

# Baltic Assembly: Born during the Awakening

**BROTHERHOOD**

**FREEDOM**

**INDEPENDENCE**

23 August 1994

## FREEDOM WAY

This is the way to democracy. This is the only way to freedom, equality, and brotherhood on our common shores of the Baltic Sea.



## INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS

To a large extent, the Baltic Assembly was created thanks to the Popular Front of Estonia – *Rahvarinne*, the Lithuanian Reform Movement – *Sąjūdis*, and the Popular Front of Latvia – *Tautas Fronte*



31 August 1989

Regular meeting of representatives of the popular movements of the Baltic States



13–14 May 1989

The popular movements of the Baltic States establish their assembly in Tallinn



1 December 1990, Vilnius



January 1991

## THE BARRICADES

In Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn

## FOUNDING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BALTIC STATES

In Tallinn on 12 May 1990, Arnold Rüütel, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Estonia, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Latvia, and Vytautas Landsbergis, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Lithuania, testified to their nations' shared commitment to strengthen cooperation by signing the *Declaration of Unanimity and Cooperation of the Baltic States*. On that day, the Baltic States' Council was established. The Declaration re enacted the Treaty of the Baltic Entente of 12 September 1934 and established the Council of the Baltic States, which included the chairmen and deputies of the supreme councils. Its meetings were attended by prime ministers, foreign ministers, and other invited officials.



8 November 1991

## BALTIC ASSEMBLY ESTABLISHED BY PARLIAMENTS THAT DECLARED INDEPENDENCE

24–26 January 1992

### First session of the Baltic Assembly:

*"We have to answer this question not only for today but also for the future perspective: **Will the Baltic States be strong enough to come together, join hands, and create Benelux-like solidarity for the Baltics?** Cooperation is meant for strong countries rather than weak ones, as cooperation implies compromises, concessions, and bargaining. Are we ready for that?"*

Vytautas Landsbergis  
Chairman of the Supreme Council of Lithuania



13 June 1994

## FOUNDING OF THE BALTIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The Baltic Council of Ministers, an organisation for cooperation of the executive branch, is established



## DEMOCRACY

20 August 1991

### AUGUST COUP

Events of the August Coup



## WITHDRAWAL OF RUSSIAN TROOPS FROM THE BALTIC STATES

4 May 1995

Demolishing of the Skrunda radar station



# Foundations of the Baltic Assembly



**STRUGGLE FOR THE NATIONS' RIGHTS TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND SOVEREIGNTY**



**REGAINING AND STRENGTHENING OF THE BALTIC INDEPENDENCE**



**JOINT DEFENCE OF BALTIC TERRITORY**



**13–14 May 1994**

4th Session of the Baltic Assembly in Jūrmala

**COMMON GOALS**

**SHARED HISTORY**

**13–15 May 1994**

**Statement Concerning Pressure from the Russian Federation on the Baltic States:**

*[...] both now and in the future, all forms of threats or pressure from anywhere exerted on any of the Baltic States will be considered as impinging on the security of all three **Baltic States***



**BALTI ASSAMBLEE  
BALTIJAS ASAMBLEJA  
BALTIJOS ASAMBLĒJA**



**STRONG ECONOMIC UNION**

**GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION**



**5–6 October 1996**

9th Session of the Baltic Assembly in Riga

**5 February 2010**

Meeting of the Baltic Assembly Presidium and the Budget and Audit Committee in Riga

**FOREIGN TRADE STRATEGY**



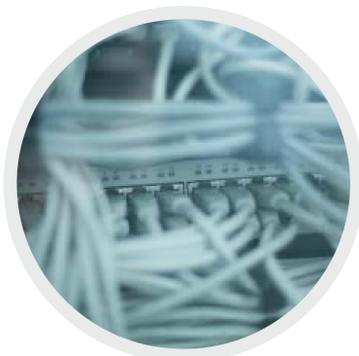
**PROTECTION OF THE BALTIC ECONOMIES AND CREATION OF THE SINGLE BALTIC MARKET**



**COORDINATED FOREIGN POLICY**



**SINGLE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AREA**



**SINGLE DIGITAL MARKET**



**23 September 2011**

Meeting of the Baltic Assembly Presidium in Palanga

# Common Security



2 June 1991

Baltic defence ministers sign a protocol on the cooperation between Baltic defence ministries within the common security framework

