

# Transnational Relations in the Baltic Sea Region



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# Acknowledgements

The origin of this book was a panel on Cooperation and Conflict in the Baltic Sea Region of the third Pan-European International Relations Conference and Joint Meeting of the European Standing Group for International Relations with the International Studies Association in Vienna in 1998. The panel, chaired by professor Adrian Hyde-Price, gathered a number of scholars with an interest in International Relations to discuss the political implications for the Baltic Sea region of the historical changes that had taken place between 1989 and 1991. My paper introduced a transnational perspective to the discussion, exemplified by a case study of the lobbying activities of the big business leaders of the Baltic Sea Business Summit (BSBS). Encouraged by this discussion, I decided to launch a comprehensive study of transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region. The aim of the research has been to map out and explain various patterns of transnational relations in the area, including contacts between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the lobbying of regional organizations and networks of non-state actors. The book is the result of this research.

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# Contents

List of tables.....	vii
List of figures.....	ix
Abbreviations.....	x
1. Introduction.....	11
The Baltic Sea region goes transnational.....	11
The research genre of transnational relations.....	15
Transnational contacts.....	18
Transnational lobbying.....	25
Outline of the book.....	30
2. Mapping transnational contacts.....	31
Introduction.....	31
Do some types of NGOs have more regular transnational contacts?.....	33
Scope.....	33
Frequency.....	36
Type of activity.....	39
Do NGOs from some countries have more regular transnational contacts?.....	42
Scope.....	42
Frequency.....	46
Type of activity.....	48
3. Explaining the patterns of transnational contacts.....	51
Conditioners for regular transnational contacts.....	51
Conditioners related to actor.....	54
(a-b) Interests.....	54
(c) Personnel resources.....	57
Conditioners related to structure.....	59
(a) Democracy.....	59
(b) Technological progress.....	61
(c) Geographical distance.....	63
(d) Economic interdependence.....	65
(e) International governmental institutions.....	68
Why do some NGOs have more transnational contacts?.....	71

Why do some types of NGOs have more transnational contacts? .....	72
Why do NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts? .....	75
4. Mapping transnational lobbying .....	79
Introduction .....	79
The target: The Council of Baltic Sea States .....	81
The formative context, membership, and mandates .....	81
Institutions and decision-making processes.....	83
Case studies of transnational lobbying .....	87
Case 1: The Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association .....	87
Case 2: The Baltic Sea Business Summit .....	90
Case 3: The Baltic Sea Trade Union Network.....	95
Case 4: The Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation .....	98
Case 5: The Union of Baltic Cities .....	103
Case 6: The Coalition Clean Baltic .....	107
Case 7: The Trans-Baltic Network .....	111
5. Explaining the patterns of transnational lobbying .....	117
Conditioners for successful transnational lobbying .....	117
Conditioners related to actor .....	120
(a) Economic resources.....	120
(b) Consensus .....	122
(c) Informal organization.....	124
(d) Representativity .....	126
(e) Knowledge .....	128
(f) Power in implementation.....	130
(g) Strategy .....	131
Conditioners related to structure .....	134
(a) Regional interdependence .....	134
(b) Democracy .....	137
(c) Regional institutions.....	139
6. Conclusions.....	143
Introduction .....	143
Transnational contacts.....	143
Transnational lobbying.....	149
References.....	157
Intergovernmental documents .....	157
Non-governmental documents .....	158
Mass media publications .....	159
Internet resources .....	159
Literature .....	159

# List of tables

Table 1. <i>Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks 1957-1999</i> .....	13
Table 2. <i>The original selection of NGOs grouped by type of NGO</i> .....	20
Table 3. <i>The surveyed NGO population and the obtained response rate, October 2000-March 2001</i> .....	22
Table 4. <i>The surveyed NGO population and the obtained response rate grouped by type of NGO, October 2000-March 2001</i> .....	24
Table 5. <i>The surveyed NGO population and the obtained response rate grouped by the NGOs' country of origin, October 2000-March 2001</i> .	24
Table 6. <i>Seven case studies of transnational lobbying</i> .....	28
Table 7. <i>Regular bilateral transnational contacts grouped by type of NGO and by number of Baltic Sea countries in which the respondents have regular contacts with NGOs (per cent)</i> .....	34
Table 8. <i>Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by type of contact (per cent)</i> .....	35
Table 9. <i>The ranking order of nine types of NGOs with respect to scope of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region</i> .....	36
Table 10. <i>The most frequent regular bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by frequency (per cent)</i> .....	37
Table 11. <i>Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by frequency (per cent)</i> .....	38
Table 12. <i>The ranking order of nine types of NGOs with respect to frequency of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region</i> .....	39
Table 13. <i>Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by type of activity orientation (per cent)</i> .....	40
Table 14. <i>Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by type of activity (per cent)</i> .....	41
Table 15. <i>Regular bilateral transnational contacts grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by number of Baltic Sea countries in which they have regular contacts with NGOs (per cent)</i> .	43
Table 16. <i>Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by type of contact (per cent)</i> .....	43
Table 17. <i>The ranking order of NGOs from eight countries with respect to scope of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region</i> .....	44
Table 18. <i>Bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by pair of countries</i> .....	45

Table 19. <i>The most frequent regular bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by frequency (per cent)</i> .....	46
Table 20. <i>Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by frequency (per cent)</i> .....	47
Table 21. <i>The ranking order of NGOs from eight countries with respect to frequency of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region</i> .....	48
Table 22. <i>Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by type of activity orientation (per cent)</i> .....	49
Table 23. <i>Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by type of activity (per cent)</i> .....	50
Table 24. <i>Interest for Baltic Sea issues and for influencing interstate cooperation in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO, 2000-2001</i> .....	56
Table 25. <i>Interest for Baltic Sea issues and for influencing interstate cooperation in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the NGOs' country of origin, 2000-2001</i> .....	56
Table 26. <i>Personnel resources grouped by type of NGO and the NGOs' country of origin, 2000-2001</i> .....	59
Table 27. <i>The value of the Rodríguez-Wilson III Index of Technological Progress (ITP) for the nine Baltic Sea states, 1994-1997</i> .....	63
Table 28. <i>The geographical distance between the capitals of the nine Baltic Sea states (kilometers)</i> .....	64
Table 29. <i>The share of the Baltic Sea countries' exports to the other countries in the region as a proportion of their total volume of exports, 2000 (Millions of U.S. Dollars)</i> .....	67
Table 30. <i>IGO-memberships of the Baltic Sea states, 1997 and 2000</i> .....	70
Table 31. <i>Correlations between transnational contacts and a selection of conditioners related to actor and structure. Type of NGO</i> .....	73
Table 32. <i>Correlations between transnational contacts and a selection of conditioners related to actor and structure. The respondent NGOs country of origin</i> .....	75
Table 33. <i>The members of the Baltic Sea Business Summit (March 2000)</i> ...91	

# List of figures

<i>Figure 1.</i> Tested conditioners facilitating regular transnational contacts .....	53
<i>Figure 2.</i> Conditioners affecting the influence of transnational lobbying on regional interstate cooperation .....	119

# Abbreviations

BAC	Business Advisory Council
BASTUN	Baltic Sea Trade Union Network
BCCA	Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association
BSBS	Baltic Sea Business Summit
BSSSC	Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation
CBSS	Council of Baltic Sea States
CCB	Coalition Clean Baltic
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Committee of Senior Officials
DGB	Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund
ERT	European Round Table of Industrialists
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EU	European Union
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission
IBSFC	International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission
IGO	International Governmental Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MNC	Multinational Corporation
NFS	Nordens Fackliga Samorganisation (Council of Nordic Trade Unions)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
TBN	Trans-Baltic Network
UBC	Union of Baltic Cities
UIA	Union of International Associations
UN	United Nations
WGDI	Working Group for Assistance to Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
WGECC	Working Group for Economic Cooperation
WGNS	Working Group for Nuclear Safety

# 1. Introduction

## The Baltic Sea region goes transnational<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the Baltic Sea region have a long and changing history of transnational relations, i.e. “regular interactions across national boundaries when at least one actor is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organization” (Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 3). Times of prospering transnational contacts have often been interrupted by inter-state wars and struggles for domination over the region.<sup>2</sup> For example, treaties such as the 1857 Øresund Treaty and the 1921 Åland Convention, through which the principle of the Baltic Sea as an open sea was acknowledged, laid important foundations for increasing exchanges of merchandise and interactions between people. This promising development, however, came to a brutal end in the late 1930s when the foreign policies of the Soviet Union and nazi-Germany burst into ruthless excesses of military threats and violence. Beginning with a joint agreement to divide large parts of the Baltic Sea region into one Soviet and one German sphere of interest (the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939), the relationship soon turned into one of antagonism and full-scale war. For part of the Baltic Sea region, the outcome of this clash was that the eastern and the southeastern parts of the area for almost half a century came under full domination of the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup> Through these developments, the role of the Baltic Sea changed from being somewhat of a cultural bridge to an iron curtain that made human contacts and exchange of ideas extremely difficult.

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<sup>1</sup> The Baltic Sea is located in the northeastern part of Europe. Since 1992 it is surrounded by nine littoral states: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and Sweden. The term ‘Baltic Sea state’ sometimes also includes Norway, which due to its geographical proximity often takes an active part in Baltic Sea cooperation. The smaller states can be divided into two sub-groupings. The Baltic states refer to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Nordic states comprise the three Scandinavian states (Denmark, Norway, and Sweden) together with Finland and Iceland (which is usually not considered a Baltic Sea state).

<sup>2</sup> For studies of the history of the Baltic Sea region, see Kirby (1990, 1995); Kirby and Hinkanen (2000); and Rystad, Böhme, and Carlgren (1994, 1995). On the post-Cold War years in particular, see for example Joenniemi (1993); Joenniemi and Stålvant (1995); and Knudsen (1999).

<sup>3</sup> Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were incorporated by force into the Soviet Union in 1940. Poland and the eastern part of Germany came under Soviet domination in 1945.

During the Cold War there was a considerable degree of transnational relations among the free and democratic states on the western and northern rims of the Baltic Sea. This was especially apparent among the Nordic countries, which were sometimes even described as a transnational community (e.g. Sundelius, 1978: 15-41; 1982: 182-90). This community was in the early 1970s made up of, among other things, 436 Nordic INGOs (International Non-Governmental Organizations), i.e. organizations gathering non-state actors from at least three of the five countries. In sharp contrast to this extensive societal interaction, we find at the same time only two Baltic Sea INGOs including members from both the eastern and the western part of the region (Union of International Associations, 2000). These were the Conference of Baltic Oceanographers (1957) and the Baltic Marine Biologists (1968), i.e. in both cases associations of scientists. Of course, a major reason for this extremely limited cooperation was that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not allow transnational contacts to flow freely during its time in power (cf. Evangelista, 1995: 157-8).

The end of the Cold War had considerable repercussions for the Baltic Sea region, including the development of transnational relations. Beginning with calls for 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' from the new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985<sup>4</sup>, the process reached its climax a few years later with events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the re-unification of Germany in 1990, the regained independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1991, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Table 1, which offers an overview of the formation of Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks, shows that transnational relations have grown significantly in the area since the Cold War began to ebb away.

In the late 1990s there were some 25 transnational actors at the regional level, compared with the four that existed only a decade earlier. In the late 1990s there were many different non-state actors involved in the transnational process (e.g. schools, islands, non-governmental organizations, ports, cities, companies, and private citizens), while the two regional networks that were formed during the Cold War were associations of scientists only.<sup>5</sup>

The arrival of these regional INGOs and cross-border networks is only one example of how international relations in the Baltic Sea area today include a clear transnational dimension. This fact is also reflected in an increasing amount of scholarly works. In-depth studies have been carried out

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'glasnost' referred to openness in political and economic decision-making, while 'perestroika' (restructuring) implied an all-embracing modernization of the Communist Party and the state apparatus. See Gorbachev (1996: 718, 722).

<sup>5</sup> For an overview of the origins and developments of the entire population of regional INGOs in the international system, see Boli and Thomas (1999: 30-4). Their analysis covers the period 1901-1973 and shows that there has been a sharp increase in the formation of regional INGOs since 1945. This development has continued during the last decades, but the pace of the increase is slower today (Union of International Associations, 2000). Apparently, this type of transnationalization has come relatively late to the Baltic Sea region.

on the transnational activities of, for example, local authorities (Joenniemi and Sweedler, 1995; Wellmann, 1998), the Baltic Sea Business Summit (Karlsson, 1999; 2001), the Union of the Baltic Cities (Heyen, 1999), and an epistemic community focusing on communicable disease control (Karlsson, 2004). In addition, Karlsson (2002) briefly reflects upon the significance of security considerations for Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks. Another type of study focuses on transnational processes at the sub-regional level, such as in the Øresund region (Berg *et al*, 2000). Besides specialized studies such as these, the transnational aspect is also briefly touched upon in some works dealing with the general political development of the Baltic Sea region (e.g. Joenniemi, 1993; Östhol, 1999).

Table 1. *Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks 1957-1999*

Year of creation		Type of members
1957	Conference of Baltic Oceanographers	Scientists
-		
1968	Baltic Marine Biologists	Scientists
-		
1988	Baltic Sea Project	Schools
1989	Islands of the Baltic Sea	Islands
1990	Coalition Clean Baltic	NGOs
	Conference of Baltic University Rectors	University rectors
1991	Associations of Museums and Castles around the Baltic Sea	Museums, castles
	Baltic Ports Organization	Ports
	Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference	Parliamentarians
	Union of Baltic Cities	Cities
1992	Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association	Chambers of commerce
	Pro Baltica Forum	Mixed
1993	Baltic Music Network	Artists
	Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation	Sub-regions
	UBC Women's Network	Women
1994	Trans-Baltic Network	NGOs, private citizens
1995	-	
1996	Baltic Sea Business Summit	Leaders of large companies
	Baltic Sea Youth Forum	Youth
1997	Baltic Nordic Network for Women with Disabilities	Women
	Baltic Sea Alliance	Regional INGOs
	Baltic Sea Women's Conference	Women
	Liberal Youth of the Baltic Sea	Youth parties
1998	Baltic Farmers' Forum on the Environment	Farmers' organizations
1999	Baltic Sea Trade Union Network	Trade unions
	Baltic Development Forum	Politicians, businessmen etc.

SOURCES: *Yearbook of International Organizations 2000/2001* (Union of International Associations, 2000), and Stålvant (1996).

The ongoing transnationalization of the Baltic Sea region gives rise to many interesting questions that can be the subject of academic study. Depending on our choice of perspective, the research questions may also be formulated in rather different ways (cf. Mingst, 1999: 8-14). If we adopt a rationalist perspective we may ask, for example, why this transnationalization occurs, why it seems to be increasing, or why it has (or has not) an effect on inter-governmental relations in the region? In these cases, we assume that there are patterns of transnational relations and that our task as analysts is to formulate and test propositions about factors that help to explain these patterns. If we instead choose a constructivist angle, we may formulate questions about, for example, the regional identity of the transnational actors (e.g. do they think of themselves as Baltic Sea actors?) or the framing of Baltic Sea issues (e.g. are some problems presented as unique for the Baltic Sea region?). In these cases, we assume that there is no single objective reality of actors and problems; there are only social constructions of them. The task of the analyst is therefore to deconstruct concepts such as 'the Baltic Sea region' and replace them with all those meanings that actors ascribe to them.

This book analyses transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region from a rationalist perspective. It is thereby assumed that there are patterns of cross-border relations involving non-state actors and that it is possible to explain them. This assumption has two wider implications. First, it implies that a study of transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region may benefit from knowledge about such relations in general. This means that many of those factors that help to explain transnational relations in, for example, Western Europe or North America, should also be relevant to this region. Second, the rationalist perspective implies that the findings from an analysis of the Baltic Sea region should have something to say about how transnational relations work in general. If some factors prove particularly important for understanding non-governmental relations in this region, then they should be considered in studies of other regions as well.

Following the choice of perspective, this book will be confined to an analysis of two specific patterns of transnational relations: transnational contacts and transnational lobbying. In other words, the purpose of this book is to do a case study of the Baltic Sea region that addresses the general questions of what conditions facilitate transnational contacts and successful transnational lobbying. Why are some non-state actors more successful in developing and maintaining durable patterns of transnational interaction than others? Why are some transnational actors more successful in their lobbying than others? Questions such as these have been given high priority ever since the study of transnational relations made a major breakthrough some thirty years ago. In a sense, the two questions reflect the basic curiosity of any scholar concerned with international politics. As the signs of increasing transnational relations have become more frequent (e.g. Risse-Kappen, 1995: 3-4), the research agenda has been broadened and lead to more scholars

seeking knowledge about the development and the political impact of this type of interaction. The case is very much the same for this study. As we have indications of a considerable increase in cross-border contacts of non-state actors in the Baltic Sea region (cf. Table 1), it is our ambition to learn more about why these contacts are developing as well as about their political significance. We think it is also important to pay attention to the latter aspect because the mere appearance of transnational contacts does not in itself prove that they are politically important.

