



*Documentation*

***Report on the Activities  
of the Land Government  
in the Baltic Sea Area 2001/2002***



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# **Report on the Activities of the Land Government in the Baltic Sea Area 2001/2002 (Baltic Sea Report)**

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### **List of Abbreviations**

## **Preliminary remark:**

By virtue of its decision on 10 September 1992 (Print 13/306) the Land Parliament requested the Land Government to submit a report on its Baltic Sea activities at an interval of six weeks prior to the annual Parliamentary Conference on the cooperation in the Baltic Sea area. This year's 11<sup>th</sup> conference will take place in St. Petersburg (Russia) on 30 Sept./1 Oct. 2002.

Up to now, the Land Government handed over seven reports<sup>1</sup> to the Parliament. Both the Parliament and the Government agreed to submit a "Baltic Sea report" every two years, in turns with the new "Europe report"<sup>2</sup> by the Land Government.

Should this report describe activities and developments that are not part of the original range of competence of the Land Government the state of knowledge of June 2002 is applicable.

## **1. Introduction**

Over the last ten years the Baltic Sea cooperation developed to become a dynamic network of regional cooperation marked by the rapid pan-European development on the one hand and bringing about new domains and regional centres of cooperation on the other hand. Already in its Baltic Sea report of 1997/1998<sup>3</sup> the Land Government pointed out that the Baltic Sea policy always will have to adapt itself to the ever-changing general framework in the Baltic Sea area.

Today, the **Baltic Sea region** is faced with **new challenges**:

- In Europe, the **EU enlargement** will enhance the importance of the North. In accordance with this shift of weight the Baltic Sea region will have to develop a voice of its own in order to be able to represent its common interests in Brussels in an effective way. At the same time, the Baltic Sea states will have to continue their efforts to support the region's candidate countries beyond the EU accession.
- Implementing the "Northern Dimension Action Plan", deepening the partnership between EU and Russia and **Russia's regional opening towards the Baltic Sea cooperation** are causing increasing responsibility for the Baltic Sea states for contributing to reliable future prospects of the Russian regions near the Baltic Sea. This applies to the integration of Russian partners into forums and projects of Baltic Sea cooperation as well as to their own efforts to strengthen and modernize the Russian regions.
- The **integration of the Baltic Sea region** into a European greater region is striding ahead. The national Baltic Sea cooperation will have to stop focusing on foreign policy alone, if it intends to continue shaping the potentials of the region. Even more than up to now this regional cooperation within an extended EU will have to rely on the projects, initiatives and networks of regional and local territorial authorities and non-governmental organizations.
- The growing-together of the Baltic Sea Region into a greater region will result as well into an increasing **competition among the actors of the Baltic Sea region**, i.e. between the subregions of the area. Partly Schleswig-Holstein will have to compete directly with states giving the Baltic Sea region top priority in their national foreign politics. Cross-border cooperation of subregions with a strong economic dynamics will increase competition. Examples for this are the Øresund region (area of Copenhagen and Skåne) or the area of Helsinki – St. Petersburg – Tallinn – Stockholm/Lake Mälär.

<sup>1</sup> Prints 13/694, 13/2784, 14/132, 14/888, 14/1638, 14/2289 and 15/204

<sup>2</sup> Comp. print 15/1517 - see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/1500/drucksache-15-1517.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/1500/drucksache-15-1517.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Print 14/1638 - version see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl14/drucks/1600/drucksache-14-1638.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl14/drucks/1600/drucksache-14-1638.pdf)

Taking this into account, the Land Government in February 2001 established the following **principles for the Baltic Sea cooperation**:

- The **Baltic Sea region will remain the priority** of Schleswig-Holstein's international activities. Unlike around the North Sea, we have to do with a developed area of cooperation which allows forming a common identity of a European greater region.
- In view of the growing number of actors, the expanding activities in this region and the increasing competition resulting from this and considering an efficient use of the own resources, the Baltic Sea activities of the Land Government are guided by the following **principles**:

**Continuity**: The success of the activities of the Land Government depends on continuity, regularity and reliability.

**Concentration**: In order to achieve an optimum use of limited resources the efforts have to concentrate on the agreed main areas.

**Coordination**: The success of measures will depend on how effectively the activities of the various departments of the Land Government are coordinated with one another and with the other actors of Baltic Sea cooperation in Schleswig-Holstein. Common strategic projects should be aligned with the following **aims**:

- **Developing the Baltic Sea region into a leading European region**

For many years now, the economic development of the region has taken place on a considerably high level. Compared to all other European regions, the Baltic Sea region is the leading one with regard to the Information Society. Qualification of people is higher than elsewhere and the awareness of solidarity and a sustainable handling of nature and environmental goods is more pronounced here than anywhere else in Europe.

Taking these conditions into account, the Baltic Sea region has good prospects of becoming one of the leading regions within the enlarged EU to come. For this purpose and with regard to the model of sustainable development, the extent of **cooperation and of interconnection especially in the domains of economics, science and politics** have to be intensified. The infrastructure, particularly in the East of the region, has to be improved in order to meet the rising demands.

The formation of an integrated greater European region is connected to Schleswig-Holstein's expectations to be part of that positive development. **Strengthening the Baltic Sea region and fostering the position of Schleswig-Holstein** are two sides to the coin. Therefore, the Land Government of Schleswig-Holstein and numerous actors in the Land are contributing to the development of the Baltic Sea region.

- Assuming the special requirements of the Baltic Sea region and the specific interests of Schleswig-Holstein, the **initiatives and contributions of the Land Government** to intensify the integration of the region will focus on the following domains:

**Improving the infrastructure**: common position of the North to the revision of the Trans-European Networks, acceleration of customs clearances.

Establishing a **knowledge-based society** in the Baltic Sea region and positioning Schleswig-Holstein as a location of knowledge.

Realizing **"Baltic 21"**: the Baltic Sea region as a model region for sustainability.

Improving **security partnership** in the Baltic Sea area.

Developing the **civil society**, forming and strengthening non-governmental organizations in the Baltic Sea area.

**Contacts between people**, especially young people, aiming at a common identity in the region.

- **Strengthening Schleswig-Holstein's competitiveness in the South Western Baltic Sea region.**

Considering an optimum use of the own resources and potentials the Land Government of Schleswig-Holstein attaches a certain **importance to the southwest area of the Baltic Sea region**. Apart from Schleswig-Holstein this area includes the direct Danish neighbours, the Øresund region and the southern neighbour of Hamburg.

The analyses compiled together with the Øresund region, Hamburg and the Danish communities of West

Sjælland and Storstrøm in the framework of the **STRING project**<sup>4</sup> revealed strategic opportunities: Aspects for a common regional development particularly lie with the domains of knowledge-based society, improvement of the common infrastructure in the region and the development of an area of nature and culture with European importance with regard to tourism. The partners intend to achieve the following aim: Increasing their own as well as the common competitiveness in Europe by a **common strategic cooperation and integration**.

Apart from continuing the STRING project further measures are contributing to strengthen Schleswig-Holstein in the southwest Baltic Sea region:

An improved **transport infrastructure in the southwest Baltic Sea region** is of great significance for the competitiveness of Schleswig-Holstein. The Land Government will commit itself to a privately financed **fixed link across the Fehmarn Belt**, to the motorway A 20 and its further eastward development (**Via Hanseatica**). With regard to the EU (Committee of the Regions, Hanse Office in Brussels), towards the Federal Government and together with our partners in the region, the Land Government will support a stronger consideration of these transport projects in the framework of the Trans-European Networks (TEN).

For more than 10 years, the German-Danish border region has been characterized by a close cross-border cooperation (Schleswig and Sønderjylland). The new formal regional **partnership between Schleswig-Holstein and Sønderjyllands Amt** shall go beyond the direct cross-border cooperation and establish a framework for projects of cooperation between bodies from Schleswig-Holstein and Sønderjylland.

In order to improve the cooperation with the Öresund region, the existing Schleswig-Holstein Office in Malmö will expand into an **Öresund representation office**.

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The **promotion of Schleswig-Holstein's interests within the EU** and the Baltic Sea policy form the two pillars of the Land's European policy. They are not a contrast, but are complementing one another. Thus, from now on, the "Baltic Sea Report" will be submitted every two years, in turns with the new "Europe Report"<sup>5</sup> of the Land Government.

By the time of the forthcoming reform of the EU Structural Funds in 2006 it will become clear at the latest that their limited means will mainly be used, apart from the new EU Member States, for transnational cooperation only, promising in addition a **"European added value"**. The Baltic Sea cooperation is offering this opportunity. Thus, an active participation in the Baltic Sea cooperation and active contributions to its further development are useful for Schleswig-Holstein's interests in a changing European Union.

The previous Baltic Sea Reports focused on the **shifting general framework of the Baltic Sea cooperation** and their consequences for Schleswig-Holstein. In addition, the Baltic Sea Report 1999/ 2000 put an emphasis on the demands on the German chairmanship in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) that was about to start at that time. By contrast, this year's Baltic Sea Report is dealing with the future role of the Baltic Sea region within the overall development in Europe (among others: EU enlargement, Northern Dimension, integration of Russia into an enlarged EU) and with needs of **shaping Baltic Sea cooperation accordingly in an extended European Union**.

Several parts of the recent Baltic Sea Reports are still effective. Thus, reference is made as well to the previous Baltic Sea Reports.

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<sup>4</sup> see item 3.3 of the report

<sup>5</sup> Comp. print 15/1517 - see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/1500/drucksache-15-1517.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/1500/drucksache-15-1517.pdf)

## 2. Current Developments of Baltic Sea cooperation

The coming **East enlargement of the EU** is moving more and more into the centre of the Baltic Sea cooperation. This also includes the development of specific forms of cooperation with Russia. After the EU enlargement, Russia and Norway will be the only members of the Baltic Sea cooperation that do not belong to the EU.

Thus, the Baltic Sea region is getting in focus of European politics: In view of a revival of the EU-Russia relationship the Baltic Sea region offers the unique perspective of testing and supporting the involvement of Russia into an extended EU on the regional level and with access to highly developed instruments of regional cooperation.

This corresponds as well to the orientation "**Northern Dimension of the EU**" evaluated in the meantime. The "Northern Dimension Action Plan", agreed upon in June 2000, mainly aims at the integration of Russia into the Baltic Sea region. The EU Summit in Gothenburg 2001 has taken note of an implementation report submitted by the former Swedish EU Council Presidency.

Apart from the "Energy Partnership" agreed by the EU and Russia in October 2000, the development of the **area of Kaliningrad** as the future Russian exclave within the EU is of particular importance: By mutual agreement during the EU-Russia-Summit in October 2001, the EU and Russia have commissioned a joint high-ranking expert group to elaborate common concepts for the future development of this exposed Russian area.

Moreover, the Baltic Sea region currently is faced with the challenge to re-align its 10-year-old network of regional cooperation with the **consequences following the EU extension**: In a few years time the Baltic Sea will have become an internal sea within the EU, the former cooperation that had been dominated by foreign policy considerations will be replaced by the mechanisms of the EU cooperation.

At the same time, however, the Baltic Sea region has the opportunity to present itself as one of the few **transnationally organized powerful future regions** in Europe. Ten years after it came into being, the coordinated Baltic Sea cooperation must dare and tackle this leap from cooperation to integration.

The period of time described in this report has been characterized by the following events:

### 2.1 Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), cooperation on national level ([www.cbss.st](http://www.cbss.st))

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit of the Heads of Government in Kolding/ Denmark (April 2000), the CBSS was commissioned to **enhance coordination of the national cooperation in the Baltic Sea area**: All existing forms of field cooperation are regarded as field conferences of CBSS, are tasked to submit reports to the CBSS accordingly and to put into practice the amendments of work given by CBSS. This has been accomplished successfully by CBSS and its Secretariat <sup>6</sup>.

On the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CBSS Russia invited to the **4<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea States Summit of the Heads of Government** which convened in St. Petersburg on 10 June 2002. Here, the Heads of Government endorsed that the Baltic Sea cooperation will continue to play an important role beyond the time of EU enlargement in order to be able to seize the prospects of development jointly and to solve the still existing problems of the region, e.g. in the domains of energy and environment. Within the framework of the "region building" process, the subregional cooperation (among others with Northwest Russia), the promotion of youth contacts as well as the cooperation with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Baltic Sea area are of particular importance <sup>7</sup>.

The **11<sup>th</sup> CBSS Ministerial Meeting** took place in Svetlogorsk (formerly Rauschen) – a highly symbolic choice, given the fact that the future of the Russian area of Kaliningrad is getting more and more into the spotlight. The main emphasis was put on the assessment of the more comprehensive organization network of the national Baltic Sea cooperation. In doing so, the CBSS further enhanced the coordination of the rising number of cooperation projects, as has been demanded by the Baltic Sea States Summit in Kolding (2000).

<sup>6</sup> Summary: [www.cbss.st/Docs/ministerial/19/InfoDoc.index.htm](http://www.cbss.st/Docs/ministerial/19/InfoDoc.index.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Chairman's Conclusions of the 4th Baltic Sea summit: see [www.cbss.st](http://www.cbss.st)

In addition, as suggested by Russia, the Council advocated a closer cooperation with the Russian area of Kaliningrad. For this purpose, the **Business Advisory Council (BAC)**<sup>8</sup>, implemented by the Council, compiled a number of measures to strengthen trade with and investments in Kaliningrad<sup>9</sup>.

During the 10<sup>th</sup> CBSS Ministerial Meeting in Hamburg in June 2001, the Northern German Länder were represented by Schleswig-Holstein's **Minister President Ms Simonis** as part of the German delegation. In Svetlogorsk/Russia (11<sup>th</sup> Meeting) they were represented by the State Secretary Mr Stuth (Commissioner for European Affairs of the Hamburg Senate).

In all, the **Russian CBSS chairmanship** (July 2001 to June 2002) was marked by continuity rather than new initiatives. This became apparent already when the working programme for the Russian chairmanship was handed out. Nevertheless, this approach shows very clearly that the cooperation in the Baltic Sea area now is acknowledged by the Russian government to be a useful regional addition to the cooperation with the EU "on a large scale". What is more, a second conference of non-governmental organizations of the Baltic Sea area took place in St. Petersburg in April 2002<sup>10</sup> under Russian chairmanship. This tradition, started by the first Conference in Lübeck/Germany (May 2001), shall be continued under the Finnish and Estonian CBSS chairmanship (in 2002/2003 and 2003/2004).

From July 2000 to June 2001, the CBSS was under **German chairmanship**, supported in content by Schleswig-Holstein and sustainably by delegating one of its staff members. Among the main results of the German chairmanship there were:

- **Promotion of economic cooperation in the Baltic Sea area**, among others by organizing the conference "Fostering Economic Cooperation in the Baltic Region" (Berlin, March 2001) and by establishing an Internet portal for small and medium-size enterprises in the region<sup>11</sup>.
- Opening the dialogue between the national Baltic Sea cooperation and the **NGO's of the Baltic Sea region**, aiming at fostering the development of the civil society in the Baltic Sea area (First Baltic Sea NGO forum, Lübeck, May 2001).
- Increased **security of maritime transport and environmental protection**. Even before the accident of "Baltic Carrier" in the trough of Kadet (March 2001) this matter had been put onto the agenda of the CBSS under German chairmanship.

With a first experts' meeting arranged in May 2001 the CBSS under German chairmanship took up the initiative "**knowledge-based Baltic Sea Region**" launched by Schleswig-Holstein's Prime Minister. In September 2001 the CBSS ministers in charge of Information Society together with the European Commission elaborated the "**Northern e-Dimension Action Plan**" intending to develop the Information Society in the Baltic Sea Region in the framework of the "Northern Dimension"<sup>12</sup>.

Equally under German chairmanship the CBSS presented a comprehensive **contribution to the implementation of the "Northern Dimension Action Plan"** in April 2001, evaluated by numerous organizations in the Baltic Sea area<sup>13</sup>. On the occasion of its 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting (Hamburg, 2001) the CBSS underlined the necessity to involve the Russian regions, especially the **Kaliningrad region**, into the cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Sea area to an increasing extent. This is related to the foundation of the "**Euro-Faculty Kaliningrad**" by the CBSS in September 2001, decisively supported by Germany (University of Göttingen).

