



Warsaw, 14th October 2013

## **Strategic cooperation between Sweden and Poland – update of the Background Paper**

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### **European Union**

#### *The financial crisis*

- Continuing close bilateral cooperation on issues associated with the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (*ECOFIN*).

#### *Europe 2020*

- The EU growth agenda Europe 2020 involves a large number of policy areas. The focus is on structural reforms at national level, following an annual process known as the European semester. Cooperation on the enhancement of the European semester.
- Sweden and Poland have similar views on growth issues, as manifested, for example, being among the countries signing a joint letter to President Van Rompuy and President Barroso – ‘A plan for growth in Europe’. Like-minded cooperation in the internal market context has clear links to Europe 2020.

#### *Internal market*

- Continued cooperation based on current like-minded endeavours in the internal market area, with a focus on growth-promoting measures, particularly in the three principal areas of the digital single market, better regulation and trade in services.

- Cooperation on the completion of negotiations concerning the two single market acts, eCommerce and the Baltic Sea Strategy (including agency-level cooperation), as well as promotion of women's participation in the labour market.
- Cooperation on two flagship initiatives aimed at eliminating trade barriers in the region (*National Board of Trade*) and sharing expertise at regional level (*Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment*). One result of the cooperation in the internal market area is a joint Swedish-Polish initiative for a Nordic-Baltic-Visegrad meeting in Stockholm in June 2013.

#### *EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)*

- Cooperation on the future strategic direction of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, including the external dimension and collaboration with relevant multilateral organisations.
- Cooperation on implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, particularly in Priority (PA) Innovation, PA Nutri, PA Hazards and on the programming of EU cohesion funds.
- Cooperation aimed at reducing emissions to the Baltic Sea from industry, wastewater treatment plants and agriculture. Cooperation is proposed ahead of the 2013 HELCOM Ministerial Meeting, particularly concerning the marine environment.
- Cooperation on optimisation of wastewater treatment plants, technical solutions for cleaner shipping and biogas.
- Cooperation ahead of the upcoming work programme and proposed new flagship SUBMARINER (*Transnational Projects for Sustainable and Innovative Uses of Baltic Marine Resources*).
- Continued cooperation on civil protection through the CBSS and within the Baltic Sea Strategy and its priority area SECURE – Protection from emergencies and accidents on land.
- Cooperation on creating a transnational component in the European Social Fund (*ESF*), inspired by the EU Baltic Sea Strategy.
- Cooperation on the gender equality component as a basis for enhanced competitiveness in the Baltic Sea region.

#### *EU enlargement*

- Close cooperation for the continuation of the EU enlargement process of Turkey and Western Balkans.

- Continued common efforts aimed at enhancing rule of law in the countries of Western Balkans, also in the context of cooperation between Visegrad Group and Nordic and Baltic countries.

#### *European Neighbourhood Policy*

- Continued bilateral cooperation on the strengthening of the European perspective of Eastern Partnership countries, development of the Eastern Partnership and follow-up of joint non-paper from January 2013.
- Continued cooperation concerning several specific bilateral issues related to developments in the partner countries, including giving the work support and visibility in multilateral formats.

#### *Belarus*

- Continued cooperation comprising both political and practical elements.

#### *Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)*

- Continued close security policy cooperation on the European Global Strategy (EGS) and the European Peace Institute (EPI).
- Continued close cooperation on involving the Eastern Partnership countries in the CFSP and, in the longer term, in the broader security policy agenda.

#### *European External Action Service (EEAS)*

- Continued bilateral dialogue on the EEAS.

#### *Migration*

- Cooperation within the framework of the EU Mobility Partnerships with Armenia, Moldova, Georgia and with potential future partnerships, which would be signed by SE and PL in areas of mutual interests.
- Further cooperation within the Prague Process as one of the strategic frameworks of cooperation under the Global Approach on Migration and Mobility.
- Continuation of cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries on migration and migration-related issues in Justice and Home Affairs area.
- Further promotion (on the EU level) of cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries (ministerial conference that was held in

October 2013 on Eastern Partnership in Justice and Home Affairs issues as an example of good practice).

#### *Human rights*

- Cooperation on human rights in the EU with connection to Polish membership in the ad hoc group started by the Irish Presidency, in which like-minded member states discuss fundamental rights, the rule of law and good governance.

