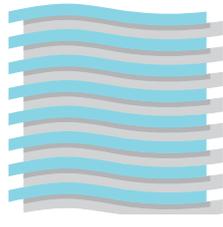


18th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference

■ Nyborg, 2009

# Report of the Working Group Labour Market and Social Welfare

of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference



Working Group on Labour Market and Social Welfare

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The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) was established in 1991 as a forum for political dialogue between parliamentarians from the Baltic Sea Region. BSPC gathers parliamentarians from 11 national parliaments, 11 regional parliaments and 5 parliamentary organizations around the Baltic Sea. The BSPC thus constitutes a unique parliamentary bridge between all the EU- and non-EU countries of the Baltic Sea Region. BSPC aims at raising awareness and opinion on issues of current political interest and relevance for the Baltic Sea Region. It promotes and drives various initiatives and efforts to support a sustainable environmental, social and economic development of the Baltic Sea Region. It strives at enhancing the visibility of the Baltic Sea Region and its issues in a wider European context. The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference is the annual general assembly in the Baltic Sea region for broad political debate on Baltic Sea issues. The Conference resolutions are political tools which enables the BSPC to launch and sustain political initiatives, and to approach the governments and regional organizations on issues of common interest. The BSPC has a number of working bodies at its disposal, which serve as resources for driving and implementing BSPC priorities and objectives. A Standing Committee and an Enlarged Standing Committee are responsible for the follow-up of BSPC resolutions, for identifying and addressing issues within the BSPC field of responsibility, and for preparing the annual Conferences. The BSPC Working Groups are political vehicles with the overall objective of elaborating joint political positions and recommendations on issues of common interest in the Baltic Sea Region. BSPC external interfaces include parliamentary, governmental, sub-regional and other organizations in the Baltic Sea Region and the Northern Dimension area, among them CBSS, HELCOM, the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (BSSSC) and the Baltic Development Forum.

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# 1. Foreword

In view of the situation on the labour market and social welfare in the Baltic Sea region, the closing resolution of the 6<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference held in Berlin in 2007 called upon the parliaments and governments of the Baltic Sea region, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the EU:

- “to remove obstacles for mobility in the labour market, and to provide for decent working conditions in every country;
- “against the background of the growing number of cross-border workers, to put the topic of ‘cross-border labour markets’ on the agenda of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, and to support policies which lead to the establishment of information centres at heavily used border crossings in the region in order to promote mobility of workers and advise workers on social-security issues. The aim of such centres would be to provide workers with comprehensive information on fiscal/social-security law. Information about job and training opportunities in neighbouring countries in the region must also be improved;
- “to foster inclusive labour markets covering disadvantaged groups as well as young people with a view to integrating them into work and society and to making use of their potential;
- “to promote corporate social responsibility in enterprises in the Baltic Sea States relative to the ILO and OECD standards and not to tolerate double standards of multinational companies.”

The 16<sup>th</sup> BSCP in Berlin in 2007 also resolved to set up a Working Group “Labour Market and Social Welfare”. The Standing Committee appointed this Working Group at its meeting in Gdynia (Poland) on 8 October 2007. The Working-Group members’ remit was to deal with the development of worker mobility in cross-border labour markets and with the integration of young people into labour markets, and to submit recommendations on both these subjects. In this respect, the Standing Committee asked the Working Group, in line with its resolution, to include a dialogue with management and labour (social partners) in its activities.

The Standing Committee asked the Working Group to present an interim report on the occasion of the 17<sup>th</sup> BSCP in Visby (Sweden) in 2008 and to submit its final report to the 18<sup>th</sup> BSCP in Nyborg (Denmark).

## 2. Political recommendations

The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference Working Group on Labour and Social Welfare, according to the resolution of the 16<sup>th</sup> BSPC, mainly dealt with the issue of cross-border labour markets in the Baltic Sea Region, the establishment of information centres in heavily used border crossings in the region providing comprehensive information to cross-border workers with a view to promoting their mobility. Furthermore it dealt with the issue of youth unemployment in the Baltic Sea Region and the promotion of their training and employment with the aim of integrating young people into work and society and making use of their potential. To this end, the Working Group should attract political attention and help place labour markets and social welfare on the national agendas of each of the countries in the Baltic Sea Region; it recommends the following initiatives and measures:

### *Cross-border labour markets and commuters*

- **The existing information centres** in the Baltic Sea region for the provision of information about social security, employment law and tax law for cross-border workers must be **strengthened** and expanded to meet new challenges. At border crossings heavily used by cross-border workers, and in locations **where the number of cross-border workers is growing but no information centres exist as yet, new centres must be established**. This applies in particular to the **east and south-east** of the Baltic Sea region. Responsibility for establishing and expanding the centres lies with the member states, in cooperation with the border regions concerned. The Working Group calls upon the EU to provide substantive, organizational and financial support for this process. The member states of the BSPC, the CBSS and the EU are duty-bound to ensure fair and humane working conditions.
- The **advisors** working in the information centres should be fluent in the languages spoken in the states on both sides of the border. They should be experts on issues relating to social legislation, employment law, tax law and legislation relating to the promotion of employment and to social security in the case of unemployment or retirement. They should also be able to provide information about childcare, education systems, family benefits and legally defined working conditions. The advice they offer should be comprehensive and officially binding. The staff of the information centres should be well-informed about jobs available on both sides of the border and pass on this information.
- Likewise, **barriers to mobility should be identified, and efforts should be made to dismantle them** in cooperation with the responsible authorities.
- The information centres should hold or arrange regular **forums for**



**the sharing of information** on the situation of cross-border workers, involving **associations representing cross-border workers, trade unions, employers and political decision-makers**, to foster **cooperation** between the various stakeholders.

- This cooperation should be supplemented by the **establishment of joint councils for border regions** which regularly discuss the current status and development of each region and foster its development in cooperation with public authorities. Good networks must be built up for exchanges and cooperation between all of the economic stakeholders in the region, with the appropriate political support. This encourages mobility, and boosts economic growth and prosperity in the region.
- The information centres should offer their own **Internet platforms** providing comprehensive information about their work. These sites should be interactive, enabling people to use them to access the information they need.
- Regularly, **experience should be shared about the work of the information centres throughout the Baltic Sea region**, examples of best practice should be presented, and contacts maintained with policy-makers in order to foster mobility and further developments in the advice given and in the implementation of legislation in the countries concerned.
- The Council of the Baltic Sea States **should prioritize issues relating to cross-border workers, labour-market integration in general and increases in mobility. This should also include temporary and seasonal workers. Full attention should be paid to the gender aspect of labour-market issues.** The work of the Baltic Sea Labour Network (BSLN) should be supported and, as a partner, the CBSS must play an active part in this project.
- The experience gathered in the course of the information centres' work should be fed into the **European Union's reform activities** to foster mobility, improve social security and boost economic growth in border regions. In order to **facilitate conditions for cross-border workers**, one precondition is **the practical implementation of the Services Directive, the Directive on the Posting of Workers and the Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications between the member states of the European Community.** In this context member states should agree on the automatic bilateral recognition of vocational and professional qualifications. Similar agreements with non-EU countries in the Baltic region should be encouraged, wherever appropriate.
- The member states of the BSPC, CBSS and the EU and regional authorities are recommended to **expand transport routes and enhance**

the quality of local public transport in border regions in order to make travel easier for cross-border workers and, in this way, contribute significantly to improving economic growth in these regions.

