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## How to promote mobility for students and researchers in the Baltic Sea Region? Strategic and innovative mobility

Tuesday 23 November 2010, 09.30 - 16.30

Danish Architecture Centre • Strandgade 27B • Copenhagen

## **HOW TO PROMOTE MOBILITY FOR STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION? STRATEGIC AND INNOVATIVE MOBILITY**

### **Common strengths and challenges**

Current and future strengths of the Baltic Sea Region in the globalised world lie in the level of knowledge and the ability to turn this knowledge into competitive products. Talent and knowledge must be available in the Baltic Sea Region, today and in the future, and it must be of a quality that can meet the fierce competition from the region's global competitors, e.g. the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China). To succeed, knowledge, students and researchers must increasingly move within the region, crossing borders between countries, industry and academia. The region has to improve in developing, attracting and retaining the best and the brightest talents in order to be an innovative, competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economic player in the world.

### **Strategic initiatives to rise to the challenges of globalisation**

In 2009 the European Commission launched the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region in order to meet a number of challenges that require action at the regional level. Four key challenges were identified as requiring urgent attention:

- To enable a sustainable environment
- To enhance the region's prosperity
- To increase accessibility and attractiveness
- To ensure safety and security in the region

The Strategy aims at coordinating actions by Member States, regions, the EU, pan-Baltic organisations, financing institutions and non-governmental bodies to promote a more balanced development of the Region. Among other goals, the Strategy focuses on ensuring dynamic people in the region who are willing to invest personal resources in improving it as well as skilled and efficient workers bringing additional prosperity.

In order to support this urgent aspect of the Strategy, Denmark, Lithuania and Germany have offered to lead a flagship project aiming to identify barriers hampering mobility of researchers and students, and enhance cooperation on the so-called 'Fifth Freedom'. As part of the 2010 Danish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation together with the Nordic Council of Ministers and Baltic Development Forum, is organising this conference with the aim to discuss mobility and its role in joining closer together education, innovation and research.

### **The knowledge triangle: Strategic and Innovative Mobility**

The knowledge triangle - education, science and innovation - is the current focus for political cooperation to ensure smart growth in the European Union as a whole, and is a useful illustration to understand the challenges facing us in order to increase smart growth in the Baltic Sea Region.

Universities are important actors in the realisation of the potential of the knowledge triangle. Universities foster relevant and available high standard knowledge through education and research, which further contributes to economic growth in society.

On the basis of the logic of the knowledge triangle, there is a new momentum to develop and plan relevant and innovation focused higher education programmes, which will emphasise problem solving and knowledge transfer through strategic and innovative mobility. We need graduates who can think out of the box, spot possibilities and turn ideas into real assets. The Region requires graduates who are highly employable and take the competences, the knowledge and the networks acquired at university straight into their first job. These highly skilled alumni will contribute to growth and wealth of society and business in the Baltic Sea Region.

Mobility plays a key role in ensuring employability by strengthening the international competences of young people, as well as contributes to knowledge transfer as mobility helps foster networks across borders. More students should go abroad to study - or to do an internship - for a semester or longer. Universities and employers have a common interest in this and also a common responsibility.

### **How to promote mobility for students and researchers in the Baltic Sea Region?** **- Strategic and Innovative Mobility**

In order to realise the full potential of the synergies of the knowledge triangle by joining closer together education, innovation and research, and to increase the mobility for students and researchers in the region, new types of partnerships between universities and employers should be established. The knowledge intensive business sectors are vital for the future of the Baltic Sea Region. If the workforce in the region is not sufficiently qualified and does not possess a sufficient level of international experience, these sectors will move their activities outside the region.

At the conference key actors from universities, the world of business, relevant government agencies and strategic actors in the Baltic Sea Region will share information, discuss best practices and explore new ideas and actions for boosting mobility of students and researchers in the region.