The idea to establish a "**Baltic Sea fund for subregional cooperation**", advocated essentially by Denmark, however, was considered little reasonable by most of the other CBSS members. Given the funding instruments in the Baltic Sea area provided by the EU, the Nordic cooperation and most of the Baltic Sea states, the practical use of another supporting instrument could not be proven sufficiently.

During the reporting period, several relevant **Field Ministerial Conferences** were held. In September 2001 (Gdansk) the **CBSS Ministers of Transport** agreed upon priorities in the domain of transport infrastructures

<sup>8</sup> For Germany, it is the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Kiel. [www.chamber.se/bac](http://www.chamber.se/bac)

<sup>9</sup> „Recommendations for increased trade and investments in the Kaliningrad Region“; see: [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian/11cbssministerialsession/dbaFile11or:www.chamber.se/bac/KaliningradFINAL.pdf](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian/11cbssministerialsession/dbaFile11or:www.chamber.se/bac/KaliningradFINAL.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Final declaration of the NGO conference in St. Petersburg: [www.cbss.st](http://www.cbss.st)

<sup>11</sup> [www.balticmarket.org](http://www.balticmarket.org)

<sup>12</sup> [www.riso.ee/nordic](http://www.riso.ee/nordic)

<sup>13</sup> [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian)



and the **CBSS Ministers of Culture** decided in Copenhagen to further develop the cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea area. In March 2002 (Moscow) the **CBSS Ministers of Economy/Trade** resolved to continue implementing their "Bergen Action Plan" (2000), mainly aiming at the abolition of trade barriers and at combating corruption<sup>14</sup>.

In September 2001 (Wismar/Germany) the **CBSS Ministers for Spatial Planning** dealt with the further development and realization of their concept "Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea (VASAB 2010)" in the framework of the EU Community Initiative INTERREG III B (Baltic Sea)<sup>15</sup>. In January 2002 the **CBSS Ministers of Education** gathered in Stockholm in order to discuss how the concept "Sustainable Development (Agenda 21)" could gain more interest in teaching and education<sup>16</sup>. Representatives of youth ministries, youth councils and youth projects from all over the Baltic Sea area held the third conference of **Baltic Sea Youth Ministers** in Vilnius (Lithuania) in June 2002. They adopted an action plan on "Youth and knowledge-based society"<sup>17</sup>.

The Northern German Länder were represented in all field ministerial conferences, at least on the working level, in the German delegation.

The cooperation of the CBSS Ministers of Energy ("Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation – BASREC") that started in 1997, decided in 2000 to establish a **BASREC Secretariat** under the guidance of the "Group of Senior Energy Officials GSEO", closely linked to the CBSS Secretariat in Stockholm<sup>18</sup>. Here the **Baltic-21-Secretariat** of the "regional Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea area (Baltic-21)" decided by the CBSS in 1998 is located, too – a permanent solution agreed upon during the German CBSS chairmanship.

Thus, the **CBSS Secretariat**, established in Stockholm in 1998, has long since extended its scope of work and developed to become a "nucleus" of the Baltic Sea cooperation, increasingly involved in coordination tasks in addition to its initial task of providing information. This development corresponds to the demand on the national Baltic Sea cooperation advocated mainly by Schleswig-Holstein for several years.

Since 1999 the criminal investigation department of Schleswig-Holstein is participating in the activities of the CBSS "**Task Force on Organized Crime**"<sup>19</sup>. In May 2002 the German Federal Minister of Home Affairs invited the CBSS ministers responsible for police-related matters to convene in Lübeck (Germany). The ministers were commissioned by the Baltic Sea States Summit of Kolding (2000) to verify the Task Force set up by the Heads of Government. They recommended putting the ministers responsible for police-related issues directly in charge of the Task Force's cooperation<sup>20</sup>.

New developments are the chiefly Swedish initiative against sexual abuse of children („**Child Centre for children at risk in the Baltic Sea Region**")<sup>21</sup> as well as the Norwegian initiative to combat communicable diseases („**Task Force on Communicable Diseases Control**")<sup>22</sup>.

In all, the national cooperation in the Baltic Sea area has reached a range and structure which is unique on the regional level of cooperation in Europe. On top of its role of integration towards the EU accession candidates and the region of northwest Russia, the Baltic Sea cooperation is of such high standard that it will be able to stand the test within the growing competition among the greater regions in Europe. Without the active support of the numerous non-governmental Baltic Sea organizations, however, this success would not have been possible.

## 2.2 Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) ([www.bspsc.net](http://www.bspsc.net))

The **10<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference** was held in Greifswald (Germany) on 3-4 September 2001 and dealt with the subject "Civil society – a political model between vision and reality". In view of the forth-

<sup>14</sup> [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian)

<sup>15</sup> [www.vasab.org.pl](http://www.vasab.org.pl) - or: [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian)

<sup>16</sup> [www.baltic21.ee/document/sectors/education/EDU\\_baltic21Efinal.pdf](http://www.baltic21.ee/document/sectors/education/EDU_baltic21Efinal.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [www.jugendsh.de](http://www.jugendsh.de) - or: [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian)

<sup>18</sup> [www.cbss.st/BASREC/BASREC\\_1.htm](http://www.cbss.st/BASREC/BASREC_1.htm)

<sup>19</sup> [www.balticseatastaskforce.dk](http://www.balticseatastaskforce.dk)

<sup>20</sup> *Conference Conclusions:* [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/10russian)

<sup>21</sup> [www.childcentre.baltinfo.org](http://www.childcentre.baltinfo.org)

<sup>22</sup> [www.baltichealth.org](http://www.baltichealth.org)

coming EU enlargement the Baltic Sea States are faced with the challenge to develop (in the sense of region building) not only an economic and social compound but also a common sense of life and values in the Baltic Sea area. The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference in Greifswald therefore decided to intensify the contact to the CBSS delegate for democratic development and to increase the cooperation with NGOs.

In Greifswald the BSPC celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and struck the balance of 10 years of work: the BSPC's increasing publicity, stable structures and, beside its political tasks, the growing working character are showing the development of the Conference. The foundation of the international summer academy, the promotion of the Baltic Youth Assembly as well as the establishment of the working group "Security of ships" were initiated by the BSPC.

In February 2002 the President of the Schleswig-Holstein Land Parliament Mr Arens handed over the chairmanship of the BSPC to the Russian politician Mr Walerij Ustjugov. Mr Ustjugov, the former president of the Kaliningrad regional parliament (Duma), is a member of the Russian Federation Council and the Chairman of its committee of international relationships.

**Russia**, organizing this year's **11th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference** in St. Petersburg (30 September to 1 October 2002), compiled the following subjects to be dealt with during the Conference: Apart from the Northern Dimension and the impact of the EU enlargement to Kaliningrad, ecological matters such as security of ships, residual pollution by dumped chemical weapons and nuclear security will be in the limelight. The resolution of this year's Conference shall deliver important impulses for the simultaneous Danish EU Council Presidency and the Finnish CBSS chairmanship.

A new component of the BSPC work is the **working group on the security of ships** set up last year. In view of repeated oil disasters and increased shipping in the area the working group shall evaluate specific political recommendations for common transnational action. The achievements of the working group will be presented during the forthcoming BSPC in St. Petersburg.

Another new approach of BSPC work taking into account the request of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) to get in closer contact with the BSPC. Thus BSPC has granted observer status to FUEV, thereby opening a common dialogue on **minority related political issues**.<sup>23</sup>

The **augmenting significance of BSPC** does not only reveal in the relationships to the outside but also **within**. Russia and the Nordic Council signaled their interest to be represented in the standing committee of the BSPC by two members each. So far, the Standing Committee consists of one representative each of the Nordic Council, the Baltic States, Poland, Russia and Germany. The 11<sup>th</sup> BSPC in St. Petersburg will discuss an application for a revision of its standing orders.

## 2.3 Baltic Sea States Subregional Conference ([www.bsssc.com](http://www.bsssc.com))

Nearly 10 years after its foundation (October 1993, Stavanger/Norway) the Baltic Sea States Subregional Conference (BSSSC) has to **set the points**: Established as a "market place" for the encounter (then unknown) on the level directly below the national state, the BSSSC now has to redefine its own role in the framework of Baltic Sea cooperation in view of the considerably enlarged (and EU funded) networks of regional cooperation.

One of the main tasks of the BSSSC, actively supported by Schleswig-Holstein since its foundation, is the **strengthening of the regional level** in the EU accession countries in the framework of the EU accession process. Invariably, the BSSSC is serving as mouthpiece for the interests of the regional level in the Baltic Sea states towards the CBSS and the European Commission.

In May 2000 the chairmanship and the secretariat of BSSSC passed to an EU accession country for the first time. Under the more difficult circumstances an EU non-member state is faced with, the **Vojvodship Pomorskie/Pomerania** – one of the partner regions of Schleswig-Holstein – is fulfilling the coordination tasks of the BSSSC and its presence in the networks of the Baltic Sea cooperation. As the first regional transnational organization the BSSSC has achieved an **observer status at the Committee of the Regions (CoR)** and participates in its regular meetings in Brussels. The Hanse Office jointly run by Hamburg and Schleswig-

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<sup>23</sup> *FUEN as independent umbrella organization for national minorities in Europe was granted consultative status in 1989 by the European Council and in 1995 by the United Nations. Moreover, it is represented at the OSCE conferences, as far as they are dealing with national minorities and ethnic groups.*

Holstein is acting as “**BSSSC-antenna**” in Brussels since May 2001.

The **9<sup>th</sup> BSSSC Conference** (25 to 27 October 2001, Riga/Latvia) focused on the **role and significance of the regional level** in the process of integration and EU enlargement. This holds for the use of EU pre-accession instruments and other EU funds available in the Baltic Sea area as well as for the implementation of fundamental EU policies, particularly in the accession countries. The Conference requested the Baltic Sea states to involve the regional level to a stronger extent when it comes to realizing Baltic Sea and EU policies. Moreover, the Conference asked the CBSS to show a stronger presence towards the EU in Brussels.

On the occasion of its annual Conference in 2001 the BSSSC, the European Commission and the INTER-REG III B Secretariat (Rostock/Germany) organized an “**INTERREG III B/PHARE Information day**” in Riga which was met with approval from regional representatives of all Baltic Sea states.

Prior to this event BSSSC, Schleswig-Holstein and Eastern Norway County Network arranged a highly esteemed **Conference on “The Northern Dimension and Kaliningrad Oblast”** in March 2001. For the first time, regional cooperation partners of the Kaliningrad region gathered on the spot in order to discuss a better coordination of projects and the integration of further regions. A second meeting is planned for 2003.

The 10<sup>th</sup> (and anniversary) Conference of the BSSSC will take place in Schleswig-Holstein’s partner region Eastern Norway (Lillehammer/Norway, 24 to 26 October 2002). The main topic will be “Regions in Partnership for the future”. The two German seats in the BSSSC board are maintained by Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg. The BSSSC Working Groups are attended by all three Northern German Länder.

## 2.4 EU Baltic Sea politics

Still, there is no consistent EU policy for the Baltic Sea area. The frequently criticized distribution of competencies inside the EU Commission due to the differing status of the Baltic Sea states has not changed. Nevertheless, the Northeast of Europe is gaining importance as well for the EU, manifested by

- the EU enlargement policy and the EU programmes available in the Baltic Sea area (INTERREG III B, PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD and TACIS),
- the Common Strategy on Russia focussing as well the specific situation of Kaliningrad region, as well as
- the concept of „Northern Dimension of the EU“.

**EU pre-accession strategy:** With the equation of all accession candidates at the end of 1999, Latvia and Lithuania, too, were enabled to become EU Members from 2004 on. In doing so, the EU is meeting the respective demand expressed by many Baltic Sea states for a long time. Despite a considerable progress, the accession countries do not yet fulfil all of the conditions for accession. Nevertheless, 10 of the candidate countries are still in time, according to the reports handed out by the Commission about the state of enlargement negotiations submitted during the EU summit in Laeken (December 2001). The EU Commission expects the negotiations to be completed until the end of 2002<sup>24</sup>. The objective still is to allow the first accessions in 2004.

In addition to the negotiation process there is an **accession process** which is characterized by accession partnerships to determine priority reforms and EU financial means to be used for that purpose as well as by national programmes for taking over the “*acquis communautaire*”. The main instrument of the EU pre-accession strategy is the EU PHARE programme. The EU Member States are directly involved e.g. by means of the sub-programme “PHARE institution building” implemented in 1998 by the EU Commission: project-oriented partnerships between authorities of member states and accession states (“Twinning”) shall enable them to realize the “*acquis communautaire*” in legislation, administration and education. Each project is based on the delegation of experts from EU Member States. The projects are financed to full extent by the means provided by the corresponding national PHARE programmes. Furthermore, the EU supporting instruments ISPA (transport infrastructures and environment) and SAPARD (establishment of institutions for the administration of the EU agricultural policy), both introduced at the beginning of 2000, are aimed at strengthening the accession eligibility of the candidates.

Within the framework of the **Common Strategy on Russia**<sup>25</sup> of 1999 the past two years have resulted in a considerable consolidation of the dialogue between the EU and Russia. This became particularly clear during the EU-Russia summit which took place in Moscow in May 2002. At present the main emphasis is put on the

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<sup>24</sup> comp. detailed “Europe report of the Land Government” (print 15/1517)

<sup>25</sup> Internet: [europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/ceeca/com\\_strat/russia\\_99.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ceeca/com_strat/russia_99.pdf)

planned establishment of a “Common European Economic Space” (CEES) intending to support Russia in entering the World Trade Organization (WTO) and to increase the cooperation in domains such as energy, security and the fight against crime. As far as the handling of visa at the future external borders between the EU and the region of Kaliningrad is concerned, however, no agreement on the differing positions could be reached during the summit.

The fact, however, that the specific political and economic situation of the Kaliningrad region has become a matter of dialogue is a proof for the changing climate of relationships between the EU and Russia.<sup>26</sup> The common efforts to support regional development of this region are aimed at attracting investors from foreign countries and making sure that the social and economic discrepancies between Kaliningrad and its neighbouring EU accession countries of Poland and Lithuania will not get any deeper. Moreover, there is a considerable, but still unsatisfied need to enhance the infrastructure and the environmental investments and to strengthen the integration of Kaliningrad into the network of Baltic Sea cooperation. Nevertheless, it has to be taken care that Russia will not convert the problems of Kaliningrad into the central issue of the relationships between the EU and Russia.

The TACIS Action Programme 2001 provided for the Russian Federation was adopted by the TACIS Steering Committee in October 2001. Usually, the TACIS Action Programmes are put into operation in the subsequent year. Even though its budget has been doubled to 80 million EURO (as against 38 million EURO the year before) it can still only be considered as a kind of initial financing, given the real problems of the country. An evaluation of the previous TACIS programmes carried out by the EU Commission resulted in the following alterations:

- Supporting measures are restricted to limited numbers of domains and projects.
- The approach of this programme is less demand driven but rather based on dialogue, i.e. the EU will have a stronger influence on the programme alignment.
- Insofar as the smaller programmes are concerned the main emphasis is put on cooperation between public and non-governmental institutions.
- The programme will concentrate on certain geographical areas (i.a. Kaliningrad) in order to increase efficiency and synergy effects.

Apart from sub-programmes like „Bistro”, small project funds, “Institution Building Partnership” or “Cross-Border Cooperation”, the current TACIS programme for Russia is guided by the following three priorities<sup>27</sup> :

- Promotion of the reforms of institutions, legal systems and administration.
- Support to the private economic sector and to economic development.
- Support for dealing with social consequences resulting from the process of reforms.

With the “**Northern Dimension Action Plan**”<sup>28</sup> adopted by the EU Summit in Feira in June 2000, the Union turned its attention to the Baltic Sea region for the first time since the middle of the 90ies. The Action Plan calls for measures, among others in the domains of infrastructure, environment and nuclear security, education, research and human resources, public health system and cross-border cooperation. However, no specific financial means are provided for implementation of the Action Plan. Instead, existing EU supporting programmes, international financial institutions (EIB, EBRD, Nordic Investment Bank) and national supporting means have to be approached.