### **Youth unemployment**

- In the course of the two years of its activities, the Working Group has reached the conclusion that **education and active labour-market policies are the decisive factors** in getting young people into training, employment and self-employment in order to prevent joblessness among young people.
- Hence, the member states of the BSPC, CBSS and EU and the responsible ministries and regional authorities are advised to work towards ensuring that **lower-secondary-school pupils receive an introduction to the world of work well before leaving school.**
- In cooperation with schools, business, the responsible authorities and ministries, programmes should be developed to give all pupils the **opportunity to complete work-experience placements with businesses, authorities, public institutions and other organisations** before leaving school.
- As part of an approach entitled, for example, “**business involvement in schools**”, employers should regularly be invited by teachers to inform young people before they leave school about work-experience placements and training opportunities including opportunities for self-employment.
- In cooperation with the responsible institutions (public authorities, employers and trade unions), cross-sectoral **training fairs should be organized at regular intervals in the regions.**
- Regional employment agencies should **offer training-related assistance**, e.g. advisors who also serve as contacts for the companies providing training; additional opportunities to undertake further training and gain qualifications, etc.
- In order to prevent youth unemployment, national governments should intensify their efforts to **reach agreements on the creation of training places with employers and workers’ representatives.**
- **Advice centres in schools should be set up by representatives of the regional employment agencies supported by teachers** to answer young people’s questions about training programmes and employment prospects.
- National and regional authorities should draw up **individual plans for young people who have not found any training or jobs**



**after leaving school.** All member states of the BSPC, CBSS and EU are recommended to ensure that **opportunities are offered by employment agencies to undertake further training and obtain qualifications, training places or jobs no later than three months after the date of leaving school.** The aim should be to ensure that there are no long periods of unemployment at the beginning of young people's working lives.

- One example of a possible incentive in this context could be to offer a **subsidy** to companies willing to train young people.
- In the case of training programmes for related occupations, **modular training courses should be created, with qualifications gained in the programme for one occupation being recognized by the others.**
- Young people who **have difficulties entering the labour market should be given special opportunities (first hired, then trained).**
- **Young people who are not motivated to undergo any training or drop out of a training programme** should be given another chance to take up training or enter employment, the idea being that no one should be left behind.
- All member states should mount special programmes to **integrate young people with disabilities into training and employment.**
- In the framework of the CBSS, **best practice in the education systems of the various countries should be exchanged in order to find the best methods for solving the growing problem of school drop-outs and low achievers** (poor skills). This should be done in cooperation with teachers and experts in the field of education and training.
- In its final report, the Working Group provides **individual examples of best practice regarding the training and employment of young people in the Baltic Sea region**, which are recommended in the efforts to tackle and prevent youth unemployment.

### 3. Background

The basis of the Working Group's activities is formed by the above resolutions, viewed against a background of growing cross-border labour markets around the Baltic Sea. Associated with this is a rising number of employees working in neighbouring countries as cross-border commuters.

The resolution text on fostering integration into labour markets and the inclusion of young people in particular in working life and society, along with calls for their potentials to be exploited, prompted the Working Group to include youth unemployment trends in the Baltic region in its brief. In doing so, it debated both the causes of youth unemployment and the strategies pursued by the various countries in combating joblessness among young people. In this report, it presents best-practice examples for each country and gives political recommendations for the better integration of young people into training and work.

At the start of their activity, the Working-Group members worked on an initial overview of the relevant border areas with cross-border labour markets in the Baltic region and the data accessible to date. The Working Group defined cross-border commuters as employees commuting on a daily or weekly basis or working for several weeks and months in another country. The Working Group would also have liked to address specific education and gender issues, but insufficient data made this impossible.

The reports and presentations made available to the Working Group by the various countries' institutions showed that the number of cross-border commuters has grown steadily in recent years. The reasons for this are manifold:

- freedom of establishment and the freedom of movement of workers in the EU
- the demand for labour in some countries
- preventing or ending unemployment
- better incomes, working and/or living conditions
- better relations between employers and employees
- social security and stability
- better opportunities in education, career and employment.

In the Working Group's discussions, it became apparent that cross-border labour markets can contribute to improving employment opportunities and to dynamic regional development, which benefits the economy, business and employees. Such markets promote flexibility, open up options for experiencing different working conditions, resolving conflicts in different ways, and conveying other hierarchical structures, cultures and values.

All the same, challenges exist, like information deficits, imbalances between freedoms and rights on the labour market, uneven regional developments, demographic challenges, labour shortages, labour

deficits in certain professions and various economic sectors, migration of young and qualified employees, illegal labour, wage dumping and working conditions, social-security issues when working in two countries, rehabilitation options, unemployment-benefit issues in the case of casual work, vocational training, taxation of companies employing temps, lack of language skills, poor traffic infrastructures, deficits in the social dialogue between government, authorities, companies and trade unions, etc.

Experience has shown that, when a decision is taken to seek work in another country or even in a neighbouring country, a whole host of questions emerge for employees, but also for employers. In the social area, these concern social-security issues, all the way from health, long-term care and accident to unemployment and pension insurance. Labour-law questions, like protection against unlawful dismissal, collective wage agreements or employee rights in a company, play a similarly large role. To this must be added – against a backdrop of different fiscal regulations – questions of tax law. Other subjects include the specific statutory social benefits, e.g. for children or families.

Some regions and countries have already responded in recent years by setting up information centres, info points, Internet platforms or cross-border commuter projects. In other areas, comparable initiatives do not exist.

Except for Iceland, Norway and Russia, all BSPC countries are EU members. No precise picture of the number of cross-border commuters can be drawn either in the EU or in the states of the Baltic region: statistical surveys are often lacking. If figures are nevertheless quoted, they came about on the basis of differing methods. This means that most of the data are based on estimates and extrapolations. In addition to data obtained from the most varied of sources, this report was also able to fall back on the 2006/2007 figures contained in a study by MKW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH, Munich, advertised, financed and commissioned by Unit G 3 of the Directorate General Employment 5 of EURES in Brussels. However, this does not alter the fact that the data situation is basically very poor, although we may still assume a considerable rise in the number of cross-border commuters in recent years. By now, between 70.000 to 120.000 employees in the Baltic region are likely to be viewed as cross-border commuters.