## GOALS:

- To develop national defence frameworks
- To promote effective development and application of defence capabilities
- To foster compatibility with allies
- To ensure effective cooperation in peace-keeping and crisis-management operations



## STRONG TOGETHER

The Baltic Assembly sends out a clear message: **the Baltic States are united**, and an accident or problem in one of the three countries is perceived as an adversity and danger for all three countries



27 February 1995

## Agreement on Baltic Cooperation in the Fields of Defence and Military Relations



"[...] acknowledging the necessity of strengthening mutual cooperation in **defence and security** issues, including voluntary formations [...]"

"[...] the Baltic Assembly urges the governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to immediately engage in shaping uniform policy and take effective preparatory action – organisational, administrative, military, and political – to foster prompt accession of the **Baltic States to NATO** [...]"

8 February 1993

## BALTBAT

Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian presidents, as well as foreign and defence ministers take part in the official inauguration of the **Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion** in Ādaži



2 December 1995

The Baltic Assembly adopts the Resolution on Defence Cooperation and the Resolution on the **Principles of Unity of the Baltic States**



6 October 1997

The Baltic States resolve to join NATO

**UNITED  
FOR  
NATO**

## SCHENGEN AREA

"Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are standing on the **NATO** threshold. This position is not accidental nor is it surprising – **we have worked hard to achieve this goal**. Although the Alliance evaluates each of the Baltic countries separately, it remains common practice to view the Baltic States **as one region** and their cooperation is highly appreciated. Thus the keyword for our progress is **cooperation** as it testifies to our will and ability to cooperate with different partners in a variety of military affairs."

Sven Mikser  
Estonian Defence Minister  
24 May 2002

9 May 1998

"The Baltic Council declaration stressing the aspirations of the Baltic States to join the secure and stable Euro-Atlantic community and emphasising the need to engage in an **active political dialogue with their neighbouring countries...**"

1 May 2004

**UNITED  
IN THE  
EUROPEAN  
UNION**

## INTRODUCTION

## OF THE EURO



2011 ESTONIA

2014 LATVIA

2015 LITHUANIA



# Energy and Transport Independence

## RAIL BALTICA

## VIA BALTICA

Consistent political support in implementing the *Rail Baltica* project



2 December 1995

**RECOMMENDATION**  
On the Implementation of the *Via Baltica* project

9 December 2000

**APPEAL**  
TO THE BALTIC COUNCIL OF  
MINISTERS ON THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF RAIL TRANSPORT

29 November 2013

"[...] to intensify negotiations with Finland and Poland on their involvement in the North Sea-Baltic TEN-T Corridor and thus the Rail Baltic/Rail Baltica project [...]"



DOCUMENTS

29 May 1999

**RESOLUTION**  
ON BALTIC ENERGY STRATEGY

22 October 2010

"[...] to arrive at a common vision for developing the Rail Baltica infrastructure project; to jointly set the schedule for implementing this project and to agree that after the TEN-T policy review, the Via Baltica route should be integrated into the main EU transport network [...]"

