



III BALTIC SEA NGO FORUM



8–11 May 2003
TURKU SUOMI FINLAND

Baltic Sea NGO Forum is a meeting point for all kinds of non-governmental organisations from the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea. The aim of the forum is to strengthen civil society in the region by offering the NGOs in different Baltic Sea countries an opportunity to exchange ideas and develop new networks, and to carry on a dialogue with the public authorities.

We welcome all NGOs interested in Baltic Sea cooperation to participate in the III Baltic Sea NGO Forum in Turku. We also invite you to give your contribution to the preparatory process.



CITY OF TURKU

GENERAL INFORMATION

III Baltic Sea NGO Forum will be held in the Congress and Spa Hotel Caribia in Turku, 8th–11th May 2003. We expect that 350 NGO representatives from all Baltic Sea countries will participate in the forum. The languages of the forum are English, Russian and Finnish.

The forum is cross-sectoral and we welcome representatives of NGOs working in any field. NGOs active in environmental questions, women's rights, human rights, social and health issues, culture, and youth, as well as trade unions and national umbrella organisations have participated in the preparatory process.

Baltic Sea NGO Forums are held annually under the auspices of rotating presidencies of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS).

The congress is arranged under the patronage of the President of the Republic **Tarja Halonen**.

BACKGROUND

III Baltic Sea NGO Forum is a part of a process of annual forums. NGO meetings started when the Copenhagen NGO initiative arranged the NGO Conference in Copenhagen in March 2001. The I Baltic Sea NGO Forum was organised same year in May in Lubeck during the German presidency in the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), and the II Forum was held in St. Petersburg 2002.



FORUM PREPARATIONS

In each CBSS member country there is a preparatory committee and an NGO which acts as a national focal point, co-ordinating together the local preparations and informing the NGOs in the country. The Finnish organising committee is responsible for the practical arrangements and programme planning.

Representatives of the national committees had a joint preparatory meeting 17–18 October 2002 in Turku, where they agreed on the preparatory process and the programme outline of the forum. After the second international meeting on 14–15 February 2003 in Helsinki a preliminary programme will be published.

PROGRAMME

The programme consists of plenary sessions and four thematic working groups. The themes of the working groups are *From social exclusion to participation, Sustainable way of life, Cooperation between NGOs and public authorities, Women's rights as human rights*.

On Saturday morning there will be an open forum for different interest groups. Environmental organisations, social organisations, youth organisations, trade unions, women's organisations etc. have the opportunity to arrange a separate meeting to discuss any themes that are of interest to them. Anyone can take an initiative and call together a meeting.

During the forum there will be an information market for NGOs wishing to present their work.

"Northern Dimension – Human Dimension? Strengthening Civil Society in the Baltic Sea Region"

www.cbss-ngo-fin.org



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REGISTRATIONS

In each Baltic Sea country there is an organisation that acts as a national focal point. The focal point organisation takes registrations nationally and sends the Finnish secretariat the list of participants. NGOs wanting to participate in the forum or join in the preparations should contact the focal point of their coun-

try latest on 7 March 2003 and express their interest. The deadline for submitting the registration form may vary from country to country.

Registration fee is 100 Euros. For those coming from the Baltic countries, Russia and Poland, travel expenses are included in the registration fee.

Denmark

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Estonia

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Finland

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Germany

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Latvia

Friends of the Earth, Janis Matulis
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Lithuania

NGO Support Center in Klaipeda, Franziska Kathöfer
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Norway

Please contact: Finland-Russia Society, Päivi Kärnä
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Poland

Regional Information and Support Centre for NGOs, Gdansk, Joanna Szewczyk
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Russia

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Sweden

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CITY OF TURKU

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