Baltic Sea Commission Resolution 2020

Approved by the BSC General Assembly on 21 October 2020

In light of the long-term challenges for a sustainable development in Europe, conditions worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic, Member Regions of the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission sends the following messages to EU decision-makers, national governments, regional authorities and stakeholders in order to build a prosperous Baltic Sea Region within Europe.

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission

a) Demands that regions will play a major role in implementing the EU recovery plan and policy areas covered by the long-term EU budget;

b) Strongly supports the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region to contribute to regional resilience;

c) Emphasises the importance of a green recovery as an opportunity for sustainable growth in the Baltic Sea Region and thereby boost Europe's competitiveness in the global economy;

d) Points out the importance of increasing accessibility for the Baltic Sea Region and sustainable transport in the Baltic Sea Region to strengthen Europe's internal market;

e) Demands intensifying efforts to achieve more sustainable tourism in maritime regions in the Baltic Sea Region and develop Europe’s tourism sector.
a) Demands that regions will play a major role in implementing the EU recovery plan and policy areas covered by the long-term EU budget

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission:
- **Regrets the proposed cuts in the Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2021-2027 for EU policies and instruments for local and regional authorities such as Cohesion Policy, the Just Transition Fund and the Research and Innovation Programme;**

- **Stresses that the involvement of regions must be a requirement in implementing the “Next Generation EU” Recovery Plan to successfully reinforce Europe after the COVID-19 pandemic;**

- **Emphasised that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Baltic Sea Commission’s policy areas, Maritime Issues, Accessibility and Transport and Energy and Climate needs to be analysed on the short- and long-term for local, regional, macro-regional and European levels to successfully develop the policy areas in the forthcoming EU programming period.**

b) Strongly supports the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region to contribute to regional resilience

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission:
- **Welcomes the approval of the revised Action Plan for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) and stresses the importance of climate change related actions and the involvement of third country stakeholders in the implementation process;**

- **Calls on the European Commission and the EU Member States for stronger “embedding” of the objectives of the EUSBSR in the Cohesion and other EU Policy instruments in the coming EU Programming Period 2021 – 2027;**

- **Underlines its continued commitment for a stronger multi-level governance approach to overcome current challenges and stands ready to partner with the National Coordinators Group and the Coordinators of the Policy Areas to develop new governance approaches for regional cooperation and to reshape the guidelines for Flagships which have been of key importance for the regional contribution in the EUSBSR implementation process.**

c) Emphasises the importance of a green recovery as an opportunity for sustainable growth in the Baltic Sea Region and thereby boost Europe’s competitiveness in the global economy

The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission:
- **Supports the ambition of the European Union displayed by the European Green Deal and believes that no regions should be left behind. The regions affected by the structural change must be provided with adequate tools to handle the transformation;**
• **Emphasises the need to enhance European Competitiveness through the green transition.** The future Multi-Annual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 should focus on sustainable growth and a resilient economy;

• **Stresses the Green Deal should be built on a framework of smart specialisation.** Building on existing foundations of collaboration and innovation performance, the Baltic Sea Region is gearing up to address the challenge of a green transformation, including the energy transformation and the digitalisation of the society.

**d) Points out the importance of increasing accessibility for the Baltic Sea Region and sustainable transport in the Baltic Sea Region to strengthen Europe's internal market**

**The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission:**

• **Welcomes the initiatives taken to implement the European Green Deal in the transport sector** and sees potential in that the EU Transport Policy could contribute to the necessary transition to an economy and a society characterised by low carbon consumption and climate resistance. It considers that the Strategy for a Sustainable and Smart Mobility should focus on sustainable and innovative freight solutions, decarbonisation of the transport sector and alternative fuels;

• **Welcomes the coming entry into force, in the framework of CEF 2021-2027, of the improvements to the extensions of the Scandinavian-Mediterranean corridor and of the North Sea-Baltic corridor along the Gulf of Bothnia in Northern Finland and Northern Sweden.** We also stress the importance of the existing TEN-T Corridors;

• **Recalls the importance of enhancing the territorial impact of the Scandinavian-Mediterranean corridor by including the Oslo-Stockholm section that is a key priority for the Baltic Sea Commission.** The BSC also calls for measures to better connect the Comprehensive Network to the Core Network Corridors and to its hubs, as well as focusing on cross-border infrastructure and removal of bottlenecks.

**e) Demands intensifying efforts to achieve more sustainable tourism in maritime regions in the Baltic Sea Region and develop Europe's tourism sector**

**The CPMR Baltic Sea Commission:**

• **Calls for developing the conditions to ensure a safe tourism which is the condition for a swift recovery** but also on a longer term to reinforce the tourism sector by making the Baltic Sea Region attractive again, including for international tourists;

• **Considers at the same time the opportunity to rebuild the tourism value chain differently** and accelerate the transition towards sustainable tourism even further than the post-COVID-19 context;

• **Calls for promoting and investing further in human capital, skills, training, and lifelong learning across the tourism value chain.**