The Action Plan limited until 2003 is just setting the political framework of action. The intended common implementation of the suggested fields of action with international and national, but also regional and local actors still shows serious deficiencies. Nevertheless, there is some remarkable political progress:

- The **Ministerial Conference** on “Northern Dimension” held in Luxemburg in April 2001<sup>29</sup> on invitation of the Swedish EU Presidency as well as the „**Full report on Northern Dimension Policies**”<sup>30</sup> submitted to the EU Summit in Gothenburg (June 2001), resulted in a broader acceptance of the concept among the Member States.
- Under German chairmanship the CBSS submitted a comprehensive contribution to implementing the “Northern Dimension Action Plan” in April 2001, based on efforts of numerous organizations in the Baltic

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<sup>26</sup> see i.a. communication “The EU and Kaliningrad” submitted by the Commission in January 2001 (Internet: [europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/north\\_dim/doc/com2001\\_0026de01.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim/doc/com2001_0026de01.pdf))

<sup>27</sup> Internet information on TACIS: [europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relation/ceeca/tacis/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relation/ceeca/tacis/index.htm) ;  
Calls for tenders via Internet: [europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/tender/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/tender/index_en.htm)

<sup>28</sup> Internet: [europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/north\\_dim/ndap/06\\_00\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim/ndap/06_00_en.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Internet: [europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/north\\_dim/conf/formin2/concl.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim/conf/formin2/concl.htm)

<sup>30</sup> Internet: [europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/north\\_dim/doc/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/north_dim/doc/index.htm)

Sea area<sup>31</sup>.

- In close cooperation with the European Commission the CBSS ministers in charge of Information Society agreed upon a **“Northern e-Dimension Action Plan”** aimed at developing the information-based society in the Baltic Sea region within the framework of the “Northern Dimension”<sup>32</sup>.
- In July 2002 the **“Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP)”** initiated by the former Swedish EU Presidency showed a first success: A NDEP Support Funds aimed at the coordinated financing of particularly important environmental projects in the Baltic Sea area was established by involving EU Member States as well as European, Nordic and international financial institutions.

The Baltic Sea related EU funding instrument **INTERREG II C (BSR)**, initiated i.a. by the Land Government of Schleswig-Holstein, could be successfully concluded by the end of 2001. Altogether, 460 partners from all over the Baltic Sea Region participated in the 45 granted projects, which had a total volume of nearly 50 million EURO (EU means, national, regional and local co-financing). The measures focused on urban planning and settlement structures, spatial and regional planning, communication networks (traffic, energy, information technology), development of coastal areas, islands and rural areas as well as culture and tourism.

The number of projects and project partners as well as the amount of invested money are important indicators for the increasingly dynamic development of the Baltic Sea Region. The projects and the networks created will enhance the degree of integration of the Baltic Sea cooperation and thus the competitiveness of the Baltic Sea area. **Schleswig-Holstein’s** participation in the INTERREG II C programme was characterized by various measures. Of the total of 45 projects, 15 projects were achieved by project partners from Schleswig-Holstein and covered a total amount of 16 million EURO (INTERREG means and co-financing).

The subsequent programme **INTERREG III B Baltic Sea** (2001-2006) was elaborated on European level with active cooperation of the Land Government. This programme was approved by the EU Commission in September 2001 and covers an average amount of 98 million EURO (plus co-financing)<sup>33</sup>. In October 2001 and March 2002 the first two calls for tender were carried through. 27 project applications were approved, 9 of which with partners from Schleswig-Holstein.

The fact that the **Investitionsbank Schleswig-Holstein (IB)** again was commissioned as administrative and financial authority for the programme by the Baltic Sea states can be considered as particular success and acknowledgement for the work achieved during the programme period INTERREG II C (1997-2001).

In 2001 a first success could be achieved insofar as the lacking **coordination of EU funding instruments in the Baltic Sea area** is concerned, which had been criticized a lot over the last few years. Up to now a successful participation particularly in INTERREG II C/III B projects was impossible especially for the EU candidate countries due to differing programme regulations and structures under PHARE. From now on, the programme PHARE is much better adjusted to INTERREG III B in form and content as well as in terms of applicable measures. The candidate countries of the Baltic Sea Region have allocated 20 million EURO from their respective PHARE budgets for project connections with INTERREG.

The newly established **“Baltic Joint Coordination Committee”**, consisting of representatives from all Baltic Sea states and the EU Commission, will ensure and develop the further connection in content and form of the EU supporting instruments. Germany is represented in this committee by the three Northern German Länder and the Federal Ministry of Finance.

## 2.5 Baltic Sea states

Invariably, the role and development of the European Union are influencing the development of nearly every Baltic Sea state in various ways. The **Baltic Sea politics of the Baltic Sea states** have undergone further development as well:

**Sweden** is continuously expanding its political commitment in the Baltic Sea area within the framework of Baltic 21 or the CBSS, among others in domains such as civil security or the protection of children and young people. Apart from its geographical position in the centre of the Baltic Sea area the re-positioning of the Nordic cooperation aiming at a stronger integration of the Baltic States is of benefit to Sweden.

<sup>31</sup> „Priorities and projects - Contribution of the Council of the Baltic Sea States“, see: [www.cbss.st/Docs/ministerial/20/Contribution to ND AP.1.htm](http://www.cbss.st/Docs/ministerial/20/Contribution%20to%20ND%20AP.1.htm)

<sup>32</sup> Internet: [www.riso.ee/nordic](http://www.riso.ee/nordic)

<sup>33</sup> For further information see: [www.spatial.baltic.net](http://www.spatial.baltic.net)

During its EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2001 Sweden was able to put a pronounced emphasis on the further development of the action plan "Northern Dimension of the EU" e.g. by arranging the Ministerial Meeting in Luxemburg (April 2001)<sup>34</sup> and by means of the "Full report on Northern Dimension Policies"<sup>35</sup> submitted to the EU Summit in Gothenburg (June 2001).

The Swedish commitment to Kaliningrad is remarkable as well. This refers to the establishment of a Swedish consulate general in Kaliningrad which is expected to be completed by the end of 2002 or the political efforts for founding a "Kaliningrad Business Support Group" of the CBSS.

The "Baltic Billion fund"<sup>36</sup> provided by the Swedish government last year shall support bilateral projects for the promotion of the economic development in the Baltic Sea region over the next few years and strengthen the position of the Swedish economy within the region.

In accordance with this orientation Sweden keeps on using the keyword "Baltic Sea Cooperation" also as "label" for its own (bilateral) regional foreign policy.

In November 2001 the chairmanship of the Nordic cooperation passed to **Norway**<sup>37</sup>. In the Baltic Sea area Norway focuses on the cooperation in the Barents region (Barents Euro-Arctic Council BEAC) provided with an organized network of regional cooperation with Russia on national and regional level. The Norwegian efforts to interlock the Barents cooperation and the structures of Baltic Sea cooperation as well as the concept of "Northern Dimension of the EU" are noteworthy.

Here, Norway's commitment to the regional cooperation with Russia is becoming apparent. One example is the cooperation in the domain of communicable diseases in the Baltic Sea area ("Task force on communicable diseases control"). On Norway's initiative the task force is dealing explicitly with deplorable conditions in northwest Russia. Another example is the Norwegian perception of the common EU initiative INTERREG III B (Northern periphery) which is to be used for positioning Norway as seaborne transportation link between the EU and the raw material region of northwest Russia.

Invariably, the transnational cooperation on the regional level both in the Baltic Sea and the North Sea areas is given priority in Norway, irrespective of the change of government in autumn 2001. By contrast, the "Strategy on Germany" launched by Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in autumn 1999 made no real progress lately.

Following its EU Presidency (2<sup>nd</sup> half of 1999), strongly influenced by the "Northern Dimension", and in view of the forthcoming EU extension, **Finland** concentrated on creating an alliance of smaller EU member states. Under the influence of the EU Summit of Nice (June 2000), however, which put a stronger emphasis on the intergovernmental cooperation, this concept had been given up by Finland. Instead, Finland gave priority to its regional foreign policy again.

Therefore, the one-year chairmanship of the CBSS beginning in July will attract all the more interest. Moreover, Finland is taking over the chairmanship from Russia which was able to intensify the Baltic Sea cooperation to a limited extent only since summer 2001.

In **Denmark**, the change of government in November 2001 was the leading topic. The foreign policy of the new Danish government was criticized by Denmark's Nordic neighbours in an unusually blunt way. For the period of its EU Council Presidency in the second half of 2002 the Danish government has declared the EU's commitment to the Baltic Sea area to be one of its focal points.

The engagement of the Danish government related to Baltic Sea politics continues to be concentrated on the promotion of cooperation on the regional level, the main issue being the further development of the Öresund region. The inauguration of the Öresund Bridge in July 2000 was a significant step into this direction. The growing-together e.g. in the domains of economy, education, science and research and the creation of a common labour market require constant efforts of all participants. Currency and tax-related problems are responsible (among other things) for the difficulties in creating a common job market. Furthermore, the acceptance and use of the Öresund Bridge is not yet as good as expected. After remarkable settlement profits, especially in Copenhagen, had been yielded, further projects such as Copenhagen's district of Ørestad came to a standstill.

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<sup>34</sup> *Internet: europa.eu.int/comm/external\_relations/north\_dim/conf/formin2/concl.htm*

<sup>35</sup> *Internet: europa.eu.int/comm/external\_relations/north\_dim/doc/index.htm*

<sup>36</sup> *Internet: www.utrikes.regeringen.se/inenglish/policy/balticbillion/billion2.htm*

<sup>37</sup> *Internet: www.norden.org*

The **Baltic States** are invariably trying to adapt to EU standards, to establish efficient democratic institutions and to get started a well-functioning market economy. Even though all three states are striving for EU Membership as soon as possible and although the "Progress reports" submitted by the European Commission certified a remarkable progress to the three of them, the public acceptance of an EU membership has started to crumble due to the discussion about the important issues of negotiation "agricultural and structural policies".

The economy of all three Baltic States is marked by a pronounced dynamics, lately particularly in Latvia and Lithuania. Unemployment is still very high but the severe effects of the Russia crises (1998) seem to be overcome. What is remarkable is the fact that Latvia recently "re"-discovered Russia as trading partner and market. On the other, Lithuania distinguished itself as the political partner of Russia inasmuch as the future of the Russian region of Kaliningrad is concerned – a topic which has been discussed a lot in the EU as well. In accordance with process of regionalization in the Baltic States, still lacking behind, but demanded by the EU within the framework of the accession negotiations, there is a growing interest in subregional cooperation in the Baltic Sea area. This is underlined by the fact that the last three BSSSC Conferences took place in the Baltic States (Kaunas/1999, Pärnu/2000 and Riga/2001).

In **Poland** EU Membership is the topic No. 1 as well. In its "Progress reports" the European Commission pointed out that Poland has a lot of catching up to do in the domain of indispensable reforms. This also holds for the obviously moderate capability of absorbing EU supporting instruments (PHARE programme) into the structures existing in Poland.

In addition to the invariably weak economic development, essential chapters of the accession negotiations turned out to be matters of dispute in Poland's domestic policy. At present, this dispute is enhanced while the reforms seem to be paralyzed by the devastating changes in Poland's political constellation since the elections in October 2001.

The position of the Vojvodships newly established in 1999 and granted with new competences could be further consolidated. The distribution of tasks among the 16 Vojvodships, approved by the Polish government, resulted in that Vojvodship Pomorskie/Pomerania plays the role of "regional bridge" between Poland and the Baltic Sea region within the framework of the new competences regarding the interregional cooperation. This corresponds to the central responsibilities accepted by this partner region of Schleswig-Holstein within the BSSSC.

**Russian Federation:** The unstable economic and political situation mentioned in the previous "Baltic Sea Report" gave way to a distinct stabilization. Save for the strong Putin government the export-oriented economic growth stand for these stable conditions. The political rapprochement between the USA and Russia following the terrorist attacks of September 2001 further facilitated the EU-Russia cooperation which is especially important for the Baltic Sea region. The Baltic Sea cooperation itself, however, is less interesting for Russia than the possibility to get better integrated into the extended EU via the regions of northwest Russia.

Nevertheless, the unsolved future situation of Kaliningrad as a Russian exclave within the EU might become the acid test for these relationships. If no amicable solutions of visa- and transit-related issues or the involvement of Kaliningrad in terms of infrastructure in an extended EU are found, this could have serious effects on the Baltic Sea cooperation, at least on the national level.

Russia's invariably strong interest in the realization of the "Northern Dimension" is remarkable. The fact that Russia keeps on pursuing the economic connection of the northwest Russian regions to the Baltic Sea area shows Russia's commitment to the "Northern Dimension". The expectations of additional EU funding means, however, often seem to be a little exaggerated.

Having this in mind, the Russian CBSS chairmanship 2001/2002, characterized by at least continuity, can be understood as active a perception as never before of this regional cooperation "below the official" EU-Russia level.

During its one-year CBSS chairmanship (2000/2001) **Germany** managed to intensify its commitment to the Baltic Sea cooperation remarkably<sup>38</sup>. Save for the CBSS itself, this refers, above all, to the various kinds of field cooperation that expanded substantially during the reporting period. The field departments of the Federal Government – frequently in close cooperation with the Northern German Länder – could be involved to an extent rarely known up to now.

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<sup>38</sup> see chapter 2.1

The intense cooperation between the Federal Government and the Northern German Länder during the German CBSS chairmanship took place in most cases without attracting a stronger public attention. Nevertheless, Northern Germany was pleased at this consistent and efficient cooperation.

From the Northern German point of view, the economic forum "Fostering Economic Cooperation in the Baltic Region" held by the Federal Government in March 2001 was of particular significance. Just like the neighbouring Baltic Sea states were able to get in touch with German enterprises, the German economy could gain an insight into the economic perspectives of the Baltic Sea region, where the Northern German Länder are acting as "bridge-builders".

Although the Federal Government pursues "continental" interests in Europe rather than Baltic Sea related ones, every effort has to be made to keep the German perception of the Baltic Sea region on this high level.



### **3. Schleswig-Holstein's Baltic Sea politics: Strengthening the Baltic Sea region for the competition among regions**

The Baltic Sea cooperation still is the **strategic regional leitmotif** for strengthening the competitiveness of the Land. This applies on a large scale – only by concerted efforts will the Baltic Sea region be able to keep pace with the competition of European greater regions insofar as commercial flows and site decisions are concerned. And it applies on a small scale – only if you are ready to cooperate, will you remain competitive.

But it is also the overall European development that requires the Baltic Sea policy to be **further developed continuously**. Own initiatives adapted to the changed role within the extended EU will have to contribute to the further development of the Baltic Sea cooperation<sup>39</sup>. Therefore it is essential to secure the **presence of the Land** in the Baltic Sea area. This includes the active cooperation of the most important Baltic Sea institutions (BSSSC, CBSS Ministerial Conferences, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, Northern German participation in the CBSS).

Moreover, **political contacts** in the Baltic Sea area are to be **cultivated** by continuing the visits paid by the Minister President, the field ministers as well as the Land Parliament (Landtag). During the reporting time, the Minister President paid visits to Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius (accompanying the Federal Chancellor in June 2000), to Oslo (October 2000), Gdansk (May 2001), Riga (September 2001), Kaliningrad and Helsinki (June 2002). In addition the Minister of Economics visited Finland and Estonia (August 2000), Poland (June 2001) and Latvia (together with Hamburg, June 2002). The Minister of the Interior paid visits to Estonia and Latvia (June 2002); the Minister of Agriculture to Estonia (June 2000), Finland (June 2002) and Latvia (September 2002); the Minister of Health to Norway (February 2001).

Furthermore, Schleswig-Holstein's network of Baltic Sea cooperation has to be further developed.

#### **3.1 Schleswig-Holstein's Partnerships in the Baltic Sea area**

With the aim to interlock Schleswig-Holstein within the area, the Land since 1992 has established an exemplary network of partnerships with a certain selection of regions in the Baltic Sea area. During the recent years these partner regions were affected by inner-national processes of regionalization and functional reforms, a fact which required, sometimes for formal reasons, to renew or revise existing agreements.