20 November 2015

**RECOMMENDATION**  
to intensify negotiations with Finland and Poland on their involvement in the North Sea-Baltic TEN-T Corridor and thus the Rail Baltic/Rail Baltica project

## ECONOMY

28 October 2014

Joint venture of the Baltic States for the implementation of *Rail Baltica II* is founded; it is entered into the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia on 12 November as *JSC RB Rail*



**Rail Baltica**  
Linking nations, people, places



"I believe that we should focus our cooperation on three main areas: **the Baltic Sea region as a favourable environment for living and business, energy supplies and infrastructure.**"

Ene Ergma  
Speaker of the Riigikogu  
25 November 2005



## A UNITED, SECURE,

## OPEN REGION

2013

Beginning of active regional cooperation in the energy sector

### Declaration on Energy Security of Supply of the Baltic States

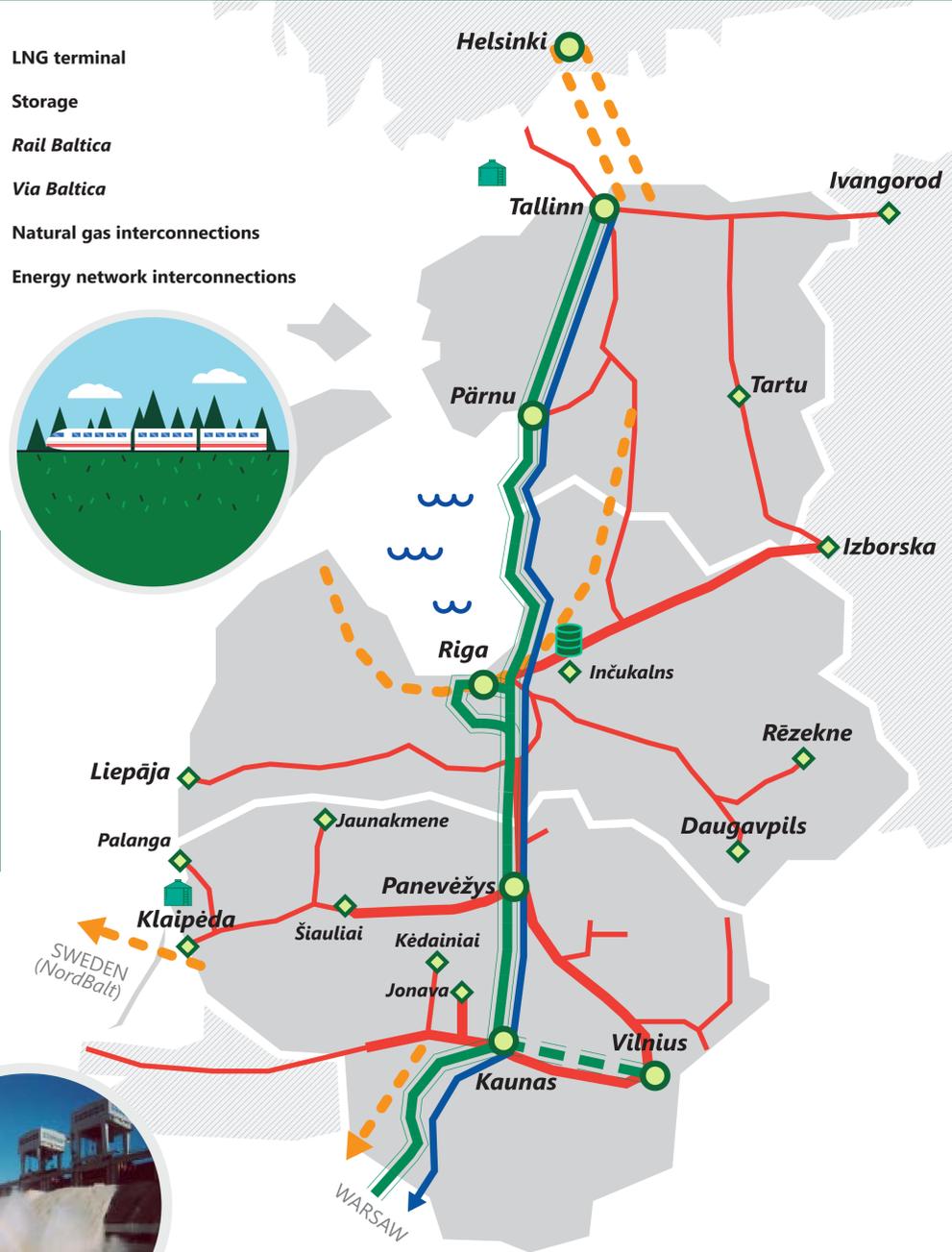
Riga, 14 January 2015

"[...] We share the same values and are profoundly committed to elaborating solutions for enhancing energy security in our region [...]"

