

PREFACE



The “Baltic Region” journal is published by the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia in collaboration with Saint-Petersburg State University, both higher education institutions being situated in two Russian cities on the Baltic Sea. These universities have significant potential for researching various problems of the Baltic Sea: ecological, historical, political, economic, and social ones. These problems are manifold and complex in their character. However, there has not been a special scientific journal devoted to the Baltic Region in Russia so far. The “Baltic region” is to fill in this niche.

The editorial board of the journal includes scholars and researchers from Russian and international research centres. We hope to encourage eminent scientists in various fields from all the Baltic Sea region states to contribute to the journal. It will allow us to give a comprehensive overview of socio-economic, political, and ecological situation in the region, including controversial issues, being considered from different points of view. Special attention will be paid to different aspects of international and cross-border cooperation.

The target audience of the journal is scholars and experts on the Baltic Sea Region, as well as government and municipal authorities, professors and students of higher education institutions.

The Baltic Sea region as such is not a strictly defined notion, nor does it have well-delineated borders and its territorial composition varies from one author to another depending on the regarded problem. But in any case, the notion refers to the states and regions closely connected to the Baltic Sea in their everyday life. The sea unites different territories in terms of their economy, political and cultural life. That is why, the Council of the Baltic Sea State includes Norway and Iceland alongside with the nine states that have direct access to the Baltic Sea — Russia, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Iceland and Norway are members of the CBSS due to their status of Nordic countries, since Nordic countries often have a common stance in international cooperation. Sometimes, Belarus is also referred to the Baltic Region states owing to its close economic and political links with the CBSS countries.

In a narrow sense, the Baltic Sea region comprises territories having direct access to the Baltic Sea. Sometimes (which is, for instance, specific to the Uppsala University “Baltic University Programme”), drainage areas of rivers flowing into the Baltic Sea basin are also related to the region. In this case, alongside the whole territories of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, major part of Poland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and significant parts of Russia, Germany, Belarus and Norway, the Baltic Sea region will include some territories of Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, considerably distanced from the sea. Sometimes, for instance, in the works of some Saint-Petersburg

and Kaliningrad researchers, the following areas are referred to the Baltic Sea region — the territories of Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; only some administrative units of Russia, Germany, and Poland situated on the Baltic coast (Saint-Petersburg and the Kaliningrad region), as well as the Pskov and Novgorod regions, closely connected in their development to Saint Petersburg; two lands in Germany — Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and three Polish voivodeships — Warmian-Masurian, Pomeranian, and West-Pomeranian ones. Sometimes, the German lands of Brandenburg, Berlin and Hamburg and some other Polish voivodeships (for instance, Kuyavian-Pomeranian one) are added to the list.

In our opinion, the territory of the Baltic Sea region should not be strictly delineated. It should include states and their parts interested in the development of cooperation and strengthening integration around the Baltic Sea.

It is well-known that given globalisation, the processes of regionalisation and polarisation of the world do not weaken but strengthen. The actively developing globalisation regarded as intensification of manifold connections in the world arena forms the *global space* with common regularities and standards. The objects of this common space follow the same laws, but at the same time they are diverse, have different development dynamics and different localisation. So, global economy does not mean homogeneity of the global space. New macroregions are being formed in the world, the regions where intensive processes of cooperation and integration encourage all participating states to raise competitiveness of their economies in the world market and strengthen their political significance. The Baltic Region is one of such macroregions.

So, the Baltic Region is a certain symbol of cross-border and international cooperation, a pole of economic, political and cultural integration contributing to the elimination of barriers between the states, thus increasing their competitiveness in the world.

