

Final BSLF resolution – AGREED BY THE ROUND TABLE, Hamburg.

15.11.2012

21 labour market organisations, involving social partners as well as the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference Secretariat (BSPC) and the Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat (CBSS), created in November 2011 an open tripartite platform called *the Baltic Sea Labour Forum – Working Together by Social Dialogue* - which is a network for cooperation between employers and trade union organisations, governmental and parliamentary institutions. The core aim of the forum is the promotion of Social Dialogue and tripartite cooperation structures as a crucial element for sustainable economic growth and social development in the Baltic Sea Region.

The BSLF Round Table 2012, gathering representatives of social partners in the Baltic Sea Region, as well as government officials and labour market experts, addressing two main subjects, **youth employment** and **mobility of labour**,

- a. commending the Baltic Sea Labour Forum (BSLF) as the only tripartite network in the Region supporting both the Baltic Sea Strategy of the European Union and the North-West Russia Socio-Economic Development Strategy by the Russian Federation;
- b. expressing gratitude to the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) for their strong political support;
- c. highlighting the need for accurate and comparable labour market information and statistics of the Baltic Sea Region labour market;
- d. recognizing that models of Social Dialogue differ from country to country and are not directly transferable from one country to another; however reaffirming that high organizational density has an intrinsic value since it begets enhanced Social Dialogue as well as extensive dialogue in civil society as a whole;
- e. stating that Social Dialogue and tripartite cooperation, based on mutual trust, are preconditions for well-functioning and fair labour markets with decent and productive working conditions;
- f. stressing that cross border mobility should be of mutual benefit and contribute to the development of the entire Baltic Sea Region, while also counteracting brain drain and social dumping;
- g. welcoming Russian participation and inviting all Russian social partners to further promote Social Dialogue, maintaining continuity and building up synergies between the Russian CBSS Presidency and the Russian BSLF chairmanship in 2013;
- h. highlighting facilitated visa procedures between Norway and Russia for citizens of the Barents region, drawing attention to a recently signed agreement between Russia and Poland to facilitate travel between Kaliningrad and its adjacent Polish territories;
- i. stating nevertheless that obstacles and challenges to the free movement of labour still do exist, be it in the form of administrative barriers between countries, lack of information, ignoring or neglecting labour law and other legislation, or others;
- j. supporting the further development of cooperative structures among the cross border information centers as well as concepts for labour market monitoring such as;



- k. stating that the economic crisis has resulted in record-high unemployment throughout the Baltic Sea Region, reminding that especially young people have been hardest hit and are most vulnerable;
- l. supporting projects that promote cross border vocational training and the mutual recognition of qualifications among the Baltic Sea Region countries;
- m. observing that well-functioning apprenticeship and internships systems seem to correlate with lower youth unemployment.

call on trade unions, employer and business organizations, politicians, public officials, experts, NGOs and scholars to

1. launch concrete measures to reduce the number of school drop-outs, reminding that a completed education is the best weapon against unemployment;
2. step up in their efforts to integrate young people in the labour market; emphasizing that targeted measures are needed in order to facilitate the entry of the young generation into the labour market;
3. develop effective strategies equipped with powerful measures to tackle youth unemployment, and to ensure that existing programmes with this aim are better coordinated; the aim should be to offer each young person a job, an apprenticeship, additional continuing education or a combination of employment and vocational training after a maximum of four months of unemployment;
4. devise strategies and programmes to ease young peoples' transitions between school and work and to create better synergies between education and the needs of the labour market;
5. work towards mutual recognition of vocational training in the Baltic Sea Region countries, and to develop the quality of vocational training in the region according to best practices, research results and society's future needs, bearing in mind that the skill mismatches is a reality in many societies in the Baltic Sea Region;
6. set in motion concrete steps to dismantle existing bureaucratic barriers in the Baltic Sea Region that hamper the mobility of labour, for instance by simplifying and aligning administrative regulations and procedures throughout the Region;
7. continue to facilitate mobility within the Baltic Sea Region and to support the gradual elimination of obstacles in accordance with outcomes of the EU-Russia cooperation in the framework of the visa dialogue, and to pursue the efforts for a gradual phasing out of the visa regime between EU and Russia;
8. ensure that conditions, rules and labour relations in each country are comparable for foreign and domestic employers and employees; the key ILO conventions and international labour standards should be a basis for a decent Baltic Sea labour market;
9. promote the social dimension of cross border labour mobility as an essential part of sustainable economic development;
10. counteract the growing problem of illegal work - such as false self-employment - by all actors in labour markets;
11. further explore the idea of establishing easy-to-reach one-stop information centers in all the countries of the Baltic Sea Region as well as one information website; those should be a first contact for migrant employees and migrant employers and should primarily disseminate information to migrant workers and companies on the conditions and rules of the labour market, including current and easily accessible information on the situation of the labour market such as legislation, conditions and labour demand in general;