"[...] We are committed to strengthening regional cooperation in **the Baltic region** and making sure that sufficient interconnectors, synchronization of Baltic States with the European Continental Networks, balancing arrangements between the Baltic States, capacity mechanisms and market integration are contributing to energy security, and at the same time ensuring the right balance between costs and overall benefits of these developments [...]"



- LNG terminal
- Storage
- Rail Baltica
- Via Baltica
- Natural gas interconnections
- Energy network interconnections



## GAS AND TRANSPORT

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Electricity and gas line interconnections – benefiting all three Baltic States

14 January 2015

Ministers of Economy of the Baltic States sign the Declaration on Energy Security of Supply of the Baltic States



## INTERCONNECTIVITY

# Joint Action – Shared Achievements

## COOPERATION → WELFARE IN THE REGION



**E-GOVERNANCE**

**JOINT MARKETING**

**STRATEGY**



26 March 1992

The Protocol on the Development of Free Trade Regime Between the Baltic States signed



13 September 1993

The Baltic States sign the Free Trade Agreement, accelerating their integration into the international trade system and making their common market more attractive for foreign investors.

13 September 1997

The Agreement on Free Trade in Agricultural Products signed by the Baltic States

24 October 2014

The Baltic Assembly Appeal to the European Commission on Support for Milk Producers of the Baltic States

**EXPORT**

**INVESTMENT**



**JOINT BRANDS**



**Take concerted action to attract foreign direct investment to the region:**

- To develop a common approach to the export of agricultural products to international markets
- To define common interests and strategies of the Baltic States in agricultural and rural development, initially with regard to specific branches and products
- To encourage the Baltic States to coordinate their tax policies and ensure stable and predictable tax systems



**JOINT**

**PROCUREMENT**



**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

### COOPERATION IN TOURISM

To elaborate a joint long-term Baltic tourism strategy for 2014–2020 as a basis for regional profiling and cooperation in the tourism industry

### DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

Baltic Assembly recommendation (2013): To develop a Baltic digital single market and eliminate all obstacles that hinder its creation.

### FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Recommendations of the Baltic Assembly, Benelux Parliament, Nordic Council, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference:

- To streamline the national legal acts, eliminating loopholes in the fight against human trafficking and to draft policies, strategies and comprehensive measures for fighting human trafficking
- To undertake cooperation initiatives, exchange of experience and information among legislatures, the executive and non-governmental sector in order to achieve common goals in preventing human trafficking

### FIGHT AGAINST SHADOW ECONOMY, VAT FRAUD

Baltic Assembly calls on the governments of the Baltic States:

- To organise regular mutual consultations on VAT and to facilitate harmonisation of the VAT policy in the Baltic States; to elaborate concrete proposals for improving the fight against tax evasion; to combat tax fraud involving third countries
- To continue looking for the most appropriate ways of combining efforts at the national, European Union and global level in the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion
- To consider the possibility of implementing the split payment model as a tool for fighting against VAT fraud



**CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION**

**IN THE PROVISION**

**OF AMBULANCE SERVICES**



Baltic Assembly recommendation (2013 and 2014): To urge Latvia and Lithuania to sign an agreement on cross-border cooperation in the provision of ambulance services in the Lithuanian–Latvian border area

22 October 2010

#### Baltic Assembly recommendations

- To develop an action plan which would serve as the basis for mutually beneficial and constructive cooperation between the Baltic States in the field of health care [...]
- To prepare an assessment of the feasibility of creating a common Baltic system for procuring state-funded medicines and medical equipment, establishment of a common sperm bank and a system for exchanging organs for transplantation, as well as establishment of joint specialised medical centres in the region
- To coordinate the provision of emergency medical services in border towns and settlements adjacent to borders

