



LIEUVOS IŠSĖTINĖS SKLEROZĖS SĄJUNGA
LITHUANIAN MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS UNION

Support for Civil Society and Equality in Baltic

PROPOSALS
FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND
EQUALITY IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

April 2016

Sustainability of the Network and Cooperation with Legislators

- ▶ Create Nordic and global networks working in multicultural settings for sharing experiences, education and thematic issues
- ▶ Creating the list of existing NGOs in Baltic countries to find each other for joint collaboration
- ▶ Build new networks responding to relevant needs (like Network for Spiritual Care and Migration)
- ▶ Create a guide containing the relevant legal information related to civil society and volunteering
- ▶ Play a stronger, visible role in advocating for changes in law, policies, procedures and regulations
- ▶ Create a commission consisting of representatives of NGOs to analyze and report on laws regulating NGOs and the legislation systems in the Baltic Region; share findings with partners in the Baltic Region
- ▶ Simplify and unify formal principles and rules of creating new associations and foundations in the Baltic region
- ▶ Establish closer cooperation between representatives of the Baltic region and the European Commission and Parliament
- ▶ Establish the Women's Parliament of the Baltic Sea Countries
- ▶ Establish the Women's Forum of the Baltic Region to support the professional and economic development of women
- ▶ Establish a Centre of Folk Art of the Baltic Sea Countries
- ▶ Work effectively with the resources you already have; NGOs have employees, volunteers, places to work in and local networks throughout the country
- ▶ Make sure any salary ensures a decent life
- ▶ Examine the level of national security in the Baltic region
- ▶ Prepare ethical rules for intercultural and interreligious dialogue; spot inequalities in society and react to them at every level of society – from the grassroots level to political advocacy

Cooperating among Organizations of the Network; Publicity

- ▶ Develop and use ways of inter-country communication
- ▶ Create info sheets about international and regional NGOs that operate in the Baltic Sea Region, and their activities; building on them, create a joint website and compile a database of NGOs in the region that informs about these NGOs and their activities
- ▶ Create a website for NGOs of the Baltic Sea countries that work to support women, children and young people
- ▶ Make a calendar for the school year presenting the Baltic countries; translate it into national languages and distribute it among students of Baltic countries
- ▶ Network to share knowledge on specific issues and information about what other NGOs in this region are doing and what they are aiming for; work proactively
- ▶ Organize a joint workshop on gender issues to identify challenges for effective implementation and monitoring of equal rights; support greater demand for and access to justice and human rights; to contract NGOs to provide free hotline services
- ▶ Share experiences of Global Media Monitoring Project 2015 with partners of the Baltic Project

Organizing International Events for the Network

- ▶ Organize experience exchange seminars regularly for the leaders of NGOs of the Baltic Sea countries
- ▶ Build vital forums for sharing good practices constantly (e.g. round table model in Ruuki, Northern Finland)
- ▶ Organize workshops and master classes for and by craftsmen (knitting, weaving, painting etc.) in different areas of Baltic and Nordic countries
- ▶ Organize a conference (incl. seminars, meetings) of NGOs in Russia (Kaliningrad) or Estonia

Forming International Partnerships with the Network; Developing Joint Projects

- ▶ Encourage international partnerships in national projects
- ▶ Help poorer countries in the region to improve the quality of life of their residents; to invest more in partnerships
- ▶ Ensure successful projects by inviting active and enthusiastic project partners; ensure that: 1) partners' goals are the same; 2) strong leader with a vision and ability to instruct project partners leads the project; 3) project is well-run, which inspires trust; 4) everybody respects deadlines and communicates well
- ▶ Motivate project partners to pool our expertise and write a project with a strong aim to bring together the various NGOs in the countries around the Baltic Sea in order to find ways to promote economic prosperity
- ▶ Link existing public sector and NGO cooperation projects with regional development and research projects and identify potential gaps
- ▶ Research the situation on the labor market in Nordic and Baltic countries and discuss ideas about possible projects on entrepreneurship
- ▶ Organize international exchange of researchers and teachers and identify potential partners in research and teaching projects in the Baltic Region; encourage education researchers to offer their expertise to educational organizations
- ▶ Offer project writing advice to project applicants who apply for grants to create micro-enterprises, small enterprises and individual merchants
- ▶ Invite colleagues from Nordic countries to participate in a new innovative project about empowerment via culture and behavioral approach in small rural communities; promote local industries and small businesses, especially crafts
- ▶ Invite experts to work on technological progress of the region together
- ▶ Collaborate with private sector on environment protection projects
- ▶ Find financing for a 3 to 5-year project "Development of the NGOs of the Baltic Sea countries"
- ▶ Continue cooperation with Nordic project partners – NGOs from Nordic and Baltic countries and Russia
- ▶ Establish contacts with People to People Denmark and discuss ideas of the new Nordic, Nordplus, EuropeAid and Erasmus+ projects
- ▶ Collaborate with the Polish partner in Erasmus+ VET project on entrepreneurship for young people and make research and virtual laboratory a learning platform together with other project partners