##### **Norway:**

The main progress in the partnership with the region of Eastern Norway County Network (Østlands Samarbeidet) was the establishment of the "health bridge" (pasientbro) agreed in 2001: about 500 patients from Norway made use of the new ways of medical treatment in Schleswig-Holstein in 2001. For 2002 the number of treatments is estimated to amount to 1,500 by Norwegian departments. In Germany a number of hospitals in Schleswig-Holstein only received the official authorization to treat Norwegian patients.

In addition to this agreement between the Norwegian national insurance department and Schleswig-Holstein hospitals that had been developed before in the framework of the regional partnership, both partner regions are striving for an increased cooperation in the domains of culture, youth & pupils exchange, technology and job market (mobilization of workforce). Jointly, Schleswig-Holstein and Eastern Norway County Network organized the BSSSC Conference "The Northern Dimension and Kaliningrad Oblast" in Kaliningrad in March 2001.

##### **Finland:**

In the limelight of the current cooperation with the Western Finnish partner regions was the realization of the "Finland focus" of the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in 2001, enriched by a number of valuable contributions from the Finnish partner regions that had been taken note of in Finland as well. This partnership shall be further enhanced by deepening the cultural cooperation.

Assisted by some of the EU supporting means the cooperation is to be extended in the fields of environment, universities, health and regenerative energy (wind, biomass). Thus, the University of Vaasa will participate in the project "Baltic Sea Virtual Campus", developed in the main by universities from Schleswig-Holstein and Southern Sweden.

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<sup>39</sup> for more details see chapter 4.

**Sweden:**

The partnership with SydSam (Samverkan i Sydsverige), the union of Southern Swedish regions, which began in 1995, was adapted to the altered framework by the revised "Common Declaration on the regional cooperation" signed in July 2001. Nevertheless, the main emphasis is continued to be put on the development of the region of "South-western Baltic Sea", among others supported by the projects STRING and "Baltic Sea Virtual Campus".

Here, the region of Skåne is playing the most important role. The possibilities to involve the other, rather rural member regions of SydSam, e.g. in the domains of technology or information-based society, shall be analyzed jointly to an increased extent.

**Denmark:**

In June 2001 a formal agreement on regional cooperation was signed by the Schleswig-Holstein Land Government and Sønderjyllands Amt for the first time. In doing so, the cross-border cooperation grown over decades has been put onto an additional foundation. The project-related cooperation in the direct border region shall be complemented by actors and potentials from all over the country. At the same time, the partnership shall bring about a forum for the direct political exchange of views for both neighbours.

In view of the historically developed cross-border relations, the practical EU project support in the programme phase of INTERREG III A (2000-2006) is particularly interesting. During the terminated programme phase (1994-1999) already, in the three German-Danish cooperation areas (region of Schleswig/Sønderjyllands Amt, region of K.E.R.N./Fyns Amt and region of Ostholstein-Lübeck/Storstrøms Amt) about 68 cross-border projects altogether were funded with an amount of 18.8 million EURO by INTERREG II A. For the programme phase 2000-2006 (INTERREG III A) supporting means of around 33 million EURO for cross-border projects in the three cooperation areas will be supplied.

**Poland:**

The highlights of the partnership with the Vojvodship Pomorskie/Pomerania were the youth conferences "CzasSprung 2010" (Gdansk, May 2001) and "Baltic Bridges – From the present to the future" (Kiel and Lübeck, May 2002). In May 2001, 60 young people accompanied the Prime Minister on her journey to Cracow, Auschwitz and Gdansk and discussed their visions for a common German-Polish future within an integrated Europe with Polish young people. In May 2002, 50 Polish youths together with Sejm Marshall Zarebski (Pomerania) came to discuss the perspectives for understanding and cooperation in the Baltic Sea region with young people from Schleswig-Holstein and other Baltic Sea states. This common initiative by both partner regions has created a forum of understanding for "tomorrow's generation".

Apart from the a.m. initiative, the strengthening of the Vojvodship's competences in Poland, granted in 1999, concerning the requirements as to the imminent EU accession is still a focal point. With regard special importance lies with close cooperation in the framework of BSSSC, for which the Vojvodship took over chairmanship and Secretariat in 2000.

**Russian Federation:**

The relationship between Schleswig-Holstein and Kaliningrad Oblast received a new foundation in 1999. The cooperation is aimed at supporting the district administration of Kaliningrad to maintain its position as a "Russian exclave in the European internal market" in the Baltic Sea area as well as in the European Commission. Experts' lectures in Kaliningrad and the invitation of a delegation from Kaliningrad to political talks in Brussels in March 2000 equally served this purpose.

The series of events "Schleswig-Holstein presenting itself" which commenced in September 2001 in Kaliningrad mainly intended to present the various, often rather imperceptible measures of cooperation and support of institutions, associations and private initiatives in Kaliningrad to a broader audience. The preliminary conclusion of this presentation was the visit of Schleswig-Holstein's Prime Minister in June 2002 to the governor of Kaliningrad Oblast, thus returning his visit during the sailing championship "Kieler Woche" in Kiel in 2001.

**Baltic States:**

In default of adequate regional cooperation partners, the partnerships of Schleswig-Holstein and the Baltic States usually do not rest on formal agreements. Exceptions are, among others, the twinning projects with Estonia in the domains of justice, fight against drugs and agricultural administration, education and advisory assistance of the police departments in Estonia and Latvia as well as the "Common Declaration on the Cooperation in Agriculture", revised in the meantime, between the Ministry of Agriculture (MLR) and Estonia and Latvia.

Irrespective of formal agreements the cooperation developed more or less independently due to the initiatives

of individual institutions, organizations and associations.

This network is complemented by the “**Schleswig-Holstein Offices**” which have been built up continuously in various countries and partner regions in the Baltic Sea area since 1995. They are doing a valuable job supporting the partnerships of the Land that have become indispensable. As platforms for information and organization they support the practical project work; as “ambassadors of the Land” they are helping to pave the way for new projects using their contacts.

The “Schleswig-Holstein Offices” in Malmö, Gdansk and Tallinn<sup>40</sup>, initially limited to the end of 2000, were prolonged by three more years. In order to intensify Schleswig-Holstein’s presence in the Baltic Sea area the network of Schleswig-Holstein-Offices has been further expanded during the reporting time:

- In cooperation with the local representations of the German Chambers of Industry and Commerce new Schleswig-Holstein-Offices were established in **Vilnius**<sup>41</sup> (June 2000) and **Riga** (September 2001).
- The previously subsidized „Hanse-Bureau“ in **Kaliningrad**<sup>42</sup> was extended at the beginning of 2001 and converted into a Schleswig-Holstein-Office, cooperating closely with the „Hanse-Bureau“ still run by a private association.
- The office in Malmö was provided with new personnell in April 2002 and will be gradually converted into a **representative office in the Öresund region**.

Having in mind the partnerships, the **Hanse-Office**<sup>43</sup> managed to establish itself as a “centre of Baltic Sea cooperation in Brussels”. The loose cooperation of regional Baltic Sea offices in and around the Hanse-Office in Brussels turned into the so-called „**Palmerston Group**“, comprising, apart from the Hanse-Office, 14 regional offices of the „Baltic Sea House“ and the „South Denmark House“<sup>44</sup>.

It was the Hanse-Office itself that advised the Vojvodship Pomorskie/Pomerania and the district administration of Kaliningrad in EU-related matters. Furthermore, the Hanse-Office is acting as “BSSSC-Antenna” in Brussels. It is supporting the BSSSC when it comes to elaborate EU-relevant positions in the framework of guest status, granted by the Committee of the Regions to the BSSSC as the first regional organization. In all, these cooperations are helping to position the Hanse-Office as the first address in terms of Baltic Sea cooperation in Brussels.

### **3.2 Strengthening the position of Schleswig-Holstein in the Baltic Sea region**

In order to secure and seize Schleswig-Holstein’s perspectives in the Baltic Sea region in the long run, especially in view of the rapidly changing general framework in the Baltic Sea area, in June 1998 the Land Government agreed on “**Master projects to strengthen Schleswig-Holstein’s competitiveness in the Baltic Sea area**”<sup>45</sup>. This catalogue was intended to encourage the discussion on how an alliance of state, economy and society could be able to decide and realize **strategic alignments** so as to strengthen the competitiveness of the Land. If possible, the master projects shall be concluded and put into practice by the middle of 2002.

The objective to give impetus to these fields of action by uniting the efforts into master projects limited in time and to intensify the cooperation with the Land’s relevant actors has proved a success. By reason of the varying structures of the individual fields of action and the varying degree of intertwining between the Land Government and non-governmental actors in these domains, however, this political approach has lost impetus again in the meantime.

At the same time new topics of the Baltic Sea cooperation, politically important for the Land, were added. For example this refers to domains such as knowledge-based society or information-based society striving to expand the Baltic-wide networks; or the “**Health Initiative Schleswig-Holstein**” having resulted in the “patients’ bridge” with Norway, enabling Norwegian patients to be medically treated in hospitals in Schleswig-Holstein.

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<sup>40</sup> see: [www.ahk-est.ee](http://www.ahk-est.ee)

<sup>41</sup> see: [www.ahk-let.lv](http://www.ahk-let.lv)

<sup>42</sup> [www.sh-hansebue.kaliningrad.ru](http://www.sh-hansebue.kaliningrad.ru)

<sup>43</sup> [www.hanse-office.de](http://www.hanse-office.de)

<sup>44</sup> North Sweden EU Office, Copenhagen EU Office, City of Malmö EU Office, South Sweden ERDU Office, South Jutland EU Office, Fyns EU Office, Kommuner Haderslev, Odense EU Office, Tampere Central Region EU Office, EU Vest (City of Ribe), West Zealand EU Office, West Finland Office, European Agency.

<sup>45</sup> comp. Baltic Sea Report 1998, print 14/1638

By 2002 the intended form of implementing these Master projects agreed in 1998 has been determined. But neither their topics nor their aims are concluded. By contrast, they still form strategic targets of the Land's politics. By focusing on the master projects the strategic significance of these fields of action for the future location of Schleswig-Holstein in the dynamically developing Baltic Sea region has become definitely clear. Its further development and realization, however, depend on the commitment of individual sectors and their responsible actors.

Schleswig-Holstein will not be able to strengthen its position using but its own means. Thus, it is all the more important to find allies - of cross-border and transnational nature or in Germany - so as to define common interests and to adopt measures to strengthen the common competitiveness.

The following balance covers the whole reporting time from 1998 to 2002. Not every individual measure, however, could be mentioned in detail:

### ⇒ A development concept for the South-western Baltic Sea region:

The south-western Baltic Sea area was marked by a special dynamics during the last few years. Dynamic developments in economic future branches, renowned educational institutions and higher social and ecological standards have turned the area between the Öresund region around Copenhagen and Malmö as well as the metropolitan region of Hamburg/ Schleswig-Holstein into a place which offers a high quality of life as well as an attractive surrounding for internationally oriented enterprises.

In order to make the best of the future prospects arising from this, Schleswig-Holstein is cooperating with the Hanseatic City of Hamburg, the Danish counties of Storstrøm and West-Zealand and the partners of the Danish-Swedish Öresund region (especially Skåne and Copenhagen) within the framework of the **STRING project**<sup>46</sup>. This long-term cooperation is aimed at developing the potentials of the partner regions together and elaborating common strategies in view of the challenges of a globalized, rapidly changing economy. By further developing and making use of the potentials the south-western Baltic Sea region can gain the perspective to become a power centre of the whole Baltic Sea region.

The guideline for cooperation will be formed by the **development concept "South-western Baltic Sea"** elaborated jointly and adopted in June 2001 within the framework of the first STRING project phase. The core part of this concept is a concrete strategy and action plan with a number of specific projects. The implementation of this concept will start in June 2002 under the subsequent project "STRING 2"<sup>47</sup>.

On the basis of comprehensive analyses, trend descriptions and strategic discussions, a group of about 100 experts from the partner regions, specialized in the domains of science, economy, administration, trade unions, transport or environmental associations evaluated seven **strategic fields of action** which are particularly promising for the cooperation in the south-western Baltic Sea area:

- Exchange of knowledge between research and enterprises in order to accelerate innovation
- Improvement of offers in terms of education and further qualification aiming at the "society of learning for everyone"
- Jointly planned development of infrastructure and settlement structures and improved coordination of traffic planning
- Promotion of mobility
- Protection of the environment and of characteristic landscapes
- Economic cooperation
- Cooperation in the domain of culture, cultivation of the common heritage and the common cultural landscape.

Within the framework of STRING 2 but also beyond, the following individual projects shall contribute to the realization of the concept of development:

- **Local and supraregional networks of SME's to support e-business:**  
Building up a system of local and interregional networks of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) and economic development societies, encouraging a more intensive use of e-business technology, de-

<sup>46</sup> „South Western Baltic Sea TransRegional Area - Inventing New Geography“; from January 1999 until the middle of 2001 supported by the common EU initiative INTERREG II C with 0.72 million EURO (total volume: 1.44 million EURO).

<sup>47</sup> approved within the common EU initiative INTERREG III B in May 2002; duration: June 2002 until June 2004 (supporting volume: 1.7 million EURO, total volume: 3.4 million EURO)

veloping marketing strategies for SMEs.

- **Online-based education and further qualification:**  
Building up a network of internet-based education and further qualification offers, exchange of information and transfer of know-how, development of Internet-based education and education units particularly adapted to the requirements of SMEs.
- **„STRING design“ – young and innovative design:**  
By tradition, design and arts and crafts are strongly represented in the STRING region. In order to promote a young and innovative design the project shall offer the platform for transregional cooperation, presentation and marketing. Save for the cooperation of universities this project comprises further education in financial and marketing strategies and the development of a network of supporting institutions.
- **„Pearls of regional nature and culture“ (HOST):**  
Assessment of the rich cultural and natural heritage of the STRING regions, evaluation of new ways for sustainable tourism
- **Strategies for a sustainable development of coastal areas:**  
Safeguarding the ecological and sustainable tourism in the coastal areas, extending the exchange of views to further fields of action in order to achieve a comprehensive integrated management of coastal areas.
- **Baltic Sea Virtual Campus / E-learning:**  
Building up a network of northern German, Swedish and Danish universities and educational institutions, developing common online courses of study close to economy, building up model-oriented structures for lifelong learning, demonstrating possibilities to integrate education and labour market
- **STRING Viking network:**  
Cooperation of museums and scientific institutions aiming at common research and development of presentation and marketing concepts of Viking-related history of the south-western Baltic Sea area as well as development of sustainable concepts for tourism for Viking museums and centres.

## ⇒ Schleswig-Holstein's way into the international knowledge & information society:

In view of the increasingly rapid changes of structures of professional work, it is of utmost importance to impart and acquire abilities to make use of knowledge available all over the world and to move on international ground. The following measures intend to strengthen the competitiveness of the Land and to improve the employment prospects of the young generation:

- **Learning foreign languages in primary schools:** In primary schools pupils from the 3<sup>rd</sup> form on are learning a foreign language (mainly English or Danish) in accordance with the integrated concept of foreign languages. Since the beginning of the reporting period in 1998 the offers of foreign languages in primary schools were extended gradually. In the school year of 2001/2002 every second primary school is teaching a foreign language. For the school year of 2004/2005 foreign language teaching in every primary school is envisaged.
- **Bilingual teaching** is offered in every fifth grammar school in Schleswig-Holstein already. Thus, the introduction phase has ended. It is mainly geography which is taught in English, even until the school-leaving exam (Abitur) at an increasing number of schools. Further bilingual subjects are history and biology. The bilingual teaching has become a fixed part of the additional teaching offers in grammar schools.
- **School partnerships:** With currently 230 schools in Schleswig-Holstein cultivating regular exchange of pupils with Baltic Sea states, a dense network of schools has been built up, at present complemented by about 50 multilateral projects in the framework of the EU programme „Comenius 1“ (school partnerships).
- **„Schools join the Web“/„Schools on-line“:** These two projects were started in 1999 and are terminated by now. At present, every school has its own Internet access. Moreover, the increasing standardization of the school computers and networks facilitates their use for teachers and pupils. The subsequent application of the educational network, training all teachers for working with the computer in their lessons,

a service which is free of charge, is adding to their qualification. Schleswig-Holstein's educational server<sup>48</sup> as the regional platform for education is providing multi-media contents and is further developed into a portal of knowledge and communication. The server is accessed about 200,000 times every school day.

