

Hamburg is the metropolis of northern Germany and the gateway to both northern and eastern Europe. The city state of Hamburg is one of the Federal Republic of Germany's 16 federal states. With its 1.757 million inhabitants, it is also the second largest German city. The whole world can feel at home in Hamburg – thanks to its mercantile and seafaring tradition, this city at the water's edge has for centuries had a cosmopolitan flair.

As both a hub and an engine of Baltic trade, Hamburg has benefited from its good economic, cultural and political relations with cities, regions and states all around the Baltic Sea ever since the Middle Ages. Economies in the 10 countries around the Baltic, with a joint population of nearly 90 million, are growing with more dynamism than elsewhere. Hamburg has become the hub of European trade in the Baltic Sea Region, with Baltic and eastern European trade today accounting for about one third of all containers handled in Hamburg.

Hamburg is a waterfront metropolis. The Elbe is its lifeline and the port its heart and growth motor. The distinctive nature of the city can be sensed most clearly in the harbour, whether in the historical warehouse quarter, the "Speicherstadt", or in "Altenwerder", the world's most modern container terminal.

Hamburg has a reputation as a centre of creativity and learning. In addition to its public universities, Hamburg's excellent private universities are the gateway to the world for many international students. And the city's lively high culture and sub-culture scenes provide a stimulating environment and excellent opportunities for creative artists of every kind.

The **Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation** (BSSSC) is a political network for decentralised authorities (subregions) in the Baltic Sea Region. The BSSSC was founded in Stavanger, Norway, in 1993. Its participants are regional authorities of the 10 Baltic Sea littoral states. The BSSSC co-operates closely with other key Baltic Sea Region and European organisations and institutions.

The main organisational bodies of BSSSC are: The Chairperson (elected by the Board on a rotational basis for a two-year period), the Board, consisting of two representatives of each of the BSR countries, the Secretariat, which follows the Chairperson, ad hoc work groups and a Brussels contact point, also called Brussels Antenna.

BSSSC's Values are:

- To be a credible organisation representing the views of subregions in the BSR.
- To be a knowledge-based organisation.
- To be a visible and recognisable organisation.
- To be an organisation which is flexible and receptive to changes.

BSSSC attaches importance to close co-operation with other policy formulating Baltic Sea organisations.

BSSSC's Work shall focus on:

- Acting as a Pan-Baltic organisation open to all regions around the entire Baltic Sea Region, bringing added value to regional co-operation on every side of the Baltic Sea.
- Using its image as a political organisation and a regional partner to the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) to promote and advocate the interests of the regions of the Baltic Sea area to decision makers, such as national governments and EU.
- Providing expertise, best practice examples and implementation capacity.



Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation

**Hamburg Chairmanship
2009 – 2010**



Chairmanship of the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation for 2009 – 2010.

The Baltic Sea Region is an impressive growth area and has for years been a focal region of Hamburg politics. We see the invitation to Hamburg to assume the chairmanship of the BSSSC as an expression of appreciation of the city's commitment to the Baltic Sea Region. We hope to continue the successful work of the BSSSC in the coming two years. Our goal is to harness the huge potential of the Baltic region and to highlight it further, both within the European Union and internationally.

Carsten-Ludwig Lüdemann
State Secretary
Commissioner for Federal, European and
Foreign Affairs
Chairman of BSSSC 2009 - 2010

The Hamburg Senate Chancellery will provide the **BSSSC Secretariat** until 2010. The Senate Chancellery handles and co-ordinates the work of the Hamburg state government and supports the First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg in the exercise of his duties and responsibilities.

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