## The research genre of transnational relations

The academic study of transnational relations was more or less established as a separate research genre in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>6</sup> Scholars such as Karl Kaiser (1969; 1971), Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1971, 1974), John Burton (1972), and Werner Feld (1972) then laid a scientific foundation for future research by beginning to create conceptual tools and raising basic questions about causes and effects. Since this first wave of studies, the understanding of transnational relations has continuously deepened, and today we can find at least three reasons for why we should consider it a rather well established genre with a separate agenda for research.<sup>7</sup>

The first reason concerns the definition of the object of study, i.e. *what* is to be considered as transnational relations? On this point it is possible to speak of an increasing conceptual consensus. For example, Keohane and Nye (1971: 332) defined transnational interactions as “the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an intergovernmental organization.” However, this implies a wide usage of the concept that includes practically every type of interaction across state borders but inter-governmental relations, e.g. cross-border flows of private individuals, merchandise, capital, and information. For analytical purposes many scholars have therefore found it necessary to make a distinction between various sub-sets of transnational relations. One such sub-set, to which this book is directed, concerns the study of transnational actors. The term transnational actor has been defined by Peter Willetts (1996: 2-3) as “any participant in world politics operating outside the group’s home country, independently of their home government.” One example of a study from this sub-set that has attracted considerable attention

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<sup>6</sup> Of course, there were studies of transnational relations carried out before. But, as pointed out by history professor Charles Chatfield (1997b: 22), these studies tended to have a rather narrative and descriptive character.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Risse (2002) provides an overview of transnational relations research. During the 1990s we saw somewhat of a second wave of transnational studies, including important contributions by, for example, John Boli and George Thomas (1999), Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998), Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995a), and Jackie Smith *et al.* (1997).

during the last decade is the book *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In*, which was edited by Thomas Risse-Kappen in 1995 and which focuses on transnational relations that are maintained by “clearly identifiable actors or groups of actors and linking at least two societies or sub-units of national governments” (p. 8). As indicated by this delimitation, it is also common to categorize studies of transnational actors depending on whether they focus on trans-societal actors such as NGOs (e.g. Arts, 1998; Willetts, 1982; 1996) or trans-governmental actors such as civil servants (e.g. Kaiser, 1971; Keohane and Nye, 1974).

The second reason for describing the study of transnational relations as well established concerns the justification for this research. That is, *why* should we care about transnational relations in the first place? There are at least three reasons for considering this research important (cf. Arts, 2000b; Brown, 2001: 37-8; Chatfield, 1997a: xiii; Zacher and Matthew, 1995: 133). One is that states are losing ground in international relations to non-state actors (cf. Rosenau, 1990). Few would deny that transnational relations have increased during recent decades, but it has been much debated how significant this change is (cf. Baldwin, 1993; Kegley, 1995). State-centric approaches, such as realism and neo-realism, assume that inter-state relations are those that really matter and that transnational interactions do not make a significant difference. At the other end of the scale, we find perspectives such as liberalism and neo-liberalism, which assume that transnational relations are penetrating or even gradually transforming the state-system.<sup>8</sup> A second reason justifying this research is that states are having difficulties in controlling non-state actors and their cross-border activities. This means that many transnational groups today appear as autonomous actors on the international scene, i.e. they act independently of governments or other types of actors. A third reason concerns the capacity to interact across state borders. The increasing number of, for example, regional INGOs is a reflection of the fact that many non-state actors possess sufficient resources to take and implement decisions on international activities. The essence of these assumptions is that transnational relations matter and that traditional state-centric approaches give an inadequate picture of international relations.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> There are many thoughts about what the outcome of this transformation may be. For a brief overview of some of these expectations, see Tarrow (1998: 178). As regards penetration, it should be noted that even though transnational actors often seek contacts with intergovernmental structures, it is not clear whether this in general facilitates or complicates international cooperation (Smith, 1997a: 51).

<sup>9</sup> It should be emphasized that the justification for research on transnational relations does not necessarily have to stand in contradiction to the state-centric paradigm. For example, John Vasquez (1998: 166) argues, “It is clear that a truly transnational society has not emerged and does not seem likely to do so in the near future. Since this is the case, it is then a relatively simple matter for adherents of the realist paradigm to include those non-state actors that are important without changing very much in their analysis.”

The third reason for considering transnational relations a well-established research genre concerns our knowledge of the phenomena. We have today an increasing body of empirical evidence on *how* and *why* transnational relations grow and play a role in international politics. Even though it is far too early to speak of a theory of transnational relations, it is possible to identify a critical mass of research that is in a theorizing stage. This means that we now have a number of well-founded propositions and hypotheses related to questions about the roots and role of transnational relations (e.g. Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 25-32; Smith, 1997: 57-8; and Tarrow, 1998: 178-84). However, theorizing also implies a need for testing the validity of existing hypotheses as well as a need for developing and examining other possible explanations. This implication is not least reflected in the many calls during recent years for further systematic studies of various aspects of transnational relations (e.g. Alger, 1997: 270-75; Boli and Thomas, 1999: 300; McCarthy, 1997: 259; Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 312-13; Smith, 1997: 57; and Tarrow, 1998: 193-94). Common for many of these calls is that we should strive toward the identification of patterns of transnational relations by making comparisons with respect to, for example, different arenas, issue-areas, time periods, and types of transnational actors. Of course, there may be significant differences in certain respects, but the premise behind this research is that there are enough comparable patterns of transnational relations to make some generalized statements possible.

When this book addresses the questions of what conditions facilitate transnational contacts and successful transnational lobbying in the Baltic Sea region, it is with the intention of contributing to the theorizing about transnational relations in general. This will be done by formulating and testing hypotheses that are more or less explicitly hinted at in the research literature on transnational relations. Considering that transnational relations, as any social relations, may be affected by a vast number of factors, related to the actors themselves as well as to various structures, the book strives toward separating the most important factors from the less important ones. The abundance of plausible explanatory factors is sometimes referred to as the “many variables, few cases” dilemma, i.e. “there are relatively few cases to observe while, at the same time, each case exhibits a bewildering complexity” (Ragin *et al*, 1996: 749; cf. Lijphart, 1971). In order to select explanatory variables, we have not relied on a specific theory. Instead we have adopted a comprehensive approach (Ragin *et al*, 1996: 754), which tries to bring together relevant factors by surveying existing research literature. Considering that the chosen approach highlights the complexity of observed cases, it will hopefully give a better understanding of the conditions that facilitate transnational contacts and successful transnational lobbying. There is, however, still no guarantee that ‘all’ relevant factors are considered.

The explanatory variables will be presented within the frame of models. Even though the level of specificity in models may vary, it should be re-

membered that all models are basically simplifications of reality (Stoker, 1995: 17-8). By bringing together the most important factors, a model, to use a common metaphor, helps us to see the wood for the trees. Moreover, the models developed in this book identify conditions for transnational contacts and successful transnational lobbying, but they do not specify the relationships between the conditions. For example, returning to Table 1, if we assume the increasing number of regional INGOs in the Baltic Sea region correlates with a decrease in inter-state tensions (e.g. the end of the Cold War), a growth of universalistic INGOs, and an increase of NGO-resources, it is evident a model should identify these as important conditions. However, a model does not specify if and how a change in, for instance, inter-state tensions may affect the importance of the other independent variables. Considering our focus on models, we will argue that this book basically represents a type of case study which Harry Eckstein (1975) has called plausibility probe. In the absence of a general theory of transnational relations, we will construct models and test them on the case of the Baltic Sea region. If the assumptions of the models prove to be plausible, then we are ready to move up one step on the theorizing ladder and begin to develop and test a general theory.

## Transnational contacts

The first research question that will be addressed in this study concerns the conditions that facilitate regular transnational contacts. In other words, why are some non-state actors more successful in developing and maintaining durable patterns of transnational interaction than others? Is it simply because they have a stronger interest in international issues and possess more resources for taking part in interactions across state-borders? Or, is the occurrence of regular transnational contacts rather dependent on structural conditioners, such as the countries' levels of interdependence, democracy, and technological development? Furthermore, what explanatory power do the two types of conditioners have in relation to each other? For example, can structural factors explain why some non-state actors, despite interest and capacity, have practically no or only very sporadic transnational contacts?

The phenomenon that is to be explained in the first part of the study is regular transnational contacts (the dependent variable). The term contact may, according to the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Online Dictionary, refer to "an establishing of communication with someone or an observing or receiving of a significant signal from a person or object". To establish communication means that there is an act through which information, verbal or written, is being transmitted or exchanged between individuals. The information may be transmitted through different channels, such as electronic mail, letter, telephone, or a personal meeting. The contact may be described as

either a one-way or a two-way communication, depending on whether the initiator is always the same part or if both parties are about equally active (Helander, 1993: 12).

Keohane and Nye argued in their pioneering study on *Power and Interdependence* (1977: 33-5) that the international communications structure had become highly transnational. However, since they use a rather broad definition on what should count as transnational relations, it should be emphasized that the term transnational contact will here be used in a much narrower sense. We are with respect to the first research question only interested in communications between non-state actors. This focus falls within the limits of the Risse-Kappen definition mentioned at the very beginning of this chapter. That is, transnational contacts between non-state actors constitute a subset of communications "when at least one actor is a non-state agent".

By expressing an interest in regular transnational contacts it should be clear that we direct the study towards durable patterns of transnational interaction rather than single contacts. Cross-border contacts become regular, or a durable pattern of transnational interaction, when they occur continuously during a certain period of time. Frequent communications across state borders between non-state actors have also been described in terms of transnational coalitions (Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 10), transnational networks (Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 8-10), and transnational movements (Smith, Pagnucco, and Chatfield, 1997: 59-60). Moreover, cross-border interactions may be more or less institutionalized, i.e. it may be based on different degrees of explicit and implicit sets of rules (Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 10). The highest levels of transnational institutionalization are in general found among international non-governmental organizations and multinational corporations (MNCs), which also include supporting structures such as boards and secretariats. Empirical research shows that transnational interactions have become increasingly institutionalized since 1945. This is seen not least in the dramatic increase in the number of global and regional INGOs (Boli and Thomas, 1999: 30-1). In the case of the Baltic Sea region, we have witnessed a similar process of institutionalization since the late 1980s (see table 1).

The conditions for transnational contacts will be studied through an e-post questionnaire to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from the nine littoral states of the Baltic Sea. An NGO has been defined by Peter Willetts as "any non-profit-making, non-violent, organised group of people who are not seeking government office" (Willetts, 1996: 5). This definition includes actors such as interest groups and private voluntary organizations, but excludes commercial organizations, liberation movements, churches, and political parties. However, even though the definition as such is rather established among scholars (cf. Gordenker and Weiss, 1996: 20-1; Josselin and Wallace, 2001: 4), the term non-governmental has often proved to be somewhat elastic when confronted with real cases. As pointed out by Josselin and Wallace (2001: 2), "defining non-state actors chiefly by their independence from

states and state authority would be misleading”, because “the theoretical purity of these opposing ideal types is muddled by the complexities of practice.” For example, some NGOs do not accept financial support from states because they fear that it may weaken their credibility as non-governmental actors. Other organizations, on the other hand, accept financial support as long as they have the right to independently decide on exactly how to use the support. The population surveyed in this study will include both types of NGOs.<sup>10</sup>

Table 2. *The original selection of NGOs grouped by type of NGO*

Type of NGO	Number	Examples
<i>Protective:</i>		
Business	100	Chambers of commerce, employers, industry, trade
Labor	100	Labor organizations, professions, and unions
<i>Promotional:</i>		
Democracy	100	Democracy, human rights
Environment	100	Environment, nature protection
Internationalism	100	International assistance (including Europe only), exchange, friendship, peace
Knowledge	100	Education, science, students
Leisure	100	Hobbies, leisure, recreation, sports
Primordial	100	Cultural or ethnic identity, family, religion
Social welfare	100	Charity, handicapped, women, youth
Sum	900	

The e-post questionnaire was sent to 900 NGOs, which were selected according to two criteria. First, the questionnaire was evenly distributed geographically. It was sent to 100 organizations in each of the nine littoral states of the Baltic Sea. The vast majority of the NGOs are operative at the national level, while about 10 per cent of the population is sub-national organizations from areas in the immediate nearness to the Baltic Sea. Second, the population also includes nine different types of NGOs (Table 2). Two of these consist of organizations with a protective interest (business, labor), while the remaining seven represent various promotional NGOs. The difference between the two is that the former is primarily looking after the interests of the members, while the latter seeks to promote values that are of use also to non-members (Blondel, 1973: 77; cf. Risse, 2002: 256). The promotional NGOs

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the e-post questionnaire does not address regional NGOs and transnational networks such as those listed in Table 1. The latter are however touched upon indirectly as the NGOs were also asked about multilateral contacts in the Baltic Sea region, including participation in regional NGOs and transnational networks (see Chapter 2).

have been grouped into the following sectors: democracy, environment, internationalism, knowledge, leisure, primordial, and social welfare.<sup>11</sup>

The individual NGOs were selected from the membership lists of international and European INGOs active within the mentioned sub-categories. These lists were also used to collect the e-post addresses of the NGOs. The selection procedure has two very important implications for this study. First, it means that the surveyed population basically consists of an elite of NGOs. That is, they possess the necessary resources for being internationally active, having computers, and being connected to the Internet. The elite status of the organizations can also be seen from the fact that the average number of employees among the respondents was 21.8 (see Chapter 3). The elite character becomes even more apparent if we consider the fact that most NGOs, in the words of Gordenker and Weiss (1996: 19), “have not managed to break out of the local setting and become engaged in transnational activities”. Even though it remains to be seen whether or not the selected group of already internationally active NGOs are also active in the Baltic Sea region, it seems reasonable to expect that the survey in this case will somewhat exaggerate the scope of transnational relations.

Second, the choice of selection procedure will also affect the degree to which we can generalize our findings. Even though we study a smaller selection of NGOs, we expect our findings to say something about transnational contacts in general. However, because the selection is not based upon a probability criterion, we cannot be certain about how representative our selection is. The choice of NGOs is first of all based upon quota. We have selected 100 NGOs from each country, which are also evenly distributed on nine types of NGOs, but it should be noted that the selection process for each category was stopped once we reached 100 organizations. In other words, we cannot rule out the possibility that the selection in some respects may be biased. It should therefore be emphasized that our generalizations about transnational contacts will basically represent rough estimates, but we will not be able to go beyond that and say to what extent the correlations are statistically significant.

Since there is no authoritative source that registers the number of NGOs in specific countries (Willets, 1996: 9), it is impossible to say exactly how large the surveyed population is in relation to the total number of NGOs in the nine Baltic Sea states. According to one survey, the number of NGOs in the Baltic states is about 3-4,000 in Estonia, 2,700 in Latvia, and 3,000 in Lithuania (Karatnycky *et al.*, 1999). If these estimates are valid, it means that the e-post questionnaire was distributed to about 2.5-3.7 per cent of all

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<sup>11</sup> The choice of sectors was inspired by a categorization of INGOs made by Boli and Thomas (1999: 41-9). They group their population into thirteen sectors. Seven of these are more or less identical with our selection. In two cases, democracy and environment, we found reason to break down their categories to create separate sub-populations.

NGOs in these countries. Considering that this study focuses mainly on national level organizations and on an elite of NGOs, the real share is probably somewhat higher. If Gordenker and Weiss (1996: 19) are correct that most NGOs have not engaged in transnational activities, then the real share should come closer to 5-7.4 per cent in the case of the Baltic states.

The selected population was surveyed between October 2000 and March 2001. During this time span we carried out a small test survey (distributed to 27 NGOs), the main survey (900 NGOs), and two reminders.<sup>12</sup> The original selection consisted of 900 non-governmental organizations, but 42 of these were for various reasons excluded from the final analysis (see Table 3). As the questionnaire was distributed it turned out that (a) two NGOs had ceased to exist<sup>13</sup>, (b) seven actors were not NGOs in the above-mentioned sense, and (c) 33 NGOs were despite several attempts not possible to get in touch with<sup>14</sup>. Because of this, the net selection was 858 NGOs.

Table 3. *The surveyed NGO population and the obtained response rate, October 2000-March 2001*

	Number	Per cent
Original selection	900	
Excluded from the selection	-42	
Ceased to exist	2	
Not a NGO	7	
No contact	33	
Net selection	858	100,0
Reply	447	52,1
No reply	411	47,9

The obtained response rate of 52.1 per cent appears to be about the same as that for comparable surveys, i.e. surveys of an international population of non-state actors.<sup>15</sup> In view of what was said earlier about the size of the sur-

<sup>12</sup> The purpose of the first mentioned survey was to test the technical procedure for sending and receiving the questionnaire as well as to test the design of the questionnaire. The test ran without technical difficulties, and the individual questions were also kept unchanged for the main survey.

<sup>13</sup> The survival of non-state actors has received scholarly attention. For example, in a study of transnational social movement organizations, Jackie Smith (1997a: 54) found support for a "ten-year survival threshold", i.e. the probability for survival is significantly lower for actors that are ten years old or younger. As regards the survival of INGOs, see Boli and Thomas (1999: 22-4).

<sup>14</sup> In these cases, the net distributor returned the e-post with some of the following messages: "wrong e-post address", "full mailbox", or "subscription has ended". Russian NGOs account for two-thirds of the organizations that was impossible to get in touch with (see table 5).

<sup>15</sup> For example, Aspinwall and Greenwood (1998) received a response rate of 58 per cent when they in 1995/96 surveyed a sample of 693 European-level interest groups by a postal questionnaire.

veyed population, we estimate that the respondents make up somewhere between 2.5-4 per cent of all elite NGOs in the region. These figures must however be treated with considerable caution. In the absence of reliable statistics on the size of the NGO population, we can only make rather rough estimates.

To carry out the survey in the form of an e-post questionnaire has some obvious advantages, but does on the other hand not solve well-known problems with respect to reliability. The advantages is that it is easy to fill in and reply to, it is easy for the interviewed to get in contact with the researcher for clarifications, and the researcher receives an immediate message should the e-post address be wrong or misspelled. As regards reliability, a first problem is related to language and understanding. The questionnaire was written in English, as was about 95 per cent of the answers (the other being German or a Scandinavian language). This means that practically all communication was carried out in a language other than the native one. Even though some NGOs asked for some clarification before answering the questionnaire, it does of course not entirely exclude the possibility of misunderstandings of questions or answers. A second problem concerns the representativity of the answers. The questionnaire was sent to the NGOs as such without addressing a particular post or specifying the name of a certain person (unless the organization itself asked the questionnaire should be sent on to someone named). This means that there is a risk that some answers may be less representative than others. The uncertainty applies especially to about one-fifth of the returned answers, which either do not specify the status of the person answering or are signed by persons who themselves make reservations for this problem.

