs in the sea
- Development of a program to inform farmers about their impact on polluting the sea
- Development of an education programme for VET schools and Higher Education Institutions to inform those who are working with nutrition about the impact of their future work within the field.

PA Hazards

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Advocating for an EU level disposition regarding acceptable levels of hazardous substances
- Finding suitable disposals for hazardous waste
 - the countries within the region should support each other on this and find common disposables if this reduces the impact on nature
- Banning landfill

Input from the BSSSC youth event on Plastic a free region

PA Bioeconomy

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Enhance close cooperation with the BeUBio project by Nordregio and financial support wherever possible
- Development of interdisciplinary-research projects for young people from different countries
- Development of concepts for elementary education (more education for educators) on bioeconomy, enabling young people to teach their parents
- Focusing on bio innovation to lead industries into a sustainable future
- Advocating for tax cuts for bio economical products
 - The environmental impact must be calculated into all products and those who are produced in an environmentally friendly way should be cheaper than those that use a lot of resources.

Input from the BSSSC youth event on Circular Economy

PA Ship

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Enhance cooperation with universities, create a space for students so that they can cooperate with, e.g. companies. Young people often have many interesting ideas, but laboratories are not well equipped, while companies have the capacity to provide important resources and need the innovation
- Advocating for taxation of pollutants and emissions
- Development of measures to make it easier and cheaper for companies to build ships running on biogas.

PA Safe

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Improve digitalisation and exchange of data between various ships on the Baltic Sea
- Foster dialogue between various shipping companies to reduce their impact on the environment
- Enhance ocean literacy within the crews and personnel in the harbor

Connect the Region

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Use the ACTER platform to share information on projects and interdisciplinary approaches: <https://www.acter.global/>
- Create a common Baltic Sea Region App
 - We envision the development of an inter-regional online application. The basic information about organizations active in the region and their projects should be transparent.
- Promote the Baltic Sea Youth Platform to streamline youth activities in our region and ensure youth from all kinds of backgrounds have the chance to raise their voices.
- Increase cultural and educational exchange of all generations.
 - Enhance the identification of the people themselves as inhabitants not only of national countries but also as inhabitants of a common region
- Organise events connecting the region, such as bike relay races and common festivals.

Input from the BSSSC youth event on Regional Identity

PA Transport

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Development and promotion of cross-border public transport solutions (e.g. night train connections around the BSR)
- Promote bike lanes: in cities as well as a tour through the whole region
 - Interdisciplinarity with PA Tourism
- Advocating for higher taxation for flight emissions and tickets.

Input from the BSSSC youth event on Smart Mobility

PA Energy

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Advocating to decrease the proportion of fossil fuel and nuclear energy
- Development of a smart Baltic Sea grid for the Baltic Sea Region
- Advocating for fair prices for energy including the external environmental costs.

Increase Prosperity

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Development of new ways of measuring prosperity in our region
 - Including World Happiness Index, and other Indices that are not only focusing on business numbers or the GDP.
- Enhance the awareness of European values: democracy, human rights, equality and others in our region.
 - Implement projects to teach about our common values and combine it with other fields such as history, cultural events, project meetings etc.
- Enhance the encouragement for social and sustainable entrepreneurship

PA Tourism

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Development of tools e.g. applications or common cultural routes to learn about the culture of other Baltic Sea Region countries when traveling
- Advocating for a more sustainable tourism sector in our region:
 - Emphasize the unique tourism sectors of our region, especially nature tourism.
 - Promote sustainable tourism and cooperate closely with travel agencies to develop new concepts of tourism that do not destroy our environment or any non-replaceable resources.
 - Promotion of local tourism and rural tourism as a rather sustainable "version" of tourism.

PA Culture

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Development of a new flagship process: Baltic Sea Cultural Cities youth input and youth included in the implementation
- Development of accessible project contests - business & social - for young people in all Baltic Sea countries
- Support to implement the Baltic Sea Crocodile Festival
 - The youth of the Baltic Sea region envisions a Baltic Sea Music and Culture Festival (Baltic Crocodile Festival).
 - The festival shall be intergenerational, inclusive for everyone and gender equal, as well as free and outdoors. The festival shall happen in different countries every year and be related to a youth event in the specific area.
 - Connecting people, creating visibility and making cultural awareness fun, in a sustainable way. A festival for everyone, organized by the youth.
- Implementation of small and non-bureaucratic grants available for young people in municipalities to implement their ideas
- Implementation of joint events for young people and decision makers
- Enhance cooperation between NGOs and schools, as well as youth centers and schools about creative processes
- Development of opportunities to set up and run students' companies – e.g. via Junior Achievement - in all schools
- Development of short-term courses for young people without long-term commitment

- Development of local cultural spaces
- Development of youth clubs at museums and theatres
- Implementation of business incubators and seed money grants for young entrepreneurs, promotion of business incubators in schools
- Implementation of personal stories and discussion evenings as a promotion tool;
- Implementation of opportunities for young people to share their personal stories about cultural and creative experiences (social media, blogs, events). This can be done on international level, too (via exchanges, TEDx, festivals etc.)
- Education of young professionals to promote cultural events/processes, as the spectrum of opportunities is already very vast.