2 May 2012

Partnership Agreement between the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Estonia and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania on Joint Procurements of Medicinal Products and Medical Devices and Lending of Medicinal Products and Medical Devices Procurably Centrally

24 October 2014

**Baltic Assembly recommendation:**  
To develop an action plan for introducing a single E-health system that would link Baltic healthcare systems



# Baltic Assembly in the International Arena



2003–2007

The Baltic Assembly and the Baltic Council of Ministers focused mainly on **social and health-care issues, cooperation in the sphere of education, research and culture, common labour market and emigration, environmental protection, and development of information technologies.**

This period is marked by intensified contacts with the **Nordic Council**, and gradually developing relations with the **Visegrád Group** and EU's new neighbouring countries. Issues related to the accession of the **Baltic States** to the **Schengen Area**, strengthening of economic cooperation in the region, and cross-border cooperation were high on the agenda of the cooperation between the Baltic Assembly and the Benelux Parliament.



**SPEARHEADING**

**THE EASTERN**

**PARTNERSHIP**

**STRATEGIC PARTNERS –**

**NORDIC COUNCIL**

**AND BENELUX**



*“The Baltic States and GUAM countries historically have had mutually supportive and good relations. **We understand one another.** It is of particular importance now, when the **GUAM** countries are committed to moving towards the European Union. **We have been and will always be true friends of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova.**”*

Raimonds Vējonis  
President of the Baltic Assembly  
December 2013



*“Stability in the European Union depends on its cooperation with its Eastern neighbours. **It is of utmost importance to support the countries of the EU Eastern Partnership in building democracy in particularly adverse circumstances.** A sustainable and powerful democracy cannot be formed overnight [...]. The Baltic Assembly rises to the challenges faced by our societies, and safeguards their values by assisting the Eastern Partnership countries in backing democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.*

Jānis Vucāns  
President of the Baltic Assembly  
15 September 2016



**ORIGINAL AGREEMENTS**

**THE BALTIC SEA**

**PARLIAMENTARY**

**CONFERENCE**

30 May 1992

Cooperation agreement with the Nordic Council signed in Palanga



May 2009

The Prague summit of the European Union adopts the Eastern Partnership, whose policy is implemented with an active involvement of the Baltic States



18 November 1994

Cooperation agreement with the Benelux parliamentary body signed in the Hague

19 June 2009

Cooperation declaration with the GUAM Parliamentary Assembly signed

October 2009

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is adopted to provide integrated solutions to the main problems faced by the region



# The Baltic Assembly in Education, Science and Culture of the Baltics



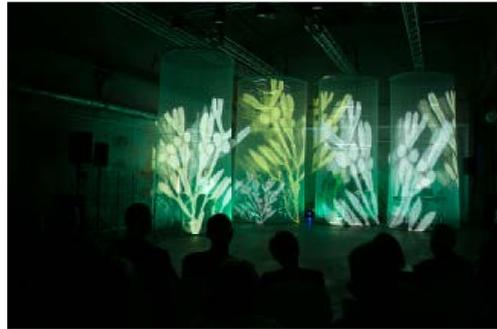
31 October 1991

The Baltic Assembly Prizes for Literature, the Arts and Science are established to promote the **development in literature, the arts and science in the Baltics** and to reward the best achievements in these areas, as well as to promote awareness of these achievements in all three Baltic States. The Prizes, which are 5000 euros each, are awarded once a year at the annual session of the Baltic Assembly

CULTURE

ART

LITERATURE



13 November 1994

**RESOLUTION**  
Concerning Cooperation of the Baltic States in the Field of Education

26 January 1992

**BALTIC ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDATIONS**  
on Joint Activities in Developing Education, Culture and Science



22 April 1995

**RESOLUTION**  
on the Promotion and Support of the Studies of the Ethnic Identities of Indigenous Nations of the Baltic States

29 May 1999

**RESOLUTION**  
Concerning Preservation of the Cultural Heritage in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

CONTRIBUTION

2002

The medal of the Baltic Assembly is awarded for upholding the unity and cooperation of the Baltic States

The medals are awarded to the members of the Baltic Assembly, as well as other persons for their outstanding contribution to strengthening the unity and cooperation of the Baltic States



26 September 2012

The Baltic Innovation Fund, which is based on an agreement between the European Investment Fund, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia

BALTICBONUS

29 November 2012

Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Education, Science and Innovations



INNOVATIONS

2011

The Baltic Innovation Prize is awarded annually to the most innovative enterprise (business) in the Baltic States.