### **Key questions**

- What competences are most relevant for the employability of university graduates in the Baltic Sea Region in order to support the knowledge-based business sectors?
- What is the contribution of mobility in enhancing these relevant competences?
- What is good practice in terms of cooperation between universities and business in developing programmes at bachelor, masters, and PhD-level?
- What are the incentives for companies and for universities to encourage more mobility?
- What are the motives for individual students and researchers to be more mobile?
- How can we further enhance public-private partnerships and cooperation between universities and business to further develop the talent base in the Baltic Sea Region? Could cross border cluster cooperation in specific business and research areas be used as a model?
- Do the current incentive structures and programmes fit the current realities? What about the future - do we need new programmes?

## PROGRAMME

- 10.00 - 10.15**      **How to promote mobility for students and researchers in the Baltic Sea Region?**  
**Introduction to the conference programme**  
 By moderator **Mikael Lindholm**, Innovation Inside
- 10.15 - 10.30**      Opening address by **Charlotte Sahl-Madsen**, Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation, Denmark
- 10.30 - 10.40**      **Co-operation between the countries in the Baltic Sea Region holds the key to our common destiny.**  
  
**Hans Brask**, Director, Baltic Development Forum
- 10.40 - 11.15**      **Mobility trends in the Baltic Sea Region**  
**Birger Hendriks**, Head of Department for Sciences, Ministry of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport of the State of Schleswig-Holstein, Bologna Follow Up Group  
  
**Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot**, Head of Sector for Higher Education Policy in DG Education and Culture, European Commission
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- 11.15 - 11.30**      **Break - networking and refreshments**
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- 11.30 - 12.30**      **Business Panel**  
 How to define skills and competences needed in the job market of today and tomorrow? How to attract and retain the best and the brightest talents challenges, solutions and actions?  
  
**Claus Hviid Christensen**, Chief Executive Officer, Lindoe Offshore Renewables Center (LORC)  
  
**Børge Diderichsen**, Vice President, and Head of Corporate Research Affairs, Novo Nordisk  
  
**Christoph Anz**, Director Education Policy, BMW Group  
  
**Marie Kingston**, Vice President for Human Resources Development, COWI  
  
**Emil Görnerup**, Director Research Policy, Confederation of Swedish Enterprise

**12.30 - 13.30**

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**Networking Lunch**

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**13.30 - 15.00****University Panel**

How to set up strategic mobility partnerships between business and universities across the Baltic Sea Region in order to secure the employability in a global setting of university candidates and researchers - perspectives from universities and students

**Svend Hylleberg**, Professor, Dean of Aarhus School of Business and Social Sciences, Denmark

**Mati Heidmets**, Professor and Rector former of Tallinn University, Chairman of the Evaluation Board of Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency, Estonia

**Henrik Wolff**, Rector of Arcada University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland

**Rimantas Vaitkus**, Associate Professor, Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vilnius University, Lithuania

**Maria Mendel**, Professor, Pro-Rector for Educational Matters, University of Gdansk, Poland

**Allan Päll**, Vice-Chairperson, European Students' Union (ESU)

**15.00 - 15.30**

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**Concluding remarks**

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**Gard Titlestad**, Head of Department of Knowledge and Welfare, Nordic Council of Ministers

**Mikael Lindholm**, Innovation Inside

**15.30 - 16.30**

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**Networking and refreshments**

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*Dr. Birger Hendriks*

### **Mobility Trends in the Baltic Sea Region**

Talking about **mobility of students** means to address at least two different types of studies:

- Students studying abroad for a short time (one or two semesters) or going abroad for an internship can be defined as **credit mobility**;
- Students going abroad for another study programme (Master or PhD) after having graduated from their home university (Bachelor) or vice versa can be regarded as **degree mobility**.