It means that the problems of the Baltic Sea region should be considered in the context of *world politics*. It is a broad and multifaceted approach. In contrast to classical realism, where only intergovernmental relations are taken into account, within the broad approach transnational corporations, non-governmental organizations, administrative regions, and municipalities are important actors as well. It is with this approach, that the Baltic Sea region appears a region of active cross-border cooperation. Dozens of international organizations and programmes coordinate cooperation activities in various fields (the “Mare Balticum” Economic Forum, the Baltic Development Forum, the Union of Baltic Cities, the Conference of Baltic University Rectors, the VASAB programme, etc.). At the level of ministers of foreign affairs, the CBSS coordinates international cooperation in the region. So, one can speak about such level of interaction within the Baltic Sea region, that in some cases, the region be considered an independent actor of world politics.

In the context of *international politics*, states being its actors, the Baltic Sea region appears to be a historical and geographical region with complex relations between its states. In contemporary history, the territory of the Baltic region was a theatre of war during WWI and WWII. Then, it was there that the border between two blocs, two world systems was drawn. And after

the demise of the world socialist system and the collapse of the USSR, the region is still heterogeneous: six of the nine states are members of NATO, eight (all but Russia) are members of the EU.

The role of Russia in the integration processes of the Baltic Sea region is a separate and rather complex question, since the other eight states situated on the Baltic coast are members of the most actively integrating group of states in the world — the European Union. One can assume that given limited raw material and energy resources in the world, the objective need for the integration of Russian and EU economies will inevitably increase.

So, on the one hand, the Baltic Sea region is a region having its own problems. It is a region with a complicated history, reflecting the political and economic interests of its states. On the other hand, it is a region of active cooperation of the states and their parts situated on its territory. The development of the Baltic Sea region in the context of world politics, taking into consideration not only the interests of the states, but also their regions, economic entities, non-governmental organisations and populace, should attenuate the problems evolving in international politics, encouraging the states to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation.

Special role in the development of the EU-Russia relations should be given to the development of cross-border cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. *New spatial forms of international economic integration* can emerge here, such as working communities, euroregions, ‘large regions’, and ‘growth triangles’. For Russia, the inclusion of its North-Western regions creates the necessary conditions for economically beneficial cooperation and interaction with the EU. Here, active development of the so-called *network cooperation* will encourage the development of civil society, strengthening contacts between non-governmental organisations, political and social actors of different levels.

All the above-mentioned questions and problems are to be discussed on the pages of our journal.

The first issue of the journal is devoted to some key aspects of the Baltic Sea Region development.

The ‘*Region and Regionalisation*’ section focuses on theoretical approaches to these notions and their application in actual regional practice (including the Baltic Region). In his article *Andrey Shastitko* formulates the main approaches to the study of regional competitiveness and, on this basis, develops a framework concept of competitiveness that should be specified for a given territory (a region, or a group of regions). The author argues that it is essential to consider competitiveness of a region in a long-term perspective through the prism of the stimuli, or incentives for decision makers to look for new opportunities of using the already existing resources as well as new *ex ante* resources for creating value. The author offers his classification of regional competitiveness factors, dividing them into two groups — exogenous and endogenous ones.

Nikolai Kaledin analyses peculiarities of regionalisation processes on the post-Soviet space, which is considered the epicentre of regionalisation processes in the modern world. At the same time, the European (Eurocentric) and Eurasian (Russia-centred) vectors of regionalisation become the key ones for the development of international integration processes. At the international

level, there are two geopolitical subregions now forming on the post-Soviet territory of the Eurasian region: the Baltic and Eurasian proper ones. At subregional level, the post-Soviet territory is divided into four historical and cultural subregions: the EuroBaltic, Baltic-Black Sea, Central-Asian and Transcaucasian ones. The author also defines the intrasubregional and intrastate levels of regionalisation.