### **Global issues**

#### *Community of Democracies*

- Continued close cooperation in developing the Community of Democracies (*CoD*), with a Permanent Secretariat in Warsaw. The question of democracy and the post-2015 agenda will be in focus in coming years.

#### *EED*

- Continued close cooperation on the European Endowment for Democracy (*EED*), established as a joint initiative by the EU and its Member States with a strong backing of Sweden and Poland, to support democratic transition by assisting civil society, primarily in the eastern and southern neighbourhoods.

#### *Arctic cooperation*

- Continued cooperation between the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat and the Polish academic research council for Arctic research. The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat is working with the Polish polar station in southern Svalbard and has been invited to Warsaw to further develop cooperation.

#### *Information and communications technology (ICT)*

- Bilateral consultations on global ICT issues.
- Continued actions on developing broader cooperation between Polish and Swedish ICT companies.

### **Defence Policy, Security and Law Enforcement**

- Continued cooperation within the framework of existing forums for cooperation such as the Memorandum of Understanding Commission, Operational Command, Polish National Defence Academy and Swedish National Defence College.
- Continued multilateral cooperation (e.g. *Sea Surveillance Co-operation Baltic Sea*, SUCBAS, and *European Defence Agency*, EDA) also within the formats of international organisations (e.g. exchange of experience on Battle Groups in the EU and partnership cooperation in NATO).

- Continued cooperation of the police forces (e.g. existing operational agreement combating drug trafficking, Baltic Sea Task Force within the framework of the EUSBSR, creation of Eastern Partnership Police Cooperation Programme EuroEast).

### Energy and climate

- Energy efficiency measures based on alternative energy sources (including waste), environmental technology, innovations, water purification and other Baltic Sea issues are seen as central strategic areas of cooperation that will strengthen growth promotion while also promoting dialogue on climate issues.
- Close cooperation ahead of this year's conference of the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which will be hosted by Poland in November. May also contribute to promoting dialogue on internal EU climate measures. Poland's becoming a member of the international Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), at the invitation of Sweden and other members, provides a further platform for bilateral and international cooperation in the climate area, linked to air quality.
- Energy cooperation with secretariats in Poland and Sweden, focus on network building between actors, dissemination and development of knowledge. The cooperation is based partly on work by Swedish municipalities on replacing fossil fuels with renewable fuels and the contribution of the forest industries to energy transition. Cooperation involves: action plan for waste management in south-west Poland, seminars on biogas production in agriculture and sustainable urban development, water purification, cultivation and production of biomass, and waste, as well as project for producing biogas from waste in Zabrze.
- Cooperation within the framework of the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership (*E5P*) concerning possible enlargement to include Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and district heating/energy efficiency measures in Ukraine.
- Close dialogue with the aim of developing common positions on development of the EU nuclear energy sector (e.g. on nuclear safety and nuclear third party liability).
- Polish interest in Swedish know-how and legislation on nuclear safety and nuclear waste.
- Cooperation aimed at sharing experience on waste management in the context of municipal and medical waste.

### **Agriculture, rural development and fisheries**

- Cooperation aimed at influencing the future design of the Common Agricultural Policy (*CAP*).
- Continued cooperation concerning fisheries control mechanisms, development of common research projects.
- Cooperation within the framework of the EUSBSR, as well as further collaboration on the development of the Legally Binding Agreement on Forest in Europe.
- Bilateral cooperation e.g. on creation and implementation of the national forest programmes, introducing Natura 2000 in forest areas and exploring potential increased use and trade of forest products.

### **Integration and social policies, human rights**

- Cooperation on *integration measures*, in view of the work on a new Polish national integration strategy as well as current Swedish integration initiatives, for example a practical year of vocational training and language for newly arrived immigrants with limited education.
- Developing closer cooperation in the field of *combating xenophobia and intolerance*, including religious intolerance, through knowledge of history.
- Work against *discrimination* and violence against the LGBT people.
- *Gender equality* – e.g. promoting gender equality in the labour market and in working life; professional career and family life challenges.
- Sharing experience on creating social policy facing the challenges of *aging population* – including medical and social care for the elderly.