



Embassy of Hungary
Stockholm



The Visegrad Group Presidency Seminar in Stockholm

On the experiences of the implementation of the EU Baltic Sea and the Danube Region Strategies– Sharing best practices

Holding the Visegrad Group Presidency between July 1st 2013 and June 30th 2014, Hungary intends to highlight policy areas that are highly relevant for the whole Central European region and are also of interest for a broader community of countries in Europe. Energy security undoubtedly is of utmost importance for Europe.

The European Union created two macro-regional strategies to answer more effectively to the challenges that are more complicated to solve at a country or an EU level. The first one, the Baltic Sea Region Strategy was created in October 2009 to address the challenges arising from the degradation of the Baltic Sea. The Danube Region Strategy, established in 2011, collects Central-European countries along the Danube, Europe's second largest river, in order to help the development of this heterogeneous region.

Energy is a priority in both macro-regional strategies. The characteristics of the two regions are different, but they have some similarities regarding energy features: energy interconnections and market integration haven't been realised yet, though both Strategies made significant efforts in this regard. In case of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy, the main problem is the isolation of the three Baltic States from other parts of the EU. The Danube Region Strategy also lacks the integrated energy market and connected region, but the Energy Priority Area of the Strategy was able to identify the most important energy infrastructure investments at a regional level. The implementation of these projects will result in lower energy prices, and increased competitiveness in the region.

The Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region share similarities in the challenges they face regarding the energy sector. Sharing the best practices and the responses to those challenges could be beneficial for all participating countries. The knowledge transfer would facilitate the more efficient and coherent implementation of the targets defined in the respected Action Plan of the Strategies.





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The cooperation between the two concepts would enhance the energy market integration and the competitiveness of the Regions.

Furthermore the European Commission as well as the European Council expressed in several documents the importance of the interaction between the two macro-regional strategies¹. The Communication of the European Commission released in March 2012² also fostered a closer cooperation of the two strategies. The Council conclusion released on 22nd October 2013 invites the Member States and the Commission to develop and strengthen links between the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region Strategies and with any further macro-regional strategies.

The seminar initiated by the Embassy of Hungary in Stockholm in cooperation with the European Commission Representation in Sweden will provide an opportunity to exchange experiences of the implementation of EU macroregional policies in the field of energy, discuss past and potential challenges and hardships, and reflect upon the future priorities.

Venue: Europahuset, Regeringsgatan 65., Stockholm

Date: 2nd April 2014

To register, please send your name, title and the name of your organisation **by email** to mission.sto@mfa.gov.hu latest by 14th March 2014.

¹ COM(2011) 381; European Council 15848/11

² COM(2012) 128





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The Baltic Sea Region Strategy and the Danube Region Strategy via the lens of Energy Cooperation

Stockholm, 2 April 2014

Venue: Europahuset, Regeringsgatan 65., Stockholm

Draft Agenda

08:30-09:00 Registration

09:00-09:30 Opening remarks

Ms Lilla MAKKAY, Ambassador of Hungary to Sweden

Mr Pierre SCHELLEKENS, Head of Representation, European Commission Delegation to Sweden

Mr Erik KIESOW, National Contact Point of the EUBSRS in Sweden, Deputy Director of the Prime Minister's Office of Sweden

Mr Vicente RODRIGUEZ SAEZ, Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

09:30-10:00 First Panel – Introduction - Macro-Regional Strategies of the EU and their Energy Priority Areas

Ms Anita ORBÁN, Priority Area Coordinator, Energy Priority Area of the Danube Region Strategy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary

Ms Rota ŠŅUKA, Priority Area Coordinator, Priority Area Energy of the Baltic Sea Region Strategy, Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia

Ms Ann-Jasmin KRABATSCH, Programme Manager, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Moderator:

Mr Stefan GÄNZLE, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and Management University of Agder, Norway





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10:00-10:15 Q &A

10:15-10:30 Coffee break

10:30-12:00 Second Panel – Macro-Regional approach towards an Integrated European Energy Market

Ms Olga BOGDANOVA, Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia (Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan)

Mr Péter KADERJÁK, Director, Regional Centre for Energy Policy Research, Hungary (Danube Region Gas Market Model, Danube Region Gas Storage Analysis)

Representative of the European Commission DG ENER (TBC)

Mr. Vladimír BLAHA, Priority Area Coordinator, Energy Priority Area of the Danube Region Strategy, Government Office of the Czech Republic

Moderator:

Mr Stefan GÄNZLE, Associate Professor, University of Agder, Department of Political Science and Management

12:00-12:15 Q&A

12:15- 12:30 Closing Remarks

Mr Stefan GÄNZLE, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and Management University of Agder, Norway

12.30-13.30 Reception offered by the Embassy of Hungary