Table 4 shows the response rates for the individual sub-populations. It should be noted that the variation range, the difference between the highest and the lowest response rate, is significantly lower for type of NGO (16.1 percentage points) than for the NGOs' country of origin (45.1 percentage points). The latter variation is above all caused by the fact that the Russian organizations have a response rate as low as 21.9 per cent. Even though the importance of the language barrier probably should not be underestimated in this case, it seems as if much of the remaining difference may be explained by substantive circumstances. As will become clear from Chapter 2, there are actually very few NGOs in the other eight Baltic Sea countries that have regular transnational contacts in Russia. This observation may also suggest that Russian NGOs in general have a weaker interest in the Baltic Sea region than NGOs from the other countries.

Table 4. *The surveyed NGO population and the obtained response rate grouped by type of NGO, October 2000-March 2001*

Type of NGO	Number of e-mail questionnaires distributed	Number of e-mail questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
Business	97	59	60.8
Labor	96	46	47.9
Democracy	94	48	51.1
Environment	95	43	45.3
Internationalism	97	54	55.7
Knowledge	96	53	55.2
Leisure	94	42	44.7
Primordial	95	45	47.4
Social welfare	94	57	60.6
Total	858	447	52.1

Table 5. *The surveyed NGO population and the obtained response rate grouped by the NGOs' country of origin, October 2000-March 2001*

The NGOs' country of origin	Number of e-mail questionnaires distributed	Number of e-mail questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
Denmark	100	67	67.0
Estonia	100	54	54.0
Finland	99	61	61.6
Germany	100	64	64.0
Latvia	94	35	37.2
Lithuania	97	41	42.3
Poland	96	44	45.8
Russia	73	16	21.9
Sweden	99	65	65.7
Total	858	447	52.1

The study of the conditions that facilitate regular transnational contacts will be carried out in two steps. The purpose of the first step is to map the transnational contacts of the 447 NGOs, while the second step aims at explaining why some organizations have been more successful than others in developing and maintaining durable patterns of transnational interaction. The mapping, which is presented in Chapter 2, will focus on particularly two patterns. These are related to type of actor (Do some types of NGOs have more regular transnational contacts?) and geographical distribution (Do NGOs from some countries have more regular transnational contacts?). In each case, the mapping will look for possible variations with respect to scope, frequency, and type of activity.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The meaning of these aspects, and the procedure for measuring them, will be further clarified in the introduction to Chapter 2.

The second step of the analysis focuses on explanation. In other words, how can we explain the discovered patterns of cross-border interactions? Why do some types of NGOs have more regular transnational contacts? Why do NGOs from some countries have more regular transnational contacts? The analysis of the contact patterns, which is carried out in Chapter 3, will be based upon a model of conditioners that are assumed to affect the likelihood of regular transnational interactions. The model brings together conditioners that are emphasized or hinted at in much of the literature on transnational relations. Of course, it will not be possible to give a definite answer to why some organizations have more cross-border contacts than others, but hopefully the model can give some clues as to when transnational contacts are more or less likely to develop. Considering that our observations are done at one point in time only (2000/01), we are however not in a position where we can test 'all' relevant factors. For example, some variables, such as changes in the security context, have fixed values and can therefore not be tested in this study. Moreover, as was emphasized earlier, because the observations are based on the answers of a smaller selection of an elite of NGOs, there is also reason to be careful about making generalizations. The model will be exposed to a rigorous test, but even after this there is much research to be done before we can present a general theory of transnational contacts.

## Transnational lobbying

The second research question that is to be addressed in this study concerns the conditions that facilitate successful transnational lobbying of regional interstate cooperation. Why are some transnational actors more successful in their lobbying than others? For example, how do actor related conditioners such as resources and choice of strategy affect the chances of being successful? Does the chance of being successful increase if the lobbyist controls some asset that is highly valued by policy-makers, such as representativity, knowledge, or power in implementation? Or, is the outcome of transnational lobbying largely dependent on conditioners related to structure, such as interdependence, democracy, or interstate institutionalization?

The second research question highlights the relationship between transnational lobbying (independent variable) and influence on regional interstate cooperation (dependent variable). The two terms lobbying and influence need to be further clarified. According to the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Online Dictionary, to lobby is "to conduct activities aimed at influencing public officials and especially members of a legislative body on legislation". Because the act of lobbying is carried out besides the formal channels of influence (e.g. general elections or referendums), it is often described as an informal mechanism of influence (e.g. Andersen and Eliassen, 1996: 41-4). It follows from this basic definition that the term transnational lobbying

should refer to the conscious attempt by a non-state actor to influence policy makers across state borders.<sup>17</sup> The target of the lobbying can be for example a public official representing another state, an intergovernmental organization or, in the case of the European Union, a supra-national institution such as the Commission or the European Parliament.

The second term, influence, refers to “the act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command” or “the power or capacity of causing an effect in indirect or intangible ways” (Merriam-Webster Collegiate Online Dictionary; cf. Arts, 1998: 58; Cox and Jacobson, 1973: 3). In other words, successful lobbying should describe cases in which it produces a desired effect on public officials.<sup>18</sup> Considering that this part of the study deals specifically with influence on regional interstate cooperation (dependent variable), success should refer to a situation where a group of geographically adjacent states consciously change their policy coordination as a result of transnational lobbying.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, considering that lobbying may produce different types of effects, we can make a distinction between effects on thinking and effects on action (cf. Goldmann, 1994: 79-86). In the former case, the effect of the lobbying may be increased awareness or knowledge among policy-makers about a problem. In the latter case, the effect may be a concrete political action to deal with the problem in question. For example, following nine case studies of transnational social movements with a focus on global politics, Smith, Pagnucco, and Chatfield (1997: 73-4) concluded that the movements had been more successful in making governments pay attention to and learn about global problems than in achieving specific policy changes.<sup>20</sup>

The conditions for successful transnational lobbying will be analyzed by seven case studies of regional INGOs and transnational networks that have consciously attempted to influence the decisions of the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The target of the lobbying, the CBSS, was created in 1992 and is an international governmental organization (IGO) with eleven member-states (the nine littoral states of the Baltic Sea, Norway, and Iceland). The purpose of the organization is rather general in character. It intends to

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<sup>17</sup> Transnational lobbying has also received some attention in studies of power relations between states. For example, some studies of the foreign policy of small states have emphasized that transnational influence strategies may be an important complement to traditional means (e.g. Moon, 1988; Sundelius, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> A similar definition is used by Bas Arts who, in a study of the political influence of global NGOs on international environmental policy, “interpret[s] ‘success’ in terms of political influence, which is defined as the achievement of one’s policy goals through one’s own, intended, intervention in international environmental politics” (Arts, 1998: 30).

<sup>19</sup> The definition of interstate cooperation in terms of conscious policy coordination is rather well established (Oye, 1986: 6; cf. Knopf, 1998: 13, n. 2).

<sup>20</sup> It should be remembered that lobbying is only one type of transnational activity and that non-state actors in many cases prefer other means of influence (cf. Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco, 1997). This pattern is also seen among the answers to the questionnaire in this study (see Chapter 2).

”serve as an overall regional forum to focus on needs for intensified cooperation and coordination among the Baltic Sea States” (The Copenhagen Declaration, CBSS, 1992). The mandate encompasses a large number of issue-areas. To begin with, the governments singled out six areas of cooperation: (1) assistance to new democratic institutions, (2) economic and technological assistance and cooperation, (3) humanitarian matters and health, (4) protection of the environment and energy cooperation, (5) cooperation in the field of culture, education, tourism and information, and (6) transport and communication (Terms of Reference, CBSS, 1992). This list has later been expanded with new subjects for cooperation.<sup>21</sup>

The seven case studies focus on Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks that have made conscious attempts to lobby the Council of Baltic Sea States during its first decade of existence (1992-2002). The selection of cases was made after going through the official documents of the CBSS.<sup>22</sup> It was then found that seven actors were the only ones that fulfilled our criteria of being a Baltic Sea non-governmental organization or network, which consciously have attempted to lobby policy-makers within the framework of the CBSS. Other regional transnational actors are mentioned in the documents, but none of these could be linked to the activity of transnational lobbying. The same observation also applies to NGOs, which suggests that the regional NGOs and networks have been given a special role in influencing Baltic Sea affairs.

The seven cases, which are presented in Table 6, represent two types of transnational actors. One group focuses mainly on the protection of the members’ interests, while the other group is motivated by the promotion of values and principled ideas (Blondel, 1973: 77). Cases 1-5 focus on transnational actors with a protective interest. The actors represent business interests in cases 1-2 (chambers of commerce, leaders of large companies), labor interests in case 3 (trade unions), and territorial interests in cases 4-5 (sub-regions, cities). Cases 6-7 focus on two regional actors aiming at promoting a certain value that is of use also to non-members. The values in these cases are sustainable ecologic development (Coalition Clean Baltic) and sustainable security (Trans-Baltic Network).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The mandate of the CBSS is presented in more detail in Chapter 4. Baltic Sea IGOs with a specific purpose include, for example, the Helsinki Commission or HELCOM (environmental protection) and the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission (IBSFC).

<sup>22</sup> The documents originate from the Council, the Committee of Senior Officials, and three working groups. A more detailed account of these bodies is found in Chapter 4.

<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that if a transnational actor wants to influence developments in the Baltic Sea region, then it might in some cases be relevant also to lobby other targets besides the CBSS (e.g. individual states, or organizations such as the EU, HELCOM, or IBSFC). However, even though such lobbying occurs, documents from the selected regional NGOs and networks (see Chapters 4-5) give the impression that the influence attempts in nearly all cases are first of all directed at the CBSS. The main exception to this is Coalition Clean Baltic, which put relatively more emphasis on the HELCOM. The Council of Baltic Sea States is moreover the only policy-making framework that is targeted by all seven lobbyists.

Table 6. *Seven case studies of transnational lobbying*

Case	Membership	Interest
1 Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association	Chambers of commerce	Protective
2 Baltic Sea Business Summit	Leaders of large companies	Protective
3 Baltic Sea Trade Union Network	Trade unions	Protective
4 Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation	Sub-regions	Protective
5 Union of Baltic Cities	Cities	Protective
6 Coalition Clean Baltic	NGOs	Promotional
7 Trans-Baltic Network	NGOs and private citizens	Promotional

The seven cases of transnational lobbying will be the object of a comparative analysis. This reflects a general call among many scholars within the field of transnational relations for more systematic comparisons of two or more cases (e.g. Alger, 1997: 270; Arts, 1998: 321; McCarthy, 1997: 246-7; Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 313). Obviously a multiple-case design will make this part of the book more robust compared to a single case study. On the other hand, there are also some negative implications associated with this research strategy (Yin, 1994: 44-51). First, if there is an unusual case involved, then it is clear that all its unique aspects will not be sufficiently covered by this study. Since we were not aware of whether there existed any rare cases or not when this research project began, the study will in this respect have an explorative character. A second implication of the multiple-case design is that it might require considerable resources and time to carry out. Since this aspect is a reality for this project, we will keep the individual case studies within the strict limits of the theoretical framework. In terms of scope, the case studies will be presented in 3-4 pages each, which gives them the character of mini-cases.

The fact that we only found seven regional actors involved in transnational lobbying of the CBSS illustrates the case side of the “many variables, few cases” dilemma referred to earlier. As regards the characteristics of the individual cases, it should therefore be emphasized that they in one important respect meet the requirement for “a maximum of heterogeneity for a minimum of cases” (Ragin *et al*, 1996: 752; cf. Arts, 1998: 40). As will be clear from chapter 4, the outcome of the seven cases of transnational lobbying differs. Some regional INGOs and transnational networks have lobbied successfully, while others have achieved no or only marginal changes of intergovernmental policies. Considering that the seven transnational actors may have lobbied on more than one issue, we have also decided to focus on what appears to be the most successful lobbying attempt of each actor up to the year 2002. The degree of the success however varies considerably. In some cases it means an actual influence on policy, while in other cases the contacts have had no or very little direct impact.

The case studies will be carried out in two steps. The first step is devoted to a mapping of the lobbying attempts of the seven Baltic Sea INGOs and

transnational networks, while the second step will look for possible explanations to why some lobbyists were more successful than others. The mapping, which is presented in Chapter 4, will highlight three aspects of transnational lobbying. It seeks to establish the intention of the lobbying, the types of lobbying that are being used for exerting influence, and the possible influence of the lobbying attempts.<sup>24</sup> The mapping is based on documentary sources from the seven transnational actors as well as from the Council of Baltic Sea States. The documents have been received through the respective secretariat (equivalent), but also from individual member NGOs.<sup>25</sup>

The second step of the analysis focuses on explanation. In other words, how can we explain the discovered patterns of transnational lobbying? Why have some regional INGOs and transnational networks been more successful than others in lobbying the CBSS? The analysis of the patterns of transnational lobbying, which is carried out in Chapter 5, will be based upon a model of conditioners, which are assumed to affect the likelihood of successful lobbying. The model brings together conditioners that have been highlighted in previous research on transnational relations. As has been stressed before, even though the model will not offer a full account of successful lobbying, it is expected to at least give us some ideas as to when transnational lobbying is more or less likely to affect regional interstate cooperation.

In carrying out the seven case studies, we have followed the replication approach to multiple-case studies as described by Robert Yin (1994: 49-50). This means that we have proceeded in four steps. The first step was devoted to the development of a model of conditioners for successful transnational lobbying, to the selection of cases, and to the definition of measures for data collection. In the next step, we conducted the first case study (the Baltic Sea Business Summit) and wrote an individual case report, which later was published as a research article (Karlsson, 1999). The case report did not only deal with the individual case but also reflected upon the relevance of the general model. Along the same lines, we then conducted the remaining case studies and wrote individual case reports. In the final step, we made a comparative analysis of the seven cases, modified the model of conditioners, and wrote the concluding report (Chapters 4-5)

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<sup>24</sup> The procedure for mapping the transnational lobbying is presented in more detail in the introduction to Chapter 4.

<sup>25</sup> It should be mentioned that many of the documents today are available through the Internet. When the research project started, the Internet was of rather limited assistance for this particular study, but at the time of writing most organizations (with the exception of the Baltic Sea Business Summit, and the Trans-Baltic Network) have very informative web sites. The web addresses are listed in the references.

## Outline of the book

Having presented the two research questions, the theoretical context in which they were raised, and the methodological procedures for answering them, we are now ready to confront the real world of transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region. To give the reader a safe journey through this landscape of non-governmental activities, the individual chapters will be organized in two parts. In each part, we will put one of the two research questions at the center of attention.

Part I of the book focuses on the task of mapping and explaining transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region. This part deals with the first research question and aims ultimately at finding out what conditions facilitate transnational contacts. To be able to answer this question, we have divided this part of the study into two chapters. In Chapter 2 we try to establish what the pattern of cross-border contacts between non-state actors actually looks like. By mapping the regional contacts of the 447 NGOs that replied to our e-mail questionnaire, we will find out if some NGOs have more transnational contacts than others. This chapter is largely descriptive in character. In Chapter 3 we carry the analysis one step further and try to explain the discovered patterns of transnational contacts. The chapter offers and applies a theoretical framework that brings together relevant factors that have been highlighted by scholars in previous studies.

Part II of the book directs the analysis towards a certain type of transnational contacts, namely those that aim at lobbying the Council of Baltic Sea States. The purpose of this part, which focuses on the second research question, is to enhance our understanding of what conditions facilitate successful transnational lobbying. The structure of the second part will be similar to the previous one. In Chapter 4 we carry out seven case studies in order to map the pattern of transnational lobbying. By closely describing the attempts to influence policy-makers within the framework of the CBSS, we want to find out which regional INGOs and transnational networks have been more successful in their lobbying than others up to the year 2002. In the next step, Chapter 5, we try to explain the pattern of transnational lobbying. For this purpose, we test a number of conditioners (intervening variables) that are widely assumed to be of importance if transnational actors are to succeed in lobbying intergovernmental targets.

Finally, the major findings are summarized and critically reviewed in Chapter 6. The answers to the two research questions will hopefully provide a contribution to our general understanding of transnational relations. However, since knowledge about social phenomenon usually tends to be of a preliminary nature, we will conclude the study by proposing some avenues for future research on the conditions that facilitate regular transnational contacts and successful transnational lobbying.

## 2. Mapping transnational contacts

### Introduction

The purpose of this and the next chapter is to address the first research question on the conditions for regular transnational contacts. To be able to answer the question of why some non-governmental organizations have been more successful in developing and maintaining durable patterns of transnational interaction, the analysis has to be carried out in two steps. This chapter will be devoted to a mapping of transnational contacts between NGOs in the Baltic Sea region. By analyzing the answers to the e-post questionnaire (2000/01) we will first see what the patterns of transnational contacts actually look like and in which cases we can find durable patterns of interaction. Once we have an accurate picture of these contacts, the analysis will move on to the second step (Chapter 3) and look for possible explanations for the observed patterns.

