



The Chairmanship of the  
**Westpomeranian  
Region 2011–2012**  
in BSSSC



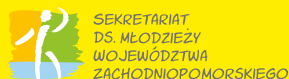
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## BSSSC Working Group on Youth Policy



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## Short introduction into BSSSC

What does the BSSSC acronym stand for? Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation – a political network which gathers together several regional authorities in the area of the Baltic Sea. In 2013 we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the cooperation of regions from such countries as: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden.



## Working Group on Youth Policy

The youth policy has been one of the main priorities of the BSSSC for many years now. This fact is reflected not only in the BSSSC work plan but also by a long co-operation of youth representatives and youth workers. Many seminars, conferences and events concerning youth and youth policy have taken place since the very beginning of the organization.





## Mission

The Working Group on Youth Policy (WGYP) brings together youth workers and youth representatives from the Baltic Sea Region. The main task of the WGYP is to provide the Board and the BSSSC regions with information on youth policies in the BSR, to ensure a dialogue between the Board and young people, prepare position papers, initiate own projects, events and exchange best practices in the field of youth work. The work undertaken by the Group reflects the priorities of the BSSSC and relates to issues raised by the EU and the Council of Europe. WGYP applies the integrated approach in its work, by integrating the work of organizations, the experience of people and a variety of methods and strategies being used in youth work. WGYP promotes a cross-sectoral way of working meaning that decisions in all fields of politics shall take into consideration the impact on youth as a central factor of our future society, as the youth is the future!

## How did it begin?

The first idea of establishing a working group on youth policy in the framework of the BSSSC was discussed at the seminar on youth policy in Mözen (Germany) in 2000, organised in co-operation with the Baltic Sea Secretariat For Youth Affairs in Kiel (Germany). The next steps were seminars in Sopot (Poland) and meetings in Malmö (Sweden) and Szczecin (Poland). In 2002 the Baltic Network of youth coordinators was established in the BSSSC and young people from the regions of the Baltic Sea had their first opportunity to take part in the BSSSC Annual Conference. A few years later, in March 2004, the network was transformed into the BSSSC Ad hoc Working Group on Youth Policy. Since then youth members have been taking part in yearly work meetings and the Annual Conference, thus having a real influence over the politics of BSSSC.



Since 2007 youth representatives from the BSSSC Working Group on Youth Policy have been having their own Youth Meetings, preceding the BSSSC Annual Conferences. They aim to prepare the young participants for the issues that are raised during the Annual Conferences and to workout the message that the youth members wish to give to the decision makers.



## Main events

**23-25 November 2006** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Szczecin, Poland

**10-12 May 2007** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Gdańsk, Poland

**12-14 September 2007** — Annual Conference, Turku, Finland

**16-18 January 2008** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Oslo, Norway

**29 May – 01 June 2008** — BSSSC Youth Conference in Cesis, Latvia

**16-19 September 2008** — 16-th BSSSC Annual Conference, Kaunas, Lithuania

**3-4 February 2009** — Youth conference in the framework of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, Hamburg, Germany

**24-26 May 2009** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Szczecin, Poland

**12-15 October 2009** — YESS, Youth Event on Sustainable Societies, Region Zealand, Denmark

**26-28 February 2010** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Szczecin, Poland

**11-14 October 2010** — International Youth Seminar “Active Inclusion of Young People”, Tallinn, Estonia

**13-15 December 2010** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Kiel, Germany

**30 March – 1 April 2011** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Greifswald, Germany

**3-7 October 2011** — Youth Event at 19th BSSSC Annual Conference, Szczecin, Poland

**10-12 May 2012** — Working Group on Youth Policy meeting, Tallinn, Estonia

**16-19 September 2012** — Gathering on Regional Energy Efficiency in Norway (GREEN), Lilleström, Norway



## **Youth Event at the 19th BSSSC Annual Conference**

**Date & place: 3-7 October 2011  
Szczecin, Poland**

What is the role of volunteering in the development of social cohesion? What are the results of the European Union's cohesion policy? The answers to those questions were investigated by the participants of the international youth seminar that took place during the 19th Annual BSSSC Conference.

The youth participants shared good practices about volunteering in their regions, discussed the role of volunteering in developing social cohesion and presented their conclusions at the Social Cohesion and Voluntary Service workshop, during the Annual BSSSC Conference. They also had a chance to attend a study visit in Świnoujście, where they had a walk around the place where the Polish and German border meet – the Transregional Promenade. The meeting took place in Szczecin, Poland, where the youth and youth workers from Germany, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Estonia and Kaliningrad were present.