Item 5 of this report lists the Working Group's session dates and discussion partners. Here, it becomes apparent that the Working Group has included in its deliberations the expertise of both trade-union representatives (Baltic Sea Trade Union Network – BASTUN) and employer representatives (BUSINESS EUROPE), as well as government representatives, specialist civil servants of the various governments, scientists and experts on the subjects of 'cross-border commuters' and 'youth unemployment'.

The Working Group also discussed the impact of the current global financial and economic crisis on the issues it addressed. Using

developments in the data on youth unemployment, it becomes clear that, in conjunction with a general rise in unemployment in the various countries, the jobless rates for young people, too, are on the up again. In developments among cross-border commuters, it must be assumed that a slight decline is taking place here or that there will be temporary stagnation.

<b>Information centres, info points or information-providing facilities exist/existed in:</b>		
<b>Sweden/Finland</b>	Tornedalen region	Center of Commuters Tornio and Hapanranda/Infocenter Hapanranda Tornio/EURES Cross-border Tornedalen
<b>Norway</b>	Regions Oslo and South-East parts of Norway	Service Centre for Foreign Workers in Oslo
<b>Sweden/Norway</b>	Regions Arvika (S)/Kongsvinger (N) Moruklien (N) Värmland/Dalarna (S)/Akershus/Østfold (N)	Call centre "GrenseTjänsten"
<b>Norway/Sweden</b>	Regions Østfold (N)/Västra Götaland (S)	"Grensependel" project (until end-2006)
<b>Denmark/Sweden</b>	Regions Copenhagen (DK) /Malmö (S)	Info centre for cross-border commuters in Copenhagen, Malmö and Helsingör
<b>Denmark/Germany</b>	Regions Sønderjylland (DK) /Schleswig (D)	Regionscontor Sønderjylland – Schleswig. Info centre Grænse, Padborg
<b>Finland/Russia</b>	Euroregion Karelia	
<b>Norway/Sweden</b>	Region The North Calotte	<a href="http://www.arcticjob.net">www.arcticjob.net</a>
<b>Finland/Russia</b>		
<b>Finland/Estonia</b>	Region Helsinki/ Tallinn	Finnish Working Life Information point Tallinn (until end-2008)
<b>Estonia/Latvia</b>	Region Valga (EE)/Valka (LV)	Estonian – Latvian Committee for Cross-border Cooperation
<b>Poland/Germany</b>	Regions Neisse-Bober Pro Europe Viadrina Pomerania	



The above account makes it clear that structures are already in place for information facilities and projects in the west and north of the Baltic region. In the east and south, by contrast, we find hardly any institutionalized information options. Some of the facilities came into being in connection with the activities of European Employment Services (EURES) and various programmes of the European Union. EURES aims at supporting professional and geographical mobility and offering compact information, advice and placement.

What follows will present, clockwise, the cross-border commuter regions and the available data round and about the Baltic Sea.



## 4. Subjects

### a) Cross-border commuters

#### **Germany – Denmark**

One region that is strongly marked by cross-border commuting between Denmark and Germany is **Sønderjylland – Schleswig**. In view of the planning for the construction of a fixed Fehmarn Belt crossing, it must be expected that the number of cross-border commuters is likely to rise in the region **Storstrøms – Ostholstein/Lübeck** in the coming years.

In Sønderjylland-Schleswig, cross-border commuter numbers soared in recent years. At present, estimates range from approx. 4.000 (Eures/IAB) to 19.200 (*Infocenter Grenze*, border information centre). At the same time, about 1.200 employees living in Denmark are assumed to be working in Germany as commuters.<sup>1</sup>

Other sources cite a total of some 3.200 cross-border commuters between the two countries for 2006/2007. Approx. 620 were said to be commuting from Denmark to Germany and about 2.680 in the other direction.<sup>2</sup>

In **Sønderjylland – Schleswig**, close regional cooperation has existed since 1997. A regional council, for example, has a total of 42 members from the two sides. This council, inter alia, executes various EU-financed projects.<sup>3</sup> One direct measure to simplify cross-border commuting is the advisory office “*Infocenter Grenze*” which was set up as a department of the *Regionskontor* in August 2004. The centre’s remit includes the provision of advice, information about working and living options in the other country, about cross-border differences, social systems, and about legislation and taxation north and south of the border, and arranges for forwarding to the correct address. It cooperates with trade unions, public authorities, clubs and associations and is accessible to all.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Norway**

##### **Norway – Denmark**

Commuting between Norway and Denmark is mainly via the ferry and plane links between the two countries. It is currently assumed

1 Town Flensburg, <http://www.flensburg.de/wirtschaft-arbeit/grenzpendler/index.php>

2 Position: 2006/2007. “Study on worker’s mobility – cross-border commuting in EU-27 /EEA / EFTA” [http://www.mkw-gmbh.de/fileadmin/templates/mkw-gmbh/publications/mkw\\_workers\\_mobility.pdf](http://www.mkw-gmbh.de/fileadmin/templates/mkw-gmbh/publications/mkw_workers_mobility.pdf)

3 Interreg III A – Projects in the region Sønderjylland – Schleswig <http://www.grenznet.com/documents/00092.pdf>

4 Region Sønderjylland-Schleswig, [www.region.de](http://www.region.de)

that some 2.300 employees commute from Denmark to Norway and approx. 600 from Norway to Denmark.<sup>5</sup>

### **Norway – Sweden**

Norway and Sweden have one of the longest borders in Europe measuring a good 1.600 kilometres, so that social and economic contacts between the two countries have a long history. The number of cross-border commuters between Norway and Sweden is likely to be approx. 17.100 – 18.900. Here, some 1.200 to 1.960 commute from Norway to Sweden and approx. 15.900 in the opposite direction.<sup>6</sup>

The focuses of large cross-border commuter flows are in the following regions:

- **Värmland-Dalarna/Aakershus-Östfold** – “*GrenseTjänsten*” project
- **Arvika/Kongsvinger** – covered by “*GrenseTjänsten*”
- **Östfold/Västra-Gotland** – bus project “*Grensependel Norge-Sverige*” until end-2006

In the region **Värmland-Dalarna/Aakershus-Östfold**, we have the “*GrenseTjänsten*” project with a call centre, which is available to cross-border commuters for questions and information. Staff collaborate closely with experts from the various authorities on both sides of the border.

The region **Arvika/Kongsvinger (ARKO)**<sup>7</sup> is a Euroregion. Collaboration between the Swedish and Norwegian municipalities goes back as far as 1967. For legal and fiscal issues, cross-border commuters can contact the “*GränseTjänsten*” call centre.

