

Baltic Sea Youth Meeting in Szczecin, March 2013

"The Baltic Sea Youth Meeting" was yet another gathering of the BSSSC Working Group on Youth Policy which, in addition to its members, involved representatives of other Baltic organisations and networks, including the B7 Baltic Islands Networks, UBC, the Four Corners Youth Parliament and the Centre for Youth Cooperation. Between 21 & 23 March, members of the Baltic organisations from Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Germany came to Szczecin to join young people from the Westpomeranian and Pomeranian Regions in developing a future model for international cooperation.

During the meeting, the Organisations Fair was held to give participants the opportunity to demonstrate what their organisations do. The Central Information Point on European Funds informed them on how effectively the Westpomeranian Region had been using EU funds. The so-called "future" workshop was the key event of the meeting. During this workshop, participants analysed the areas in which cooperation had not been satisfactory, and determined what needed to be done for cooperation at large to work smoothly. Next, they identified and outlined some specific actions to be undertaken. Some interesting ideas for cooperation were put forward at the meeting:

- an online resource base for Baltic Sea Region youth organisations, operated and updated by young leaders
- the Knowledge and Organisations fair – a 2-3-day meeting of Baltic youth organisations funded from the Youth in Action programme and the participants' own resources, a place where organisations will have the opportunity to present on and learn about projects carried out by organisations from the Baltic Sea region.
- a website managed and updated by youth leaders from the respective regions

Moreover, the young people visited Strefa 89 (the 89 Zone) in Szczecin, a place where both freelancers and people working off site can go to in order to do their jobs in the so-called open space, meet other sole entrepreneurs and take part in meetings and workshops featuring leading figures in science and business. They also went to the Szczecin Incubator of Culture. There, in the "old cinema", they learnt about the activities and the potential of the Incubator.

The meeting saw a leader of the Kiel Baltic Sea Secretariat for Youth Affairs demonstrate a concept for the Baltic Sea Youth Forum, whose aim will be operate as an umbrella organisation for all the youth establishments within the Baltic organisations, including BSSSC, CBSS and B7, to more effectively get their ideas across to decision makers.

On the last meeting day, a session was held, with the Finnish side proceeding with the preparations for the next BSSSC youth conference in Helsinki, to take place this year in October.