



THE BALTIC SEA  
**High Level Energy  
Security Meeting**

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10 April, 2024  
Vilnius, Lithuania

# THE DECLARATION OF ENERGY MINISTERS

We, the Ministers of the EU Member States around the Baltic Sea – the Republic of Lithuania, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Poland, the Kingdom of Sweden, convened in Vilnius, Lithuania, for the Baltic Sea High Level Energy Security Meeting to discuss key energy security issues, in particular, the development of offshore wind energy and regional cooperation with a focus on infrastructure interconnectivity, energy economics and resilience of critical energy infrastructure against cyber and physical threats, with the aim of agreeing on the regional forward looking solutions.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has been a major challenge to the European and global energy markets and to international energy security. Nevertheless, European countries have demonstrated tremendous solidarity and unity in phasing out Russian fossil fuels by swiftly building the minimum necessary import infrastructure for natural gas to ensure immediate and diversified security of supply, reducing energy consumption, speeding up the deployment of renewable energy sources and green and low carbon hydrogen. Our joint actions in recent years have not only contributed to the energy security and overall resilience of the EU but have also advanced our efforts to achieve EU climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest.

In light of the continuing challenges posed by geopolitical uncertainties and climate change, we hereby reconfirm our commitment to securing Europe's prosperous energy future and decarbonizing our energy systems as soon as possible in the most cost-efficient ways while taking into account unique challenges as well as our common potential. Our strength lies in our determination to enhance regional energy cooperation and resilience among the EU Baltic Sea countries by aligning our efforts to phase out fossil fuels, particularly Russian fossil fuels, as soon as possible and replace them with zero emission energy, in particular, with renewable energy sources that are available in the Baltic Sea. Keeping security of supply, we will work closely together to assess further options to continue to apply significant pressure on Russian revenues from energy, including the newly created opportunity provided by the regulation establishing common internal market rules for renewable and natural gases and hydrogen to adopt the restrictions to the supply of natural gas, including liquefied natural gas, and hydrogen from Russia or Belarus, with the aim of protecting our essential security interests.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP) which for the past 15 years has played an important role in surpassing key energy challenges in terms of integrating the region into the internal energy market. BEMIP will continue to ensure political steering, close follow-up of our priority projects and energy policy objectives as well as a joint platform for coordinating the main energy challenges.

Recognizing the contribution of investment in domestic generation capacities of the offshore wind energy for the sake of energy security, adequacy, resilience and climate neutrality, we commit to support enhanced regional cooperation in exploring development of hybrid projects and new offshore energy multi-purpose hubs that connect offshore wind farms across the Baltic Sea. They can play an important role in the European energy network, facilitating additional renewable energy generation and its efficient transmission and distribution, thereby contributing to an increasingly meshed offshore grid, promoting the development of energy storages as well as green hydrogen and its derivatives. We will collaborate closely with relevant stakeholders to design and construct these energy hubs in a way that ensures their compatibility with the existing infrastructure and environmental considerations as well as readily available and planned capacities to adequately balance energy systems for their stable and secure operation at all times. We recognize the need for a fair and transparent distribution of cost and benefits with the aim of maximising the benefits of the renewable energy potentials and social-economic welfare for households, industry, and societies in the Baltic Sea countries.

It is our firm belief that greater interconnectivity among the EU Baltic Sea countries, considering the ongoing discussions on the development of offshore wind farms, the expansion and enhancement of ports, the establishment of offshore energy hubs, the use of low emission alternative fuels, in particular green and low carbon hydrogen, and other energy infrastructure projects in the Baltic Sea region, including hydrogen infrastructure, will significantly contribute to Europe's energy security.

The envisaged growth of the volumes of renewable energy increases the need for flexibility in the electricity system, including an expansion of the interconnectivity of Europe's electricity grid where necessary, the sufficient availability of dispatchable generation capacity as well as the growth of storage and demand response volumes. Increasing the system flexibility enables to engage more renewables as well as reduce the price volatility, magnified the needed reserves in the system and secure therefore energy system better. We recognize that involving storage and demand response resources to the system is a priority. More unified approach in the EU framework, especially regarding independent aggregators involvement to all market levels, will be a key factor here in the future.