The mapping focuses on two patterns of transnational contacts. The first pattern is related to type of NGO (Do some types of NGOs have more regular transnational contacts?), while the second pattern concerns the geographical distribution (Do NGOs from some countries have more regular transnational contacts?). For each pattern, the mapping will give detailed descriptions of scope, frequency, and type of activity. As regards *scope*, transnational contacts may be bilateral as well as multilateral. The former refers to contacts between two actors from two different countries, while the latter describes contacts between actors from more than two countries. Both types of transnational contacts have increased dramatically during the last half-century. For example, Jackie Smith (1997: 51) found that the relative share of transnational social movement organizations reporting no other contact with other NGOs between 1973 and 1993 fell from 56 to 20 percent. Parallel with this development, transnational contacts have also become much more multilateral since 1945, which among other things can be seen in the dramatic increase of INGOs (Boli and Thomas, 1999: 22-3). These findings suggest that there is no zero-sum relationship between the two types of transnational contacts, i.e. the current multilateralization of transnational contacts does not take place at the expense of bilateral contacts. Instead we have reason to talk about a general increase of interactions across nation-state borders, which includes both types of contacts. Considering this, we find no reason to exclude one type or the other from this study. The intention

is rather to pay attention to the totality of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region. The term bilateral contacts will in this study refer to contacts between two non-governmental organizations from two different Baltic Sea countries, while the term multilateral contacts will be used to describe contacts between NGOs from more than two Baltic Sea countries.

As regards *frequency*, which refers to the occurrence of contacts during a certain period of time, the analysis is based upon the NGOs own estimates of their transnational contacts (at the time of the questionnaire). Because the frequency of the interaction may vary considerably, a distinction is made between very frequent contacts (occurring at least once a month), less frequent contacts (occurring less than once a month), and no contacts at all. To avoid misunderstanding, it should also be noted that terms such as regular contacts or occasional contacts could be used in different contexts. Regular contacts may occur, for example, on a daily as well as a yearly or a bi-yearly basis. Occasional contacts may refer to a few single contacts during a long period of time but may also, once they occur, for a short moment give rise to very frequent contacts. For example, some international networks of NGOs become much more active in connection with certain events, such as inter-governmental conferences. The intensity of the communications then increases dramatically for some time, but once the event is over the level of communications becomes barely visible again. It should therefore be remembered that the mapping of frequencies pictures the situation as it is perceived at the time of the e-post questionnaire, i.e. at the beginning of the new century.

Finally, the mapping will also describe the *type of activity* that is carried out by the transnational contacts. Non-governmental organizations may engage in transnational activities that are both inward- and outward looking (cf. Chatfield, 1997b: 30-1; Alger, 1997: 261-8). The former type only includes activities that target the NGOs themselves, i.e. those NGOs that take part in the transnational contact. These activities can take the form of, for example, social events, exchange of ideas and information, and assistance (e.g. administrative support, education). Activities that are outward looking are directed toward external targets. For example, NGOs may engage in joint projects to affect certain conditions, in opinion formation to influence the public at large, or in lobbying to influence governments. It is important to pay attention to type of activity for several reasons. One obvious justification is that frequencies as such do not say anything about the political significance of the transnational contacts. NGOs with very frequent contacts may be involved in mainly inward looking activities with little or no political relevance. Neither can we assume that less frequent contacts are politically less important. That is, even contacts that are held on, for example, an annual basis could, once they occur, have considerable political relevance. Second, it should be kept in mind that inward looking activities might also have political effects. It is true that that they in this respect do not work as direct as

outward looking activities, but in a long-term perspective they may help to strengthen civil society and by this indirectly generate political effects. There is therefore no reason to limit the study only to outward looking activities, which at first hand may seem to be the most relevant.

The chapter is in what follows divided into two parts. The first part focuses on transnational patterns with respect to type of NGO. The analysis maps the transnational contacts for each of the nine types of non-governmental organizations and looks for possible variations between them. The second part of the chapter deals with the geographical distribution of the transnational contacts. This part of the study focuses on how the contacts are distributed with respect to the respondent NGOs' country of origin. The analysis will in both cases be based on the same data, the difference being that it is cut in two separate ways. The first cut focuses on type of NGO, while the second cut pays attention to the NGOs' country of origin.

## Do some types of NGOs have more regular transnational contacts?

### Scope

The question of scope concerns the extent to which non-governmental organizations have bilateral and multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region. To get an accurate picture of the scope, the analysis will proceed in two steps. In the first step, we look closer at the two types of contacts individually. That is, which types of NGOs have more bilateral contacts and multilateral contacts, respectively? Based upon the aggregate result of this mapping, we will then in the second step produce a ranking order that shows which types of NGOs have more transnational contacts in general.

Beginning with the bilateral contacts, the interviewed NGOs were asked to give the number of Baltic Sea countries in which they at present have regular contacts with other NGOs. A NGO can have contacts in eight countries at the most, considering that there are nine littoral states of the Baltic Sea. The term regular was in this context not further specified. Table 7 shows that 76.5 per cent of the NGOs have one or more regular bilateral contacts in the Baltic Sea region, while 23.5 per cent have no such contacts at all.<sup>26</sup> Nearly half of all NGOs have regular contacts in one or two countries, while only four per cent have contacts in more than six countries.

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<sup>26</sup> Please note that the average figures in this chapter have been calculated on all answers instead of just considering the averages of each category. Since the latter figures have been rounded off, the average of these may deviate somewhat from the real average.

Table 7. *Regular bilateral transnational contacts grouped by type of NGO and by number of Baltic Sea countries in which the respondents have regular contacts with NGOs (per cent)*

Type of NGO	Number of Baltic Sea countries in which the respondents have regular bilateral contacts with NGOs:						Sum	N
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	1-8	0		
Business	55.9	16.9	5.1	11.9	89.8	10.2	100	59
Labor	43.5	15.2	10.9	0	69.6	30.4	100	46
Democracy	39.6	22.9	6.2	2.1	70.8	29.2	100	48
Environment	39.5	16.3	9.3	7.0	72.1	27.9	100	43
Internationalism	50.0	14.8	9.3	3.7	77.8	22.2	100	54
Knowledge	39.6	7.5	9.4	5.7	62.2	37.7	99.9	53
Leisure	54.8	16.7	4.8	4.8	81.1	19.0	100.1	42
Primordial	51.1	20.0	2.2	0	73.3	26.7	100	45
Social welfare	63.2	12.3	12.3	0	87.8	12.3	100.1	57
Average	49.0	15.7	7.8	4.0	76.5	23.5	100	-
N	219	70	35	18	342	105	-	447

The overall pattern is basically the same for the individual types of NGOs. In no case does the share of NGOs that have no regular bilateral contacts exceed the share that have such contacts. There are, however, some notable variations between the different sectors. NGOs that focus on business and social welfare have more bilateral contacts than other types of NGOs. In these two cases, 89.8 per cent and 87.8 per cent, respectively, stated that they have regular contacts. The corresponding figures are considerably lower for NGOs within the sectors of knowledge (62.2 per cent) and labor (69.6 per cent). Furthermore, as regards the number of countries, we find business NGOs and social welfare NGOs to have somewhat different individual patterns. Almost 12 per cent of the former have regular contacts in more than six countries, while none among the latter have such extensive contacts. On the other hand, social welfare NGOs clearly dominate the category where transnational contacts are limited to only one or two countries.

Table 8 shows to what extent the 447 non-governmental organizations at present have any multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region. A distinction is made between membership in Baltic Sea INGOs and networks, participation in single multilateral events, and no multilateral contacts at all. The difference between the first two categories is related to the existence of an institutionalized setting. In other words, it depends on whether or not the interaction is based on a set of rules and is supported by a bureaucratic structure. INGOs are in general more institutionalized than networks (Risse-Kappen, 1995: 10), but because this distinction is not always made clear in practice we have presented them as one category.<sup>27</sup> The second type

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the discussion in Chapter 1 on the exact name of the seven INGOs and networks that were selected for the case studies of transnational lobbying.

of contacts, participation in single multilateral events, could take the form of, for example, a meeting or a conference. These contacts typically occur in non-institutionalized transnational settings and the participating NGOs are not members of any regional INGOs or networks.

The overwhelming portion of the 447 NGOs (71.4 per cent) has at present no multilateral transnational contact in the Baltic Sea region. However, even though the multilateral dimension is weak, it is nevertheless visible. 17.4 per cent of the NGOs are member of a regional INGO or network, while another 11.2 per cent have recently participated in some single multilateral event. Together these organizations make up 28.6 per cent of the entire NGO-population.<sup>28</sup>

Table 8. *Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by type of contact (per cent)*

Type of NGO	a) Membership in Baltic Sea INGO/network	b) Participated in single multilateral event	a + b	No multilateral contacts	Sum	N
Business	33.9	8.5	42.4	57.6	100	59
Labor	19.6	6.5	26.1	73.9	100	46
Democracy	6.3	8.3	14.6	85.4	100	48
Environment	25.6	7.0	32.6	67.4	100	43
Internationalism	27.8	14.8	42.6	57.4	100	54
Knowledge	7.5	18.9	26.4	73.6	100	53
Leisure	11.9	11.9	23.8	76.2	100	42
Primordial	6.7	11.1	17.8	82.2	100	45
Social welfare	14.1	12.3	26.4	73.7	100.1	57
Average	17.4	11.2	28.6	71.4	100	-
N	78	50	128	319	-	447

Multilateral transnational contacts can be found among all types of NGOs but are particularly common among those who focus on business (42.4 per cent), environment (32.6 per cent), and internationalism (42.6 per cent). They are least common among NGOs that belong to the democracy and primordial sectors. The main portion of the multilateral contacts within the former three sectors takes place in an institutionalized transnational setting. Judging from the answers to the questionnaire, the setting is in two of these cases dominated by particularly one regional INGO or network, even though other collective actors are mentioned. The Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA) has a salient position within the business sector. The BCCA was created in 1992 and has 52 members (2000) from the ten Baltic Sea countries. The Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) is the most dominating institutional setting among environmental NGOs. The CCB, which was

<sup>28</sup> Because these organizations also have at least one regular bilateral contact, it means that the total share of NGOs that have some type of transnational contact in the Baltic Sea region remains at 76.5 per cent (N = 447).

established in 1990, gathers 32 NGOs (2000) from the littoral states. The institutionalized contacts within the third sector (internationalism) are spread over several different regional INGOs and networks. Finally, institutionalized transnational contacts are less common within the sectors of democracy, knowledge, and primordial. If these NGOs have multilateral contacts, then they are in most cases organized as single events.

Having looked closer at the two types of transnational contacts, we may now conclude this part of the mapping by ranking the nine types of NGOs in relation to each other (Table 9). The comparison is based on a simple ranking of which types of NGOs have scored highest and lowest with respect to the scope of bilateral and multilateral transnational contacts. Please note that the figures only inform about the order between the nine categories and that the distance between the figures is without meaning in this context.

Table 9. *The ranking order of nine types of NGOs with respect to scope of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region*

Type of NGO	Bilateral contacts	Multilateral contacts	Sum	Ranking order
Business	1	2	3	1
Internationalism	4	1	5	2
Social welfare	2	4	6	3
Environment	6	3	9	4
Leisure	3	7	10	5
Primordial	5	8	13	6
Knowledge	9	4	13	6
Labor	8	6	14	8
Democracy	7	9	16	9

The combined ranking order shows that transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region are most common among non-governmental organizations that focus on business, internationalism, and social welfare. Transnational contacts are least common among NGOs that are concerned with labor and democracy. The individual order does not look exactly the same for the two types of contacts. The ranking order is most similar for business NGOs. Regardless of type of contact, they end up among the two most transnationalized types of NGOs.

## Frequency

Having established that about three fourths of the 447 NGOs have transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region, we will now move on and look closer at how frequently the organizations have these contacts. Are they interacting as frequently as once a month? Or, are the contacts held on a less frequent basis? In conformity with the mapping of scope, we will first examine each type of contact individually before we produce a ranking order based on the aggregate result. It will then be an obvious task to see if the

pattern is in accordance with the previous one. That is, NGOs that focus on business, internationalism, and social welfare tend to have more transnational contacts, but do they also have the most frequent interactions?

As regards bilateral contacts, the NGOs were asked to estimate the frequency of the most frequent regular bilateral transnational contact that they at present were having in the Baltic Sea region. The result of this inquiry is shown in Table 10. It appears from this that 58.8 per cent of the 447 NGOs have regular contact in another Baltic Sea country that occurs at least once a month (very frequent). Another 17.7 per cent have regular bilateral contacts, but the frequency of their most frequent contact is less than once a month (less frequent). Almost one fourth of the NGOs have no bilateral contacts.

Table 10. *The most frequent regular bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by frequency (per cent)*

Type of NGO	Very frequent contacts	Less frequent contacts	No contacts	Sum	N
Business	74.6	15.3	10.2	100.1	59
Labor	50.0	19.6	30.4	100	46
Democracy	54.2	16.7	29.2	100.1	48
Environment	55.8	16.3	27.9	100	43
Internationalism	66.7	11.1	22.2	100	54
Knowledge	41.5	20.8	37.7	100	53
Leisure	61.9	19.0	19.0	99.9	42
Primordial	53.3	20.0	26.7	100	45
Social welfare	66.7	21.1	12.3	100.1	57
Average	58.8	17.7	23.5	100	-
N	263	79	105	-	447

NOTE: Very frequent contacts = occurring at least once a month. Less frequent contacts = occurring less than once a month.

If a non-governmental organization has established a regular bilateral contact, then it tends to be very frequent rather than less frequent. This goes for all types of NGOs. However, the difference between those that interact more or less frequently varies considerably. The highest share of NGOs with very frequent contacts is found among those that focus on business (74.6 per cent), internationalism (66.7 per cent), and social welfare (66.7 per cent). The lowest share with very frequent bilateral contacts is found among knowledge NGOs (41.5 per cent).

Turning to the frequency of the multilateral contacts, we should first remember that it is only some 28 per cent of the respondents (447 NGOs) that have this type of contacts at all in the Baltic Sea region. Besides, from Table 11 we may also conclude that the frequency of these contacts is rather low. The overwhelming majority of those NGOs that have multilateral contacts are engaged on a less frequent basis. In fact, only 20 NGOs (4.5 per cent) have multilateral contacts as frequently as once a month.

Table 11. *Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by frequency (per cent)*

Type of NGO	Very frequent contacts	Less frequent contacts	No contacts	Sum	N
Business	6.8	35.5	57.6	99.9	59
Labor	4.3	19.6	76.1	100	46
Democracy	0	14.5	85.4	99.9	48
Environment	14.0	18.6	67.4	100	43
Internationalism	13.0	27.8	59.3	100.1	54
Knowledge	1.9	26.4	71.7	100	53
Leisure	0	21.4	78.6	100	42
Primordial	0	20.0	80.0	100	45
Social welfare	0	26.3	73.7	100	57
Average	4.5	23.9	71.6	100	-
N	20	107	320	-	447

NOTE: Very frequent contacts = occurring at least once a month. Less frequent contacts = occurring less than once a month.

The described pattern repeats itself for each of the nine types of non-governmental organizations. Less frequent contacts are the most common frequency for multilateral interactions among all groups. As a matter of fact, multilateral contacts occurring at least once a month can only be found among five types of NGOs. The share of very frequent contacts is highest among NGOs specializing on the environment (14 per cent) and on internationalism (13 per cent). In the former case, we should also note that the share is almost as high as that for less frequent contacts. This means that if an environmental NGO has multilateral contacts, then the probability is nearly the same that these will occur at least once a month as less than once a month.

After scrutinizing the frequency for the two types of transnational contacts, we may now rank the nine types of NGOs in relation to each other. The ranking, which is presented in Table 12, is carried out according to the same formula as in the previous section. First, we make a simple ranking of which types of NGOs have scored highest and lowest with respect to frequency of bilateral and multilateral transnational contacts, respectively. Then, we calculate the combined ranking order by summarizing the numbers of the places in the individual rankings.

The combined ranking order shows that the most frequent transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region is found among non-governmental organizations concerned with business, internationalism, and environment. At the other end of the ranking order, we find NGOs that belong to the sectors of primordial, democracy, and knowledge. These populations have the least frequent contacts of all types of NGOs. Furthermore, if we compare the individual rankings for bilateral and multilateral contacts we see that some types of organizations end up in about the same place in both cases. Among these are NGOs that focus on business and internationalism. Other types of

NGOs, on the other hand, have very different ranking places. For example, environmental organizations have the most frequent multilateral contacts of all types of NGOs, but the frequency of their bilateral contacts is about average. The opposite pattern seems to apply to social welfare NGOs. They rank top two when it comes to the most frequent bilateral contacts but only end up in sixth place in the case of multilateral contacts.

Table 12. *The ranking order of nine types of NGOs with respect to frequency of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region*

Type of NGO	Bilateral contacts	Multilateral contacts	Sum	Ranking order
Business	1	3	4	1
Internationalism	2	2	4	1
Environment	5	1	6	3
Social welfare	2	6	8	4
Leisure	4	7	11	5
Labor	8	4	12	6
Knowledge	9	5	14	7
Democracy	6	9	15	8
Primordial	7	8	15	8

Finally, we may conclude that the ranking orders with respect to scope (Table 9) and frequency (Table 12) are very similar. Seven of the nine types of NGOs end up in either the same ranking place or in the place next to it. Two types of NGOs (labor and primordial) have ranking places that only differ by two. In other words, there seems to be a slight correspondence between the two ranking orders. If one type of organization has many transnational contacts, then it tends also to have very frequent interactions.

### Type of activity

The mapping has showed that about three fourths of the 447 NGOs that responded to the e-mail questionnaire have regular transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region. So far, however, we have not said anything about the type of activities that are hidden behind these figures. In other words, what are the non-governmental organizations actually doing when they interact with each other across state boundaries? To answer this question, we asked the NGOs to specify the two most common types of transnational activities in the Baltic Sea region that they at present (2000/2001) were involved in.<sup>29</sup> The questionnaire contained a list of alternatives covering outward looking as well as inward looking activities. In the former case, the named alternatives were lobbying, opinion formation, and joint projects. The inward look-

<sup>29</sup> On this point, we make no distinction between bilateral and multilateral transnational contacts.

ing alternatives included assistance, exchange of ideas and information, and social contacts.