The region **Östfold/Västra-Gotland** had a “*Grensependel*” bus project between the city of Oslo (NO) and the town of Strömstad (SE).

### **Norway-Sweden-Finland-Russia**

Located in the far north is the Nord-Calotte region. It links the northern parts of Norway (*Nordland, Tromsø, Finnmark*), Sweden (*Norbotten*), Finland (*Lappland*) and Russia’s Koala peninsula. This region, too, has its cross-border commuters. The main target country of the cross-border commuters is Norway thanks to its good working conditions. Most of the cross-border commuters come from the Murmansk region in Russia. This is true above all of fisheries. Regrettably, no figures worth mentioning are available. There is an Internet site named *Arctic Jobnet*<sup>8</sup> which provides information about job opportunities in the four states.

5 Position: 2005. Nordic commuter map [http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2008-599/at\\_download/publicationfile](http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2008-599/at_download/publicationfile)

6 Position: 2006. Nordic statistics yearbook 2008. <http://www.norden.org/pub/ovrigt/statistik/sk> and MkW

7 Euroregion ARKO. [http://www.arko-regionen.org/om\\_arko.asp](http://www.arko-regionen.org/om_arko.asp)

8 Crossborder Tornedalen. [www.arcticjobnet.net](http://www.arcticjobnet.net)

The commuter numbers for Norway – Sweden can be found above. From Norway to Finland, 200 are likely to commute, whereas 1,000 Fins working in Norway commute across the border.<sup>9</sup> No cross-border commuter data from Russia to the countries Norway, Sweden and Finland or in the opposite directions were available.

### Sweden

Sweden's border regions are mainly Tornedalen (Sweden-Finland), the Øresund region and the various border crossings to Norway.

#### *Sweden-Finland*

In the **Tornedalen** area, heavily frequented by cross-border commuters between Sweden and Finland, the municipalities of Tornio and Haparanda mounted a joint **Intereg II EuroCity job-centre project** as early as 1997 and 1999. The outcome of this project is the **info centre in Haparanda** for cross-border commuters.

The tasks of this centre are:

- the production of comparable statistics about the labour market and the workforce on both sides of the border;
- the elimination of bottlenecks;
- forging links with businesspeople and potential businesspeople from various sectors;
- the provision of labour-market information for companies, job seekers and students as well as data on work-experience placements, living and employment opportunities on both sides of the border;
- the activation of small businesses in sectors with acute staff shortages.

Overall, we may assume about 4,300 cross-border commuters, incl. approx. 2.000 from Sweden to Finland and some 2.300 in the opposite direction.<sup>10</sup> According to other statistical surveys, the total number is roughly 6.140, of whom about 2.360 Swedes work in Finland and some 3.780 Fins in Sweden<sup>11</sup>.

#### *Sweden – Denmark*

The **Øresund region** between Denmark and Sweden, with a population of 3.5m, is one of the most densely settled areas in Scandinavia. Here, we find more commuters in the direction Sweden-Denmark than Denmark-Sweden.

Some 18.000 people commute daily between home and work across the Øresund. In recent years, following the construction of the Øresund crossing, the commuter figures increased from 13.316

<sup>9</sup> Position: 2005. Nordic commuter map.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> MkW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH.

in 2006 to a good 18.000 in 2008. Most commuters – 15.700 – use the Øresund bridge.<sup>12</sup> Just over 16.000 employees commute from Sweden to Denmark, while some 2.000 people living in Denmark work in Sweden.<sup>13</sup> The background here is above all the much better labour-market situation on the Danish side when compared with Sweden. Other investigations work with total figures of about 13.380. Here, approx. 12.40 come from Sweden and only about 640 from Denmark<sup>14</sup>.

### Åland

Annual gross migration between Åland and other regions runs at about 1.00 people, or just over 5% of the Ålandic population. Thanks to the sizeable local shipping industry, the number of people commuting to work relative to total employment is even higher, despite the region's insular location.

The number of “inward commuters” to Åland, i.e. people commuting to workplaces in the local shipping industry is significant, and has been running at about 2.00 in recent years, according to the available statistics. The majority of this inward flow of commuters comes from southwest Finland, but the total also includes maritime workers living in Sweden, especially in the Stockholm region. The shipping firms also use labour from other Baltic countries, but only to a very limited extent.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to obtain accurate figures of the corresponding flow of “outward commuters” from Åland. Drawing upon various sources, the number of people resident in Åland who “commute out” to maritime workplaces provided by shipping firms domiciled outside Åland has been estimated at 320, though it could be as high as 600-700. Even if we accept the most conservative estimate, this means that a significant share of Åland's qualified maritime personnel is employed by non-Ålandic companies, or by Åland shipping companies on board foreign-registered tonnage.<sup>15</sup>

### Finland

#### Finland-Russia

Finland and Russia share a very long border. It was closed for nearly 70 years, although close economic ties existed between the former Soviet Union and Finland. With no regional collaboration in place<sup>16</sup>,

12 Position: 2008. Øresund trends. <http://www.tendensoresund.org/sv/pendlingen-over-oresund/pendling3.jpg>

13 Position: 2005. Nordic commuter map.

14 M&W Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH.

15 Country report Åland 2008

16 Eskelinen, Heikki: 2008. P. 7. “Market-driven Processes in an Altered Geopolitical Context: Evolving Patterns of Cross-border Interaction in the Finnish-Russian Case” Paper presented at the Border Regions in Transition IX Conference [http://publicadmin.uvic.ca/brit\\_ix/papers/eskelinen.pdf](http://publicadmin.uvic.ca/brit_ix/papers/eskelinen.pdf)



labour mobility has no tradition on this border. The current interest in this is great; however, especially so on the Finnish side, since the Karelia region is seriously affected by an ageing population and migration to other parts of Finland. Since 1992, there has been a border-crossing cooperation treaty between the two countries, in the wake of which special working groups, too, were formed on the two sides. In 1998, the Karelia Euroregion was established. On the Finnish side, it links the municipalities of North Karelia, Kainuu, Oulu and, on the Russian side, the Republic of Karelia. To date, collaboration has focused on the creation of an infrastructure and on social, cultural and economic coordination. To this was added the placement of Russian seasonal workers in agriculture. No cross-border commuter figures worth mentioning are known at present. The situation is slightly better when it comes to estimating seasonal workers. In 2003, 1,100 work permits were issued in North Karelia, incl. 77% for seasonal work in farming. The permits are valid for 3-4 months, and 94% of these were issued to Russian nationals.<sup>17</sup> By now, the number of seasonal workers already runs into “several thousands”.<sup>18</sup> The share of Russians working seasonally in agriculture all over Finland has expanded following the enlargement of the EU. This is explained by the Finnish government, *inter alia*, with improved collaboration at the border in seasonal-work issues.<sup>19</sup>

The population total in North Karelia is still falling in all regions. It is estimated that the region will lose approx. 27,000 people capable of work between 2000 and 2030. This translates into an acute labour shortage.<sup>20</sup> By 2013, a further 4,200-5,700 Russian nationals are expected to immigrate to North Karelia.<sup>21</sup>

There is even less data material available about commuters from Finland to Russia. Nor can much commuting be expected in that direction, since – in theory – commuters usually start to cross borders for better pay. The town of Imatra in South Karelia advertises the region with the business model “Production in Russia – Management in Finland” since the route is short enough to enable daily commutes.<sup>22</sup> The production locations would then be in St Petersburg or in the federal state of Leningrad, to where managers could commute daily, where necessary. It was not possible to establish just how many of such business models there are, and how large the number of such commuters is.