We, the Ministers of the EU Baltic Sea countries, acknowledge the potential of offshore wind energy in the Baltic Sea, estimated by the European Commission at 90 GW, and its role in decarbonization, diversification, electrification and the ramp-up of green hydrogen. The resources of offshore wind energy provide an opportunity to drive the region and Europe towards a sustainable, affordable, resilient, and technologically advanced energy future. Recognizing the benefits of offshore wind energy, we agree to continue the build-out of offshore wind energy and to strengthen the competitiveness of European wind energy manufacturing.

We, therefore, welcome a significant milestone which was agreed upon in the 2022 Marienburg Declaration and actions which were taken so far by signatory countries, as well as the 2023 sea-basin goals for the Baltic Sea, in order to achieve tangible results.

We commit to work towards implementing the ambitions set in the Marienburg Declaration and to accelerate the development and deployment of offshore wind capacity, ensuring the timely completion of necessary infrastructure and regulatory frameworks at EU and national level according to national energy policies to facilitate their establishment, in particular, looking towards the update of the sea-basin goals due in December 2024 and the upcoming sea-basin financing discussions.

As a step towards the achievement of the Marienberg targets, we acknowledge the first-ever Offshore Network Development Plan (ONDP) that recognizes the potential offshore renewable generation capacity in the Baltic Sea as 26.7 GW by 2030, 45 GW by 2040 and 70 GW by 2050, and agree on the need to continue developing the ONDP in order to achieve its full maturity. To this end, offshore grid planning needs to be conducted by closer cooperation of those Transmission System Operators (TSOs) concerned. In order to make timely progress on this endeavour and select the most economically viable projects, we encourage the relevant TSOs to analyse the potential for further hybrid offshore projects and their benefits in the Baltic Sea.

We, the Ministers of the EU Baltic Sea countries, commit to contribute to the work of the European Commission in preparing effective guidance on costs and benefit allocation for offshore infrastructure in EU sea basins, which will play an important role in helping to achieve our offshore wind energy goals. We also call on an adequate EU funding for trans-European energy infrastructure projects, especially for grid infrastructure, that is in line with the high ambition and potential of renewable energy uptake in our region and in the EU.

We, the Ministers of the EU Baltic Sea countries, are also fully committed to promoting research and innovation, both in the public and private sectors, and driving EU and national energy policies and legislation to enhance the scalability, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of offshore wind energy projects. Moreover, we recognise the need of science-based and integrated Maritime Spatial Planning processes to link renewable offshore energy production with nature protection and other existing activities at sea.

In line with this commitment, we strongly encourage collaboration among the EU Baltic Sea countries, fostering the sharing of expertise, technological advancement, and best practices. With further deployment of offshore wind energy, we aim to contribute to a green transformation that will change not only the energy sector but also our entire economy. This transformation should contribute to the promotion of the competitiveness of Europe's economy and European value chain, for the sake of national defence interests, give rise to new jobs, technologies, industries, and a market of services. Thereby, we recognize that we must navigate a new landscape of the required investments in new energy infrastructure as well as in modernization and repurposing of existing infrastructure and the establishment of a supportive regulatory environment.

We are fully committed to ensuring protection and resilience of our critical infrastructure in the Baltic Sea, in order to protect our common interests, uphold international law and react effectively to growing threats including attempts of hybrid and cyber interference. We will work together to increase the security of offshore and underwater infrastructure and deter possible malign activities against them with future support of NATO's Maritime Centre for the Security of Critical Undersea Infrastructure and in cooperation between NATO and the EU, as set out by the 2023 joint declaration.

Together, we will work to build secure, safe, and sustainable energy sector for generations to come.

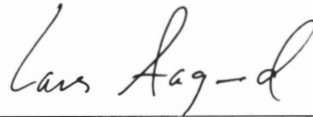
Vilnius, 10 April 2024.

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