The ***Development Strategies of the Baltic Region*** section is focused on strategic approaches to the development of both the Baltic Sea region in general and certain states and intrastate regions in particular. *Konstantin Khudoley and Dmitry Lanko* analyse the role of Saint-Petersburg in international cooperation in the Baltic Sea region and the significance of international links for the city. The authors state that Saint-Petersburg has made a significant contribution to the formation of the Baltic Region as a geopolitical, socioeconomic and cultural concept. The city played a crucial role in establishing the CBSS system of international organisations. At the moment, Saint-Petersburg is actively increasing its participation in the implementation of the Northern Dimension policy (for instance, Saint-Petersburg State University has developed an initiative of setting up a Northern Dimension Research Institute). The article by *Tadeusz Palmowski* is devoted to the establishment of Baltic Europe without dividing lines, which, in the future, can become a new economic and cultural centre of Europe, similar to Atlantic and Mediterranean Europe of today. The author states that this process is facilitated by the EU “Northern Dimension” initiative and the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

Irina Busygina and Mikhail Filippov analyse the consequences and effects of strategic interdependence between all levels of the EU-Russia relations using the “Northern Dimension” Initiative as an example. The authors come to the conclusion that the growing tension between the EU and Russia can be ‘compensated’ for by cooperation at other institutional levels, in particular by more active participation in the regional (spatial) EU initiatives (such as the Northern Dimension). At the same time, it is *crucial* to strike a reasonable balance between all the levels, and the Northern Dimension context should be strictly separated from all the problems of ‘high politics’ and should be more focused on the functional cooperation in the field of the so-called ‘low politics’.

The ***Cross-Border Cooperation*** section contains two articles. Mikhail Plyukhin analyses peculiarities of the post-EU enlargement cross-border cooperation in the Kaliningrad region, which is affected by two opposite tendencies: the one is towards ‘consolidation’ of the EU external borders, and the other — towards increasing cooperation in the framework of the neighbourhood policy. The author gives concrete examples of cooperation benefits in various fields and outlines the most promising directions of cross-border cooperation (first of all, in the framework of the ‘Lithuania, Poland, Russia: 2007—2013’ and ‘Baltic Sea Region’ programmes). The article emphasises the significance of their harmonisation with the regional development strategies of the neighbouring territories. The article by *Eduardas Spiriajevas* analyses the allocation of the “Europe Economic Area” (Iceland, Norway, and Lichtenstein) and “Norway” grants in the states that acceded to the EU before 2004. The author concentrates on Lithuania, defines priority

sectors for cooperation and analyses the geography of the participation of Lithuanian municipalities in the above-mentioned grant programmes.

The *'Russia and the Baltic States'* section describes the relations of Russia and the three Baltic states — Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. *Nikolai Mezhevich* investigates the economic aspects of these relations in 2007—2008 with special emphasis on the transit of Russian cargoes via the Baltic ports. Factual data show that the relocation of the remains and the monument to Soviet soldiers from the centre of Tallinn led to a decrease in Russian cargo transit via Estonian ports in favour of the ports of Latvia and Lithuania, which imparted certain solidity and pragmatism to Russia-Latvia and Russia-Lithuania relations. In this connection, the author regards maintaining this positive dynamics of Russian-Latvian and Russian-Lithuanian relations as necessary, while Russia-Estonia relations will unfortunately take time to be restored.

The section *'Russian communities in the Baltic Region'* considers the problems connected with the position of the Russian-speaking population in the states of the Baltic region, as well as the maintaining of Russian language and culture in these diasporas. The article by *Viktor Voronov* deals with the problems of socio-cultural adaptation and identity formation of ethnic Russians in Latvia. The author states that, since the middle 1990s, two integration processes have started to intensively develop: one is the “rooting” of the Russian population into the life of independent Latvia, and the other is their forming a new identity. At the same time, the new identity formation process and simultaneous integration of ethnic Russians into Latvian society are hampered by objective internal political and economic reasons: the imperfection of the national legislation, resilience of some political parties, socioeconomic stratification of society, and the difference in the interpretation the XX century history.

The present issue of the journal is concluded with a review of the Baltic Sea Region studies at the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia prepared by *Andrey Klemeshev* and *Gennady Fedorov*. The review covers the main directions of the Baltic Studies at the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia, as well as the most significant research programmes and projects in this sphere. The authors offer a list of the major publications of the university researchers on the problems of the Baltic region in general and the exclave Kaliningrad region in particular.

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