## **BSSSC Youth Meeting on Climate Change and Renewable Energy Sources**

**Date & place: 12-13 September 2007  
Turku, Finland**

Each region should develop a program of energy usage and one that combats climate change, the youth should be provided education opportunities on the subject of energy and climate in their regions – that was one of the youth demands towards the decision makers presented during the BSSSC Annual Conference in Turku.

Over 30 youth participants from the Baltic Sea Region took part in a preparatory meeting before the conference "Sustainable Energy Contribution to meet the threats of Climate Change". After a day of discussions and a workshop on sustainable energy and climate change the youth participants developed suggestions and demands towards those who make decisions. They were presented during parallel sessions of the BSSSC conference. Some more suggestions were:

1. Environmentally friendly behavior should become trendy. Politicians should set example to the local communities.
2. Public institutions should be a model of energy use (biomass in office cars, solar heating systems in public buildings etc.)
3. Regional politicians should put pressure on their national governments to develop policies in favor of renewable energy usage.

# **Youth conference in the framework of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region**

**Date & place: 3-4 February 2009**

**Hamburg, Germany**

**The views and expectations for the upcoming EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) were discussed by more than 80 young people from all around the Baltic Sea Region in Hamburg.**

The young participants were joined by representatives of the European Commission that were directly responsible for drafting the strategy. This was a true and direct dialogue that is not possible for most people. The message to stakeholders – prepared by the youth participants included by many others statements:

1. We want more campaigns on ecological and sustainable behavior and on environmental issues.
2. We want a stronger public involvement in environmental issues.



3. Young entrepreneurship should be supported, as young people have a big potential for creativity and ideas for new economies. Micro credits should easily be accessible for young entrepreneurs.

4. Equal access for young people to the labour market in all BSR countries should be realized.

5. To promote well educated young people and to avoid a brain drain, we demand to offer appropriate labour places in specific companies in the BSR.

It also included an important statement: Politicians and institutions of today should be aware of their present decisions having much more influence on future generations than on their own present generation. They should follow the core principle of European youth policy, which is: "Nothing about us without us".





## **Integrated Youth Policy in the BSR BSSSC Youth in Action Project**

**The youth participation in the BSSSC structures was supported by the funds of the Youth in Action Programme.**

The project gave the young participants the possibility to actively use their voice at political meetings and seminars, at the BSSSC Board meetings and the BSSSC Annual Conferences. The goals of the integrated youth policy reflected the main European documents, and required powerful work by and engagement from the Working Group on Youth Policy (WGYP) members, local and regional authorities, NGO's, governments and administrations as well as from private persons in all BSR countries.

The project "Integrated Youth Policy for better living conditions of the young people in the Baltic Sea Region" has been approved by the Norwegian National Agency of the Youth in Action Program, which resulted in 25 000 € being given to the BSSSC Youth's work. The project took place between September 2007 and October 2008 and it reflected the main ideas included in the BSSSC paper "Integrated Youth Policy for better living conditions of young people in the Baltic Sea Region".



## **Youth representatives are BSSSC Board Members**

**Two places in the BSSSC Board are reserved for Youth Board Members who represent the Youth Team at the BSSSC Board meetings, which are held four times a year in different cities in the Baltic Sea Region.**

Each year at the BSSSC Annual Conference, elections take place for one of the positions of Youth Board Member. The elected member holds his/her position for two years. This means that there is an overlap of the newly elected board member and one who has had a year of experience. The youth board members are the link between the youth network and the board of the BSSSC. The task of the youth board members is to be the voice of the youth throughout the Baltic Sea Region. The communication has to go both ways, to inform the youth about the things going on in the board and to give back the youth perspective on these things after they have been discussed in the youth network. The Youth Board Members have the same membership as all the other Board Members and have therefore full rights of speech and vote. Through the Youth Board Members the youth of the Baltic Sea Region have an unique position and opportunity to get their voice heard and their opinions expressed.

### **Youth Board Members:**

Laase Lehre, Norway (2005-2007)

Alexandra Ehlers, Germany and Gerd Tarand, Estonia (2007-2009)

Gerd Tarand and Paweł Grządko, Poland (2009-2010)

Paweł Grządko and Ingrid Klemp, Norway (2010-2011)

Ingrid Klemp and Vladimir Svet, Estonia (2011-2012)



