

	CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS BALTIC SEA COMMISSION
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Vision and Mission Statement

CPMR Baltic Sea Commission - The United Voice of the Baltic Sea Regions

Introduction: The power of a pan-Baltic organisation in Europe

The Baltic Sea Commission is an international, independent organisation of Regional Authorities at sub-national level in the Baltic Sea region. The Baltic Sea Commission has a strong emphasis on territorial work, and each Member Region is represented by leading elected politicians. The Baltic Sea Commission is one of six geographical commissions that make up the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR). Members of the Baltic Sea Commission are also Members of the CPMR.

Both the CPMR and the Baltic Sea Commission regularly partner with European institutions, Member States and other key actors of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The main focuses are strengthening territorial cohesion, enhancing the European maritime dimension and boosting the accessibility of Europe's territories.

Since its foundation in 1996, the Baltic Sea Commission has established itself as a forum for policy-oriented cooperation and a platform for cooperation amongst Regional Authorities in the Baltic Sea region.

Vision: A united voice of the Baltic Sea regions

The basis of successful cooperation in the region is promoted by a mutual understanding of cultural differences, sensitivity for each other's interests and trust. Regional Authorities are at the crossroads of cooperation, able to bridge efforts at local, national, pan-Baltic and EU levels.

The Regions serve as a reference point for a broad spectrum of sectoral activities. Citizens need Regional Authorities to voice their interests and perspectives to Member States and EU institutions.

Mission: A platform for policy-orientated cooperation

Thematic political priorities

The Members of the Baltic Sea Commission have identified three thematic areas in which the organisation has established long-term Working Groups. The Working Groups are made up of politicians, officials and experts from the Member Regions.

Long-term thematic Working Groups cover the policy areas of:

- **Accessibility and transport;**
- **Maritime affairs;**
- **Renewable energies.**

The Working Groups develop general and specific policy positions that highlight the Member Regions' common ambitions. These positions are then adopted in consensus by the Executive Committee of the Baltic Sea Commission.

Shaping policies from a regional perspective

Each Working Group develops a Work Plan of deliverables and actions. A Work Plan can, for example, consist of formulating new positions based on surveys or mappings that provide more in-depth argumentation and concrete examples from Member Regions.

Working Groups also organise workshops and seminars as well as participate in processes that provide grounds for policy discussion and development.

Positions formulated by the Baltic Sea Commission also directly feed in to the CPMR's overall political actions to improve European policy.

Platform for cooperation

The Working Groups and Member Regions may also be involved in the practical implementation of projects within the thematic areas. Close cooperation among territories remains a solid pillar of integration, and many of the regional challenges require transnational coalitions. Successful cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region includes not only the EU Member States but also has to involve Norway and Russia, and relate to the stakeholders active in the Eastern Partnership action and the Arctic dialogue.

Through thematic Working Groups and events, the Baltic Sea Commission initiates and forms partnerships between Member Regions and other stakeholders.

The meetings of the Working Groups provide an opportunity for Member Regions to share their experiences of specific issues or methods. Many of the Regions are involved in transnational projects that are in line with the themes of the Working Groups.

Special focus 2016–2017

Working for a stronger involvement of regional stakeholders in the governance and implementation of the EU Strategy of the Baltic Sea Region

The Baltic Sea Commission, together with its Member Regions, supports the main goals of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region: **Save the Sea, Increase Connectivity and Prosperity of the Baltic Sea Region**. The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is a tool for solving common challenges and for the region to reach its full potential.

The Baltic Sea Commission contributes to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region by promoting multi-level governance and supporting regional stakeholders in engaging in the governance and implementation of the strategy.

The Baltic Sea Commission and the Federal Foreign Office in Germany are co-organising the EUSBSR Annual Conference in June 2017. Preparations for, and organisation of, the Conference will constitute a clear focus for the Baltic Sea Commission during the year to come.