The question regarding the two most common types of transnational activities was answered by 345 NGOs in all. The collected data is presented in two tables. In the first of these, Table 13, we take a look at the activity orientation. That is, are the two named transnational activities outward looking, inward looking, or do they include both types of activities? The table shows that almost half of all organizations (49.3 per cent) are engaged in outward looking as well as inward looking activities. Another 42.3 per cent have transnational contacts that are mainly inward oriented, while only 8.4 per cent of the NGOs are involved in mainly outward looking activities.

Table 13. *Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by type of activity orientation (per cent)*

Type of NGO	Outward looking	Inward looking	Both outward- and inward looking	Sum	N
Business	13.2	30.2	56.6	100	53
Labor	6.7	50.0	43.3	100	30
Democracy	17.6	29.4	52.9	99.9	34
Environment	18.8	28.1	53.1	100	32
Internationalism	4.7	55.8	39.5	100	43
Knowledge	5.7	45.7	48.6	100	35
Leisure	5.9	52.9	41.2	100	34
Primordial	0	64.7	35.3	100	34
Social welfare	4.0	32.0	64.0	100	50
Average	8.4	42.3	49.3	100	-
N	29	146	170	-	345

Furthermore, even though the outward looking type of transnational contacts in no case outnumbers the other orientations, Table 13 does unveil some major differences between the individual types of NGOs. The most outward oriented types of NGOs are found in the categories of environment, democracy, and business. These are at the same time also the least inward looking types of NGOs. Much of the opposite pattern is seen among NGOs that belong to the primordial and the internationalism sectors. That is, these NGOs are the most inward looking ones and are also among the least outward oriented. The clearest deviation from this pattern is the social welfare category that scores relatively low on both types of orientation but that instead has the highest share of NGOs involved in both outward- and inward looking activities.

In Table 14 we take one step further and analyze the answers with respect to the individual types of activities. The database consists of 690 observations, since the 345 NGOs were asked to name the two most common types

of transnational activities.<sup>30</sup> The table shows that all types of activities are represented among the transnational contacts. The most common types of activities are exchange of ideas and information (38 per cent) and joint projects (27 per cent). The transnational actors devote least time to lobbying and opinion formation, i.e. activities that are more political in character. Two-thirds of the contacts are devoted to inward looking activities, while one-third is outward oriented.

Table 14. *Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO and by type of activity (per cent)*

Type of NGO	Outward looking:		Inward looking:			Sum	N
	Lobbying, opinion formation	Joint projects	Assistance	Exchange of ideas/information	Social contacts		
Business	10.4	31.1	15.1	38.7	4.7	100	106
Labor	13.4	15.0	13.3	45.0	13.3	100	60
Democracy	5.9	38.2	4.4	47.1	4.4	100	68
Environment	6.3	39.0	14.1	31.2	9.4	100	64
Internationalism	3.5	20.9	18.6	34.9	22.1	100	86
Knowledge	2.9	27.1	8.6	47.1	14.3	100	70
Leisure	2.9	23.5	10.3	30.9	32.4	100	68
Primordial	5.8	11.8	22.1	32.4	27.9	100	68
Social welfare	4.0	32.0	18.0	36.0	10.0	100	100
Average	6.1	27.0	14.2	38.0	14.8	100.1	-
N	42	186	98	262	102	-	690

Are some types of transnational activities more or less common among some categories of NGOs? On this point, Table 14 suggests at least four noteworthy patterns. First, all types of activities can be found among all types of organizations. In no case is more than half of the NGO-population engaged in a certain type of transnational activity. Second, exchange of ideas and information is the most common type of transnational activity for all types of NGOs except two. The exceptions are environmental NGOs and leisure NGOs. The most frequent types of activity among these actors are instead joint projects and social contacts, respectively. However, exchange of ideas and information is in both of these cases clearly the second most common type of activity. Third, lobbying and opinion formation appear to be unusual types of transnational activities for most NGO-populations. The exceptions to this are organizations representing business, labor, and democracy. The least common forms of transnational activities for them are instead social contacts (applies to all three) and assistance (applies to the latter two).

<sup>30</sup> 27 NGOs, or eight per cent of the respondents, named more than two types of transnational activities. In these cases we have coded the first two mentioned. Four NGOs named only one type of activity. In these cases we coded the named activity twice.

Finally, the individual types of activities are relatively more common among some types of NGOs than others. In the case of the outward looking activities, we see that lobbying and opinion formation are more usual among the protective NGOs (business 10.4 per cent, labor 13.4 per cent), while joint projects are most common among organizations that focus on democracy (38.2 per cent) and environment (39.0 per cent). As regards the three inward oriented activities, the pattern is that assistance is relatively more usual among primordial NGOs (22.1 per cent), exchange of ideas and information is most frequent among NGOs concerned with democracy and knowledge (47.1 per cent), while social contacts are most common among leisure NGOs (32.4 per cent).

## Do NGOs from some countries have more regular transnational contacts?

### Scope<sup>31</sup>

To what extent do non-governmental organizations from certain countries have bilateral and multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region? Do NGOs from some Baltic Sea countries have more contacts than NGOs from other countries? For example, are NGOs from the four EU countries (2000/2001) more engaged in cross-border activities in this area than organizations from the transitional countries? Is the distribution between the two types of contacts similar or is there a tendency that NGOs from some countries have either more bilateral or more multilateral contacts?

As regards bilateral contacts, the data was grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by the number of Baltic Sea countries in which they at present have regular contacts with other NGOs. From Table 15 we see that 75.9 per cent of the 431 organizations have one or more regular bilateral contacts in the Baltic Sea region. The share that does not have such contacts is about one quarter. Nearly half of all organizations have regular contacts in one or two countries, while only four per cent have contacts in more than six countries.

The overarching pattern is, with the exception for German NGOs, very much the same as for the individual categories. This means that regardless of country of origin, the majority of NGOs have regular bilateral contacts in the Baltic Sea region, and in most cases they have contacts in one or two countries. German organizations are the only category for which the share of NGOs that does not have bilateral contacts in the region exceeds the share that does have such contacts. Furthermore, bilateral contacts in the Baltic

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<sup>31</sup> Due to a low response rate (21.9 per cent), the answers of the Russian NGOs have been excluded from this part of the analysis.

Sea region are most common among NGOs from Finland and the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania). On average, 90.5 per cent of the NGOs from these countries have regular contacts in the region. The corresponding average for NGOs from the other four countries (Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Sweden) is only 64.2 per cent.

Table 15. *Regular bilateral transnational contacts grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by number of Baltic Sea countries in which they have regular contacts with NGOs (per cent)*

Country	Number of Baltic Sea countries in which the respondents have regular bilateral contacts with NGOs:						Sum	N
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	1-8	0		
Denmark	50.7	6.0	3.0	7.5	67.2	32.8	100	67
Estonia	46.3	25.9	11.1	7.4	90.7	9.3	100	54
Finland	67.2	24.6	3.3	0	95.1	4.9	100	61
Germany	20.3	9.4	6.2	6.2	42.1	57.8	99.9	64
Latvia	60.0	20.0	2.9	5.7	88.6	11.4	100	35
Lithuania	53.7	19.5	14.6	0	87.8	12.2	100	41
Poland	47.7	11.4	11.4	0	70.5	29.5	100	44
Sweden	46.2	15.4	10.8	4.6	77.0	23.1	100.1	65
Average	48.0	16.0	7.7	4.2	75.9	24.1	100	-
N	207	69	33	18	327	104	-	431

Turning to the multilateral contacts, we see from Table 16 that these in general are much less common than the bilateral contacts. Only 28.8 per cent of the respondent organizations said that they at present (2000/2001) had some type of multilateral transnational contact in the Baltic Sea region. 17.4 per cent of the NGOs are members of a Baltic Sea INGO or transnational network, while another 11.4 per cent have recently participated in a single multilateral event in the region.

Table 16. *Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by type of contact (per cent)*

Country	a) Membership in Baltic Sea INGO/network	b) Participated in single multilateral event	a+b	No multilateral contacts	Sum	N
Denmark	9.0	14.9	23.9	76.1	100	67
Estonia	25.9	14.8	40.7	59.3	100	54
Finland	23.0	14.8	37.8	62.3	100.1	61
Germany	7.8	4.7	12.5	87.5	100	64
Latvia	20.0	14.3	34.3	65.7	100	35
Lithuania	26.8	9.8	36.6	63.4	100	41
Poland	13.6	9.1	22.7	77.3	100	44
Sweden	18.5	9.2	27.7	72.3	100	65
Average	17.4	11.4	28.8	71.2	100	-
N	75	49	124	307	-	431

As regards the respondent NGOs' country of origin, we find that the distribution of the multilateral contacts follows the same geographical pattern as described earlier. That is, multilateral contacts in the Baltic Sea region are more common among NGOs from Finland and the three Baltic states (average 37.4 per cent) than among NGOs from the four countries in the South and the West (average 21.7 per cent). Multilateral contacts are least common among German NGOs (12.5 per cent).

Having mapped the scope of bilateral and multilateral contacts for NGOs from eight countries, we may now come up with a conclusion on which of these have more or less transnational contacts. In Table 17 we see a ranking order that is more clear-cut than the ranking order that was produced for type of NGO. This means that regardless of whether we study bilateral or multilateral contacts, we find the same four countries among the top-four. Non-governmental organizations from Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have more transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region than NGOs from the other countries. The contacts are in both cases most common among NGOs from the former two countries.

Table 17. *The ranking order of NGOs from eight countries with respect to scope of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region*

Country	Bilateral contacts	Multilateral contacts	Sum	Ranking order
Finland	1	2	3	1
Estonia	2	1	3	1
Latvia	3	4	7	3
Lithuania	4	3	7	3
Sweden	5	5	10	5
Poland	6	7	13	6
Denmark	7	6	13	6
Germany	8	8	16	8

The fact that the transnational contacts in the region seems to be more common among NGOs from the countries at the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea (Russia excluded) raises an interesting follow-up question. What is the geographical direction of these contacts? In other words, we do not yet know in which countries these organizations have their transnational contacts. If the majority of the interaction takes place among the same four countries, then we have identified somewhat of a transnational sub-region in the Baltic Sea area. If the contacts, on the other hand, are mainly directed toward the countries at the western and south-western rims, then we may conclude that the tendency for these NGOs to turn westward in their contacts is much stronger than the tendency for the latter to turn eastward. To analyze this aspect further, we will take a look at the direction of the bilateral contacts. In connection with the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to specify in which other Baltic Sea countries they have regular NGO-contacts (at least ones a month). The answers were distributed between pair of countries, and for

each pair we calculated a value that varies between +1 and -1.<sup>32</sup> The measure should be interpreted as follows:

+1 = all respondent NGOs from country A have at least one regular bilateral contact with a NGO in country B

0 = half of the respondent NGOs from country A have at least one regular bilateral contact with a NGO in country B

- 1 = none of the respondent NGOs from country A have regular bilateral contact with a NGO in country B

The geographical distribution of the bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region of the 431 NGOs that responded to the questionnaire is showed in Table 18. Russia is included in the table only to the extent that NGOs from the other Baltic Sea countries state that they have regular contacts with Russian organizations.

Table 18. *Bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by pair of countries*

	DEN	EST	FIN	GER	LAT	LIT	POL	RUS	SWE
Denmark	-	-0.58	-0.40	-0.61	-0.55	-0.55	-0.61	-0.82	-0.07
Estonia	-0.52	-	<b>0.26</b>	-0.74	<b>0.30</b>	-0.07	-0.63	-0.63	-0.19
Finland	-0.34	<b>0.51</b>	-	-0.87	-0.52	-0.48	-0.97	-0.77	-0.02
Germany	-0.56	-0.72	-0.59	-	-0.62	-0.69	-0.53	-0.69	-0.56
Latvia	-0.54	<b>0.14</b>	-0.66	-0.66	-	<b>0.14</b>	-0.60	-0.54	<b>0.09</b>
Lithuania	-0.46	<b>0.02</b>	-0.61	-0.71	<b>0.32</b>	-	-0.61	-0.76	-0.27
Poland	-0.59	-0.77	-0.73	-0.36	-0.55	-0.27	-	-0.64	-0.36
Sweden	-0.54	-0.23	-0.26	-0.82	-0.35	-0.32	-0.66	-0.54	-

NOTE: Values of 0.00 or above are indicated in bold type.

The findings support the existence of a transnational sub-region in the Baltic Sea area. The core of this sub-region is made up of interactions between NGOs from the three Baltic states, and to a lesser extent also from Finland and Sweden. More than half of all non-governmental organizations in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have regular transnational contacts in the other two Baltic countries. The table also confirms that NGOs from Finland and Estonia, which tended to have more transnational contacts in the region than organizations from the other countries, have a considerable number of regular contacts with each other. Moreover, the existence of a Nordic dimension

<sup>32</sup> The value is calculated according to the following formula:  $(P-Q) / (P+Q)$ . P stands for the number of NGOs from country A that have at least one regular bilateral contact with a NGO in country B, while Q represents the number of NGOs from country A that does not have a regular bilateral contact with a NGO in country B. The formula is the same as for calculating the value of gamma.

– in this case including Denmark, Finland, and Sweden – could also be seen, especially between the latter two countries. The fact that this dimension is less apparent should probably be interpreted with some caution, partly because all Nordic countries are not included in this study, and partly because we focus exclusively on the Baltic Sea context. Finally, we should also note that the Baltic Sea dimension appears to be least present among NGOs from Germany, Poland, and Russia. In no case do we find that at least half of these non-governmental organizations have regular transnational contacts in another Baltic Sea country.

## Frequency

By mapping the scope of the transnational contacts we have received a first picture of the extent to which non-governmental organizations from different Baltic Sea countries take part in regional cross-border interactions. We will now try to make the picture more complete by also scrutinizing the frequency of these contacts. Considering that regional contacts are more common among NGOs from Finland and the three Baltic states, the obvious question will then be whether or not these NGOs also have the most frequent contacts. The data refer to the occurrence of regular contacts at the time for the questionnaire and is based on the respondent NGOs' own estimates.

Table 19. *The most frequent regular bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by frequency (per cent)*

Country	Very frequent contacts	Less frequent contacts	No contacts	Sum	N
Denmark	40.3	26.9	32.8	100	67
Estonia	81.5	9.3	9.3	100.1	54
Finland	73.8	21.3	4.9	100	61
Germany	32.8	9.4	57.8	100	64
Latvia	68.6	20.0	11.4	100	35
Lithuania	68.3	19.5	12.2	100	41
Poland	52.3	18.2	29.5	100	44
Sweden	63.1	13.8	23.1	100	65
Average	58.7	17.2	24.1	100	-
N	253	74	104	-	431

NOTE: Very frequent contacts = occurring at least once a month. Less frequent contacts = occurring less than once a month.

In order to analyze the frequency with which NGOs from different countries have bilateral contacts, we asked the organizations to estimate the frequency of their most frequent bilateral contact in the Baltic Sea region. Table 19 shows that the majority of NGOs (58.7 per cent) have at least one very frequent bilateral contact in the region, i.e. the contact occur at least once a

month. Another 17.2 per cent have regular bilateral contacts, but which do not occur as frequently as once a month.

Regardless of the country of origin, we see that once an organization has established a regular bilateral contact, there is a higher probability that this will occur on a very frequent than a less frequent basis. This probability is particularly high for NGOs from Estonia. Quite as expected, we find that the share of very frequent contacts is highest for NGOs from Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. However, Swedish NGOs do not come far behind. It is also worth noting that if a Swedish organization has established a bilateral contact, the probability that this will occur at least once a month is about the same as that for NGOs from Finland, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The frequency of the multilateral transnational contacts is in general considerably lower than that for the bilateral contacts. Only 4.6 per cent of the 431 NGOs have multilateral contacts in the Baltic Sea region as frequently as once a month (Table 20). Besides, in no case do we find that NGOs from a particular country have multilateral contacts that on average take place on more than a less frequent basis.

Table 20. *Multilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by frequency (per cent)*

Country	Very frequent contacts	Less frequent contacts	No contacts	Sum	N
Denmark	1.5	22.4	76.1	100	67
Estonia	5.6	35.2	59.3	100.1	54
Finland	8.2	29.5	62.3	100	61
Germany	3.1	9.4	87.5	100	64
Latvia	2.9	31.4	65.7	100	35
Lithuania	4.9	31.7	63.4	100	41
Poland	4.5	18.2	77.3	100	44
Sweden	6.2	21.5	72.3	100	65
Average	4.6	24.1	71.2	99.9	-
N	20	104	307	-	431

NOTE: Very frequent contacts = occurring at least once a month. Less frequent contacts = occurring less than once a month.

Interestingly, Table 20 suggests that the previously observed difference between NGOs from the eastern and the western / southern parts of the Baltic Sea is less marked when the frequency of the multilateral contacts is concerned. First, the share of NGOs with very frequent multilateral contacts is highest among organizations from Finland and Sweden. Second, once NGOs take part in multilateral contacts in the region, the probability that these will occur on a very frequent than a less frequent basis is in general higher for NGOs from Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Sweden. Even though the relationship between bilateral and multilateral contacts is in no way to be considered a zero-sum relationship (e.g. where NGOs compensate less frequent

bilateral contacts by being more multilaterally active), it is clear that organizations from the latter four countries score somewhat higher as regards the frequency of the multilateral contacts.

The noticed difference has effects for how NGOs from the different Baltic Sea countries rank in relation to each other (Table 21). The most obvious effect is that the previously mentioned geographical pattern (east vs. west / south) becomes somewhat less clear. It is now only visible if we delimit the analysis to the countries that rank top two and bottom two, respectively. NGOs from Finland and Estonia rank top two, while organizations from Germany and Denmark rank bottom two.