The aim of the Prize is to reward and spotlight those Baltic businesses that have employed economically successful innovations in the development of their products, services or business models.



JOINT RESEARCH

INFRASTRUCTURE

## BALTIC ASSEMBLY PRIZE WINNERS

2016

Sigitas Parulskis (literature)  
Kristijonas Vildžiūnas (the arts)  
Majija Dambrova (science)

2015

Māris Bērziņš (literature)  
Modestas Pitrenas (the arts)  
Eva-Clarita Pettai un Vello A. Pettai (science)

2014

Peeter Sauter (literature)  
Alvis Hermanis (the arts)  
Vidas Gražulevičius (science)

2013

Donaldas Kajokas (literature)  
Peeter Vähli (the arts)  
Renāte Blumberga (science)

2012

Aivars Klavis (literature)  
Visible Solutions LLC (the arts)  
Algis Petras Piskarskas (science)

2011

Arvydas Juozaitis (literature)  
Andris Nelsons (the arts)  
Andres Ilmar Kasekamp (science)

2010

Ene Mihkelson (literature)  
Antanas Žukauskas (the arts)  
Jānis Stradiņš (science)

2009

Inga Ābele (literature)  
Marko Mäetamm (the arts)  
Leonardas Sauka (science)

2008

Knuts Skujenieks (literature)  
Petras Vyšniauskas (the arts)  
Lembit Vaba (science)

2007

Marcelijus Martinaitis (literature)  
Silvija Radzobe (the arts)  
Tarmo Soomere (science)

2006

Nora Ikstena (literature)  
Andres Tali (the arts)  
Gediminas Valkiūnas (science)

2005

Hasso Krull (literature)  
Viļņas stīgu kvartets (the arts)  
Evalds Mugurēvičs (science)

2004

Pēteris Brūveris (literature)  
Mindaugas Navakas (the arts)  
Arvo Krikmann (science)

2003

Vytautas Bubnys (literature)  
Jaan Toomik (the arts)  
Elita Grosmane (science)

2002

Jaan Tätte (literature)  
Biruta Baumane (the arts)  
Algirdas Gaizutis (science)

2001

Justinas Marcinkevičius (literature)  
Ilmārs Blumbergs (the arts)  
Raimo Pullat (science)

2000

Jānis Rokpelnis (literature)  
Veljo Tormis (the arts)  
Silvestras Gaiziūnas (science)

1999

Jaan Kross (literature)  
Mindaugas Baužys (the arts)  
Janina Kursite (science)

1998

Sigitas Geda (literature)  
Erkki-Sven Tüür (the arts)  
Jānis Krastiņš (science)

1997

Jaan Kaplinski (literature)  
Gidons Krēmers (the arts)  
Rimutė Rimantienė (science)

1996

Judita Vaičiūnaitė (literature)  
Pēteris Vasks (the arts)  
Juhan Maiste (science)

1995

Uldis Bērziņš (literature)  
Peeter Mudist (the arts)  
Juozas Kulys (science)

1994

Emil Tode (literature)  
Eimuntas Nekrošius (the arts)  
Andris Caune (science)

# 25th Anniversary of the Baltic Assembly

## Ubi concordia, ibi victoria

32 parliamentarians from ESTONIA,  
LATVIA, LITHUANIA come together  
to further the Baltic efforts to shape a secure  
and developed Baltic region



## We are the Baltic Unity!