- **Reduction of school and study periods:**

Pupils who attended grammar school for eight years instead of nine (as usual) and passed their exam are able to terminate their education earlier while being provided with the same qualification, thus becoming increasingly competitive on the European labour market. Therefore, three grammar schools in Schleswig-Holstein for the first time offered the possibility to pass the exam after 8 years (i.e. after 12 years in school) already in the school year of 2001/ 2002. This pilot experiment will be considerably extended to eight schools altogether in the school year of 2002/2003.

The major subject contents and methodical abilities will be imparted within six instead of seven years until the entrance into the last two school years (the qualification phase of the higher grade). The acceptance of pupils to this experiment depends on the principle of free choice of school. The schools will advise the parents in such a way that the offer is meant for pupils with the ability to learn quickly and a broad range of talents. The recognized high level of Schleswig-Holstein's "Abitur" (school-leaving exam of grammar school) will maintain its high standard, irrespective of whether it takes eight or nine years in grammar school).

As far as the **universities** are concerned the bandwidth and the intensity of cooperation with partner universities in the Baltic Sea area was enlarged and intensified. Beyond traditional forms of cooperation – such as exchange of students, acceptance of certificates in the framework of the ECTS procedure, common scientific projects or exchange of lecturers – close bilateral but also multilateral forms of cooperation were created: Complete study courses that are developed, offered and internationally accepted; but also syndicates opening towards the global educational market in terms of fundamental education and professional qualification, by offering even several internet-based, multi-media courses of study. In doing so, the participating universities are providing valuable contributions to integrating the European landscape of education and to realizing the "Process of Bologna".

Among the multitude of cooperation activities the following ones are of particular significance:

- The vision of a "**Baltic Sea Virtual Campus**" which emerged from the project "Virtual University of Applied Sciences" initiated by Fachhochschule Lübeck (University of Applied Sciences) could be further developed in a promising way. The feasibility study submitted at the end of 2001, which had been supported by INTERREG II C and the Land's initiative on information-based society, resulted in a project under INTERREG III B involving 20 partners from the Baltic Sea area. For the time being, five pioneer economy-related online courses of study are planned that are to be promoted on a common system platform by the partners of the syndicate.

This ambitious project is guided by FH Lübeck. It is the first time ever that a joint learning programme is offered which comprises several universities in various countries. Another major issue is the professional further education and qualification.

- The Baltic Sea initiative "**Science without frontiers**" by Christian-Albrechts-Universität (Kiel University) has made progress. During the „Baltic Summer School“, a common initiative of the faculties of medical technology of the CAU and the Universities of Lund and Copenhagen, young scientists encountered in Kiel in summer 2000 for the first time, an event which will be continued successfully. The "Kiel Summer School" (KISS), organized by the faculty of economic and social sciences, is intended mainly for junior staff from the eastern European area, especially from the Baltic Sea states.

Further cooperation projects in the framework of "Science without frontiers" are being prepared. For example, a "Master of International Studies" is planned to be established by partners in the Baltic Sea and North Sea area.

- The **bilingual German-Danish study courses** at the University of Flensburg and Syddansk Universitet in Sønderborg, supported by the EU Community Initiative INTERREG II A, are working well and help to strengthen the attraction of the German-Danish border region. In the winter semester of 2001/2002, about 100 German and Danish students started the courses of study "Culture and language mediator" and "Energy and ecology management". At present the courses are attended by approximately 300 students.

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<sup>48</sup> [www.lernnetz-sh.de](http://www.lernnetz-sh.de)

## ⇒ Sustainable, environmentally compatible development of the Baltic Sea region:

The guideline for a sustainable, environmentally compatible development is gaining importance for the Baltic Sea area. This holds enormous future potentials and perspectives for the economic, technological as well as environmentally compatible development. Within the EU the Baltic Sea region even holds a pioneer position when it comes to realizing this guideline on a large scale and with international agreement.

The Land Government of Schleswig-Holstein has produced a number of valuable contributions to the realization of the **regional Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea area (Baltic 21)**, which was adopted by the CBSS in June 1998. This programme shall support a sustainable and ecologically compatible development in the Baltic Sea area. The particular commitment of Schleswig-Holstein is revealed by the fact that the representative of the BSSSC in the Senior Officials Group of Baltic 21 (SOG) is provided by Schleswig-Holstein's Ministry of the Environment. This participation, too, has led to an increasing awareness of the significance of a sustainable development in the subregions of the Baltic Sea area, organized by the BSSSC. Not least because of this, Schleswig-Holstein held a BSSSC workshop in January 2002 in order to realize the aims of Baltic 21 on the regional level.

Furthermore, the Land Government compiled a catalogue of contributions for putting into practice Baltic 21. An up-to-date balance revealed that various individual projects (e.g. balance on tourism and environment, Baltic CHAIN) were highly acknowledged contributions, supported a great deal by Schleswig-Holstein. These contributions to a sustainable, environmentally compatible development in the Baltic Sea area will be continued.

The project **"BERNET" (Baltic Eutrophication Regional Network)** was also adapted to the aim of a sustainable, environmentally friendly development of the Baltic Sea area. This project was supported by Schleswig-Holstein and successfully concluded in September 2001. It intended to find solutions for the regional eutrophication of the Baltic Sea. The seven subregions involved compared their current problems and strategies and agreed on a number of detailed recommendations for handling this problem in a better way. Every region set up an "action plan". The project was supported by INTERREG II C. An amount of about 450,000 DM was allocated to Schleswig-Holstein for this project.

## ⇒ Integration of major cultural events, stronger intertwining in the Baltic Sea area:

Many of Schleswig-Holstein's various cultural events enjoy great popularity: the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, the "Kiel Week", the activities of ArsBaltica, the Nordic Film Days or the "NordOst Passagen". Presentation and promotion of events like these need to be enhanced beyond the borders of Schleswig-Holstein.

In order to achieve a **better presentation and promotion of culture in Schleswig-Holstein**, an inter-ministerial working group was established in 2001. The Ministry of Culture (MBWFK) is in charge of this group which is striving for a networked marketing of the cultural domain – together with cultural bodies and actors of tourism. Even though the landscape, nature and climate are in the interest of the tourist passing his holidays in Schleswig-Holstein, culture is adding to the attractiveness of this holiday region and could be used for extending the target groups. Since Schleswig-Holstein is not a classical cultural tourist destination it will require too much effort to win cultural tourists as an individual group of holidaymakers – apart from some extraordinary offers. Therefore, the activities should focus on adding to the existing holiday offers by highlighting cultural events. A networked marketing does not affect only outward considerations of tourism. An improved marketing is interesting for people living in Schleswig-Holstein as well, since a stronger "cultural identity" with Schleswig-Holstein might be a considerable social component.

**Ars Baltica** has developed into a lively multilateral network. The participating Ars Baltica countries have decided to re-structure their informal network. Until the year of 1999 Schleswig-Holstein alone was responsible for the complete coordination and held the chairmanship. Now, the responsibility is borne by all participating countries. Since the year of 2000, one of the countries is chosen to be entrusted with the coordination tasks and the organization of the joint office every year.

Since the year of 2000 the activities of ArsBaltica are coordinated by an elected chairman (2000/2001: Finland, from 2002 on: Sweden) and a secretariat (2000-2003: Estonia), which is provided with one staff member and funded by contributions from all participating countries. During the sessions of the Ars Baltica Or-

ganising Committee twice a year the projects to be supported are selected and the Ars Baltica label is granted by the participating countries.

The cultural initiative ArsBaltica is elucidated by local cultural projects, often financed in common, as well as the online presentation of the cultural initiative<sup>49</sup>, run by the secretariat. The homepage is connected to the culture network of Schleswig-Holstein<sup>50</sup> and to the other national culture networks. This informal cooperation shall encourage joint cultural cooperation projects, support their financing and thus enhance the cultural identity of the region. Cultural "makers" and cultural institutions from all Baltic Sea countries can initiate, suggest and participate in projects.

Meanwhile, the cultural network Ars Baltica won national and international recognition. The CBSS, for example, acknowledged the initiative as successful model for cultural cooperation several times. The Federal Government of Germany pursues the efforts of the network with great interest, in some cases contributes to the financing and regularly delegates a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take part in the sessions of the Ars Baltica Organising Committee.

The manifold joint cultural projects are covering e.g. contemporary jazz music and fine arts, the cooperation of Baltic Sea libraries as well as the exchange of writers. During the first years of its existence, the cultural initiative dealt with 4 to 10 selected multilateral projects and events a year under the Ars Baltica label. This number of projects augmented continuously. In the year of 2002, 20 multilateral cultural projects will be focused on.

**JazzBaltica**, the three-day jazz festival at the Land's cultural centre of Salzau initiated 12 years ago, enjoys a great popularity and originally emerged from the cultural initiative ArsBaltica. Today, experts recognize Jazz-Baltica as an important international jazz festival. Until the year of 2001 it was organized by Schleswig-Holstein's Ministry for Culture and the Land's music council. In 2002 the responsibility for this event devolved to the "Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival" (SHMF). A final assumption by the SHMF will be negotiated in the course of 2002.

## ⇒ Security cooperation in the Baltic Sea area:

Following the gradual reduction of the EU's border control (Schengen agreement), particularly at the borders to Denmark and towards Scandinavia, as well as the emerging EU extension to Eastern Europe, security cooperation in the Baltic Sea area needs to be further developed essentially.

The **security partnership in the Baltic Sea area** was further consolidated. On the basis of bilateral agreements on the police cooperation in order to fight organized crime above all between Schleswig-Holstein's Ministry of the Interior and the Baltic States, Poland, St. Petersburg Oblast and Kaliningrad Oblast and based on the close contacts with the Scandinavian states, the Minister of the Interior initiated again bilateral measures to simplify and further improve the police cooperation.

As in the years before the **support in terms of advice, education and equipment**, particularly in the Baltic States and Kaliningrad Oblast, is continued consistently. In the framework of the educational support, numerous exchange projects by the police headquarters for the education and further qualification and by the University of Applied Sciences of Administration took place, organizing an exchange of lecturers and students from Estonia, Lithuania and Kaliningrad. The main emphasis of the advisory assistance was put on the Law Academy of Lithuania.

These far-reaching conceptions are complemented by specific individual measures:

- Initiated by the police department of the Ministry of the Interior a **Twinning project (PHARE)** was started with Estonia. One long-term and several short-term experts, together with the Estonian authorities in charge are elaborating a complete concept for the combat of drug-related crime and the prevention of drug addiction.
- An international conference on the exchange and initiation of projects in the domain of **crime prevention**

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<sup>49</sup> [www.ars-baltica.net](http://www.ars-baltica.net)

<sup>50</sup> [www.kulturnetz-sh.de](http://www.kulturnetz-sh.de)



*in the Baltic Sea area* will be held in Lübeck in March 2003.

- The head of the Land's Bureau of Criminal Investigation is a member of the Operative Committee (OPC) of the **Task Force on Organized Crime**. Here, specific measures and controlling actions for fighting organized crime in the Baltic Sea states are determined.
- Since the foundation of the working group "**Drug trafficking North-East**", Schleswig-Holstein is in charge of its management. Apart from the Northern German Länder and the Federal Republic of Germany, the Nordic and the Baltic States, Poland, Russia and the Netherlands belong to this group.
- In cooperation with the Danish region of Sønderjylland, a **German-Danish training project** is being carried out at present, involving the Schleswig-Holstein Police Authority North and the Southern Danish police districts. A further INTERREG project is being striven for, joining the Schleswig-Holstein Police Authority South and Danish partner regions.

## ⇒ Strengthening youth encounters:

In 1996 (Kalmar/Sweden) the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) emphasized the promotion of people-to-people partnerships in general and the support of contacts between young people in the Baltic Sea region in particular. In 1998 the representatives of Youth Ministries, national agencies of "Youth for Europe" as well as of various public and non-public bodies responsible for youth-related projects from all Baltic Sea states and European representatives were invited to the first **Conference of Baltic Sea Youth Ministers** in Visby/Sweden, aimed at adopting action plans for the future cooperation in the domains of youth policy and multilateral youth exchanges.

In order to support the cooperation of youth associations and representations in the Baltic Sea area, the Ministry of Justice, Women, Youth and Families is running the **Baltic Sea Youth Office** (at the Land's Youth Council) since 11 years. This office has developed into an important information agency, supporting the formation of new contacts, cultivating existing contacts, gathering a great variety of information, particularly in terms of culture, leisure-time, schools and profession from all over the Baltic Sea area, sorting it out and transmitting it to various youth associations and representations.

Thanks to the successful work of the Land's Youth Council and the great commitment of the Baltic Sea Youth Office, the **Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs** could be affiliated to the Youth Council in 1999. This Secretariat is financed by Finland, Sweden, Norway, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Russia, Iceland and Germany. Its main task is to coordinate and realize the action plans adopted during the first Conference on Baltic Sea Youth Cooperation in Visby/ Sweden in 1998 and to prepare the subsequent Conferences of Baltic Sea Youth Ministers.

In 2001 the Secretariat focused on the implementation of the online data bank "Baltic Sea Desk" about the ways to finance youth projects<sup>51</sup>. Moreover, it helped to organize and carry through the first conference of non-governmental organizations in the Baltic Sea area (May 2001).

A **Baltic Sea youth foundation** to promote the youth exchange in the Baltic Sea region was suggested during the subsequent conference in Lübeck in June 2000 by the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs. This proposal was approved by the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) in Malmö/Sweden in September 2000. Since then, various efforts have been made to call this foundation into being. The union of youth councils in the Baltic Sea area (Baltic Youth Forum) is pursuing this aim.

A second suggestion made by the Conference of Baltic Sea Youth Ministers in Visby aimed at introducing low-price ferry tickets (**Baltic Sea Ferry Ticket**) for young people or at least leaders of youth groups. The youth councils in the Baltic Sea area agreed to draw up proposals and possibilities to realize the Baltic Sea Ferry Ticket. First ideas were elaborated together with the Baltic Sea Tourism Commission (BTC).

## ⇒ Sustainable energy supply in the Baltic Sea area:

The provision of future-oriented energy supply is of major importance to a sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region. Here, Schleswig-Holstein can make substantial contributions, mainly in the fields of training

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<sup>51</sup> [www.balticseadesk.org](http://www.balticseadesk.org)

and communication in the energy sector and the transfer of know-how in the domains of renewable energies, CHP and resource-saving construction.

Limited financial and manpower resources and the fact that the enterprises involved in the energy sector in Schleswig-Holstein are much smaller than those in the Baltic Sea area, however, impede a comprehensive commitment. Despite the growing interest in the use of wind energy in the Baltic States and Poland, enterprises in Schleswig-Holstein were hardly able to compete with Danish and Swedish companies whose demonstration projects are supported by their national governments.

Nevertheless, some progress has been made:

- Since the winter semester of 1997/ 1998 the University of Flensburg and Syddansk Universitet at Sønderborg offer a joint **German-Danish study course "Energy and Eco-Management"**, providing a foundation for extending the cooperation with Denmark in the Baltic Sea area.
- Insofar as the transfer of know-how is concerned the Baltic-wide project "**Baltic CHAIN – Baltic Clearing House and Information Network**", attended by the Energy Foundation of Schleswig-Holstein, partners from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as well as the International Energy Agency, is under way. It is aimed at identifying, financing and realizing small and medium-size projects in the domains of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies and it intends to elaborate the foundations for the application of the mechanisms of emission trade fixed in the protocol of Kyoto.

In the framework of the first project phase, funded by INTERREG II C, the final report "Promoting small-scaled energy projects in the Baltic Sea region (establishing a clearing house and information network)" was submitted in September 2001. On this basis, the project shall be continued under INTERREG III B. Focal points are the quality assurance of the Country Desks established in the Baltic States, Poland and Russia, the development of joint implementation projects, the identification of small and medium-size enterprises in the domains of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies as well as an improved provision of information on the project development and the supporting instruments.