Table 21. *The ranking order of NGOs from eight countries with respect to frequency of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region*

Country	Bilateral contacts	Multilateral contacts	Sum	Ranking order
Finland	2	1	3	1
Estonia	1	3	4	2
Sweden	5	2	7	3
Lithuania	4	4	8	4
Latvia	3	7	10	5
Poland	6	5	11	6
Germany	8	6	14	7
Denmark	7	8	15	8

The reason that NGOs from countries in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea do not occupy the top four places is because Swedish and Latvian NGOs rank so differently with respect to multilateral contacts.

## Type of activity

What type of activities are non-governmental organizations from the Baltic Sea countries engaged in when they act across state borders? Are NGOs from some countries more involved in certain type of activities than organizations from other countries? For example, are there any differences in this respect between, on the one hand, Finnish and Estonian NGOs (the most active), and on the other hand, NGOs from Germany and Denmark (the least active)? The data in this part of the analysis is based on the answers of those 330 NGOs (Russian NGOs excluded) that have some type of regular transnational contact in the Baltic Sea region. It specifies the currently two most common types of regional transnational activities that the organizations have and may be used for mapping the general orientation as well as the concrete content.

Starting with activity orientation, we find in Table 22 that only 7.9 per cent of the NGOs have transnational contacts that are mainly outward looking (lobbying, opinion formation, and joint projects). These contacts are,

irrespective of the organizations' country of origin, the least common type of activity orientation. The share that takes part in mainly inward looking interactions (assistance, exchange of ideas and information, and social contacts) is five times as large (42.4 per cent). Almost half of all NGOs, however, are involved in both outward and inward looking interactions.

Table 22. *Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by type of activity orientation (per cent)*

Country	Outward looking	Inward looking	Both outward and inward looking	Sum	N
Denmark	6.4	51.1	42.6	100.1	47
Estonia	8.2	32.7	59.2	100.1	49
Finland	5.2	55.2	39.7	100.1	58
Germany	7.4	44.4	48.1	99.9	27
Latvia	6.2	50.0	43.8	100	32
Lithuania	5.7	22.9	71.4	100	35
Poland	9.7	41.9	48.4	100	31
Sweden	13.7	37.3	49.0	100	51
Average	7.9	42.4	49.7	100	-
N	26	140	164	-	330

The data on activity orientation suggests that there is only some small resemblance to the previously mentioned geographical pattern. As regards outward looking activities, we certainly find that NGOs from countries in the west and the south on average score somewhat higher than organizations from the eastern countries (9.3 per cent and 6.3 per cent, respectively). The outward oriented type of contacts is most common among NGOs from Sweden and Poland and least common among NGOs from Finland, Latvia and Lithuania. However, the picture becomes much more split when we study the inward looking contacts. These are particularly common among organizations from Finland, Denmark, and Latvia and least common among NGOs from Lithuania and Estonia. The behavior of the eastern NGOs seems in this respect to go in opposite directions.

In order to further scrutinize what the non-governmental organizations are doing when they interact across state-borders, we asked the NGOs to state from a list the two most common types of activities. From Table 23 we see that the most common types of activities are exchange of ideas and information (37.6 per cent) and joint projects (26.5 per cent). Considering that it is not more than a decade since the Cold War ended, one might have expected that assistance (from the West to the East) should make up a larger share of the total activities. The fact that this share is only 14.5 per cent, or the fourth most common type of activity, may indicate that the transitional years in the former eastern bloc is coming to an end and that transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region are taking place on more equal terms. The most political

types of activities – lobbying, and opinion formation – are also the least common (6.2 per cent).

Table 23. *Transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the respondent NGOs' country of origin and by type of activity (per cent)*

Country	Outward looking:		Inward looking:			Sum	N
	Lobbying opinion formation	Joint projects	Assistance	Exchange of ideas/information	Social contacts		
Denmark	7.4	20.2	12.8	43.6	16.0	100	94
Estonia	9.2	28.6	15.3	41.8	5.1	100	98
Finland	7.8	17.2	15.5	35.3	24.1	99.9	116
Germany	7.4	24.1	13.0	33.3	22.2	100	54
Latvia	1.6	26.6	14.1	48.4	9.4	100.1	64
Lithuania	2.9	38.6	12.9	37.1	8.6	100.1	70
Poland	3.2	30.6	17.7	33.9	14.5	99.9	62
Sweden	6.9	31.4	14.7	28.4	18.6	100	102
Average	6.2	26.5	14.5	37.6	15.1	99.9	-
N	41	175	96	248	100	-	660

If we analyze the pattern of transnational activities for specific countries, then we find a result that very much resembles the overall pattern. Exchange of ideas and information and joint projects are the most common types of NGO activities for all countries except for Finland. When Finnish organizations interact across state-borders it is somewhat more common that they are involved in social contacts than in joint projects. In relation to the previous finding of a transnational sub-region in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea, we may also note that nothing suggests that these contacts are significantly different from those occurring elsewhere in the region. Neither do we find a certain type of activity to be more common, or more unusual, on the eastern rim. If we study each category separately, we find no case where NGOs from the three Baltic states and Finland at the same time occupy the top four or even the top three places. The same applies to the bottom four and bottom three places.

### 3. Explaining the patterns of transnational contacts

#### Conditioners for regular transnational contacts

In the preceding chapter we identified a number of patterns of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region (2000/01). First, we found non-governmental organizations focusing on business and internationalism to have more contacts than other types of NGOs. Second, we found contacts across state-borders in the region to be more common among as well as between organizations from Finland and Estonia than NGOs from the other countries. The two patterns could be seen with respect to scope as well as to frequency. As regards type of activity, we found rather different patterns. The most outward looking organizations in relative terms were focusing on environment and democracy and came from Sweden and Poland. The most inward looking NGOs, on the other hand, appeared to be relatively more common among organizations dealing with primordial issues and internationalism and with Finnish and Danish origin.

The analysis will now continue with a search for the conditioners that facilitate the establishment of regular transnational contacts. In other words, what are the main factors that can help us to better understand why these patterns are there? For example, are durable interactions mainly a result of the NGOs' own interests and resources? Or, are they rather shaped by some structural conditioner? For instance, how do patterns of transnational interactions correlate with factors such as democracy and technological progress? And how do geographical distance, economic interdependence, and international governmental institutions affect the likelihood of NGO contacts in the Baltic Sea region?

Previous research contains many suggestions and ideas of how to explain the occurrence of transnational contacts. Some of these are in the form of tentative hypotheses, while others are only vaguely hinted at. Some propositions are supported by considerable empirical evidence, while others are so far only based on a few single observations. The aim of this chapter is to bring together these propositions in an integrated framework and make them the object of a rigorous test. The literature on transnational relations suggests

that such a framework should be based upon at least three general premises (cf. Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 7-8, 12; McCarthy, 1997: 253-6; Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 14-32). First, a thorough understanding of transnational relations demands that we consider factors that are related to actors as well as to structures. Taken separately, the two types of factors offer some understanding, but it is basically the combination or the interplay between the two that is assumed to provide the best explanations. Second, actor related explanations must pay attention to both interests and resources. For example, the fact that business groups are the most active transnational actors at the EU-level can be linked to both a stronger interest (the EU is mainly an economic community) and to superior resources (Greenwood, 1997: 101-32). Third, transnational relations are shaped by political opportunity structures at different levels of analysis. In other words, states and their activities at home and abroad provide a political context that may encourage non-state actors to go transnational or force them to remain on the domestic scene. For our purposes it seems meaningful to make a distinction between three levels of analysis. Transnational contacts may be affected by factors at the state level (e.g. characteristics of the state), the relational level (e.g. geographic distance), and the international system level (e.g. international governmental institutions).

By taking the three general findings into consideration, we have constructed a simple model for studying the conditions for regular transnational contacts (Figure 1). The dependent variable, regular transnational contacts, refers to the direct communication across national borders between non-governmental organizations that occur continuously during a certain period of time. The dependent variable was mapped in Chapter 2. The independent variable, the NGOs, will be studied with respect to type of NGO and to the NGOs' country of origin. The conditioners, or the intervening variables, are of two types. The first type is related to the actors themselves (the NGOs) and considers their interests (interest for Baltic Sea issues, interest for influencing interstate relations in the region) as well as their resources (personnel resources). The second set of variables is related to structures. Altogether, we will test the explanatory power of five structural variables, including democracy, technological progress, geographical distance, economic interdependence, and international governmental institutions. The five conditioners represent different levels of analysis. The first two mentioned belong to the state level, the next two are linked to the relational level, and the final conditioner is connected to the international system level.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> The direction of the arrows in the figure shows that regular transnational contacts are treated as the dependent variable in this study. This does not, however, have to exclude the possibility of a two-way relationship in some cases (cf. Kriesberg, 1997: 3). For example, in the case of democracy, it has been argued that transnational factors have contributed to the processes of democratization and democratic consolidation in Eastern Europe (Zielonka and Pravda, 2001).

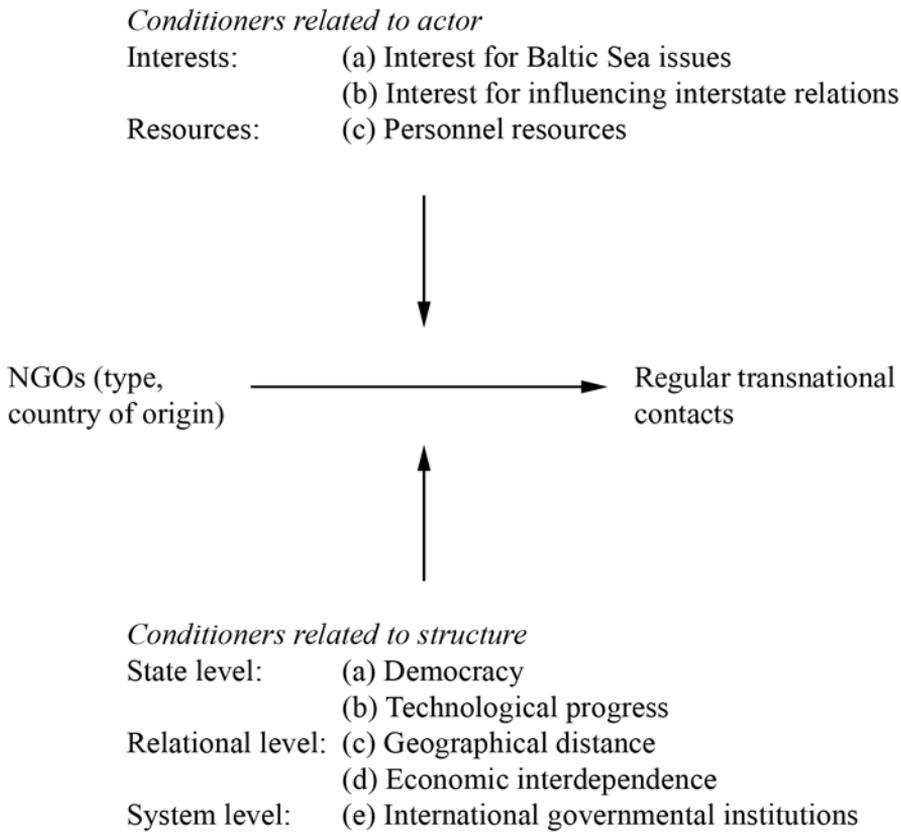


Figure 1. Tested conditioners facilitating regular transnational contacts

The final selection of which conditioners to test has been guided by the particular focus of this study, that is, transnational contacts between an elite of north European NGOs in the year 2000 / 2001. One implication of this is that some variables, which otherwise are ascribed explanatory power, have fixed values and are therefore not possible to test in this study. Three such variables stand out as particularly important. Changes in the security context are quite often seen as a very important explanation of transnational growth (Gordenker and Weiss, 1996: 24; Josselin and Wallace, 2001: 4, 7; Kriesberg, 1997: 4). There is no reason to think that the Baltic Sea region should be an exception to this. On the contrary, as was indicated in Chapter 1, the increase in regional INGOs and transnational networks can hardly be understood without considering the end of the Cold War. Expansion of the state system is a second factor that has proved important for the growth of transnational relations (Boli and Thomas, 1999: 32; cf. Jacobson, 1979: 14-5), but that has been left out for the same reason. In the case of the Baltic Sea region, the end of the Cold War brought about a major change in this respect

as the number of states increased from seven to nine. Finally, we have also excluded one factor for validity reasons. Language may be of some importance for the growth of transnational contacts, but since we focus on NGOs as such rather than on individuals we cannot with certainty say what language is being used in each contact.<sup>34</sup>

The chapter is in what follows divided into three sections. Sections one and two are devoted to a presentation of each of the individual explanatory variables. The first section focuses on the conditioners that are related to actor, while the second section deals with the five structural conditioners. For each variable we formulate one or more hypotheses that are grounded in previous research and present the empirical data that it will be tested against. Finally, we test the hypotheses empirically and give an integrated answer to our two main questions. Why do some types of NGOs have more transnational contacts? Why do NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts?

## Conditioners related to actor

### (a-b) Interests

It is common to make a distinction between actors' interests and preferences. The former refer to "more ultimate goals and aspirations" (Lukes, 1986: 6), or to "fundamental goals" (Milner, 1997: 15, footnote 4), while the latter represent an actor's specific policy choice on a particular issue (ibid). For example, the interest of the big business leaders of the Baltic Sea Business Summit is to maximize the conditions for economic growth in the Baltic Sea region (Karlsson, 1999: 20-1; 2001: 107-8). Preferences, on the other hand, refer to where the business leaders stand on specific issues such as customs, mobility of labor, and environmental protection. The specific standpoints are derived from the ultimate goal, even though the latter does not say anything explicitly about them. In connection to this, it should be noted that interests tend to be more stable, and therefore less changeable, than preferences. Or, in the words of Helen V. Milner (1997: 15, footnote 4), "Interests are the stable foundation on which actors' preferences over policy shift as their situation and the policy area vary."

It is more or less a matter of course that a study of NGOs must pay attention to interests. In fact, the term interest has almost come to be synonymous with this type of actor, as can be seen from labels such as *interest* groups (cf.

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<sup>34</sup> For example, the fact that Estonia and Finland have languages that are closely related to each other may help explain why transnational contacts are more common between these countries than between other pairs of countries. In this particular case, however, it should be noted that when Helander (1993: 136-7) tested the language hypothesis on the Estonian contacts of the ministries of Finland, he found only relatively weak support.

Blondel, 1973; Greenwood, 1997) or organized *interests* (cf. Greenwood *et al.*, 1992). However, as noted by Helen V. Milner (1997: 15), even though it seems commonsensical to observe the role of interests, it is not unusual to find that political scientists at large tend to neglect this variable.

By focusing on interests we assume that cross-border contacts in the Baltic Sea area may reflect fundamental regional goals of the NGOs. Put differently, we assume that the stronger interest for the Baltic Sea region NGOs have, the more regular transnational contacts will they have in this area. It is important to stress that we focus on regional interests rather than on internationalism in general, which is also an important stimulus of transnational relations (Seary, 1996: 17-18; cf. Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 15).<sup>35</sup> The latter aspect will however be treated as a constant in this study, because the interviewed organizations can be assumed to have a strong interest in international issues considering their membership in international NGOs. In order to test the importance of interests we will concentrate on two aspects that are related to the NGOs' fundamental regional goals. The first of these concerns the NGOs' interest for Baltic Sea issues in general, while the second looks closer at their interest for influencing interstate relations in the region (i.e. one particular aspect of regional affairs). Against this background we have formulated the following two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: *The stronger interest in Baltic Sea issues NGOs have, the more transnational contacts they have in the region.*

Hypothesis 2: *The stronger interest in influencing interstate relations in the Baltic Sea area NGOs have, the more transnational contacts they have in the region.*

Of course, the interest for transnational contacts may be linked to specific circumstances at the national level or in a certain Baltic Sea country as well, but by these hypotheses we want to shed extra light on the possible role of fundamental regional goals. The importance of this dimension can be assumed to increase as NGOs become more aware of the internationalization of problems and politics (cf. Smith, 1997a: 57). As a matter of fact, scholars who specialize on the new regionalism have to some extent already registered such a development in current international relations. It has therefore been argued that increasing "social communication and convergence of values throughout the region" constitutes one salient characteristic of the new regionalism (Hettne, 1999: 11).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> For a thorough analysis of the concept of internationalism, its roots and impact on world politics, see Goldmann, 1994.

<sup>36</sup> It should be emphasized that even though we primarily are interested in the effect of interests on transnational contacts, the dynamic between the two may work in both directions. One study that highlights some of the reversed relationship, i.e. how cross-border communication

Table 24. *Interest for Baltic Sea issues and for influencing interstate cooperation in the Baltic Sea region grouped by type of NGO, 2000-2001*

Type of NGO	Interest for Baltic Sea issues	Interest for influencing interstate co-operation	N
Business	2.7	2.6	59
Labor	2.0	1.9	46
Democracy	2.2	2.2	48
Environment	2.3	2.2	43
Internationalism	2.4	2.4	54
Knowledge	2.4	0.8	53
Leisure	2.2	1.6	42
Primordial	2.1	2.0	45
Social welfare	2.7	2.4	57
Average	2.3	2.1	447

NOTE: 4 = Very strong, 3 = Rather strong, 2 = Rather weak, 1 = Very weak, 0 = None.

Table 25. *Interest for Baltic Sea issues and for influencing interstate cooperation in the Baltic Sea region grouped by the NGOs' country of origin, 2000-2001*

The NGOs' country of origin	Interest for Baltic Sea issues	Interest for influencing interstate co-operation	N
Denmark	2.1	1.9	67
Estonia	2.8	2.7	54
Finland	2.9	2.5	61
Germany	1.2	1.0	64
Latvia	2.9	2.8	35
Lithuania	2.9	2.7	41
Poland	2.3	2.1	44
Sweden	2.4	2.2	65
Average	2.4	2.2	431

NOTE: 4 = Very strong, 3 = Rather strong, 2 = Rather weak, 1 = Very weak, 0 = None.

