

Aims. To promote co-operation in the Baltic Sea region in the field of trade, investment and economic exchanges, combating organized crime, civil security, culture and education, transport and communication, energy and environment, human rights and assistance to democratic institutions.

The Council meets at ministerial level once a year, chaired by rotating foreign ministers; it is the supreme decision-making body. Between annual sessions the Committee of Senior Officials and three working groups meet at regular intervals. The CBSS Commissioner on Democratic Development, Helle Degn (Denmark), appointed in Oct. 2000, acts independently to the Council, and supports and structures the promotion and consolidation of democratic development in the member states. In Oct. 1999 ministers of energy of the CBSS member states agreed to achieve the goal of creating effective, economically and environmentally sound and more integrated energy systems in the Baltic Sea region. The Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation (BASREC) is made up of energy ministers from the region and is chaired by the energy minister from the chair country of the CBSS.

Official language: English.

CBSS Secretariat: Strömsborg, PO Box 2010, S-103 11 Stockholm, Sweden.

Website: <http://www.baltinfo.org>

Director of the Secretariat: Jacek Starosciak (Poland).

EUROPEAN BROADCASTING UNION (EBU)

The EBU is the world's largest professional association of national broadcasters with 69 active members in 50 European and Mediterranean countries and 48 associate members in 29 countries elsewhere in Africa, the Americas and Asia. One of the EBU's best-known television activities is Eurovision which has a permanent network comprising a total of 42 TV channels on Eutelsat, Intelsat and Asiasat satellites, and 2 Euroradio channels on a Eutelsat satellite.

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Website: <http://www.ebu.ch>

BLACK SEA ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION GROUP (BSEC)

Founded in 1992 to promote economic co-operation in the region. Priority areas of interest include: transport and communications, energy, environmental protection, tourism, trade and industrial co-operation, agriculture and agro-industry, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, science and technology, finance administration.

Members. Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine.

Observers. Austria, Egypt, Israel, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Tunisia.

There is a *BSEC Business Council*, and a *Black Sea Trade and Development Bank* was established in Thessalonika, Greece, in 1993, with a founding capital of US\$300m. In May 1994 members met to try and create a mechanism for the solution of conflicts in the region, under the auspices of the Group's Interparliamentary Legal and Political Affairs Committee.