17 Ibid, P. 26.

18 Eskelinen 2008. P. 6.

19 Report to the Parliament on the Impacts of the Transition Period Act and the Free Movement of Labour and Services on the Labour Market Situation in Different Sectors. [Given to the Parliament 8th of March 2006] [http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/99\\_pdf/en/01\\_ministry/vns-en.pdf](http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/99_pdf/en/01_ministry/vns-en.pdf)

20 Arosara, Tuukka. 2004. P. 10. “Työvoiman liikkuvuudesta Pohjois-Karjalan ja Karjalan tasavallan välillä.” SPATIA Raportteja 3/2004. [http://www.joensuu.fi/spatia/julkaisut/rap2004\\_3.pdf](http://www.joensuu.fi/spatia/julkaisut/rap2004_3.pdf)

21 Ibid. P. 24.

22 Euroregion Karelia. [http://vuoksi.etelakarjala.fi/sijoittautumismuistio/eng\\_web.pdf](http://vuoksi.etelakarjala.fi/sijoittautumismuistio/eng_web.pdf)

### **Finland – Estonia**

Although some 4.000 Finnish companies are registered in Estonia and we may also assume the existence of Finnish cross-border commuters, it is regrettable that no useful data are available here. Only one survey assumes about 500 Fins commuting across the border.<sup>23</sup>

### **Estonia**

#### **Estonia – Finland**

Some 10.000-13.000 employees probably commute from Estonia to Finland and work, above all, in construction, transport, gastronomy, housekeeping and health.<sup>24</sup> Another estimate even assumes 20.000 employees.<sup>25</sup>

From 2002 to 2008, the **centre for the Finnish labour market** was located in Tallinn. Its tasks included the provision of information and attending to people interested in the Finnish labour market. The centre's services were free of charge and available for all interested parties. In the meantime, there is a EURES office in Tallinn staffed by two who perform advisory tasks for cross-border commuters.

### **Latvia**

#### **Latvia – Estonia**

Since 1995, there has been a cooperation treaty in place between Estonia and Latvia covering the fields of culture, sports, training, urban development, environment and business. An Estonian-Latvian committee also exists for border-crossing cooperation with the following brief:

- coordination of vocational training and language skills;
- simpler border crossing;
- issuance of identification codes for Latvians working in Estonia;
- simpler access to nursing;
- organisation of bus routes between the two states.

No precise data on cross-border commuters can be given, since no estimates or extrapolations are available. In the opinion of economic experts, up to 3,000 Estonians work in Latvia. In summer 2007, a total of 1.373 companies of Estonian provenance were doing business in Latvia. Although the two facts do not permit any inferences about cross-border commuters, these do confirm the assumption that the cross-border commuter volume has grown since the two countries joined the European Union.

One investigation arrives at about 1.000 cross-border commuters in all, one half each from Estonia and Latvia<sup>26</sup>. In the Estonian-Latvian twin towns of Valga (EE) and Valka (LV), close cross-border coopera-

23 M&W Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH.

24 EURES Estonia. <http://www.eures.ee/6909>

25 M&W Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH.

26 M&W Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH.



tion exists between the towns' authorities. Still, the cross-border commuter figures are said to be very low.

## **Lithuania**

### **Lithuania-Latvia**

From 2004 to 2007, approx. 90.000 Lithuanians and 48.000 Latvians were registered in the UK and Ireland, so that countries in the Baltic region were not the main destinations for employees seeking work abroad. Since the pay differences between the two countries, too, are very low, we may assume that commuting between these two states is also very low. Both from Lithuania and from Latvia, 500 people each are said to be cross-border commuters.<sup>27</sup>

## **Poland**

### **Poland – Lithuania**

Here, one study proceeds from some 200 Polish cross-border commuters in Lithuania. In the opposite direction, no data are available.<sup>28</sup>

### **Poland – Germany**

In 2007 and 2008, Germany was an important destination country for Polish migrant workers. In these years, between 190.000 and 230.000 Polish seasonal workers were employed there. It is also assumed that approx. 43.500 Poles have long-term jobs in Germany. Investigations reckon with 1.350 cross-border commuters between the two countries. Of these, 1.200 are Polish nationals, with a mere 150 German commuters.<sup>29</sup> No further data were available.

## **b) Youth unemployment**

To obtain an overview of developments in youth unemployment in the countries of the Baltic region, the Working Group used as basis the data from EUROSTAT in order to have a common comparable data base. EUROSTAT itself compiles no data. Collection is by the statistics authorities of the member states. They examine and analyse national data and transmit these to EUROSTAT. Its task is to match and align the data and ensure that they are comparable, i.e. drawn up using uniform methods. Hence, the data published by EUROSTAT have been harmonized as far as possible.

At the same time, the Working-Group members also wish to point out that different computational methods are certainly used in the various countries' statistics, which then also yield different results.

Irrespective of the specific computational method employed, however, the level of unemployment among young people is a major

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> MkW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH.

challenge for all countries. Using the EUROSTAT data as basis, the bandwidth of the unemployment rate among young people ranges from 5,1 in Åland till 36,1 % in Estonia (data basis EUROSTAT 31 July 2009).

### General overview

The main causes of youth unemployment are a too small supply of training places and jobs, difficulties in job orientation in the transition from school to work, qualification deficits after school attendance, lack of training maturity, sometimes too high expectations on the part of business, little contact between school and the world of work, lack of motivation in individual young people for school and/or training, young people dropping out from their secondary schools or leaving them without any certificate, physical disabilities, social risk environment (problems in the family, drugs and alcoholism), or a combination of different factors.

The Working Group obtained detailed information on local youth unemployment and on the measures being taken to reduce it from experts heard at meetings in the various host countries. In all countries we find a multitude of activities in place designed to lower unemployment among young people. In their quality, strategies and effects, they must be viewed and assessed against the background of existing school and company training structures, the various groups involved and the specific challenges in the countries concerned.