The know-how and experience gained from the "Baltic Chain II" projects for financing energy efficiency measures and for making use of renewable energies in the Baltic States, Poland and Russia shall be made available for the energy sector in Schleswig-Holstein as well.

## ⇒ Integrating Schleswig-Holstein into transport flows and planning of the Baltic Sea area:

The economic development in the Baltic Sea area being in the process of growing together and its interconnection with continental Europe will increase the mobility demands of the exchange of goods and services in the future. In this context Schleswig-Holstein is getting more and more into the focus for the transport corridors to and from Scandinavia. Thus, the integration of Schleswig-Holstein into the transport flows and planning of the Baltic Sea area remains the unlimited strategic task so as to take up current developments and to verify continuously and further develop technical and financial concepts.

Schleswig-Holstein's position within the Baltic Sea transport flows and the function of the land bridge between Scandinavia and continental Europe could be successfully consolidated. This path will be further pursued:

- The extension of "**Vogelfluglinie" Hamburg-Lübeck-Copenhagen/ Malmö** and the accelerated transport across the Fehmarn Belt are closely connected to the project of a **fixed link across the Fehmarn Belt**. The comprehensive analyses as to the economic, technical and ecological feasibility, commissioned by Denmark and Germany in 1995, were submitted in 1999 and thoroughly discussed in Schleswig-Holstein.

After having assessed all positive and negative effects of the project, the Land Government voted in favour of this project towards the Federal Government in December 1999. The German-Danish memorandum of December 2000 determines that the land-bound part of the fixed link has to be funded by the corresponding national budget.

In autumn 2001, the German-Danish Fehmarn Belt Development Joint Venture (FDJV) was commissioned by the two Ministries of Transport to examine whether the private sector is willing and able to take

care of the construction, the planning, the financing and the operation of a fixed link. At the same time, technical and financial solutions shall be optimized and a realistic distribution of the risk among both states and the investors shall be determined.

The final report was presented during a ministerial meeting in June 2002. This report underlined the willingness of the private economy to realize the fixed link across the Fehmarn Belt and describes by means of model calculations that a combined railway and road connection requires either national subsidy, investment for railways or guarantees, depending on the applied model. Until the beginning of 2003, railway-related matters shall be clarified and the traffic study has to be updated. Then, Denmark and Germany will decide about further planning steps.

- Insofar as **railway traffic** is concerned, the bottlenecks on the **Jutland route** (Flensburg – Hamburg), which has become the backbone of transport between Scandinavia and Western Europe after the Great Belt link had been opened, need to be eliminated:
  - The refurbishment and reinforcement of the **railway bridge near Rendsburg** will probably be terminated by the end of 2006, thus ensuring a technical life of about 30 years. In this context, the design of a replacement building shall be started at an early stage. Moreover, the bridge will be trafficable on both tracks again.
  - After having achieved improvements already, the **railway bottleneck near Pinneberg and Elmshorn** shall be eliminated in the next few years by rebuilding Elmshorn station and realizing the three-track design.
  - After termination of the freight bypass south of Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein is very much interested in expanding the **northern freight bypass** so as to relieve the traffic load in Hamburg and to create free capacities for the local railway passenger traffic in the area of Hamburg.
  - The planning process on **electrification of the Hamburg-Lübeck-Travemünde route**, considering the connection in way of the port areas of Vorwerk and Skandinavienkai is under way. If the construction work is started in 2003 the route can be opened for traffic at the end of 2006.
- In **road traffic** the following projects have priority:
  - The **motorway A 20** project is striding ahead. After 3 ½ years of construction the first route section of the “Baltic Sea motorway” between motorway A1 and the junction of Lübeck-Genin could be opened for traffic at the end of 2001.  
The judgement of the Federal Administrative Court as to the planned route section 2 heading to the Land border of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern paved the way for the construction work in March 2002. It is intended to achieve a non-stop trafficability of A 20 between A 1 near Lübeck and Rostock as early as possible in 2004.
  - The plans for the westward extension of the “Baltic Sea motorway” as **north-western bypass of Hamburg including the link across the river Elbe** have made progress, too. For the route between A 1 near Lübeck and A 21 near Bad Segeberg, divided in three sections, the decisions of the planning assessment process are expected to be made in 2003/2004.  
Between Bad Segeberg and motorway A 1 in Lower Saxony the motorway A 20 is planned in cooperation with the Länder concerned. With the vote of the Land Government on 14 May 2002 in favour of the preferred variant of Elbe-crossing near Glückstadt, a decisive hurdle has been taken on the way to realize this project which is of great importance to Schleswig-Holstein, Northern Germany and the Baltic Sea region. This solution, developed unanimously with the neighbouring Länder of Lower Saxony and Hamburg, is expected to result not only in a relief of the traffic loads but also in positive effects on the structural policy.  
The formal guideline is expected to be determined by the Federal Minister of Traffic in the course of 2003. Then, the design, the planning assessment and the construction will follow.
  - Save for motorway A 20, the **conversion of the federal road B 404 into a four-lane motorway A 21** to become a second powerful north-south axis for the spacious traffic is of particular importance as well. For the area between Bornhöved and Negernbötel, the decision of the planning assessment process is expected for autumn 2002. Thus, there are good prospects of starting the construction of the completion part in 2003.
  - In order to be able to cope with the rising traffic load between north and south, the **motorway A 7**

shall be extended to six lanes on Schleswig-Holstein's territory, beginning at the border to Hamburg and stretching to the motorway junction of Bordesholm.

- For the traffic via A 1 and A 7 network control appliances are provided so as to improve the flow of traffic. These are supposed to adapt the traffic flows to the existing road network by alternating indications of long-distance destinations. In doing so, an evenly distributed use of the road capacity is intended, thus avoiding an overload of individual sections of A 1 and A 7.
- The supraregional **ports of Kiel and Lübeck** were extended as planned in order to take up additional Baltic Sea transport. The new east bank port of Kiel shall be inaugurated at the end of August 2002. It will substantially improve the transport flows to and from the Baltic States and Russia. Skandinavienkai of Lübeck's port and the new container terminal in Lübeck-Siems are being extended at present.

In the medium term, a further growth at all traffic junctions of the Baltic Sea with a focus on the Eastern Baltic Sea states has to be expected. This will be of benefit to the Kiel Canal (linking the North Sea to the Baltic Sea). The introduction of a motorway toll will give further impetus to the waterborne traffic. Therefore, the demand-oriented extension of the ports and, even more, the connections to the hinterland via road, rail or inland waterway is increasingly gaining importance. In this context, the extension of Elbe-Lübeck Canal is indispensable for large inland motor ships.

- According to the regional plan for Schleswig-Holstein's planning area III – the KERN region (Kiel, Eckernförde, Rendsburg, Neumünster) – the regional airport of Kiel-Holtenau shall extend its network of connections to the Baltic Sea area. In Scandinavia, however, private companies could not yet be encouraged to take up air traffic.

## ⇒ Schleswig-Holstein's technology policy in the Baltic Sea area:

The use of the findings of international research and development is getting more and more essential for innovation and competitiveness in Schleswig-Holstein, mainly for small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).

**Technological networks in the Baltic Sea area** could therefore help to prepare economic contacts or even support them. In this sense, technology initiatives are contributing to create an economic area Baltic Sea which is able to prevail in the pan-European competition of site:

- In the course of the reporting time Schleswig-Holstein's Ministry of Economy (MWTW) concluded the project "**Transregional Innovation – Partners ensuring Progress (TRIP PEP)**", funded by the EU. Apart from the regions of Lower Austria and Kent, Western Sweden took part in this project. It offered the opportunity for the regions to exchange views, resulting in that Schleswig-Holstein adopted the instruments of technology and innovation policy from other partner regions in a modified way and developed them further (regional innovation consultant, innovation audit).
- Since November 2001 Schleswig-Holstein is involved in a new EU funded project with the working title "**Strengthening the Regional Innovation Profile (STRINNOP)**". Apart from Schleswig-Holstein, the two Danish regions of Fyn and Ringkøbing and the region of Western Sweden, eight other regions are participating in this project (Kaunas/ Lithuania, Gdansk/Poland, Pest-Bács-Kiskun/Hungary, Flanders/ Belgium, Norte/Portugal, Bretagne/ France, Lower Austria and Bremen). The project aims at improving the regional conditions for the development and the use of innovation potential of the various regions. Particularly SMEs shall be supported in their innovation activities.

Here, the STRINNOP project shall help

- to intensify or build up the exchange of views between the regions,
- to employ the synergy effects using existing networks of the regions and their methods and
- to develop new projects of cooperation between STRINNOP members.

When the project has ended, every region shall have further developed or built up its own profile.

- Since January 2002 Schleswig-Holstein participates in the initiative "**ScanBalt in Biotechnology**". This project is attended by all Baltic Sea states including Russia. It intends to intertwine the scientific and economic potentials in the domain of biotechnology available in the regions so as to develop the Baltic Sea area into the most efficient region in terms of biotechnology in Europe. The partners are striving for a

common INTERREG III B project which shall be applied for in October 2002.

### ⇒ **Strengthening financial services in the Baltic Sea area:**

Landesbank Schleswig-Holstein (LB Kiel) managed to strengthen its position as "Bank of the North" continuously over the last few years. The foreign credit volume concluded in the Nordic countries amounts to approximately 13 billion EURO, which is nearly one third of the total export credit volume.

Today, LB Kiel Copenhagen Branch controls the operative business in the Nordic countries. It is one of the major foreign banks in Scandinavia and is represented by an agency in Helsinki as well as representations in Oslo and Stockholm. In the Baltic States and the bordering regions, LB Kiel runs a representation in Tallinn/Estonia. Moreover, the Danish Investment Bank Gudme Raschou and the Finnish financial service PCA Corporate Finance Oy belong to the bank group of LB Kiel.

### ⇒ **Strengthening Schleswig-Holstein's food industry:**

Numerous enterprises involved in Schleswig-Holstein's food industry are cultivating long-lasting and close business contacts with the states of the Baltic Sea area. This applies to the Nordic countries, especially Denmark, but over the last few years increasingly to the Eastern Baltic Sea countries. In case of processed high-quality products the export business is dominating. In case of agricultural products (fruits and vegetables) countries such as Poland are gaining importance as procurement markets.

By tradition, **Denmark** is, apart from the Netherlands, the main purchaser of food products from Schleswig-Holstein and the major trading partner in this domain (10.3% of agricultural products in 1999). In the course of the economic integration in the EU, commercial relationships in the food industry are developing continuously with **Sweden and Finland**, however on a considerably lower level than with Denmark. Due to the quantitative import restrictions for food and agricultural products tight limits are set to the relationships with **Norway** in this domain.

In view of the forthcoming EU accession of **Poland** the economic relationships with Schleswig-Holstein were subject to a positive development in food industry as well. Due to the high customs duties in this domain, the export of food products into Poland plays only a minor role. Some enterprises from Schleswig-Holstein established production plants in Poland, either independently or in cooperation. Some of the food-processing companies hold a share in the common office for enterprises from Schleswig-Holstein in Szczecin, supported by the Wirtschaftsförderung Schleswig-Holstein (WSH). Since 1999 Schleswig-Holstein participates in the joint stand at Poland's most important nutrition fair POLAGRA in Poznan every year.

Despite their limited population potential, **Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia** have become increasingly important trading and business partners, also for the food industry of Schleswig-Holstein. The last time Schleswig-Holstein presented itself in 1998 and 1999 at the trade fair AGROBALT in Vilnius (Lithuania) in the framework of a joint participation. Moreover, individual food-processing companies from Schleswig-Holstein are extending their commitment to the Baltic area independently. Numerous contacts can be found on the official level. In this context, the Estonian government was consulted in introducing a quality label for Estonian food products in accordance with the quality label "Produced and examined in Schleswig-Holstein".

Business contacts on the **Russian market** are gaining significance for many companies from Schleswig-Holstein. Above all, this applies to manufacturers of high-quality semi-luxury and food products as well as to enterprises involved in the domain of food technology. As early as 1990 a joint Schleswig-Holstein stand was organized at a nutrition fair in Moscow, combined with a business trip. Since then, numerous enterprises established long-lasting successful business contacts with Russia. The last time Schleswig-Holstein presented itself by a joint participation in the major nutrition fair PRODEXPO in Moscow in 1999. Furthermore, there are many examples of individual efforts made by enterprises from Schleswig-Holstein in Russia, such as the creation of a private nutrition institute for the domain of dairy and meat products in St. Petersburg.

### ⇒ **Strengthening Schleswig-Holstein as a location of tourism:**

Tourism is of considerable significance for economy, labour market, structural policy and image. Aside from other tasks it remains essential to enhance efforts to attract new clients, also from the Baltic Sea area.

The project “**Opening up the Scandinavian area as a market for tourism**” by the Association of Baltic Seaside Resorts of Schleswig-Holstein (Ostseebäderverband) intends to achieve an improved competitiveness of Schleswig-Holstein’s Baltic Sea coast and Holsteinische Schweiz by attracting new tourist potentials from the Scandinavian area. It aims at the target markets of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. In the framework of this project both external and internal marketing measures shall be carried out. Save for active advertisements in Scandinavia, specific internal marketing is to make sure that guests from Scandinavia feel welcome in the holiday resort of Schleswig-Holstein. The project is supported by Schleswig-Holstein’s “Regionalprogramm 2000” using means from the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRE) in the framework of the target-2-programme (2000 – 2006).

In the course of the project “**Tourism Management Scandinavia**” run by Nordkolleg Rendsburg, members of Schleswig-Holstein’s association of country women were provided with a job-oriented competence on Scandinavia. The course focused on a Scandinavian language, networks, analyses and project development for agricultural structures, intercultural aspects, economy policy and target group marketing. The project aimed at utilizing the remarkable experiences, the numerous contacts and the networks Nordkolleg Rendsburg has built up with Scandinavians from Norway, Finland, Denmark and Sweden for the tourism sector and for imparting specialized competence of (future) multipliers. The project was funded by the EU Community Initiative LEADER II (ESF).

In the framework of the “Baltic Tourism Project” a workshop was held in Lübeck in November 1999 on “Cycle Tourism in the Baltic Sea area”. The participants from Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Denmark and Sweden agreed on placing uniform signposts and promoting the **Baltic Sea Cycle Route**. In Germany, uniform signposts have already been set up. Here, the cycle route is promoted by Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. It is part of the planned German-wide long-distance cycle route network EuroVelo.

## ⇒ Cross-border labour market Schleswig-Holstein/Sønderjylland:

Although the free movement of workforces is a vested right in the European Union, there are still many open questions, even in the German-Danish border region. The vision of a cross-border labour market is confronted by only 1,000 border commuters, a number which has not increased over the last few years. It became obvious that the job markets in the EU are still subject to cultural and social traditions, irrespective of legal forms of organization. The challenge to create a real “European labour market” is not a matter concerning the German-Danish border region alone.

By taking stock, it became clear that it is less the “hard” impediments in the fields regulated by legal provisions (e.g. tax liability, unemployment, health and pension insurance) but rather the “soft” ones that have a detrimental effect on a cross-border labour market with the northern neighbour Denmark. “Soft” impediments are e.g. the absence of knowledge of labour market structures in the neighbouring country, insufficient knowledge of language and culture, lacking cooperation experience and last but not least “chains of prejudice” prevailing on both sides of the border.<sup>52</sup>

Aimed at promoting a German-Danish labour market, several institutions and initiatives are active in the border region, in particular the activities of **EURES** (European Employment Services) – an initiative of the European Union – are to be mentioned. The activities of EURES, the committees of which are advised by the Ministry of Social Affairs since 1998, already resulted in numerous suggestions, findings and activities in various domains. In particular, two cross-border projects supported by the programme “Work for Schleswig-Holstein” are noteworthy:

- **PROGA** (Project Office for cross-border developments in labour market policy) aims at
  - the support of flexibility on the job market,
  - the initiation and promotion of specific activities and projects as to cross-border labour market policy and
  - the support of cooperation structures.

The first project phase until the end of 2001 resulted in first achievements as well as the realization that further efforts are required in order to stimulate the labour market in the border region. Thus, a subsequent project is being prepared.

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<sup>52</sup> The common hearing of the committees for social and economic affairs of Schleswig-Holstein’s Land Parliament (17 June 1999) came to the same conclusion.

