



Baltic Sea NGO Network

Baltic Sea NGO Forum

History, structure, future

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Danish Focal Point





BACKGROUND and HISTORY

Baltic Sea NGO Network – Baltic Sea NGO Forum

NGO meetings started in **2001** when the Danish NGO initiative arranged the conference “The Copenhagen Initiative” as an impulse for the future.

Appointment of the national focal points in each CBSS country

- **I Baltic Sea NGO Forum - 2001 in Lübeck**, German Presidency in CBSS
First Forum – NGOs of the region have got their own “meeting arena”
- **II Baltic Sea NGO Forum – 2002 in St. Petersburg**, Russian Presidency in CBSS



HISTORY

- **III Baltic Sea NGO Forum – 2003, in Turku** under the patronage of Mrs. Tarja Halonen, the President of Finland
- **IV Baltic Sea NGO Forum – 2004, Pärnu, Estonia**
- **V Baltic Sea NGO Forum – 2005, Gdynia, Poland**



VI BS NGO FORUM

VI BS NGO Forum
STOCKHOLM 5 – 7 OCTOBER 2006

Human Rights and Democratic Participation

workshops:

- Civil Security - Trafficking, violence against women/children, criminality and drugs as a development obstacle.
- Social inclusion and discrimination
- Environment and sustainability
- NGO-legislation. Legal Security and Civil Society



VII BS NGO FORUM

- Latvia, Riga, 11 – 13 May, 2008: Citizens' Participation for Sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region

Programme under consideration of CC members

- 1. NGO sustainability and legislation**
- 2. Climate change and energy**
- 3. Social inclusion and human rights**
- 4. Non formal education**
- 5. Cultural exchange**



VIII BS NGO FORUM 2009

- Denmark, Elsinore 27.02 – 02.03

“New Challenges for the Civil Society in the Baltic Sea Region”

- 1. Lifelong learning**
- 2. Environment and climate change**
- 3. Social affairs**
- 4. Civil dialogue**
- 5. Cultural diversity and tolerance**



VIII BS NGO Forum 2009

- Dialogue with CBSS and CSO during whole process (including summit participation)
- Focus on partners in the region (CBSS, Parliamentarians, Baltic Development Forum)
- EU strategy - lobbying
- EU grants and candidate for EU-prize



IX BS NGO FORUM 2010

- Lithuania, Vilnius, 2010:
CSO EMPOWERMENT: COOPERATION, INNOVATION AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
- 1. Interregional Cooperation**
 - 2. Innovation and NGO Development**
 - 3. Strengthening of the NGO Sector**



X BS NGO FORUM 2012

- Germany, Berlin 23.04 – 25.04: Social Capital for a sustainable Baltic Sea Region
- 1. Youth**
 - 2. Civil participation/Lifelong learning**
 - 3. Environment**
 - 4. Social affairs**
 - 5. Human rights**



XI BS NGO FORUM 2013

- Russia, Saint Petersburg: NGOs for Tolerance and Cultural Diversity
 1. **Multicultural Societies – challenges and expectations**
 2. **Social Inclusion - Basic Demand for Stable Society in the Baltic Sea Region**
 3. **Environment unites people**
 4. **SEBA and Turku-process cooperation**



XII BS NGO FORUM 2014

- Turku, Finland:
NGOs Creating an Active and Innovative Civil Society
 1. Saving the Baltic Sea
 2. Diverse society: Young immigrants' experience as to obstacles in relation to inclusion
 3. Bringing out the voice of youth
 4. People as the makers of democracy in the Baltic Sea Region
 5. People with special needs
 6. Open sessions



XIII BS NGO FORUM 2015

- Tallinn, Estonia:
A Smart Civil Society – for the best of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR)

10 different workshops



XIV BS NGO FORUM 2016

- Gdansk, Poland
“Solidarity as a new dimension in Baltic Sea regional cooperation”
- 1. Culture and Social Innovation**
 - 2. Civic sector and social problems – self-independent youth**
 - 3. Migration processes in Europe Environment and climate change**



XV BS NGO FORUM 2017

- Reykjanesbær, Iceland
*Democracy – Equality – Children Cornerstones in
Baltic Sea regional cooperation*



XV BS NGO FORUM 2018

- Uppsala, Sweden

*Strengthen participation in the Baltic Sea region
regional cooperation*



General Structure BS NGO Network

- **The Baltic Sea NGO Forum**
 - Hosted by NGOs in the country of CBSS Presidency
 - Annually
- **The Baltic Sea NGO Coordinating Committee**
 - 1-2 representatives per country (National Focal Point)
 - Chaired by host country
 - Meets usual twice a year
 - **National Focal Points in each of 11 countries**

Stated in document “Guidelines for BS NGO Network” adopted 2008 in Riga



Organigram for Baltic Sea NGO Network

The Baltic Sea NGO Forum

Hosted by the country holding the CBSS Presidency

- Organised by NGOs in the host country in collaboration with NGOs active in the Baltic Sea NGO Network
- Held annually

The Baltic Sea NGO Coordinating Committee

- 1-2 representatives from each country (**11 Focal Points**)
- Act as a steering group
- Chaired by representative from the country holding the CBSS Presidency
- Regular contacts via e-mail and aim to meet twice a year

Working Groups

Ad hoc group: HA Capacity:
Sweden (Coordinator), Denmark,
Finland, Germany.



Why do we need the Forum?

- Meeting platform for NGOs and Networks from the region *from different spheres: possibility to discuss “cross cutting themes” of common importance like legislation, NGO/GO cooperation, access to information, etc*
- Possibility to share views, experience
- As the Forum is in the framework of intergovernmental structure CBSS – access to governmental bodies of 11 countries



Baltic Sea
NGO Forum

Why do we need people to people level in BSR?

- **Complex approach – common efforts**
- ***Stronger civil society – Better society***
- ***Lobbying interest of civil society on international level***
- ***Diminishing risk of conflicts and tension promoting tolerance***
- ***Contributes to the regional development***



Future perspectives

- **Strengthening Baltic Sea NGO Network**
- *Through close “inside” cooperation between NGOs of the region*
- *Through interaction “outside” with other European & BS institutions on international, regional level*



Future perspectives

- Baltic Sea NGO Network as an European organization
- *Baltic Sea NGO Network as a facilitator of the involvement of civil society in EU strategy (HA Capacity)*
- *Closer daily co-operation with*
 - *CBSS and CSO,*
 - *Nordic Council of Ministers,*
 - *Parliamentarian conference,*
- *Co-operation with civil society in other regions*