The Working Group made no evaluations. Nor was this included in its terms of reference. Instead, it regards this report as a summarizing account of the important issues involved that may move them in fact to the centre stage of political action. Individual measures or best-practice examples from the various countries are described in order to provide ideas and examine the possible adoption of any or all of the measures. All the same, the Working Group, drawing its conclusions from the information received and the discussions held, has produced recommendations that may help combat youth unemployment even more vigorously, starting at a very early stage on preventive activities at school.

It seems to be evident that young people in some parts of the Baltic Sea region are more affected by the *Global Financial Crisis* than the rest of the population. Especially in Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania the youth unemployment has increased dramatically between 2008 and June 2009.<sup>30</sup> Finally the time period from the beginning of this crisis until now is too short to come to any reliable estimation.

30 See Artikel Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 21 July 2009, Die Zeit, 30 July 2009 and Study of the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund, Crisis affects younger and older employers significantly, July 2009

## Denmark

### Youth unemployment in Denmark:<sup>31</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
6.2	8.3	7.4	9.2	8.2	8.6	7.7	7.9	7.6	11,3*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Denmark

The **youth unemployment programme** is a combination of active labour-market policy and stiffer sanctions. The training programmes are geared toward young people without vocational training and last up to 18 months. If a job offer is refused, any pay-replacement benefits are discontinued in full.

“**Youth Guidance Centre**”/production school – The Youth Guidance Center refers young people whose everyday life at school is problematical (e.g. “notorious truants”) to craft-oriented production schools preparing young people for a job.

## Norway

### Youth unemployment in Norway:<sup>32</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
9.8	10.0	10.8	11.2	11.2	11.4	8.6	7.3	7.2	10,3*

\*May 2009

At present, youth unemployment in Norway is at a near historic low. The fall in unemployment among young people until end-2008 reflects developments in general unemployment. Also, only a small number of young people are affected by long-term unemployment. The share of the long-term unemployed is much higher among adults than among young people.

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment

**Youth guarantee** – The parliament has called upon the government to introduce a youth guarantee. All young people below the age of 25 are to have a right to work, training or a short-term job.

**Support guarantee for young people aged 20-24** – Unemployed young people aged 20-24 receive a special support guarantee from the state employment authority within three months of losing a job. It contains comprehensive advice and measures for work motivation.

**Support guarantee for school drop-outs** – The regional authorities organize a support service for young people who drop out of secondary school or are at risk of dropping out.

31 EUROSTAT. Harmonized unemployment data. 2009 data; position: July 2009

32 EUROSTAT

The present government has suggested gearing education policy more toward the labour market. Training measures, too, should become more practice-relevant in order to ease integration into working life.

## Sweden

### Youth unemployment in Sweden<sup>33</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
10.5	10.9	11.9	13.4	16.3	21.7	21.5	19.1	20.0	29,7*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Sweden

**Lowering the social-security contributions** – For people aged between 18 and 25, employers have lower outlays for social security. This is now to be extended to age 26 as well. Simultaneously, the employment agency is stepping up the matching process (perfect-fit qualification for the labour market) for unemployed young people.

**“Jobbgarantin för unga”** (job guarantee for young people) – Young people receive in-depth support in job seeking, e.g. application training. In return, participants must produce evidence of increased efforts in job seeking. The pay-replacement benefits involved are financed from unemployment insurance. At the start of the programme, these payments are higher than in the case of the general job guarantee for the long-term unemployed. The programme initially runs for 15 months or until the participant is in employment which no longer requires pay-replacement benefits.

## Åland

### Youth unemployment in Åland

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
3.5	2.8	3.0	4.3	4.8	4.1	5.3	4.6	4.2	5.1*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Åland

The aim of the **“katapult youth project”** is to create a permanent, well-functioning and flexible method that leads to the integration of young unemployed into the labour market. The project’s target group is that of young people aged between 16 and 24 who have no vocational training.

## Finland

### Youth unemployment in Finland<sup>34</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
21.4	19.8	21.0	21.8	20.7	20.1	18.7	16.5	16.5	22,5*

\*June 2009

#### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Finland

**“Outreach work”** – The Finnish government is making particular efforts on behalf of young people who are not in training or employment. The government has pencilled in € 30.5m to reach these young people. The education ministry, for example, makes funds available for the organization of “*Youth workshops*” to reach the missing young people.

**National plan of action for labour-market policy** – The long-term objective anchored in the plan was a qualification offensive for young people at the interface of schooling and the labour market. By 2008, 96% of all comprehensive-school leavers were to be integrated into other education measures. An evaluation is still pending.

**JobCoaching** – Young people are supported not only in their search for a job, but also in their efforts to adapt to a new work environment. A job coach can look after young people for the first few weeks or months in a new job and help tackle the difficult transition period.

## Estonia

### Youth unemployment in Estonia<sup>35</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
23.9	23.1	17.6	20.6	21.7	15.9	12.0	10.0	12.0	36,1*

\*June 2009

#### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Estonia

Estonia’s employment agency offers the young unemployed various services designed to help re-integrate them into the labour market:

**Information** about the labour market and promoting integration.

**Personal advice and help** in planning a vocational professional career, supported by psychological tests and analysis of the various skills.

**Work practice through internships and “non-profit work”** between three and four months to give unemployed young people an opportunity to gain experience in everyday company life and/or to learn work habits.

<sup>34</sup> EUROSTAT

<sup>35</sup> EUROSTAT

**Encouraging the setting up of companies** by providing financial and qualifying support. The preconditions are a minimum age of 18 years as well as completed commercial/economics studies or the attendance of business courses.

## Latvia

### Youth unemployment in Latvia<sup>36</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
21.4	22.9	22.0	18.0	18.1	13.6	12.2	10.7	13.1	32,2*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Latvia

The **“Career Day” project** gives employers an opportunity to offer an interested and competent job seeker a job or work-experience placement, and to collect data on potential applicants.

The **shadow-day project** gives pupils an opportunity to accompany and watch an employee at work as “shadow”, and to gain experience.

**Training courses for deaf and hearing-impaired young job seekers** – The higher school for skilled trades in Riga provided deaf and hearing-impaired young job seekers with valuable skills as interior decoration specialists, finishing work workers, plumbers, electricians, florists, making a contribution toward improving their employability. A special training course was developed with suitable teaching material and learning aids.

## Lithuania

### Youth unemployment in Lithuania<sup>37</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
30.6	30.9	22.4	25.1	22.7	15.7	9.8	8.2	13.4	29,2*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Lithuania

The **JobCenters for young people** give youngsters information about new jobs, training options, help in career planning and in adapting to changes in labour-market policy.

**Social integration of offenders** – The objective of the project was to break through the vicious circle leading to more crime and to improve the social skills of teenagers released from prison. The idea here is to prepare young offenders for re-integration into society by fostering their adaptability and providing training in a trade, e.g., a baker’s.