- **GRAMARK** (cross-border labour market) pursues active research about job vacancies in the German-Danish border region and transmits information to EURES as well as job-seekers accordingly. Since the middle of 2001, i.e. during the project phase of initiation, first successful placements could be obtained so that further positive effects on the labour market are to be expected.

It is the declared aim of the partners in the border region to continue on their way towards “lived mobility”. There is, however, no doubt that this can only be achieved in many small steps. In doing so, the Government of Schleswig-Holstein will contribute to supporting regional actors in the German-Danish border region.

### 3.3 Northern German cooperation in the Baltic Sea area

The three Northern German Länder of Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Schleswig-Holstein continuously have built up and intensified cooperation in their Baltic Sea policies in the bodies of Baltic Sea cooperation and towards the German Foreign Ministry. Meanwhile, the three of them enjoy a good reputation in the Baltic Sea region. This is fostered by the early declaration of intent of the new Hamburg Senate to make the Baltic Sea cooperation to one of its political focal points.

During the reporting time, the **cooperation with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs** was in the lime-light. Beyond the support of the German chairmanship of the CBSS (2000/2001) the political cooperation was extended considerably. Above all, this applies to the main fields of the German CBSS chairmanship (see item 2.1), having resulted in essential contributions and initiatives by the Northern German Länder. Moreover, the Länder supported the German CBSS chairmanship by organizing conferences, e.g. the forum of “Northern Dimension” (Schwerin, August 2000), the “NGO forum of the CBSS” (Lübeck, May 2001) and the Ministerial Meeting in Hamburg (June 2001).

In addition, the **Hanse-Office** and the German CBSS chairmanship jointly held a workshop on the “Northern Dimension” in Brussels in March 2001. The presentation of prospects of the Baltic Sea cooperation to help realize the action plan “Northern Dimension” was met with great interest by the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament.

The increasing intertwining of **EU policies** with the development in the Baltic Sea area here, too, has led to a stronger cooperation of the Northern German Länder with the Federal Government. On the one hand, this holds for the German representation in committees such as the Monitoring or Steering Committee of INTERREG III B (Baltic Sea) or the “Baltic Joint Coordination Committee “ (BJCC), uniting the EU Commission and the Baltic Sea states in coordinating and realizing the programme “PHARE CBC Baltic Sea”.

On the other hand this is true for political topics, too: the Federal Government and the Northern German Länder jointly elaborated a suggestion how to improve the interlocking of the EU programmes INTERREG III B and PHARE in the Baltic Sea area and submitted the suggestion to the European Commission in February 2001. What is more, they helped to evaluate the contribution of the CBSS to realize the action plan “Northern Dimension”<sup>53</sup>.

As a result of the “Common Declaration on regional cooperation”, signed by the Land Government of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and the Russian Oblast of Leningrad at the beginning of 2002, the Northern German Länder agreed to increase the coordination of their respective **partnerships with Russian regions**. Among others, this refers to the town partnership between Hamburg and St. Petersburg as well as the partnership between Schleswig-Holstein and Kaliningrad Oblast. Furthermore, Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern decided to enhance the coordination of their activities, both cultivating partnerships with the South Swedish regional union of SydSam.

Based on a common session of the Land Governments of Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein in November 1998 they decided to offer **the participation in delegation trips and joint stands at trade fairs** to one another as far as possible. This is confirmed by the agreement to integrate the foreign policy activities of Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein in the year of 2002.

In addition, there are the most different types of Baltic Sea cooperation with single or all Northern German Länder in the framework of EU funded projects or individual committees of the Baltic Sea cooperation.

The Länder have to seize the opportunities emerging from this highly developed cooperation with determina-

<sup>53</sup> „Priorities and projects – Contribution of the Council of Baltic Sea States“, see: [www.cbss.st/Docs/ministerial/20/Contribution to ND AP.1.htm](http://www.cbss.st/Docs/ministerial/20/Contribution%20to%20ND%20AP.1.htm)

tion. In the interest of the joint competitiveness – for all the unavoidable competition among the Länder – the changing framework in the Baltic Sea area requires a close Northern German cooperation. This also applies to the developed network of **field conferences of the Baltic Sea cooperation**. Over the last few years the Northern-German Länder were able to safeguard their participation in German delegations wherever interests and factual possibilities of acting allowed.

Examples of the close bilateral cooperation with Northern German neighbours are the STRING project carried out together with Hamburg, the cross-Länder cooperation in the “Metropolitan Area of Hamburg” or “Hanse-Office” in Brussels run jointly with Hamburg as well as the management of the EU programme INTERREG III B (Baltic Sea) realized in close cooperation of the Northern German Länder and the Federal Government, picking up the thread of the EU programme INTERREG II C (Baltic Sea).

### 3.4 Active contributions to the EU pre-accession process

The report of the Land Government “The enlargement process of the European Union”<sup>54</sup> submitted to the Land Parliament and the response to the great enquiry „Schleswig-Holstein and Europe“<sup>55</sup> emphasized the significance of the EU extension for the further development of the Baltic Sea region and pointed out that Schleswig-Holstein as well as other Baltic Sea states will support the accession countries in their efforts to meet the conditions of accession.

Schleswig-Holstein was involved already in the initial phase of “PHARE Institution Building” (1998/1999) by one project: the twinning project “Strengthening the judicial system in Estonia”, terminated in September 2001, which aimed at the training of judges, public prosecutors and bailiffs and was supported by Mecklenburg-Vorpommern’s Ministry of Justice.

During the reporting time, Schleswig-Holstein played a decisive role in further **twinning projects**:

- In September 2001 the twinning project “Development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy against drug abuse” was started in **Estonia**, supported by Schleswig-Holstein’s Ministry of the Interior, the MASGV and the Land’s office “Health hazard by drug addiction”.
- Moreover, **Estonia** was endowed with the twinning project for establishing a payment office for supporting measures in the domains of agricultural policy in September 2001. The project management and the long-term expert are provided by Schleswig-Holstein’s Ministry of Agriculture (MLR).
- In **Poland** Schleswig-Holstein is involved in a twinning project to prepare the adoption of the EU’s fisheries laws by the Polish fisheries administration. This project is managed by the Federal Agricultural Office. The MLR of Schleswig-Holstein delegates the long-term expert.

The decisive factor for the future project participation of Schleswig-Holstein in the EU twinning programme will be to what extent the European Commission will realize its announcement to increase the number of calls for tender on projects designed to strengthen the administrative bodies in the accession countries on a regional level. Similar factors apply to the EU **pre-accession instruments SAPARD and ISPA**, introduced in 2000, aimed at strengthening the administration in the field of agriculture/rural development and at promoting investment in the fields of environment and infrastructure in the accession countries.

The Land Government will further consider the possibilities of using these programmes for own project proposals. At the same time the Land contributes by its own force to the EU pre-accession process. For example:

- In the domain of **agriculture** the “Common Declaration” of Schleswig-Holstein’s Ministry of Agriculture (MLR), Latvia and Estonia encouraged numerous programmes for agricultural trainees as well as several weeks’ delegations of staff members from the Ministries of Agriculture in Schleswig-Holstein since 1992. Staff members of the MLR supported the establishment of the agricultural administrations in Estonia and Latvia on the spot over the last few years. The declarations of the Ministries of Agriculture of Schleswig-Holstein and the two a.m. Baltic States, which have been revised in 2000, shall enable common projects to be initiated in the framework of the new EU programme SAPARD in the future.
- Based on the vocational training support of the Land’s Police various exchanges of lecturers and stu-

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<sup>54</sup> print 15/325

<sup>55</sup> print 15/1490



dents with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are under way. One of the major achievements is the project co-operation between the University of Applied Sciences of Administration and the Law Universities of Lithuania, taking place since 2000

The Government of Schleswig-Holstein will continue and intensify these efforts serving at the same time to strengthen the Land's position in the Baltic Sea area. The respective opportunities are offered by the existing networks of partnerships and offices the Land has established in the Baltic Sea region. Moreover, practical contributions on the part of Schleswig-Holstein strengthen the Land's role as a political competence for the (further) development of the Baltic Sea cooperation.

This is underlined by the Land's activities under the EU Community Initiative INTERREG II C/III B (Baltic Sea) (see also item 2.4). This EU instrument for supporting transnational cooperation in the domain of spatial planning and regional development is of particular significance, since, after the accession of further Baltic Sea states, it will be the major EU funding instrument for the Baltic Sea cooperation.

The Common Secretariat of INTERREG III B (Baltic Sea) in Rostock is run by the Schleswig-Holstein Investment Bank, which has also been entrusted with handling the financing of projects as the common financial institution during the programme period (2001 until about 2008). Schleswig-Holstein played a decisive part in the preparation of the programme scheme.

### **3.5 Baltic Sea related activities and initiatives of NGO's from Schleswig-Holstein**

Baltic Sea cooperation gains its vitality from the variety of initiatives and organizations supporting the idea in itself. Without the commitment of numerous non-governmental organizations, neither could the network of cooperation in the Baltic Sea area have become the main pillar of the region's development, nor could Schleswig-Holstein have gained its good reputation as the "driving force behind the Baltic Sea cooperation".

They are making a sustainable contribution to strengthen Schleswig-Holstein as an important site in the Baltic Sea region by means of own projects and initiatives, which might not have been acknowledged sufficiently in the overall context so far. Among them are the following:

- trade unions and chambers of industry and commerce,
- numerous institutions of adult education,
- associations of free welfare work,
- Wirtschaftsförderung Schleswig-Holstein (WSH), Technological Foundation Schleswig-Holstein (TSH) and Energy Foundation Schleswig-Holstein (ESSH),
- Landesbank of Schleswig-Holstein (LB Kiel),
- Economic Academy of Schleswig-Holstein (WAK: Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein),
- Baltic Sea Youth Office and Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs,
- Environmental associations.

The enclosed list of Baltic Sea actors in Schleswig-Holstein is based on voluntary informations from the organizations and institutions themselves. It does not claim to be complete or representative. Nevertheless, the list gives a survey, being representative for Schleswig-Holstein's commitment to the Baltic Sea area<sup>56</sup>. For the first time since 1998/1999<sup>57</sup> this description is involved in the Baltic Sea Report again. The Land Government is in close contact with the said organizations and initiatives within the framework of individual projects and political field cooperation.

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<sup>56</sup> respective annexe available only in the German version - see:

[www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/1500/drucksache-15-2051.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/1500/drucksache-15-2051.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> print 14/2289 see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl14/drucks/2200/drucksache-14-2289.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl14/drucks/2200/drucksache-14-2289.pdf)

## 4. Perspectives of Baltic Sea cooperation

Enlarging the EU will alter the image of Europe in a decisive manner: Irrespective of the formal framework of the European Union the reality within Europe will be of a polycentric character. Well functioning mega-regions with their own (cooperation) structures will gain importance. The weight of natural economic areas will increase, decisions of site will more and more depend on regional circumstances. Many cross-border regions offer comparative advantages already today. Regions are capable of attracting economic actors if they offer unique benefits specific to their region.

With its cooperation networks established in the past ten years and based mainly on projects and initiatives of regional and local authorities and numerous non-governmental organizations the Baltic Sea region has created the prerequisites for its development into one of these well-functioning mega-regions. Moreover, it provides the necessary potentials:

- A market of 50, 70 or 100 million people - depending on the geographic scope – is of European significance and is, already today, marked by considerable economic dynamics.
- A dense network of universities, education and research facilities enables the Baltic Sea region to distinguish itself as a knowledge-based region in Europe.
- The high standard in the field of Information Society<sup>58</sup> in large parts of the Baltic Sea region offers good initial conditions for positioning the Baltic Sea region in this future-oriented domain of the global economy.
- The network of sea-borne transport and ferry lines existing in the Baltic Sea region can contribute to the efficient, ecologically compatible handling of rapidly increasing transport volumes in the Baltic Sea region (“Baltic Sea motorway”).
- Today, the deeply rooted network of common historical and cultural traditions – formerly cut for decades – unites the countries of the Baltic Sea area more than anywhere else in Europe.

By EU enlargement, the Baltic Sea region is getting more and more into the limelight of European politics. For the first time, the concept of “Northern Dimension” intends to encourage a close cooperation of the European Union with deep-rooted forms of cooperation in a specific region of Europe. This concept assigns to the Baltic Sea cooperation the role of a kind of “regional window” for the partnership between the EU and Russia, thus breathing life into this partnership. At the same time, the Baltic Sea region actively contributes to the EU’s pre-accession strategy in favour of the region’s accession countries.

Invariably, the challenges to the Baltic Sea cooperation, compiled in the Baltic Sea Report of 1999/2000<sup>59</sup>, remain valid:

1. **Creating social and economic cohesion** in the Baltic Sea region and avoiding the formation of new dividing lines between East and West – after the enlargement of the EU this will remain a major political task in this area for a long time, being of interest also to the whole of Europe. The Baltic Sea cooperation offers answers to this problem going beyond the application of the usual EU instruments (structural funds, supporting programmes).
2. The opportunities of the Baltic Sea region are to be found mainly in the **joint development and use of the existing potentials**. Strategies, designed in view of globalization, to distinguish the area as a European region are quite promising.
3. The relations between the European Union and Russia will continue to play an important role for the creation of stability and security in Europe for a long time. Not least the **inclusion of Russian regions** into regional networks and assistance schemes for overcoming the problems of economic transformation and establishing a civil society organized in a constitutional state require efforts not only on the EU level but also on regional level.
4. In the future, Europe will be increasingly characterized by the **competition of several greater trans-regional developing areas**. The Baltic Sea region with its considerable potential for the future will be one of them. The Baltic Sea cooperation is a decisive prerequisite for the further competitiveness of the regions in an enlarged EU.

It will be essential to keep the Baltic Sea cooperation going, also beyond the extension of the EU – the aim

<sup>58</sup> In the ranking of 2001 of the highly acknowledged „Information Society Index“, Sweden, Norway and Finland are listed at positions 1 to 3, even before the USA at position 4. Denmark follows at position 5, Germany at position 13. (source: [www.worldpaper.com/2001/jan01/ISI/2001%20Information%20Society%20Ranking.html](http://www.worldpaper.com/2001/jan01/ISI/2001%20Information%20Society%20Ranking.html))

<sup>59</sup> print 15/204 - see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/0200/drucksache-15-204.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/0200/drucksache-15-204.pdf)

which dominates many of the thoughts at present. Unlike in the past when motivation was determined by foreign policy, the national cooperation has to focus more intensely on the internal socio-political orientation even stronger than up to now. The content-wise alignment of the Conferences of Field Ministers in particular, recently already pointed into this direction.

In line with the necessary adaptation of national cooperation to the changing framework, the building-up of cooperation networks of regional and local territorial authorities as well as non-governmental organizations essentially can be considered as concluded. A good ten years after the idea came up we might refer to the forthcoming "second generation of Baltic Sea cooperation". Invariably, the building of bridges of encounter and understanding across the Baltic Sea is thoroughly justified. Nevertheless, the highly-developed networks have to be used for the specific progress of the Baltic Sea region and to the common benefit of the partners concerned.

#### **4.1 „Region-building” – a concept for developing the Baltic Sea region**

The **action programmes of Kalmar**<sup>60</sup> adopted by the CBSS in 1996 remain the framework. Their realization is offering the opportunity for the Baltic Sea area to develop into a competitive European mega region. The action programmes focus on the following:

- increasing people-to-people contacts and civil security
- economic development and integration
- strengthening environmental protection.

A survey published by the CBSS reveals on the one hand that numerous institutions and fora are contributing to put these action programmes into practice. On the other, however, large parts of the national cooperation in particular are still somewhat dragging. Thus, the Baltic Sea region is in danger of losing sight of a major programmatic connexion, suitable, like no other, for the formation of a real common region.

