

FINAL BSLF resolution – AGREED BY THE ROUND TABLE IN HELSINKI 1st November 2013

1 Organisations from the Baltic Sea Region, involving social partners as well as the Baltic
2 Sea Parliamentary Conference Secretariat (BSPC) and the Council of the Baltic Sea States
3 Secretariat (CBSS), created in November 2011 an open tripartite platform called the Baltic
4 Sea Labour Forum BSLF – Working Together through Social Dialogue - which is a network
5 for cooperation between employers and trade union organisations, governmental and
6 parliamentary institutions. Today the BSLF counts 28 members and nine observers. The
7 core aim of the forum is the promotion of Social Dialogue and tripartite cooperation
8 structures as a crucial element for sustainable economic growth and social development in
9 the Baltic Sea Region.

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11 The BSLF Round Table 2013, which gathered representatives of social partners in the Baltic
12 Sea Region, as well as government officials and labour market experts on 1st November
13 2013, addressed two main subjects: **mobility of labour** and **youth employment**.

The Baltic Sea Labour Forum

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18 a) recalls the recommendations in the Resolution from the BSLF Round Table in
19 Hamburg 2012 (Link to the 2012 resolution);
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21 b) commends the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (BSLF) as the only tripartite network in the
22 Region supporting both the Baltic Sea Strategy of the European Union and the
23 North-West Russia Socio-Economic Development Strategy by the Russian
24 Federation;
25
26 c) appreciates the support of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) and the
27 Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS);
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29 d) appreciates the work of the BSLF working group on the mobility of labour and
30 welcomes its action plan;
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32 e) re-iterates the need for accurate, reliable and comparable labour market
33 information and statistics of the Baltic Sea Region labour market as a basis for
34 future policy options;
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36 f) promotes well-functioning labour markets in the Baltic Sea Region which contribute
37 to the attractiveness of the region for living, working and doing business, support
38 economic growth and competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region;
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40 g) states that competitiveness and productivity are essential in order to succeed on
41 the global market, believes also that competitiveness and productivity can best be
42 reached through genuine co-operation between labour market organisations and
43 fair labour markets;
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45 h) recognizes that models of Social Dialogue differ from country to country and are
46 not directly transferable from one country to another; however reaffirms that high
47 organizational density is beneficial for an enhanced social dialogue;
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49 i) states that Social Dialogue and tripartite cooperation, based on mutual trust, are
50 preconditions for well-functioning and fair labour markets with decent and
51 productive working conditions;

- 52 j) stresses that cross border mobility should be of mutual benefit and contribute to
53 the development of the entire Baltic Sea Region;
54
- 55 k) states nevertheless that obstacles and challenges to the free movement of labour
56 or services still do exist, be it in the form of administrative barriers between
57 countries, lack of information or neglecting legislation; points out for example the
58 lack of adherence to minimum standards concerning mobile workers;
59
- 60 l) supports the further development of cooperative structures among the cross border
61 information centers as well as concepts for labour market monitoring;
62 acknowledges the work of Hello Norden as well as of the existing information points
63 in the border regions in this respect;
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- 65 m) reiterates that comparable treatment of workers regardless of their country of origin
66 and fair competition between companies are based on respect for industrial
67 relations and collective bargaining systems as key elements in creating fair labour
68 markets;
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- 70 n) expresses concern about the level of undeclared work in many states of the Baltic
71 Sea Region; recognizes that undeclared work is a complex phenomenon resulting
72 from an interaction of multiple causes and is a worrying practice for all: employers,
73 workers and the states; looks thus forward to the results and the proposed follow-
74 up measures of the consultation of the social partners by the European commission
75 on enhancing the EU cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared
76 work;
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- 78 o) states that the record-high unemployment levels caused by the economic crisis
79 have reached their turning point and even decreased a little while still remaining
80 relatively high throughout the Baltic Sea Region, reminds that especially young
81 people have been hardest hit and are most vulnerable;
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- 83 p) observes that well-functioning apprenticeship and internships systems seem to
84 correlate with lower youth unemployment.
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87 **The Baltic Sea Labour Forum calls on** trade unions, employer and business
88 organizations, politicians, public officials, experts, NGOs and scholars to
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- 90 1. deepen their co-operation so that all relevant labour market information of the Baltic
91 Sea Region can be gathered under one heading so that the data is easily accessible
92 for all relevant stakeholders; proposes that the CBSS takes a coordination role in
93 this goal which will greatly benefit future labour market policies;
94

95 regarding mobility of labour
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- 97 2. promote the social dimension of cross border mobility as an essential part of
98 sustainable economic development;
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- 100 3. ensure that information, advice and support to workers and employers about their
101 rights and duties is provided in an accessible manner since this helps to increase
102 the level of intra-EU mobility and secure fair working conditions according to EU-
103 law or national regulations and traditions;
104
- 105 4. establish easy-to-reach one-stop information centers, like e.g. The Hello Norden service,
106 in all the countries of the Baltic Sea Region and one information website, borned jointly and
107 agreed by all relevant actors; these information centers and website should be a first contact
108 for employees and employers and should primarily disseminate information to

- 109 workers and companies on the conditions and rules of the labour markets, including
110 current and easily accessible information on the situation of the labour markets such
111 as legislation, conditions and labour demand in general;
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- 113 5. set in motion concrete steps to dismantle existing bureaucratic barriers in the Baltic
114 Sea Region that hamper the mobility of labour and services, for instance by
115 simplifying and aligning administrative regulations and procedures throughout the
116 Region;
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- 118 6. to aim at ensuring that conditions, rules and labour relations in each country are
119 comparable for foreign and domestic employers and employees; the 8 fundamental
120 ILO conventions and other international labour standards should be a guide for a
121 decent Baltic Sea labour market;
122
- 123 7. prevent and deter undeclared work, recognize that undeclared work is a complex
124 phenomenon resulting from an interaction of multiple causes and is worrying a
125 practice for all: employers, workers and the states; looking forward to the results
126 and the proposed follow-up measures of the consultation of the social partners by
127 the European commission on enhancing the EU cooperation in the prevention and
128 deterrence of undeclared work;
129
- 130 8. continue to facilitate mobility within the Baltic Sea Region and to support the
131 gradual elimination of obstacles in accordance with outcomes of the EU-Russia
132 cooperation in the framework of the visa dialogue, and to pursue the efforts for a
133 gradual phasing out of the visa regime between EU and Russia;
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135 regarding youth employment
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- 137 9. develop effective strategies equipped with powerful measures and to create the
138 conditions of sustainable and jobs creating growth in order to tackle youth
139 unemployment; to ensure that existing programs with this aim are better
140 coordinated; the aim should be to avoid gaps between school education and
141 entrance to the labour markets;
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- 143 10. develop the quality of vocational training in the region according to the needs of the
144 labour markets following best practices and research results, bearing in mind that
145 the skill mismatches is a reality in many societies in the Baltic Sea Region;
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- 147 11. ensure that especially young people with difficulties in school will be supported in
148 targeted ways at an early stage;
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- 150 12. work towards mutual recognition of competences in the Baltic Sea Region countries,
151 by further developing existing instruments such as the European Qualification
152 Framework (EQF) and the European Credit System for VET (ECVET);
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- 154 13. take advantage of the Eures network and find new ways to enhance the mobility of
155 young people in the border regions e.g. in dual training and in cross-border
156 apprenticeships; supported by programs such as Your first EURES Job, Erasmus for
157 All or the European Social Fund.