Fostering Creativity in NGO Members; Organizing Events

- ▶ Build prosperity via integration and activation of society; base that on folk traditions, folk wisdom, and generational solidarity, communication between different social and age groups, and Christian values
- ▶ Organize youth camps and promote collaboration between youth NGOs
- ▶ Organize a conference with the aim of helping government and donors form a more effective development strategy of labor market through strengthening institutions, staff training and improving management capacity
- ▶ Organize Nordic-Baltic Culture Days, small song and dance festivals, city and town festivals, exhibitions, fairs, concerts; involve all residents
- ▶ Create Cultural Evenings about the Baltic countries for young people, adults and seniors; promote mutual culture
- ▶ Discuss opportunities of cultural cooperation between Estonia and Kaliningrad: photo exhibitions, handicrafts exhibitions, possible participation in Old Town Days in Tallinn, etc.
- ▶ Organize a round table on effective methods of social inclusion of talented people with special needs through art and culture
- ▶ Collaborate among amateur theatre groups or other amateur artistic communities throughout the Baltic Region
- ▶ Polish NGOs collaborate with Lithuanian and Latvian NGOs to provide local Polish communities with Polish literature, books, magazines, and organize charities for poor Polish expat children; lobby for cultivation of Polish traditions abroad at a political level
- ▶ Boost cooperation by creating new solutions

Involving NGO Members and Partners in Learning Programs

- ▶ Educate society on politics and engagement in politics; make policy makers accountable to the people about promised decisions
- ▶ Liberal adult education is a basis for effective discussion of gender equality as well as equal treatment and inclusion of people and non-discrimination on any grounds – nationality, social status, sexuality; international projects greatly help to bring us closer, develop understanding of each others cultural habits and traditions, and redefine what we want to be and how
- ▶ Make use of liberal adult education as a good platform for projects
- ▶ Draft scenarios of activities for equality development, taking into account the current situation in each country of the Baltic Region, directed mostly at high school and university students
- ▶ Lead discussion and be a strong voice on sustainable development, natural and human values to make living sustainable; teach in schools about protection of the natural environment in the Baltic Region; organize joint cleanings and seminars on these subjects; share best practices
- ▶ Educate society on diversity and difference, especially in rural areas
- ▶ Use the knowledge and skills of researchers to meet the educational needs in local communities
- ▶ Organize seminars and workshops for young people about EU and international regulations of labor law
- ▶ Conduct research on the role of the NGOs of the Baltic Sea Region in protecting women's and children's rights
- ▶ Take into account questions of parenthood in multicultural families when building working models
- ▶ Lead health education for women and girls
- ▶ Organize training aimed at changing awareness among men about the role of women and relationships in civil (democratic) society
- ▶ Organize a seminar on language teaching methods based on the communicative approach in Riga, Latvia
- ▶ Organize workshops and master classes for different types of crafts
- ▶ Organize a stakeholder discussion on workplace violence, defining it as any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the workplace