Input from the BSSSC youth event

Local Riga event

Local Kaliningrad event

Local Schleswig-Holstein event

PA Innovation

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Implementation of common Baltic Sea research institute - funded by different countries and stakeholders - for innovation that shapes the region as e.g. sustainable energy through offshore wind parks
- Enhance focusing on innovation towards more sustainability in industries where the Baltic Sea Region is strong, like nature tourism, manufacturing industries and harbors.
- Enhance building the region as an innovation ecosystem
- Encouraging young social entrepreneurship at local and regional level
- Implementation of small funding for social entrepreneurs
- Use social media to inform about sustainable small local business producing e.g. food and clothing

PA Health

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Implementation of more advice for mental health focusing on young people.
 - Volunteers shall visit schools and talk to youngsters in a safe space. This could help to reduce the stress in schools and create a better environment for youngsters to grow up.
- Implementation of social project to increase awareness on how important physical activities and healthy eating is, especially amongst young people to lay a foundation for a long healthy life.

PA Education

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Development of awareness campaigns for young people for opportunities across the region
 - We suggest creating a deliberated career choice platform to help students and young professionals to find an ideal career for their talents and to create a more prosper economy.
 - We envision to promote internship / workplaces in different countries and regions.
- Focus on young people with fewer opportunities should be maintained: flagship School to Work does a great job and should be paid the tribute it deserves
- Address the very young in our region
 - we imagine a book for children promoting the SGDs that is designed by artists from the region. Find more information about the project on the facebook page: 'Baltic Sea Belongs to Kids'.
- Implementation of the Baltic Sea Region University on a ship
 - We envision a university on a ship crossing the Baltic Sea.
 - Focusing on SDG 13 and 14, namely 'climate action' and 'oceans and seas' the university will ensure research-oriented, interdisciplinary and intercultural learning. The results shall be discussed with the societies, where the ship docks to transfer the gained knowledge and

outcomes and to take the considerations of the societies into account.

- Development of flagship process: integration of migrants into local societies in cooperation with the BSYP
- Development of flagship process: Nordjobb for Baltic Sea Region

Local event Stockholm

PA Secure

Priorities from a youth perspective:

- Enhance closer cooperation of border security responsables
- Foster sustainable development for fire engines and police cars, as well as equipment that is safe and can be recycled
- Foster innovation to develop safe ways to extinguish electric car engine fires

The Baltic Sea Youth Platform

The [Baltic Sea Youth Platform](#) is a common framework for and by the young people in the Baltic Sea Region.

The project is funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the EU and the partnership consists of the CBSS, Euroregion Baltic, BSSSC, UBC and ESN Finland as well as numerous associated partners and projects.

The aim is to empower young people in the region and to make their voices be listened to on all levels.

Our aims:

- The BSYP is a sustainable connection point for youth organisations and decisionmakers in our region
- The BSYP is striving to streamline youth participation in the EUSBSR
- The BSYP is demanding real youth participation within the EUSBSR and beyond on all levels in the region
- The BSYP cooperates with various youth organisations in each field and on all levels in the Baltic Sea Region

Our proposals to decisionmakers:

- **Tell us your demands** – what do you need from young people? Ideas? Cooperation?
- **Tell us your ideas how to include youth** – make them part of steering committees, invite young people to discussion rounds and project meetings?
- **Use our network** – the BSYP can support you in finding the right group of young people to include into your work.
- **Cooperate with the Working Groups of the BSYP** – our 6 Working Groups on Advocacy, Power Box, Research, Culture & Cities. Communication and IT – are happy to get your ideas for their work.
- **Cooperate with young people** to develop projects and flagships as the Policy Areas Culture and Education are already doing.

“We welcome the establishment of the Baltic Sea Youth Platform – an excellent example of joint efforts among several different cooperation structures both at regional and sub-regional level. We trust that it will contribute to creating more meeting places for young people throughout our region, and thus to strengthening ties and involving young people more directly in the different cooperation processes.”

Ine Eriksen Soreide
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway
CBSS Ministerial 2020



“Let’s strengthen the Youth Platform. We need to get the young generation more engaged. Academic mobility, networking, joint projects, and communication – all this will help building regional identity.”

Linas Linkevičius
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania
CBSS Ministerial 2020

