



NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US!

Youth Ideas from BSSSC Autumn Youth Event 2020



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1. EUSBSR 2020
2. Circular economy
3. Plastic-free Baltic Sea
4. Smart mobility and transport
5. Culture and Baltic Identity

BSSSC Autumn Youth Event 2020

BY BSSSC YOUTH

From 22.-24. September 2020 we – round about 40 youngsters from all over the Baltic Sea Region - held our annual youth online event. Before some of us met in local hubs in Kiel (Germany), Potsdam (Germany), Kaliningrad (Russia) and Gdansk (Poland) to prepare the workshops and to discuss first ideas. We presented the results at the BSSSC Annual Conference 2020 on the 30th of September and on the 1st of October. Some of our ideas found their way into the final Conference Resolution.

But most importantly we – the Baltic youth - discussed and reflected together with experts and political decision-makers, and made our voice heard on multiple levels. We, engaged young people, connected across borders of 10 different countries and felt the uniting Baltic Sea spirit. Now we are ready for more! We want to transform the Baltic Sea region into a truly sustainable place by 2030!

EUSBSR- The new Action Plan for the Baltic Sea Region

BY FIONA MORRISON, BSSSC YOUTH NETWORK

“Save the sea, increase prosperity, connect the region”

- Climate, prosperity, and connecting the region all hang together;
- Baltic city green spaces - an idea to develop;
- Culture (connecting the region through Baltic identity) can and should have more focus on it;
- Idea of Baltic Cultural Cities, Baltic cultural projects, and more;
- Any goal can be achieved more efficiently through cooperation.

What does the youth want in/for the Baltic Sea region?

- Better understanding of the socio-economic challenges the youth faces;

- A more public view of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, or BSSSC as a whole;
- Creation of a deeper Baltic Region spirit;
- Increased positivity regarding the EU;
- A safe and secure future - explicit actions against Human Right's violations or threats to democracy.

What ideas do we have for the EUSBSR?

- The possible idea of subregional parliaments' to make ideas of the plan a reality, close to the people;
- Not just put into certain areas/topics - the youth should be allowed to sit at every table, on any theme;
- Simplification of networks within the Baltic Sea Region;
- Simplified version of the EUSBSR for public understanding, while also deepening detail on certain action points.

European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)



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Any goal can be achieved more efficiently through cooperation.

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Circular Economy - Let's Do it Together!

BY ILIA OGANISIAN & MAŁGORZATA LEWANDOWSKA, BSSSC YOUTH NETWORK

Our impact on the environment & the biggest problems

Lack of knowledge:

- People often do not realise how important their daily choices are;
- We pay not enough attention to either the quantity or quality of materials from which the products are made of.

Plastic and CO2:

- Often products are packed individually in plastic bags and huge amounts of carbon dioxide are produced during transport.

Costs:

- New greener solutions are often very costly and less profitable for entrepreneurs and producers.

How do young people want to solve this?

Education and social campaigns:

- In our opinion, every big change starts with a change of mind. In Poland, we say "What little Johnny has not learnt, big John will not know".

Plastic and CO2:

- There is a need for change in the way clothing is transported - elimination of plastic packaging in favor of biodegradable plastics.

Costs:

- Corporate subsidies and tax reliefs might help new and smaller businesses and encourage already large companies to change their policies.

Innovative ideas of young people

- Organization of projects supporting the exchange of clothes and everyday objects;
- Popularization of points with the possibility of donating used clothing;
- Supporting city halls in the promotion of such events and popularization throughout BSR (regular cycle of events in every major city). Suggestion: 1-3 points per city/village/district;
- Using the collected materials to create new products and donating them to charity.

Our contribution:

- We will strive to pursue a circular focus on the economy in our local boards. Through entrepreneurship and innovational thinking, we will make that happen!
- When coming with political inputs we will demand circular ways and therefore look further than the fixed mindset of using new resources;
- We prefer "green" transport (electrical cars are not the best solution);
- We do not buy too much;
- We use more biodegradable materials, fewer plastics;
- We prefer lifelong gadgets with trade-in system (in the case if to refuse is too difficult);
- Repair is better than change;
- Capsule wardrobe is a new trend, to be fashionable you don't need too many clothes;
- We prefer eco-friendly companies.