Looking at the available **statistical data**, there are no consistent directly comparable figures available for mobile students and researchers in all countries in the Baltic Sea Region. The situation is even worse when it comes to questions concerning how many students go out from country X to country Y and for how long? The registration of credit mobility and in particular the credit mobility of *free movers* (students going abroad on own initiative, not in the framework of an exchange programme or bilateral agreement between universities) - is poor, except in the contexts of Erasmus students and the NORDPLUS programme. The Erasmus statistics are precise but do not include *free movers*. After all, it is necessary to analyze the available data in order to find out tendencies and developments for a given timeline and the reasons for these developments which are interesting enough. But it is not possible to fall back on precise data on mobility of students in the whole Baltic Sea Region.

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When looking at the **development of mobility over recent years**, one has to take into account that the total number of students has increased substantially. The absolute figures as well as the percentage of graduates being part of all people born in one year have grown during the last ten years in almost all countries around the Baltic Sea: e.g. in Denmark from 32,1 % (2000) to 48,1 % (2009), in Poland from 12,5 % (2000) to 32,8 % (2009), in Latvia from 18,6 % (2000) to 30,1 % (2009), whereas in Lithuania it decreased from 42,6 % (2000) to 40,6 % (2009) (Source: EUROSTAT).

Also the total **number of foreign students** in countries of the Baltic Sea Region have increased: i.e. in Germany 187.000 (2000) to 244.800 (2009), irrespective of their home country. Only in Latvia these figures decreased from 6.000 (2000) to 1.400 (2009). The numbers of first-year students in Germany coming from other European countries (Bildungsinlaender) increased at the universities of applied sciences by 21 % between 2006 and 2008 and by 6 % at the universities in the same period (Source: Di Stasis, Germany). However, the countries from where the foreign students depart are diverse: looking at incoming students in the countries of the Baltic Sea Region, there are several neighbouring countries among the top ten of the countries of origin, but also China, Belarus, Ukraine and others (Source EURODATA).

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So **where do the national students go?** This trend is quite different from the patterns of incoming students. National students predominantly go to UK, USA, France, and Germany. Another interesting trend is that the number of outgoing students is lower than the figures of incoming students from abroad in the western Baltic Sea Region countries. Denmark for example had 9 % incoming students in 2006/7, but only 3,2 % were outgoing students (Source: EURODATA). And the student exchange among the NORDPLUS countries has also decreased substantially between 2006 and 2008, especially in credit mobility for up to 12 months. On the other hand, NORDPLUS can state that what they call the *express mobility* (shorter student mobility, lasting less than one month, but more than one week) has doubled in the same time. The same can be said for Germany having 11,3 % incoming students and 4,3 % were outgoing; and the terms of studies abroad are becoming shorter. In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania the situation was at that time (2006/7) the reversed: 3,2 % incoming students in Estonia, 6 % outgoing (Source: Gate, Germany). From this, one can conclude that Poland, Latvia and Lithuania are so-called *exporters* whereas Germany, Finland and Estonia show balanced figures; and Denmark, Norway and Sweden are the *importers*. But being an *importer* can be a signal of attractiveness or can simply express the fact that the figures of outgoing students are much lower than those of the incoming students. For Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, a possible contributing factor to the decrease in the number of outgoing students could be the financial crisis.

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Baltic Sea Region



**Baltic Development Forum** is an independent and high-level network for decision-makers from business, politics, academia and media in the Baltic Sea Region. Our mission is to create a prosperous Baltic Sea Region through regional integration, sustainable growth, innovation and competitiveness. Apart from providing research and publishing reports on topics vital to the development of the Region one of our main activities is the annual Summit, where more than 600 decision-makers from business, politics, academia and media meet to exchange ideas and formulate strategies for the future development of the Region.

**The Nordic Council of Ministers** is the platform for intergovernmental cooperation between the Nordic countries. It has a broad range of activities within 11 different Ministerial Councils. The purpose of inter-governmental co-operation in the Nordic Council of Ministers is to work toward joint Nordic solutions that have tangible positive effects – Nordic synergies – for the citizens of the individual Nordic countries. In the field of education and research the Nordic Council of Ministers has initiated among other things the Nordic-Baltic education programme Nordplus, a broad range of Nordic Master Programmes, as well as the Nordic research institution NordForsk.