By confronting the pattern of transnational contacts (Chapter 2) with information about the NGOs' interests, we will later in this chapter test the two interest based hypotheses. Information on the NGOs' interests was gathered through the e-post questionnaire. The respondents were asked to specify the strength of their interests in accordance with a five-point scale (very strong, rather strong, rather weak, very weak, none). If we look at the average result for the entire population we find that the interests in general must be described as being rather weak (Table 24-25). This applies somewhat more to the interest for influencing interstate co-operation than to the interest for Baltic Sea issues.

If we break down the answers into our two main categories (type of NGO, the NGOs' country of origin) we find what appears to be a familiar underly-

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may contribute to a sense of regional community, is Karl Deutsch's *et al* (1957) classical work *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*.

ing pattern. The strongest interests can be found among organizations specializing on business, internationalism, and social welfare, and among NGOs from the four eastern countries (Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania). In other words, the NGOs that we earlier found to have more transnational contacts seem to a large extent also to have a stronger interest. The interest in these cases comes in general closer to being rather strong. In a similar way we see that organizations from Germany and Denmark, which had fewer contacts, also tend to have a weaker interest. However, having indicated that there is a possible link between contacts and interests does not necessarily have to mean that there is a clear correlation between the two. At this stage we do not yet know to what extent a stronger interest actually stimulates more contacts. For example, it is possible that a stronger interest also can be found among NGOs with fewer transnational contacts and vice versa. We will come back to this issue in the final section.

### (c) Personnel resources

To be able to realize one's interests one must possess or be in control of some resource. The term resource is here seen as "a source of supply or support", which gives an actor "an ability to meet and handle a situation" (Merriam-Webster Collegiate Online Dictionary). This means that if an NGO has an interest in the Baltic Sea region, then it is his resources that give him the ability to act transnationally, i.e. to uphold cross-border contacts and to carry out transnational activities. Resources have for a long time been ascribed explanatory power of transnational relations. The most obvious example of this concerns the operations of Multinational Corporations (MNCs). It is more or less routine to stress that this type of corporation commands more resources than some states (cf. Greenwood, 1997: 18; Greenwood *et al*, 1992: 14; Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 3). The importance of resources has also been stressed in studies of NGOs and their transnational relations (Kriesberg, 1997: 6). For example, it has been argued that growing resources of NGOs help explain why these actors in the 1990s became more active around the UN system (Gordenker and Weiss, 1996: 25).

When scholars pay attention to resources they proceed more or less explicitly from the simple assumption that the more resources actors have, the greater is their ability to act. In our study we therefore expect to find that NGOs that have more transnational contacts in general have more resources than NGOs with fewer contacts. The resources may be of different types. Typical examples of resources that give non-state actors an ability to act across state borders are economic resources (e.g. money, personnel), communication resources (e.g. e-post, fax machines), and organizational resources (e.g. secretariat, cohesion among members) (cf. Greenwood, 1997: 57-79). Considering that we study an elite of NGOs, we can assume that our population already has considerable resources. For example, as was men-

tioned earlier, we already know that all organizations have access to computers and to the Internet as well as are internationally active. In order to test the role of resources we have therefore decided to focus on personnel resources (cf. Greenwood, 1997: 60-1). This is one asset where we most likely can find a variation between the NGOs and that thereby makes hypothesis testing possible. The resource hypothesis has been formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 3: *The more personnel resources NGOs possess, the more transnational contacts they have.*

The information about the personnel resources was collected in connection with the e-post questionnaire. The variable was given concrete form by asking for the number of employees, including full-time as well as part-time staff. From Table 26 we see that the average number of employees among the 447 NGOs that responded to the questionnaire is 21.8. The average becomes somewhat lower when we group the answers by the NGOs' country of origin, since Russia was excluded due to a low response rate. The highest averages of employees are found among organizations focusing on business, labor, internationalism, and primordial categories. As expected we find that the protective NGOs possess considerable resources, while it is somewhat more surprising to find that also the latter two belong to this group. The reason for this is that the average is drawn up by comparatively resource rich NGOs such as the Red Cross (internationalism) and religious organizations (primordial). Turning to the NGOs' country of origin, we find that organizations from the three Baltic states on average possess considerably less personnel resources than NGOs from the other countries.

The patterns with respect to personnel resources do not seem to match the corresponding patterns for transnational contacts very well. As regards type of NGO we found that contacts were most common among NGOs belonging to the sectors of business, internationalism, and social welfare. The first two mentioned certainly have considerable resources, while the third type falls far below the average. A similar divergence can be seen among organizations with fewer contacts. NGOs categorized as labor and primordial tend to have comparatively fewer contacts, but Table 26 shows that these are actually the most resource rich types of NGOs. Only in the case of democracy oriented NGOs do we find fewer contacts be parallel with less personnel resources.

Table 26. *Personnel resources grouped by type of NGO and the NGOs' country of origin, 2000-2001*

Type of NGO	Personnel resources	N	The NGOs' country of origin	Personnel resources	N
Business	26.9	59	Denmark	22.0	67
Labor	38.6	46	Estonia	6.2	54
Democracy	9.6	48	Finland	40.6	61
Environment	11.0	43	Germany	30.6	64
Internationalism	37.3	54	Latvia	4.7	35
Knowledge	5.6	53	Lithuania	8.2	41
Leisure	10.2	42	Poland	30.4	44
Primordial	47.0	45	Sweden	23.0	65
Social welfare	9.9	57			
Average	21.8	447		20.7	431

The apparently weak match between the two patterns also appears when we consider the NGOs' country of origin. Finnish and Estonian organizations have more contacts than NGOs from the other countries, but there is a huge gap between them with respect to personnel resources. Somewhat paradoxically we find that the highly transnationalized NGOs from the three Baltic states are the least resource rich ones, while the considerably wealthier organizations from Denmark and Germany on average have much fewer transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region. It remains to be seen whether or not the observed divergence is also reflected in the correlation analysis, but so far it at least raises the question of a toning down of the relative importance of personnel resources. One possibility, to which we will come back, is that the effect of variations in this variable is reduced or taken away by some of the structural conditioners.

## Conditioners related to structure

### (a) Democracy

It is widely assumed among scholars that democracy constitutes an important condition for transnational interactions (see, e.g., Josselin and Wallace, 2001: 4; Kriesberg, 1997: 4-7; Risse-Kappen, 1995b: 38; Zacher, 1992: 94). It is among democracies that we usually find the greatest flows of information and people and the largest numbers of international NGOs. For example, Boli *et al* have found that "... residents of the most democratic countries belong to over four times as many regional INGOs as those of the least democratic countries" (Boli, Loya, and Loftin, 1999: 67). The reason that democracies tend to be more favorable for transnational contacts appears to be

strongly linked to the issue of control. This point has been made by among others Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995b: 38):

Transboundary activities of societal actors largely depend on whether the domestic structures of the states involved enable governments to control these activities. Since democratic systems are based on the separation of state and society, their governments are less able to control the transnational activities of their citizens than authoritarian political systems. Transnational relations are expected to flourish in alliances among democracies.

In accordance with this expectation, we can also assume that the cross-border contacts between non-state actors will begin to ebb away as states become less democratic. This is so because, in the words of Daphné Josselin and William Wallace (2001: 4): “Totalitarian states reject the distinction between private and public; authoritarian states accept the intrusion onto their territory of private actors beyond their control only under tight conditions”. A government that somehow wants to control the transnational flows across its borders can take a number of measures (cf. Krasner, 1995: 268; Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 25). In the case of transnational contacts between NGOs these can include restrictions on the distribution of visas or on the access to the Internet. Considering the importance of democracy for transnational relations, we may formulate the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4: The more democratic countries are, the more transnational contacts NGOs from those countries have.*

In order to test the democracy hypothesis, we have utilized data that have been collected and put together by the Freedom House.<sup>37</sup> Since 1955 it has carried out annual surveys of the progress and decline of freedom in the world. The evaluation “rates each country on a seven-point scale for both political rights and civil liberties (1 representing the most free and 7 the least free) and then divides the world into three broad categories: ‘Free’ (countries whose ratings average 1-3); ‘Partly Free’ (countries whose ratings average 3-5.5); and ‘Not Free’ (countries whose ratings average 5.5-7)” (Freedom House, 2001: 10). The surveys have a reliable character and have therefore been of great relevance to scientists (cf. Kriesberg, 1997: 4-5; Zacher, 1992: 92-3).

The spread of democracy has during the last 10-15 years been remarkable in the Baltic Sea region. In 1982/83, there was an extreme polarity between the countries along this dimension. Four countries were rated as Free (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and West Germany), while three countries were

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<sup>37</sup> The Freedom House is a non-profit non-partisan organization located in Washington, D.C. For more information, see its web page at <http://www.freedomhouse.org>.

considered to be Not Free (East Germany, Poland, and the Soviet Union<sup>38</sup>). One decade later (1992/93), in the very beginning of the post-Cold War era, the survey indicated that the earlier division was well on the way to disappear. All countries in transition had now been upgraded one or two levels. Estonia, Latvia, and Russia were rated as Partly Free, while Lithuania and Poland had been upgraded to Free, expanding this category to six countries (including the three Nordic states and Germany). No country was any longer described as Not Free. Finally, in 2001/2002, all states are rated as Free, except Russia that still is considered to only be Partly Free.

The development described raises the question of whether or not there is too little variation between the Baltic Sea countries today to make hypothesis testing meaningful. However, even though eight out of nine countries belong to the same category, their individual ratings on the seven-point scale are not exactly the same. Using the survey for 2001/2002 (Freedom House, 2001: 14), we find that the three Nordic states (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) make up somewhat of a democratic elite with a score of 1.0. A second group of countries – Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland – receives an average point of 1.5. The rating of Russia is 5.0, which makes the gap to the other countries considerable. Considering these ratings, we should expect to find more transnational contacts among the countries in the first group, while interactions with Russian NGOs generally can be expected to be much more rare. Certainly, the latter expectation seems to match the pattern described in Chapter 2 (Table 18). Regular transnational contacts rarely find their way across the Russian border. On the other hand, if the democracy factor were to have considerable explanatory power, then we would expect the Nordic NGO contacts to be more extensive. In the final section of this chapter we will see exactly how strong the correlation between democracy and transnational contacts really is.

## (b) Technological progress

Many scholars have noticed that technological innovations throughout history often have had a positive impact on the increase in transnational contacts (see, e.g., Jacobsen 1979: 59; Keohane and Nye, 1977: 41; Kriesberg, 1997: 6). The general argument, as formulated by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye (1977: 41), is that technological change stimulates transnational activities because it reduces the costs for such activities over great distances. For example, in a long-time perspective, we have seen how cheaper boat, train, and air travel and developments of postal services tend to bring increasing levels of travel and information flows across state-borders. Today, there are numerous scholarly studies pointing at how the telecommunications

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<sup>38</sup> Not forgetting that the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) at this point of time still were part of the Soviet Union.

revolution during the last 30-40 years has quite dramatically simplified personal contacts and information exchanges (see, e.g., Gordenker and Weiss, 1996: 25; Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 14; Seary, 1996: 18; Tarrow, 1998: 193). The general argument, however, still remains the same: “The communications revolution has transformed the ability of non-state actors to develop and maintain transnational contacts, and has radically lowered the costs of doing so” (Josselin and Wallace, 2001: 1). The widespread assumption of a positive link between technological progress and transnational relations form the basis for hypothesis 5:

*Hypothesis 5: The higher the level of technological progress countries have, the more transnational contacts NGOs from those countries have.*

Technological progress is here defined as the number of five technology related products and services – fax machines, mobile phones, Internet hosts, personal computers, and televisions – per 10,000 persons. The five variables form the basis of the Rodríguez-Wilson III Index of Technological Progress (ITP) (Rodríguez and Wilson III, 2000: 12-3 and appendix 1). The index, which is normalized to vary between 0 and 100, is based on yearly data from 1994 to 1997.<sup>39</sup> In Table 27, we have put together the relevant statistics for the nine Baltic Sea states. The table clearly reveals that there exists somewhat of a technological gap in the Baltic Sea region. The most technologically advanced economies are found in the three Nordic states (Finland, Sweden, and Denmark) and in Germany. The five countries in transition, on the other hand, are behind on all five indicators, even though the gap in some cases is rather small.

The technological gap corresponds with the old east-west division, which for decades paralyzed regional affairs. However, when we compare that particular pattern with the east-west contact pattern that was described in Chapter 2, we find a surprisingly weak correspondence. The expectation of the technological progress hypothesis is that transnational contacts should be more common among the western countries than among the countries in transition or among pair of countries that includes one from each group. Instead we found that the contacts on the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea (Russian NGOs excluded) were the most common of all. For example, if we focus on the top ten pairs of countries where transnational contacts are most common, we see that only two of them include exclusively western countries (see Table 18). Especially the NGOs from the three Baltic states (Estonia,

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<sup>39</sup> It should be noted that there is no perfect match between the time period for these data (1994-97) and the occasion for this questionnaire (2000-01). Even though there are only a few years missing, we cannot with certainty say whether this study exaggerates the support for the hypothesis or not because the technological gap in the meantime may have changed somewhat.

Latvia, and Lithuania) have far more transnational contacts than the level of technological progress of those countries lead us to expect. As in the case with the other variables, we have still to wait for the correlation analysis in the final section before we can say anything more definitely about the importance of technological progress for transnational interactions. The described incongruity may however indicate that there is a need for a refined hypothesis or that the index of technological progress is too broadly composed.

Table 27. *The value of the Rodríguez-Wilson III Index of Technological Progress (ITP) for the nine Baltic Sea states, 1994-1997*

Country	Fax Machines	Mobile Phones	Internet Hosts	Personal Computers	Televisions	ITP
Finland	290.72	2524.15	444.32	2283.99	5337.01	90.78
Sweden	415.86	2361.52	202.24	2447.50	4908.18	77.87
Denmark	391.75	1787.35	177.59	2624.40	5436.64	72.24
Germany	442.24	637.54	71.80	1936.19	5000.62	50.90
Estonia	44.54	503.93	52.11	119.34	4006.54	21.36
Latvia	3.12	174.98	16.90	55.44	4809.05	16.27
Lithuania	11.05	194.64	8.73	219.52	3625.54	13.86
Poland	9.74	114.13	11.54	275.03	3497.99	13.16
Russia	2.56	16.17	4.11	199.61	3862.99	12.05

NOTE: Fax Machines, Mobile Phones, Internet Hosts, Personal Computers, and Televisions are per 10,000 persons. The range for ITP is standardized to vary between 0 and 100.

SOURCE: Rodríguez and Wilson, III (2000: Table 3).

### (c) Geographical distance

It may seem more or less a truism to assume that geographical distance can help to explain patterns of transnational relations. Any type of communication between actors, one may assume, ought to be easier the closer the geographical distance between them is. In the case of international relations, this point has been made by among others Johan Galtung: “The factor ‘geographical proximity’ may certainly play a powerful and decisive role in the international communication and general interaction structure ...” (quoted in Helander, 1993: 26). On the other hand, we should note that the importance of geographical proximity might have changed somewhat because of new technological innovations. James Rosenau, for example, has argued that during recent decades we have been witnessing “the shrinking of political distances by microelectronic technologies” (Rosenau, 1992: 3). In other words, the introduction of new telecommunication technologies may have meant that geographical distance has lost some of its meaning when we talk about transnational contacts. Regular contacts by e-mail are upheld as easily at the local level (e.g. within a city) as at the international level (i.e. across state borders). From this point of view, the question even arises whether geographical proximity any longer plays a significant role at all. In order to

test these two opposing interpretations, we have formulated the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 6: The closer to the geographical center of the region countries are, the more transnational contacts NGOs from those countries have in the region.*

The test of the geographical distance hypothesis will be based upon data on the distance in kilometers between the capitals of the nine Baltic Sea countries (cf. Helander, 1993: 143-4). To use capitals as the point of measurement is not completely satisfactory. However, considering that most of the studied NGOs, or some 90 per cent (see Chapter 1), are national level organizations, we may assume that a significant part of them have their headquarters in the capital, or at least are represented there. Five of the nine capitals are situated directly at, or immediately near, the Baltic Sea (Copenhagen, Helsinki, Riga, Stockholm, and Tallinn). Three capitals are located within a distance of 100 to 300 kilometers from the coast but are more or less directly connected to the Baltic Sea through rivers or channels (Berlin, Warsaw, and Vilnius). The only capital that does not have a natural connection to the Baltic Sea is Moscow. The Russian capital is situated some 620 kilometers from the Finnish Gulf and some 800 kilometers from the Gulf of Riga. The distance in kilometers between the capitals is shown in Table 28.

Table 28. *The geographical distance between the capitals of the nine Baltic Sea states (kilometers)*

Capital	Berlin (GER)	Copen- hagen (DEN)	Helsinki (FIN)	Moscow (RUS)	Riga (LAT)	Stockholm (SWE)	Tallinn (EST)	Warsaw (POL)	Vilnius (LIT)
Berlin	-	360	1100	1580	840	820	1020	520	820
Copenhagen	-	-	880	1540	740	540	800	700	820
Helsinki	-	-	-	880	360	380	100	920	620
Moscow	-	-	-	-	800	1200	860	1120	740
Riga	-	-	-	-	-	440	260	580	260
Stockholm	-	-	-	-	-	-	340	840	700
Tallinn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	840	540
Warsaw	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	400
Vilnius	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average	882.5	797.5	655	1090	535	657.5	595	740	612.5

NOTE: The distance is calculated on the basis of a straight line between cities.