**BY FIONA MORRISON, VALERIA ZAGIROVA AND THE KALININGRAD HUB,
BSSSC YOUTH NETWORK**

New technologies are being developed all the time, for example:

- microplastic filtration systems;
- microplastic collecting vehicles.

Many countries work under a 'plastic bag ban'. This is positive progress. There exist, as an example, the systems of returning plastic bottles to the supermarkets for money. Recycling plastic is a concept that become almost the natural state within many countries: recycling bins are readily available in most spaces. Using recycled plastic become more widespread, even going on to create for example:

- furniture;
- bathroom fittings;
- kitchen fittings etc.

The aforementioned microplastic collecting vehicles work in the ocean and collect huge amounts of plastic every hour, while not damaging other sea life. These vehicles have been bought and are being used by many governments, hopefully, this will become EU-spread.

What issues did we notice?

When a solution is found, this solution also usually brings hidden problems with it, for example:

- microplastic collection boats use diesel and are therefore also not fully sustainable and harm the natural environment in this way;
- the system of returning bottles to supermarkets for money has in some cases made it more normalized to buy plastic bottles in the first place, as the cost of doing so has gone down recycling;
- bins are often not used properly and therefore the recycling processes are done incorrectly. Generational differences are entirely unhelpful when it comes to climate issues and result in delayed action.

Our conclusions:

"We must work together, intergenerationally and internationally, to work on finding solutions to every issue, and then finding solutions for the issues that arise this way. We must pay attention that our solutions really are as sustainable as we think they are: avoid "Greenwashing".





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Our contribution:

- *Take an active part in the separate collecting wastes where it is possible;*
- *Prefer reusable glasses, cups, dishes;*
- *Create more places for separate collection of wastes;*
- *Avoid cosmetics with plastic particles;*
- *Choose natural textiles;*
- *Create and demand more informational campaigns;*
- *Influence the creation of an interactive platform with zero-waste shops, second hands, etc.*

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Transport & Smart Mobility

BY NIKOLAI NIKITIN, KALININGRAD HUB, BSSSC YOUTH NETWORK

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We state higher demands regarding future options for transport and them to be sustainable.

We demand politicians to innovate sustainably when considering new transport options.

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Interchange as an urban space .

We suggest to:

- Locate stations as close as possible to existing/new urban facilities and museums;
- Treat the station and the surroundings as one single public space (visual+physical connections, but also in terms of details and materials);
- Bring metro/tram entrances as close as possible to the main local existing activity centre (even when it means extra-tunnelling);

Example: Kaliningrad 2030 - A Car-free city centre – future or dream

- Provide plenty opportunities for the overlap of mobility flows: more targeted flows, accessing the metro system below ground or the urban facilities above ground + more casual flows, including passers-by;
- Connect pedestrian channels in the station and pedestrian channels in the neighbourhood;
- Use of traffic lights in a smart way.

Interchange hubs - by the example of Kaliningrad

- Convenient changing from one mode of transport to another;
- Establishment of 11 transport interchange hubs;
- Possible infrastructure development of mini- transport interchange hubs (world experience);
- Usage of existing railroad track – «railbus».

Culture and Baltic Identity

BY NICOLE TOMCZAK, MIKHAIL MIKHAYLOVSKIY & KALININGRAD HUB,
BSSSC YOUTH NETWORK



Does a Baltic identity exist?

- We have our common Baltic Sea that unifies us;
- We have a common history of a centuries-old interaction;
- There are relatively good transport links between the Baltic regions;
- There are relatively constant, close tourist connections within the region.

