



Ingrida Šimonytė
Prime Minister
Republic of Lithuania

Evika Siliņa
Prime Minister
Republic of Latvia

Kaja Kallas
Prime Minister
Republic of Estonia

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Your Excellencies,

On behalf of the Baltic Assembly, we would like to express the assurances of our highest consideration to the Baltic Council of Ministers.

On 7-8 March 2024, the joint meeting of the Education, Science and Culture Committee and the Health, Welfare and Family Committee of the Baltic Assembly was held in Vilnius. Among other issues parliamentarians, governmental representatives and experts discussed the **gaps in the cooperation of the Baltic States in education, science and research**.

During the meeting, parliamentarians assessed the **implementation of the recommendations** of the Baltic Assembly and concluded that in several cases lack of progress can be observed. The Baltic Assembly recommended the governments of the Baltic States to create a format for the regular exchange of information in vocational and secondary education between the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia, the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of Lithuania. Unfortunately, the answers of the Baltic Council of Ministers received in August 2023 indicate that there have been discussions about creating such a format, but no concrete proposals have been initiated. We would like to receive answers to the following questions:

- What has prevented or disrupted the creation of a format for the regular exchange of information in vocational and secondary education?
- What are the plans of the governments to create such a format?

Another recommendation discussed during the meeting was to prepare a map of the existing Baltic research cooperation in order to examine the results of research cooperation and overcome the gaps. It seems that steps, targeted specifically towards the Baltic States, are not being considered at the moment, therefore, we would like to understand:

- What are the main obstacles in creating such a map of the existing Baltic research cooperation using the instruments and cooperation formats available (such as Horizon Dashboard, Baltic Research Cooperation Program, and Baltic Science Network, among others)?
- How do the governments plan to examine the results of research cooperation and overcome the gaps in the Baltic States?

The parliamentarians also discussed the progress in the implementation of the recommendation to create a mechanism for the efficient use of the research equipment acquired in the Baltic States. The answers of the Baltic Council of Ministers received in August 2023 show that the cooperation between separate higher

education and research institutions of the Baltic States is conducted on a bilateral basis, however, there seem to be no regulative measures planned for creating separate mechanisms on the Baltic level. Considering the abovementioned, we would like to get answers to the following questions:

- Do the governments agree that more efficient use of the research equipment acquired in the Baltic States is vital and could bring research but also economic benefits for the region?
- What are the further plans to create a mechanism for the efficient use of the research equipment acquired in the Baltic States?

Following the discussions about the cooperation of the Baltic States in education, science and research, the Committees have also agreed on **new proposals** to the Baltic governments for improving the cooperation of the Baltic States and beyond. They are as follows:

- to start work on an implementation plan, management mechanism and budgetary framework for establishing a Baltic Science Fund to finance and facilitate regional research cooperation;
- to secure the funding necessary for the implementation of a full-scale feasibility study of the joint initiative of the CERN Baltic Group and CERN on Advanced Particle Therapy Center for the Baltic States;
- considering the international nature of the challenges in the STEM field, to create a format for coordination of the implementation of policy initiatives to address the shortage of graduates, skills mismatch and gender imbalance in the STEM field.

We would highly appreciate receiving clear and detailed answers to the aforementioned questions and other reflections by **14 June 2024**.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Chair of the Education,
Science and Culture
Committee



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