36 EUROSTAT

37 EUROSTAT



## Poland

### Youth unemployment in Poland<sup>38</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
35.1	39.5	42.5	41.9	39.6	36.9	29.8	21.7	17.3	19,1*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Poland

The following measures address “unemployed in special situations on the labour market”:

- probationary employment (for unemployed under 25 years);
- scholarships amounting to 40% of unemployment benefits for 12 months granted to unemployed under 25 with no vocational/professional qualifications who now acquire these through schooling or studies;
- duty of an employment agency to offer an unemployed person under 25 and over 50 a job within 6 months of registration.

The **dream-school project** was designed to improve the education options for pupils in rural primary, middle and secondary schools and in schools with a share of at least 35% of pupils from rural areas. After submission of a development plan, schools in rural regions receive grants to extend the education opportunities of their pupils, enhance their curricula and further train the teachers. Within the scope of the project, 250,000 hours were expended on extracurricular further education and training courses in which 85,000 pupils and 5,000 teachers participated.

**Working mum** – Job integration programmes for mothers of disabled children. The women were given adequate IT equipment for online courses to become self-employed and taught flexible working methods. In the course of the project, any fears associated with the use of information technologies were dismantled. This led to a boost to the women’s self-esteem and had a positive overall impact on their situation on the labour market.

## Germany

### Youth unemployment in Germany<sup>39</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
7.5	7.7	9.1	9.8	11.9	14.2	12.8	11.1	9.9	10.9*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Germany

**Training Pact** between the Federal Government and industry. Indus-

38 EUROSTAT

39 EUROSTAT

try committed itself to creating yearly 60,000 new training positions and encouraged 30,000 companies to start offering training places. The various sectors agreed to create 40,000 new internship positions annually to enhance company-based entrance qualifications. The Federal Government undertook to subsidize 40,000 positions in the next 3 years.

The Federal Government wants to establish at least a 7% share for training places in the public service requiring compulsory social insurance. The Federal Government has committed itself to continuing the training programme between the central government and the federal states (*Bund-Länder-Ausbildungsprogramm-Ost 2007*) until 2010 with an overall volume of 22,000 positions.

**Vocational-training bonus** – Companies that create additional training places and fill these with applicants in need of special help (e.g. young people without a completed school education), receive financial support from the state. This can be a one-off amount of between € 4,000 and 6,000.

**Integration and qualification grant for younger people under 25** – The integration grant targets younger employees with a vocational qualification, and the qualification grant those without a vocational qualification. The subsidy is based on a max. gross pay of € 1,000/month.

**JobPerspective** – A special employer subsidy was launched for those in long-term unemployment, over 18 years of age, capable of work but in need of help, with special placement handicaps. The precondition is that an unsuccessful attempt has already been made here for at least 6 months to find employment on the labour market for the person in need of help, and that there is no reason to expect any integration into the general labour market during the next 24 months.

**Entry qualification for youths** – The programme gives young people access to vocational training. The project's target group is that of adolescent training applicants with restricted placement perspectives and young people who do not yet have the full trainability required. They can obtain this in the course of one year and may then be accepted for a course of training. The takeover rate stood at approx. 70% in the last two years.

## Schleswig-Holstein

### Youth unemployment in Schleswig-Holstein<sup>40</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
7.1	9.4	10.7	9.7	14.8	15.4	13.3	12.9	*	*

\* No precise EUROSTAT data available

**Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Schleswig-Holstein**

**Project ‘school and world of work’** – Young people are to be prepared even better while at school already for their later training and occupations. For this the state (Schleswig-Holstein), the European Union and regional organizers will be investing some € 55m by 2013. The young people are pinpointedly addressed in their transition from leaving general-education schools and their entry into vocational training or the world of work – this usually starts in grade 8 of the education path at lower secondary general-education schools or support centres and extends all the way to the career-entry phase at vocational schools. Action is taken here in the “flexible transition phase”, in support centres and career-entry classes.<sup>41</sup>

The **alliance for training** aims at offering places to all trainable and young people willing to undergo training. The partners in the alliance ensure that additional training places are created to achieve this objective. The alliance was forged for the first time in 1997 by the chambers, associations, trade unions, the state employment agency and the state government. In the past few years, the alliance for training has made a crucial contribution toward offering every trainable and willing young person a place in Germany’s dual education system of in-firm training and vocational school.

**Mecklenburg-West Pomerania**

**Youth unemployment in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania<sup>42</sup>**

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
12.0	13.0	14.7	19.8	19.2	20.8	20.3	19.4	*	*

*\*No precise EUROSTAT data available*

**Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania**

**Production schools** offer one possibility of integrating young people into working life.<sup>43</sup> As separate practical training facilities located between general-education schools and the labour market, they offer young people (aged 15 to 25) a possible leg-up at any time in the school-to-work transition on a voluntary basis with an application procedure, depending on their level of learning.

Production schools focus on the social and economic participation of young people. The aim, thanks to integration into work and society, is for young people to gain a perspective for their future and

41 Country Portal Schleswig-Holstein. [http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/Bildung/DE/SchuleWirtschaft/HandlungskonzeptSchuleUndArbeitswelt/HandlungskonzeptSchuleUndArbeitswelt\\_node.html](http://www.schleswig-holstein.de/Bildung/DE/SchuleWirtschaft/HandlungskonzeptSchuleUndArbeitswelt/HandlungskonzeptSchuleUndArbeitswelt_node.html)

42 EUROSTAT

43 National Union of Production Schools. <http://www.bv-produktionsschulen.de/downloads/Fachkonzept-Produktionsschule-12-03-09.pdf>

for their lives, and to become personalities acting under their own responsibility. For this, production schools develop offers of assistance in orientation, preparation, qualification and training.

## Hamburg

### Youth unemployment in Hamburg<sup>44</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
-/-	-/-	9.9	-/-	14.3	14.8	15.9	11.6	*	*

\*No precise EUROSTAT data available

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment in Hamburg

In the **Hamburg training-place programme (HAP)** young people with poor starting opportunities can finish in-firm training, backed by a social worker. The *HAP* is available for young people with and without lower secondary general-education certificates who have attended a measure preparing them for a vocation and whose job maturity has been established.

**Entry qualification for young people EQ** is a company-based internship in which the participants work in a firm and acquire basic skills for a recognized trade.

## Russia

### Youth unemployment in Russia<sup>45</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
25.	26.7	26.5	28.9	28.1	28.4	31.1	29.6	29.4	29*

\*No precise data are available.

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment

The Working Group had no information at its disposal, because the Russian working group member never attended in its meetings.