Exchange of NGO Experience

- ▶ Share experience and good practice in the dissemination events of the Baltic project in Nordic and Baltic countries
- ▶ Facilitate international exchange of NGO employers and employees to get more experience
- ▶ Organize an experience exchange of NGO leaders and other experts in Estonia
- ▶ Exchange best practices and establish cooperation between NGO experts in lawmaking; make representation of NGO experts mandatory in the lawmaking process
- ▶ Cooperate with schools in education (teach part of the curriculum), especially about peace; include questions of gender; make contacts between schools, vocational schools and universities in Nordic and Baltic countries and Kaliningrad
- ▶ Create opportunities to exchange good practice among Nordic and Baltic countries and Poland on a governmental level by creating contacts with departments in local authorities dedicated to NGOs
- ▶ Learn the experience of other NGOs about cooperation with government authorities and use it in practice in your home country
- ▶ Cooperate between social enterprises in the Baltic Region – exchange experiences, solutions, practices
- ▶ Travel to other Baltic Region countries to exchange experience with the aim to develop entrepreneurship
- ▶ Investments in tourist and health sector in Baltic area; the role of NGO: promoting holiday resorts
- ▶ Create a working group to discuss increasing youth crime in Lithuania and share the good practices and methods used in Nordic countries
- ▶ Exchange experiences about the education systems of different countries using social media resources
- ▶ Collaborate between the Baltic countries to enhance their position in mobile phones industry on the world stage
- ▶ Perform joint research benefitting the development of maritime transport, particularly safety measures and navigation in the Baltic Sea using advanced tools
- ▶ Invite Nordic NGOs for youth and adult cultural exchange to live in partners' houses, with the hosting institution providing food, transport and cultural program, and vice versa
- ▶ Take measures that help pass on the experience of the older generation to the younger generation

Training NGO Staff, Attracting Volunteers

- ▶ Organize study courses on economics and project management for NGO experts and volunteers; NGOs can coordinate the expert network
- ▶ Hold seminars on teaching methods based on the communicative approach
- ▶ Learn about the problems NGOs have in their countries and find new solutions together by learning from each other
- ▶ Train NGO experts to create contacts with departments in local authorities dedicated to NGOs
- ▶ Organize lessons for youth on involvement in civil society in the context of the Baltic Sea Region
- ▶ Support NGO volunteers more; increasing the number of volunteers in NGOs
- ▶ Encourage active use of electronic media (e-mail, Skype and video connections instead of having everything on paper and travelling) to avoid environmental costs

Developing Immigrant Support Programs

- ▶ Integration and mental care of immigrants is to be a cooperation and responsibility between NGOs and public services; help immigrants in crisis on a case-by-case basis, organize peer support for immigrants
- ▶ Partner with universities of applied sciences for education and research in the field of migration
- ▶ Build a better system of public services for immigrants
- ▶ Work with common values and attitudes towards migration and spread the culture of encounters in society
- ▶ View migration as a cultural resource for Nordic countries
- ▶ Develop international family reunion policy in Finland

Involving Members of the Network in Advocacy; Focusing on Young People and People with Special Needs

- ▶ Deepen the dialogue between NGOs and international security institutions; engage more with elected representatives
- ▶ Inform local society about their strong voice as individuals through NGOs in order to solve local problems, to answer local needs and demands (bottom-up initiatives)
- ▶ Encourage official aid agencies and government ministries to adopt successful approaches developed in the NGO sector
- ▶ Promote stakeholder participation in all decision-making stages
- ▶ Advocate for human rights and equality on national and international level
- ▶ Lobby the unification of the rules regulating the labor market in the Baltic countries; implement the NGO petitions discussed with decision makers
- ▶ Present an evaluation of labor market policies for young people
- ▶ Ensure the education system provides skills needed for the labor market, especially languages
- ▶ Improve cooperation between NGOs and government services to develop new hospital and care services for disabled people
- ▶ Promote formation of coalitions of NGOs by allocating financing to them from the state budget and/or giving them tax breaks; try to solve immediate personal problems primarily through ties in the NGO sector
- ▶ Discuss and plan NGO funding with national governments
- ▶ Remove the burden of bureaucracy: incessant controls and reports
- ▶ Allocate special funding from the state budget to NGOs to solve urgent societal issues

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Support for Civil Society and Equality in Baltic, April 2016

Proposals were developed by the working groups of the following Baltic Sea region NGOs:

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- ✿ Eesti People to People, leader Ruta Pels
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