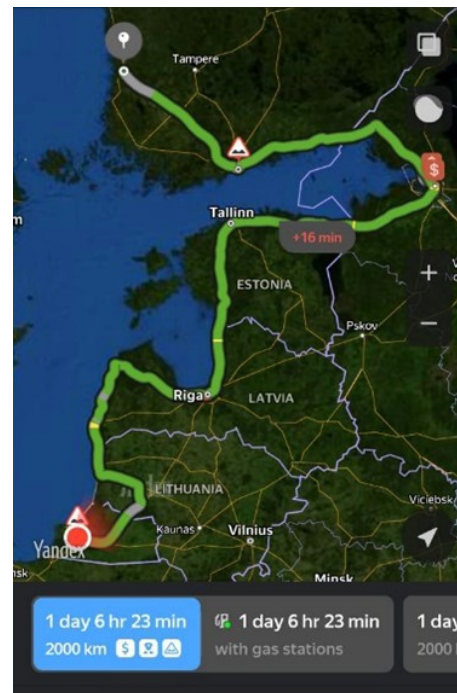
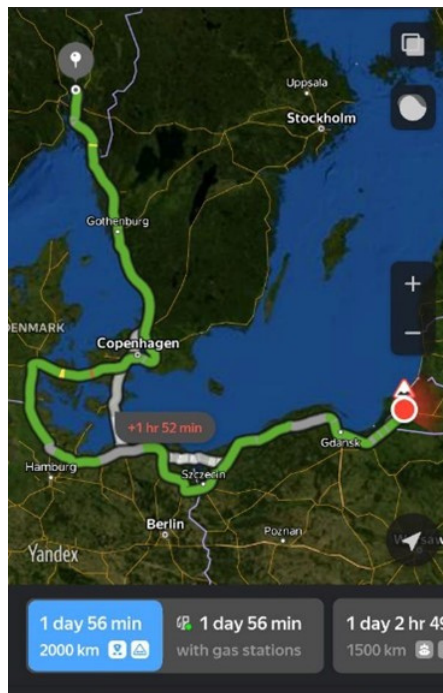
What problems are there in cultural interaction?

- There is a visa regime connected to transport;
- Regions have different levels of accessibility;
- There is a poor coverage of regional events in the cultural sphere;
- There exist many cultural stereotypes.

Why is culture so important in building relationships?

- Culture is a 'bridge' that connects countries;
- Culture permeates almost all areas of interaction;
- Cultural attractiveness of the region may become an incentive for its development.





Project ideas from Kaliningrad hub to improve the situation:

BALTIC STREETS

Baltic Streets is a global festival that touches on several spheres of life of today's youth. These are sports, music, art, cinema and food we all love so much :) We unite youth with different interests by uniting these 5 spheres into one. The theme of the festival is related to street culture, which is gaining popularity all over the world year by year.

SUMMER SOLSTICE (MIDSUMMER)

Our history is the thing that unites us. We want people not only to remember about it, but to have an opportunity to live through the best moments of it. For this aim, we want to organise a festival in a medieval style.

Imagine yourself walking through a medieval fair, hearing folk music from everywhere, seeing buffoons show, listening to sailor's stories from far unknown places. Wandering artists will show different myths and people will have a chance to vote for the best costume. Everyone will have the opportunity to learn how to shoot from a bow and to try medieval dishes.

BALTIC 360°

BALTIC 360° is a bike relay race through the BSSSC countries. The race is supposed to provide a 360° dynamic view on the countries involved, thus having observed the visual part of our cultures - architecture. The race starts in Kaliningrad and has two alternative routes, each is 2,000 km long:

- 1) To Oslo through Poland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden;
- 2) To Pori (Finland) through Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and St. Petersburg.

FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE

It is a theatre festival, which will be running for a week at the same time in every city that participates in the festival. During the series of events each region chooses one or a group of play writers, whose works will be presented in another region. For the even deeper understanding of the neighbours' "souls", art exhibitions can be presented too.



BALTIC SEA CULTURAL CITIES

Feedback to the project idea: Connecting citizens and cities through culture – Baltic Sea Cultural Cities. Filling the idea with life!

goals:

- promoting unity;
 - easy access for a variety of people and regions;
 - learning and creating;
 - past, present and future.