## Iceland

### Youth unemployment in Iceland<sup>46</sup>

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
4.7	4.8	7.2	8.2	8.1	7.2	8.4	7.2	8.2	21.9*

\*June 2009

### Examples of measures against youth unemployment

The Working Group had no information at its disposal, because Iceland did not nominate any MP to participate in its meetings.

<sup>44</sup> EUROSTAT

<sup>45</sup> ROSSTAT

<sup>46</sup> OECD Statistics, EUROSTAT Statistics for Iceland not available



## 5 Sessions and dates of the Working Group

<p><b>October 2007</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitation with a request to nominate members to the Working Group was sent to Speakers of the member Parliaments and parliamentary organizations of the BSPC on 24 October 2007.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 March 2008</b> (Berlin, Germany)</p>	<p><b>First meeting</b> of the Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairmanship, mandate and timeframe,</li> <li>• Discussion on problems and WG priorities, working plan and activities,</li> <li>• Presentation on commuting and youth unemployment in the Baltic Sea region by <b>Mr. Franz Thönnnes</b>, Chairman of the BSPC Working Group, MP, Parliamentary State Secretary to the German Minister of Labour and Social Affairs,</li> <li>• Presentation of the work of the Information Centre <i>Grænse-Grenze</i> in Padborg by <b>Ms. Andrea Kunsemüller</b>, former leader of the Information Center Padborg.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5 May 2008</b> (Helsinki, Finland)</p>	<p><b>Second meeting</b> of the Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on commuting and youth unemployment in Finland by <b>Ms. Tarja Cronberg</b>, MP, Federal Minister of Labour, Finland, and <b>Ms. Laila Lankinen</b>, representative of Helsinki City,</li> <li>• Presentation on trade-union views and positions on commuters in the Baltic Sea region and the Baltic Sea Labour Network (BASTUN) by <b>Mr. Mika Häkkinen</b>, representative of BASTUN,</li> <li>• Reports of the WG members on commuting and youth unemployment,</li> <li>• Half-time report to the 17<sup>th</sup> BSPC in Visby,</li> <li>• Working plan 2008-2009.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1-2 September 2008</b> (Visby, Sweden)</p>	<p>Presentation of the Working Group's progress to the 17<sup>th</sup> BSPC in Visby (Sweden) – half-time report by the Chairman</p>

<p><b>29 September 2008</b> (Oslo, Norway)</p>	<p><b>Third meeting</b> of the Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on Information and Case-handling Procedures for Immigration Workers by <b>Mr. Per Brannsten</b>, Director Strategy and <b>Ms. Berit Alfsen</b>, EURES Manager of the Norwegian Directorate of Employment and Welfare,</li> <li>• Presentation on Reforms of Policy in the Labour and Welfare Field; Political Considerations by <b>Mr. Jan-Erik Støstad</b>, State Secretary to the Norwegian Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion,</li> <li>• Presentation on employers' views and positions on commuters and youth unemployment in the Baltic Sea region by <b>Mr. Sverker Rudeberg</b>, Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and member of BUSINESSEUROPE,</li> <li>• Resolution 17<sup>th</sup> BSPC in Visby,</li> <li>• Half-time report,</li> <li>• Working plan for 2008/2009.</li> </ul>
<p><b>21/22 January 2009</b> (Copenhagen, Denmark)</p>	<p><b>Fourth meeting</b> of the Working Group,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations on commuters and youth unemployment in the Øresund region by <b>Mr. Mikael Stamming</b>, Director of the Committee of Øresund, <b>Mr. Anders Oldhov</b>, Managing Director of the Øresund secretariat, <b>Ms. Eva Eilstrup</b>, Counsellor to the organization of commuters in the Øresund region,</li> <li>• Visit to information centre in Malmö,</li> <li>• Discussion about main questions concerning final report,</li> <li>• Working plan 2009.</li> </ul>
<p><b>30/31 March or</b> (Tallinn, Estonia)</p>	<p><b>Fifth meeting</b> of the Working Group,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations on commuters and youth unemployment in Estonia by <b>Ms. Kerstin Peterson</b>, advisor, and <b>Ms. Annika Sepp</b>, Chief Specialist, Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs,</li> <li>• Presentation on the work of the Finnish Working Life Information Point in Tallinn by <b>Ms. Eve Kyntäjä</b>, Head of the Finnish Life Information Point in Tallinn,</li> <li>• Presentation on the work of the VBSS WG for cooperation on children at risk (WGCC) by <b>Ms. Anniki Tikerpuu</b>, Head of the Family and Children Department, Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs,</li> <li>• Draft final report and recommendations on the draft resolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> BSPC in Nyborg</li> </ul>

<p><b>11/12 May 2009</b> (Berlin, Germany)</p>	<p><b>Last meeting</b> of the Working Group,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final report,</li> <li>• Recommendations for the draft resolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> BSPC in Nyborg,</li> <li>• Presentations on Youth Unemployment in Germany by <b>Mr. Ralf Buchholz</b> and <b>Ms. Katrin Göggel</b>, desk officers, German Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs,</li> <li>• Work of EURES and Commuting Figures by <b>Dr. Wolfgang Müller</b>, representative of EURES, German Employment Agency.</li> </ul>
<p><b>31 August 2009</b> (Nyborg, Denmark)</p>	<p><b>18<sup>th</sup> BSPC in Nyborg, Denmark,</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the Working Group's final report</li> </ul>

Working Group on Labour Market and Social Welfare



## 6. Members of the Working Group

**Mr. Franz Thönnnes**, MP, Germany, Chairman, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs

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**Mr. Göte Wahlström**, MP, Sweden, Member of the Nordic Council Welfare Committee

**Mr. Janne Seurujärvi**, MP, Finland, Member of the Nordic Council Business and Industry Committee

**Ms. Barbro Sundback**, MP, Åland

**Ms. Marion Pedersen**, MP, Denmark

**Ms. Tatjana Muravjova**, MP, Estonia, Chairperson of the Social-Affairs Committee of the Baltic Assembly

**Ms. Krista Anni Susanna Huovinen**, MP, Finland

**Ms. Gabi Dobusch**, MP, Hamburg

**Ms. Silva Bendrāte**, MP, Latvia, Chairperson of the Social-Affairs Committee of the Baltic Assembly

**Mr. Gediminas Navaitis**, MP, Lithuania, Chairman of the Social-Affairs Committee in the Baltic Assembly

**Mr. Werner Kuhn**, MP, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania

**Mr. Wolfgang Baasch**, MP, Schleswig-Holstein

**Mr. Per Rune Henriksen**, MP, Norway, Member of the Standing Committee on Labour and Social Affairs

**Ms. Dorota Arciszewska-Mielewczyk**, MP, Poland, Senator

**Mr. Vladimir Nikitin**, MP, Russia

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**Ms. Sabine Herget**, Office Manager of MP and Parliamentary State Secretary Franz Thönnnes, German Bundestag



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