



Resolution 1175 (1998)¹

Energy co-operation in the Baltic Sea region

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Baltic Sea is a European inland sea. The bordering countries of the Baltic Sea are very varied in geological, historical and economic terms and also have considerable differences amongst themselves as far as energy is concerned.
2. All types of energy are present in the bordering countries, from coal, oil and gas to nuclear and renewable energies, including hydro-electric energy.
3. Energy use and efficiency, with their consequences on the environment and the economy, also vary in these countries, which means that each one is at a different starting point for the next step in its development.
4. The differences can be partly absorbed through the installation of transport and distribution grids for gas and electricity around and across the Baltic Sea.
5. Technological prospects in the energy field have an important role to play in the integration process in the region and so should be supported.
6. In this respect environmental factors are important. In some countries old fossil fuel plants are still in use, but with poor efficiency, causing high carbon dioxide emissions and with insufficient control of other pollutants such as dust, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide.
7. Nuclear safety also deserves special attention. There are countries that have nuclear plants (Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Russia and Sweden) and others that do not. Amongst those with such plants, the differences in types and safety culture levels are quite significant.
8. The Assembly believes that an integrated energy market inside the Baltic Sea region would pull energy prices in that region down and push industrial competitiveness up.
9. Such a market, supported by developing energy grids, in a region which is energy self-sufficient, would increase the security of supply to the whole of Europe, particularly after the coming into force of the Energy Charter Treaty.
10. The Assembly therefore calls on member governments, and in particular those of the Baltic Sea region, as well as on the European Union:
 - 10.1. to work actively for closer political and economic co-operation and partnership in the field of energy in the Baltic Sea region, involving authorities, energy entities, private sector companies and other participants;
 - 10.2. to increase and encourage investment in the infrastructure necessary for regional energy co-operation by:
 - a. supporting the development of the Baltic Ring project on electrical interconnection, with a view to creating a common electricity market in the Baltic Sea region;

1. See [Doc. 8168](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology, rapporteur: Mr Lekberg; [Doc. 8232](#), opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mrs Blattmann; and [Doc. 8217](#)/[Doc. 8217](#), opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, rapporteur: Mrs Dromberg. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 4 November 1998.



- b. encouraging at the same time the development of an integrated gas grid in the Baltic Sea region;
- 10.3. to encourage the increased use of natural gas, in particular with a view to replacing coal and oil for electricity production, and the implementation of modern environmental protection systems in coal, oil or oil-shale power plants;
- 10.4. to tackle the environmental and landscape problems arising from past exploitation of energy sources;
- 10.5. to gradually reduce the use of Chernobyl-type RBMK nuclear power plants and, consequently, reduce the nuclear-related risks in the whole Baltic Sea region, whilst encouraging international co-operation such as the activities in the power station in Ignalina, Lithuania, in order to maximise nuclear safety;
- 10.6. to encourage the further development of renewable energy sources (biomass, wind, solar, enhanced efficiency of existing hydropower) with a view to increasing their contribution to the global energy production;
- 10.7. to intensify research and development for all sectors with a view to improving energy efficiency and energy intensity as well as environmental standards, upgrading or replacing old and inefficient equipment, in particular in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia. For these countries, special attention should be given to the upgrading of district heating systems;
- 10.8. to ensure the transfer of well-proven energy saving technologies, concerning production, transport and use of energy, towards all countries in the Baltic Sea region;
- 10.9. to improve the gathering, dissemination and exchange of energy-related information for the interested groups, and also by fully involving the mass media;
- 10.10. to encourage co-operation and exchange of experiences among scientists and technicians in the Baltic Sea region;
- 10.11. to support financially the efforts made by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Russia to adapt swiftly their energy infrastructures to western standards;
- 10.12. to liberalise the energy market;
- 10.13. to reflect the real costs in energy prices, while taking consumer affordability and the inefficiencies of energy systems into consideration;
- 10.14. to invite all the countries in the region that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Basle Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, and the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which sets out special targets regarding greenhouse gas emissions in the countries in transition, as well as a timetable for their implementation;
- 10.15. to ensure respect of all the provisions of the Energy Charter Treaty, with a view to finding a better solution to export/import or transit difficulties;
- 10.16. to assure a balanced distribution of funds for energy-related projects in all the countries of the Baltic Sea region.