In parallel, a **network of cooperation** has further developed, thus offering the opportunity, beyond the individual project strategy, to establish regional structures and a common regional consciousness complementary to the action programmes of Kalmar. In its Baltic Sea Report of 1999/2000<sup>61</sup>, the Land Government already pointed out the following aspects:

- Having set up **BALTIC 21** the Baltic Sea region is the only mega region in the world to have a programme for implementing "Agenda 21". By combined action the Baltic Sea states and numerous non-governmental organizations are working on the implementation of the cross-sectoral concept of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea area. The Baltic Sea region has the opportunity of representing and distinguishing itself internationally as a model region for the implementation of sustainable development.
- **HELCOM**, the Helsinki Commission founded in 1980, represents an established and legally embodied network of cooperation in the Baltic Sea region oriented towards solving and curing the most urgent environmental problems of the Baltic Sea ("hot-spot programme").
- By **VASAB 2010** ("Visions and Strategies around the Baltic Sea") the Baltic Sea region is provided with a self-elaborated spatial development concept which is perfectly matching the "European Spatial Development Concept" (ESDP). Even stronger than during the programme period of INTERREG II C (1997-1999) the projects during the programme period of INTERREG III B shall further deepen the perspectives outlined therein.

Meanwhile, the following achievements have been made:

- A close cooperation of national, association-based and honorary youth policy projects have emerged, supported by the Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs, encouraging youth encounters and further developing and establishing youth-related work around the Baltic.
- **BASREC**<sup>62</sup> ensures the close cooperation in the domain of energy. Apart from the coordination of a modern and efficient energy policy, BASREC pursues the ambitious goal becoming a testing ground for

<sup>60</sup> see: [www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/4swedish/dbaFile517.html](http://www.cbss.st/documents/cbsspresidencies/4swedish/dbaFile517.html)

<sup>61</sup> print 15/204 - see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/0200/drucksache-15-204.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infothek/wahl15/drucks/0200/drucksache-15-204.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> „Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation" (comp. item 2.1) - see also: [www.cbss.st/basrec](http://www.cbss.st/basrec)

trade with emission rights according to the protocol of Kyoto (1997) by means of a project. In this domain, too, has the Baltic Sea region succeeded in distinguishing itself as a model region.

- The “**Northern e-Dimension Action Plan**”, resolved in September 2001 (including Russia and the active cooperation with the EU Commission), offers the opportunity for the Baltic Sea region to become a top address in the global information-based society.
- The continuation of the dialogue between the national Baltic Sea cooperation and the **non-governmental organizations in the Baltic Sea area**, announced by the Finnish CBSS chairmanship (2002/2003), takes up an initiative of the German CBSS chairmanship (2000/2001), thus allowing to establish a forum actively involving the non-governmental Baltic Sea cooperation into its further development.

Against this background the CBSS should consider **to revise the action programmes of Kalmar**. A revised development strategy, including those initiatives and structures which did not yet exist in 1996, might result in that the re-orientation will enable the Baltic Sea cooperation to cope with the changed framework which is caused by the EU extension.

In this context the **CBSS** should redefine its own role as well. Above all, its tasks should cover the following:

- defining **political aims** for the development of the Baltic Sea region;
- selecting **priority measures and projects** for the region-building process enabling these aims to be realized;
- relying on the various existing national and non-governmental, regional and local **actors and networks** in the Baltic Sea area, working under the auspices of the CBSS, when it comes to realize these targets;
- **coordinating** the various activities as far as necessary;
- lending a face and a voice to the Baltic Sea region in Brussels using the CBSS chairmanship for representing its interests - as has already been achieved in parts by the German and the Russian chairmanships as to the topic of “Northern Dimension”.

Simultaneously, it will be essential to use the EU Community Initiative **INTERREG III B**, de facto available in the Baltic Sea area since the beginning of this year, for projects aiming at developing the Baltic Sea region and to integrate as many partner institutions in the region’s accession countries as possible. This also applies to the development of parts of regions which might turn out to become dynamic centres of development in the Baltic Sea region, thus substantially supporting the strategically oriented concept of “region-building”.

## 4.2 EU East enlargement

### – a challenge also to be met by the Baltic Sea region

Irrespective of the challenges connected to the EU extension – such as implementing EU structural funds or questions related to the future internal organization of an “EU of 20 or 25” – the enlargement is a historical opportunity both for the whole of Europe as well as for the Baltic Sea region. The thus emerging prospects for Schleswig-Holstein and the Baltic Sea region were already described by the Land Government in its response to the great enquiry “Schleswig-Holstein and Europe”<sup>63</sup>.

According to the reports submitted to the European Council of Laeken (December 2001) by the EU Commission none of the accession countries completely fulfils the **eligibility for accession** yet, despite various considerable progress. These conditions were determined by the European Councils of Copenhagen (1993) and Madrid (1995) as being touchstones of progress made in the accession countries:

- *institutional stability, democratic and constitutional order, safeguarding of human rights and recognition and protection of minorities (political criterion);*
- *a functioning market economy and the capability of coping with the competitive pressure within the Union (economic criterion);*
- *the capability of implementing the obligations resulting from EU membership in the EU and of adopting the aims of a political, economic and monetary union (criterion of suitable administrative structures).*

Nonetheless, ten accession candidates are within the time limit, according to the reports submitted by the Commission, so that the intended **accession until 2004** is still within reach.

The **internal EU conditions** for enlargement are ensured. The European Council of Berlin (1999) with its financial preview until 2006 provided the financial prerequisites; the European Council of Nice (2000) supplied

<sup>63</sup> print 15/1450 - see: [www.lvn.ltsh.de/infotehek/wahl15/drucks/1400/drucksache-15-140.pdf](http://www.lvn.ltsh.de/infotehek/wahl15/drucks/1400/drucksache-15-140.pdf)

the institutional ones. Without an alteration of the conditions of accession, further steps are required to secure the capacity to act and the democratic legitimating of a Union comprising 25 or more members. This topic will be approached by the convention of 2002 and the Governmental Conference in 2004.

Particularly the **Baltic Sea region** has the opportunity of integrating the potentials of a grown cooperation into this process. In combined action, “old”, “young” and future EU member states can demonstrate how the pre-accession process can be supported by regional cooperation without help from outside. At the same time, Baltic Sea cooperation can give the starting signal to demonstrate how, in an enlarged European Union, mega regions can become a pillar of a more decentralized Europe.

None of the other European regions is faced with a challenge like this. The **actors of Baltic Sea cooperation** – states, subregions, communities as well as NGOs – accept this responsibility already today. They are involved in numerous cooperation projects on the most different levels and in many fields. Nevertheless, these contributions have to be coordinated in a more efficient way.

This is true all the more in view of the time **after enlargement** when the pre-accession instruments of the EU will be replaced by the “classical” EU instruments, while the requirements of the accession countries as to efficient and modern administration structures on the regional and local levels remain unchanged. Particularly those domains which are not focused on at the moment will require the actors of the Baltic Sea cooperation to remain active far beyond the EU accession, insofar as practical support is concerned.

In view of the socio-economic and ecological disparities in the Baltic Sea region, the accession into the EU alone will not bring about considerable changes either. On the contrary, it will remain one of the main tasks of the Baltic Sea cooperation in the extended Union to see to an improvement of framework conditions for **catching up on the economic and social development in the accession countries**. This also applies to the removal of environmental pollution in these countries. The concept of “Northern Dimension” can supply the framework for this, particularly since a close cooperation of the EU and the CBSS can be extended beyond the time of EU enlargement.

### **4.3 Northern Dimension – an opportunity for developing EU Baltic Sea Policy**

At present the concept of “Northern Dimension” obviously is giving political focus on the **integration of Russia** on the regional level into an enlarged Union. This is of major importance considering the quite rapid development (as against the years before) of cooperation between the EU and Russia. However, the further realization of this concept should not be limited to this focal point only. The political concept of “Northern Dimension” rather offers the opportunity of interlocking the instruments and policies of the EU with the developed network of regional cooperation in the Baltic Sea area also beyond the time of EU enlargement. An EU policy, understood that way, would provide the foundation for strengthening the perspectives of development of the Baltic Sea region in a sustainable way, taking into account that the region still is sensitive to European politics.

In addition, it is essential to continue and to further develop the ND Action Plan, so far limited in time from 2000 until 2003, inasmuch as **contents and timely perspectives** are concerned. For its period of EU Presidency (2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2002) Denmark already announced corresponding initiatives. Moreover, Finland declared its intent already at an early stage for the CBSS chairmanship (2002/2003) to initiate an “arctic window” thus contributing to the continuation of the ND Action Plan.

Against this background the **CBSS** should pursue the following **tasks**:

- coordinating the demands of the Baltic Sea states on the continuation of the action plan,
- focusing this continuation on the priority needs in the “Northern Dimension” area in a stronger way,
- supporting the integration of the EU accession candidates and their requirements into the continued action plan, also after their accession,
- responding to the criticism of the EU Commission – understandable from the Brussels’ point of view – of the large number of regional cooperation forums by own coordination agreements with the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC) and the Arctic Council,
- including the relevant actors of Baltic Sea cooperation into the continuation of the action plan and coordinating their contributions,

- monitoring the implementation of priorities and projects listed in its own contribution to the current ND Action Plan.

In all, Baltic Sea cooperation can only succeed in demanding the concept of “Northern Dimension” to be continued and deepened if the Baltic Sea region manages to organize a **consistent contribution** by its own force, supported in practice by the region’s actors and valid to give “**added value**” for the EU policies effective in the region.

#### 4.4 Thinking beyond EU enlargement – demands on the future of Baltic Sea cooperation

With the upcoming EU enlargement the national Baltic Sea cooperation, too, will definitely leave the initially constitutive level of “classical” foreign policy. Thus, the **practical and socio-political cooperation**, dependent on close common action with the fora and networks of non-governmental Baltic Sea cooperation, will increasingly gain importance.

**Social and economic cohesion** in the Baltic Sea area and the common development and use of the potentials available in the region will be the major challenge in order for all Baltic Sea states to strengthen their competitiveness in a substantially enlarged European Union by means of common action.

On the one hand the cooperation of the Baltic Sea states has to be intensified considerably also in those domains that were determined by action of individual states or decided on EU level so far. Among them are e.g. common decisions on infrastructure, the extension of the cooperation of universities, the utilization of possibilities related to the information-based society, the cooperation in the energy sector and in the field of health or the realization of a prototype regional concept of sustainable development in the Baltic Sea area (Baltic 21).

On the other the Baltic Sea states have to be prepared to speak in one voice when it comes to safeguarding common interests of the Baltic Sea region in Brussels – quite stronger after EU enlargement than up to now.

Over the last ten years the Baltic Sea cooperation managed to create the prerequisites for reaching this aim. Beyond the establishment of networks, a process which today can be considered to be terminated,

- the existing cooperation networks of universities and information-based society are offering the opportunity to develop the Baltic Sea region into a “**knowledge-based region Baltic Sea**” which might be able to play the leading part in realizing the concept of the “learning society” in Europe.
- the concept of „Baltic 21“ as well as the efforts to test the trade of emission rights provided by the Kyoto protocol in the framework of energy cooperation are offering the opportunity for the Baltic Sea region to become a “**model region of sustainable development**”.
- the successful cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea area in the framework of **Ars Baltica** could be used as a “**label**” in order to position and promote the Baltic Sea region within Europe by joint action.

The **social and economic imbalance** within the Baltic Sea region foreseeably will remain even beyond EU enlargement. The aim to overcome this imbalance can only be reached by concerted action of the EU and the Baltic Sea region itself. For the time being, Baltic Sea cooperation on the national level as well as the cooperation of economic associations, chambers, trade unions and welfare associations will have to continue their efforts to strengthen the catching-up development of the coming EU Member States.

The same applies to the **integration of the Russian regions located near to the Baltic Sea** into cross-border and transnational development cooperation, which needs to be substantially extended. This does not only refer to the politically sensitive area of Kaliningrad or the regions of Karelia, Murmansk, St. Petersburg or Leningrad Oblast, bordering Finland. The regions of Novgorod and Pskov, bordering the future EU Member States of Estonia and Latvia, equally have to be considered in a stronger way than up to now. This is not a demand exclusively on the other Baltic Sea states or the EU. Russia, too, will have to create and strengthen the prerequisites and capacities in order for these regions to be able to cooperate with their neighbours and other partners in the Baltic Sea area.

In both domains the Baltic Sea region will have to speak up for the allocation of respective **EU funds** in Brussels the latest within the decision processes leading to the next period of EU Structural Funds from 2006 on.

Here, the continuation of the successful EU Community Initiative INTERREG II C/III B in the Baltic Sea area seems to be the minimum requirement. Far more decisive will be, however, to further develop the subsequent instrument of INTERREG III B into a real instrument of transnational regional development in a more pronounced way. It is particularly in this domain that the Baltic Sea states will have to prove whether they are capable of jointly representing their common interests in an enlarged Union.

Having in mind the future design of the European Union, the Baltic Sea states will be able to involve their profound ***social and civil society traditions***. In view of the required re-organization of a considerably enlarged Union. The fundamental Northern European consensus on these issues will entail a responsibility which cannot be ignored. It can only be dealt with if all Baltic Sea states stand together as one.

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Economic prosperity, social security and ecological stability in an enlarged European Union can only be achieved and ensured in the long run by concerted action of regions capable of development. The fora and networks of Baltic Sea cooperation should enhance focus on this major aim – particularly after the coming EU enlargement.

<b>BAC</b>	Baltic Sea Business Advisory Council (established by CBSS)
<b>BALTIC 21</b>	A regional Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (action programme for sustainable development in the Baltic Sea area)
<b>BASREC</b>	Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation
<b>BEAC</b>	Barents Euro-Arctic Council (cooperation of Norway, Finland, Sweden and Russia in the Barents region)
<b>BSCC</b>	Baltic Sea Customs Conference (Committee to abolish customs and trade barriers)
<b>BSSSC</b>	Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation (conference of the subregions in the Baltic Sea area)
<b>BCCA</b>	Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (organization of the Chambers of Commerce in the Baltic Sea area)
<b>BSPC</b>	Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference
<b>BTC</b>	Baltic Sea Tourism Cooperation
<b>BTUC</b>	Baltic Sea Trade Unions Council
<b>CBSS</b>	Council of the Baltic Sea States (of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs)
<b>CEE</b>	Central and east European states
<b>CSO</b>	Committee of Senior Officials (of the CBSS)
<b>EBRD</b>	European Bank for Recovery and Development, London
<b>EIB</b>	European Investment Bank, Luxemburg
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GSEO</b>	Group of Senior Energy Officials (steering body of BASREC)
<b>HELCOM</b>	Helsinki Commission
<b>INTERREG III A</b>	EU Community Initiative supporting projects of cross-border cooperation
<b>INTERREG III B</b>	EU Community Initiative to supporting transnational cooperation in the domains of spatial planning and regional development (Baltic Sea area, North Sea area etc.)
<b>ISPA</b>	<u>I</u> nstrument for <u>S</u> tructural <u>P</u> olicies for <u>P</u> re-accession - EU programme to promote investments in the domains of environment and traffic infrastructure in the accession countries
<b>MASGV</b>	Ministry for Labour, Social affairs, Health and Consumer protection of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>MBWFK</b>	Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Culture of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>MFE</b>	Ministry of Finance and Energy of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>MJF</b>	Ministry for Justice, Women, Youth and Families of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>MLR</b>	Ministry for Rural areas, Spatial planning, Agriculture and Tourism of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>MUNF</b>	Ministry for Environment, Nature and Forestries of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>MWTV</b>	Ministry for Economics, Technology and Transport of the Land of Schleswig-Holstein
<b>PCA</b>	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (agreed by the EU and the Russian Federation at the end of 1997)
<b>PHARE</b>	EU Support programme for central and east European states
<b>PHARE - CBC</b>	PHARE Cross Border Cooperation Programme
<b>SAPARD</b>	<u>S</u> pecial <u>A</u> ction for <u>P</u> re-accession Aid for <u>A</u> griculture and <u>R</u> ural <u>D</u> evelopment - EU programme to integrate politics and administration in the domains of agriculture and rural areas in the accession countries
<b>SOG</b>	Senior Officials Group (steering body of Baltic-21)
<b>SOIS</b>	Senior Officials on Information Society (steering body of the Northern e-Dimension Action Plan)
<b>TACIS</b>	EU Support programme (technical support) for Russia and the CIS (Community of Independ-



ent States)

**TACIS – CBC** TACIS Cross Border Cooperation Programme

**UBC** Union of the Baltic Cities