Course of action:

Committee chooses one topic every two years. Regions apply and meet the criteria -> allowed to promote their events under the official name, receive funding, advertising.

Topic 1: Travelling across the Sea

The Baltic Sea has a long history of migration and trade. Who migrated? How did people describe their new home? Which goods/technologies/inventions improved life in other regions?

TELL ME

“TELL ME” is a program for people who are ready to help each other and to create unity with neighbouring countries. The main point of this is to create volunteering opportunities for countries of BSSSC with the final project – video interview with 10 people of a different occupation. Every channel in every country produces a wide range of TV programs in which famous people share their life experience. People of all ages are interested in gaining it by talking or listening to other people, so why not do the same, but with ordinary people who are close to us, but differs in customs and languages? Participants will have to ask questions about what they find outstanding and interesting. As the program is supposed to be an exchange project, at the end of the period volunteers will be able to compare their projects and share their results, emotions and new ideas.

Learning: Exhibitions, lectures, permanent installations in museums, universities, libraries, book shops. Creating: workshops, presentations.

Topic 2: Stories about Water

Every country has its unique myths, legends and fairy tales about the Baltic Sea. What were our common beliefs and what is our vision for the future?

Learning: Book readings for kids and grey-haired people, cinema. Creating: theatres, plays, workshops.

Topic 3: Spices of the Baltic Sea

Discovering traditional dishes and customs from your own and other regions. Restaurants, cooking classes, food trucks.

Topic 4: One Sea – One Responsibility

The Baltic Sea is a sensitive ecosystem. Our actions on the Baltic Sea have an impact on all regions.

Summary

- **Culture** is the easiest way to bring people together and gives us power even in the time of the pandemic.
- The initiative "**Baltic Sea Cultural Cities**" is of particular interest for the youth. Young people feel especially inspired by the initiative. They delivered a firework of ideas on how to fill the idea with life.
- A working group of the **Baltic Sea Youth Platform** (www.bsyp.eu) dedicated to the project, developed the idea of a Baltic Sea Crocodile Festival, an intergenerational and inclusive festival for all BSR citizens, taking place every year in different BSR countries.
- Furthermore, within the workshop project partners of the initiative underlined the economic benefits of the envisaged label **Baltic Sea Cultural City**. For example the spillover effects of cultural assets and vibrant cultural life on the economy. A lively creative sector can slow down the shrinking of cities and regions.
- The project initiative is in its **seed money phase led by the CBSS Secretariat** and gets strong support from the **BSSSC** and the **Union of Baltic Cities**. Representatives of the Baltic Sea Cultural Center in Gdansk, the cities of Kaunas/Latvia and Kiel/Germany, the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia/Finland, Oblast Kaliningrad and Land Schleswig-Holstein are involved in the project.
- Interested **cities and regions are welcome to join in**. Next step of the project is to ensure financing for the main project.



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Next steps: Youth Dialogue board – The power of the young generation

BY VENLA HATAKKA & JULIA ORLUK, BSSSC YOUTH NETWORK



BSSSC youth will establish a continuous/permanent youth working group (**Youth dialogue board**) to deepen discussions and foster connections between them to close the long term gap between the two main annual youth events. This could strengthen the BSSSC Identity and lead to new ideas and stronger commitment. In cooperation with the BSSSC Board, we will reactivate the **Youth Network and Working Group on Youth Policy** with one official representative from each BSSSC Board member region, so that the two annual youth events will mirror the perspectives of as much Baltic Sea regions as possible.

Each BSSSC region is invited to build a local/region BSSSC hub for continuous work on BSSSC topics on an enlarged youth network basis.

- Young people will be an advisory body, thanks to which they will gain experience;
- They will be able to submit their own ideas and discuss issues important to youngsters;
- They will help with the preparation of youth events (submit ideas for workshops, be speakers).





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**POMORSKIE
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Pomorskie Chairmanship of the BSSSC 2020-2021

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