The closest situated capitals in the Baltic Sea region are Helsinki and Tallinn (100 kilometers). In other words, if the explanatory power of the geographical distance hypothesis is high, then we should expect to find transnational contacts to be most common between Finnish and Estonian NGOs. From Table 28 we may assume that transnational contacts are also relatively common between Estonian-Latvian NGOs and Latvian-Lithuanian NGOs, while

any regular contacts involving Russian organizations should be very rare. These expectations seem to correspond rather well with the patterns that were mapped in the previous chapter (Table 18).

Moreover, if we focus on the average distance for each capital, Table 28 shows that the geographical center of the region is found in the triangle of the three Baltic states (Riga-Tallinn-Vilnius). Helsinki and Stockholm are closely located to the center, while the remaining four capitals make up somewhat of a geographical periphery of the Baltic Sea region (Berlin, Copenhagen, Moscow, and Warsaw). In accordance with the hypothesis, we expect to find transnational contacts to flourish in the center of the region, while interactions across the center-periphery line should be sparser. Once again, there seems to be a certain correspondence between these expectations and the actual patterns. In Chapter 2 we saw that NGOs from the countries on the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea (Russia excluded) had more transnational contacts and that most contacts took place within this group of countries. NGOs from the region's periphery, on the other hand, had in general fewer contacts and were not interacting with the center to the same extent. The apparent similarities between expectations and actual patterns seem to suggest that geographical proximity – despite technological revolutions – continues to play an important role for the development of transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region. We cannot yet say exactly how important this factor is, but clearly we should expect the correlation analysis to show that the explanatory power is significant.<sup>40</sup>

#### (d) Economic interdependence

It is a widely spread view among scholars that transnational relations are particularly prosperous when interdependence prevails. The term interdependence may be defined as "situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries" (Keohane and Nye, 1977: 8). The phenomenon of interdependence arises as a result of international transactions, but only to the extent that they can be associated with "reciprocal (although not necessarily symmetrical) costly effects" (p. 9). In the case of economic interdependence, such costs or constraints may arise from, for example, interruptions in international trade, foreign direct investments, and foreign lending by banks (cf. Zacher, 1992: 80-8). If the transactions cannot be associated with any reciprocal effects, we have a situation of interconnectedness rather than interdependence (Keohane and Nye, 1977: 9). It should moreover be noted that interdependence might be more or less complex. A situation of complex interdependence is characterized by three

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<sup>40</sup> In relation to this, we must also observe that there is an obvious risk for misinterpreting statistical support for this factor. It may be difficult to separate geographical distance from, for example, security relations, economic interdependence, or the cultural context.

main conditions (p. 24-5): the presence of multiple channels of contact between societies (including interstate, transgovernmental, and transnational relations), the lack of hierarchy among issues (e.g. military issues do not dominate the agenda), and the absence of military force.

It seems to be rather widely assumed that there is a positive relationship between interdependence and transnational relations. In the words of Kjell Goldmann: "In a condition of complex interdependence, a radical increase in the amount and variety of transgovernmental and transnational relations has taken place" (Goldmann, 1994: 49; cf. Chatfield, 1997: 21; Jacobsen, 1979: 59; Kriesberg, 1997: 8; Keohane and Nye, 1977: 110). There are several reasons that situations of mutual dependence may stimulate transnational interactions. One reason is that interdependence tends to reduce the importance of sovereignty and national boundaries, which means that many transnational activities can take place without the control of governments (Starr, 1999: 22). A second reason can be derived from the fact that interdependence may produce collective problems that have to be collectively managed (p. 19). In the words of Mark Zacher: "What is occurring in the world is not a serious demise of states as the central actors in the system (although certain transnational actors are achieving greater prominence) but rather their acceptance that they have to work together in controlling a variety of interdependencies" (Zacher, 1992: 67). Transnational actors do occasionally also use this awareness to put pressure on states to act in a certain way (Wapner, 1996: 118-9). The assumed positive relationship between interdependence and transnational relations make up the basis for hypothesis 7:

*Hypothesis 7: The more economically interdependent countries are, the more transnational contacts NGOs from those countries have.*

The hypothesis will be tested by studying the share of the Baltic Sea countries' exports to the other countries in the region. There are two reasons for choosing international trade as an indicator of economic interdependence. First, even though scholars may have exaggerated its importance somewhat, it is the type of transaction that is usually associated with economic interdependence (Zacher, 1992: 81). Second, and more important, however, is the fact that the Baltic Sea region has hardly yet entered a phase of an all-embracing economic interdependence. For example, if we instead were to focus on foreign direct investments or foreign lending we would in some cases probably come closer to a situation of dependence rather than interdependence. The transactions between, on the one hand, the four EU-countries in the west and, on the other hand, the five transitional economies in the east are in these respects rather one-sided. As regards international trade, however, we find more of mutual dependence, even though it in some instances may be far from symmetrical. The measurement of interdependence will therefore be based upon trade, more specifically the size of the Baltic Sea

countries' exports to each and every one of the other eight countries in the region as a proportion of their total volume of exports.

We make three general observations with respect to the Baltic Sea countries' intra-regional trade (Table 29). First, we can establish that there is a Baltic Sea market, since 47 per cent of the total volume of exports from the nine littoral countries is directed to this area. Second, the German market appears to be somewhat of a high-powered engine for several economies within the Baltic Sea region. On average, 16 per cent of the other countries' exports are directed toward this single market. Third, the Baltic Sea market is clearly more important to some countries than to others (the column at the extreme right). It is most important to the three Baltic states. More than 50 per cent of the total volume of exports from these countries is intra-regional. The share is extremely high for Estonia (88.8 per cent). The country for which the regional market is comparatively less important is Germany. Only nine per cent of its total export is intra-regional. In other words, the German market is more important to the other countries than these markets are to Germany.

Table 29. *The share of the Baltic Sea countries' exports to the other countries in the region as a proportion of their total volume of exports, 2000 (Millions of U.S. Dollars)*

Exporting Country	Total export	DEN	EST	FIN	GER	LAT	LIT	POL	RUS	SWE	Intra-regional (per cent)
Denmark	49,534	-	0.2	3.5	19.9	0.2	0.4	1.7	1.0	13.2	40.1
Estonia	3,133	3.5	-	33.0	9.4	8.8	3.8	0.8	8.3	21.2	88.8
Finland	44,524	2.6	3.2	-	12.9	0.6	0.4	1.7	4.5	9.6	35.5
Germany	549,578	1.6	0.1	1.2	-	0.1	0.2	2.4	1.1	2.3	9.0
Latvia	1,865	5.8	5.3	1.9	17.2	-	7.6	1.6	4.2	10.8	54.4
Lithuania	3,810	4.9	2.3	1.3	14.3	15.0	-	5.5	7.1	4.4	54.8
Poland	31,651	2.7	0.3	0.7	34.9	0.7	1.8	-	2.7	2.7	46.5
Russia	104,836	0.4	1.2	3.0	8.8	1.6	2.0	4.2	-	1.6	22.8
Sweden	86,908	5.4	0.5	5.1	10.7	0.2	0.2	1.7	0.6	-	24.4
Average	-	3.4	1.6	6.2	16.0	3.4	2.0	2.4	3.7	8.2	47.0

SOURCE: *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook, 2001* (International Monetary Fund, 2001).

Table 29 shows that the degree of economic interdependence between the countries in the Baltic Sea region varies considerably. The highest levels of interdependence are found among Nordic countries (Denmark-Sweden, Finland-Sweden) and among countries at the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea (Estonia-Finland, Estonia-Latvia, Finland-Russia, Latvia-Lithuania). Even though some of these are rather asymmetrical interdependencies, the share of these countries' exports to each other exceeds three per cent of their total exports. At the other end of the scale, we find three pairs of countries where the degree of mutual dependence is significantly lower. The trade between Estonia-Poland, Denmark-Russia, and Finland-Lithuania does in no case make up more than 1.3 per cent of the respective country's total trade. If we

look closer at the two groups, the most and the least interdependent pair of countries in the region, we find what appears to be a certain co-variation with the preceding variable, geographical distance (cf. footnote 40 in this chapter). All pairs of countries in the former group include countries that border on each other, while the countries in the latter group have no common borders. On the other hand, it would go too far to assume that mutual dependence varies strongly with geographical distance. For example, the degree of interdependence between Denmark and Finland is relatively high despite the considerable distance between them.

If the interdependence hypothesis is correct, then we should expect to find significantly more transnational contacts among the first pairs of countries than among the latter pairs. In the final section we will see to what extent this is supported by empirical evidence, but it seems that a cursory comparison of the two patterns leads us expect to find at least some correspondence between the two, even though there are also some notable deviations. Indeed, transnational contacts are in general more common among and between many of the interdependent economies on the Eastern rim. On the other hand, the equally high level of mutual dependence between the Nordic countries, or between Finland and Russia, does not seem to have stimulated non-governmental contacts to the same degree.

#### (e) International governmental institutions

International institutions – “ranging from transnational values or belief systems to substantive regimes to international organizations” (Zacher and Matthew, 1995: 133) – may have a positive effect on the occurrence of transnational relations.<sup>41</sup> The importance of the institutional context is usually strongly emphasized by liberal analysts. In the words of Josselin and Wallace, “Liberal pluralists take for granted the framework of international institutions and regimes which have created a space within which transnational economic and societal actors now flourish” (2001: 10-1). A basic expectation of this premise is that “as authority becomes increasingly vested in transnational bodies, social movements will tend to become more transnational in scope and target” (McCarthy, 1997: 255; Cf. Tarrow, 1998: 19-20). In accordance with this assumption, international governmental institutions have been described as “arenas for forming and strengthening networks” (Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 12), “international political opportunity structures” that contribute to the emergence of transnational cooperation (Smith, 1997a: 57), and “the armature around which transnational relations have grown” (Tarrow, 1998: 180).

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<sup>41</sup> Institutions are sometimes defined more narrowly and separated from organizations. For example, Sweet, Sandholtz, and Fligstein (2001: 6) define an institution as “a complex of rules and procedures that governs a given set of human interactions”.

There are two ways in which international governmental institutions may contribute to increasing levels of transnational relations (Tarrow, 1998: 180-1; cf. Chatfield, 1997: 26; Kriesberg, 1997: 10-1). First, international institutions are quite often considered to be relevant targets for transnational influence attempts since they provide additional channels of influence. Second, intergovernmental institutions on their part may be promoters of transnational cooperation if this can help them to secure, for example, expertise and legitimacy. Both of these dynamics are well known, not least from studies of the highly institutionalized context of the European Union (Greenwood 1997; Greenwood and Aspinwall, 1998; Haas 1958; Rucht, 1997). The role of institutions for transnational relations is also empirically supported by studies of, for example, the United Nations (Arts, 1998; Atwood 1997; Weiss and Gordenker, 1996; Willetts, 1996), and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Leatherman, 1993).

Considering these findings, it seems reasonable to expect that international governmental institutions may be of some significance for the occurrence of transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region. It seems, for example, most likely that the establishment of the Council of Baltic Sea States (1992), or sub-regional organizations such as the Nordic Council of Ministers (1971) or the Council of the Baltic States (1990)<sup>42</sup>, at least partly can account for some transnational contacts in the region. Because we are primarily interested in the possible effects of international institutions on transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region, we have to give the hypothesis a more concrete form. The intervening variable will in this case therefore consider the degree to which the nine Baltic Sea states take part in international governmental organizations. Participation in international organizations and regimes may be seen as one important aspect of a country's international orientation (cf. Hermann, 1990: 5-6). Depending on the extent of the participation, we can imagine a scale ranging from isolationism to internationalism, or from introversion to extroversion (cf. Kegley and Wittkopf, 1996: 46-47).

*Hypothesis 8: The more countries take part in international governmental institutions, the more transnational contacts NGOs from those countries have.*

The hypothesis rests on the assumption that transnational contacts reflect the extent to which countries take part in international governmental institutions. This means that we expect NGO relations to be rare between introverted countries while flourishing between extroverted countries. In order to test the hypothesis, we will use data on memberships in International Governmental

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<sup>42</sup> The Nordic Council of Ministers consists of the governments of the five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden). The members of the Council of Baltic States are Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Organizations (IGOs).<sup>43</sup> Table 30 shows that the nine Baltic Sea states on average are members of 62.9 IGOs (2000). There are, however, considerable differences in the level of participation. The three Nordic states (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) are in this respect the most extroverted countries with 86-87 memberships. The three Baltic states, on the other hand, stands out as the by far most introverted countries in the region. On average, they are not even members of half that many IGOs. The larger states (Germany, Poland, and Russia) end up somewhere between the two groups of small states. In a long-term perspective, there is however reason to believe that the differences between the countries is only temporary. Since Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania regained their independence in 1991 they have steadily increased their participation in intergovernmental organizations. At the same time, the number of IGO-memberships of the Nordic states have on the whole remained unchanged and in the case of the larger states even decreased somewhat. If this development continues, the gap will soon become much smaller, and inevitably reduce the relevance of the hypothesis.

Table 30. *IGO-memberships of the Baltic Sea states, 1997 and 2000*

	1997	2000	Difference
Denmark	86	86	0
Estonia	29	35	+ 6
Finland	86	86	0
Germany	83	79	- 4
Latvia	32	41	+ 9
Lithuania	32	36	+ 4
Poland	58	56	- 2
Russia	61	60	- 1
Sweden	86	87	+ 1
Average	61.4	62.9	+ 1.5

NOTE: The table shows the number of international governmental organizations of which a country is a direct member, whether through full or associated membership.

SOURCE: *Yearbook of International Organizations 2000/2001*, Volume 2 (Union of International Associations, 2000).

The explanatory power of the institutional hypothesis will be rigorously tested in the next section, but it seems from Table 30 that we already at this stage have reason to believe this to be rather low. Considering the number of IGO-memberships, we would expect transnational contacts to be most common among the Nordic countries and least common among the Baltic states. The fact that the actual pattern of contacts looks rather different, i.e. the non-governmental interactions are instead stronger among the countries at the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea, suggests that the institutional factor is less im-

<sup>43</sup> We do not make a distinction between regional and global organizations because transnational contacts may also originate within institutional contexts external to the Baltic Sea region.

portant in this case. There is however reason to be careful with the general conclusion regarding the role of institutions. This becomes evident if we change our focus to the Nordic countries. The relative large number of IGO-memberships for Denmark, Finland, and Sweden seem to correspond quite well with the considerable number of Nordic INGOs that was noticed in the first section of Chapter 1. If the hypothesis is supported by the Nordic case, but not the Baltic Sea case, then we may conclude that international institutions are at least not a necessary condition for transnational contacts. This type of interactions does also flourish in less institutionalized contexts. On the other hand, once international institutions have been established, they may, alone or in combination with other factors, provide a nutritious soil in which NGO-contacts can grow.

## Why do some NGOs have more transnational contacts?

Having presented the eight conditioners for transnational contacts, we will now turn to the final step of the analysis. The aim of this step is to test the hypotheses and to come up with a conclusion about the explanatory power of the intervening variables. How well exactly do the patterns of transnational contacts correlate with the eight conditioners? Do some of the selected variables provide more explanatory power than the others? The preceding presentation of the eight conditioners made us expect that interest and geographical distance might be more important than personnel resources, technological progress, and international governmental institutions. As regards democracy and economic interdependence, we expect to find some explanatory power, although not as strong as the first mentioned variables. Does the empirical evidence support these expectations? Furthermore, is the best explanation provided by a combination of structural conditioners and actor related variables? Or, do some of these types of explanations tend to be more important? Finally, is the support for the eight hypotheses similar when tested against different sub-populations? Or, does the relevance of the individual conditioners vary with type of NGOs and the NGOs country of origin?

The eight hypotheses have been tested in a regression analysis (Hellevik, 1977; Miles and Shevlin, 2001). The aim of this is to see how much each independent variable affect variations in the occurrence of regular transnational contacts (dependent variable). For example, to what extent can higher levels of economic interdependence be linked to more extensive NGO-contacts? The correlation between a conditioner and transnational contacts is expressed by a coefficient that varies between  $-1$  and  $1$  (Pearson's  $r$ ). Because the size of this coefficient has no obvious or direct interpretation (unless it comes rather close to the extremes), we will consider the percent of explained standard deviation to get an idea of the explanatory power of each

conditioner. The conventional interpretation then is that a correlation coefficient of 0.87 or above may be characterized as high, i.e. indicating that there is a strong connection between the independent and the dependent variable. If the coefficient is between 0.66-0.86 the correlation may be described as moderate, while values between 0.33-0.65 indicate only a weak connection. Coefficients below 0.33 suggest that the independent variable is insignificant or has no effect on the dependent variable. Since it is generally believed that transnational relations are influenced by several conditions (cf. the introduction to this chapter), we have reason to expect the explanatory power of each individual conditioner to be moderate or weak rather than strong.<sup>44</sup>

The results of the test of the eight hypotheses will be presented in two sections. In the first section, we see to what extent the conditioners can explain the patterns of transnational contacts when these are distributed on types of NGOs. After that the hypotheses are tested once again, but this time the patterns consider the NGOs country of origin. In both cases, we deal with six patterns of transnational contacts: scope (bilateral, multilateral), frequency (bilateral, multilateral), and type of activity (outward looking, inward looking).<sup>45</sup>

### Why do some types of NGOs have more transnational contacts?

The first test of the hypotheses concerns their ability to explain why some types of NGOs have more transnational contacts than others. The result of the test is shown in Table 31. The rows give the correlation coefficients for each pattern of transnational contacts, while the columns represent the individual conditioners. Columns H1-H3 show the coefficients for the actor related conditioners, while columns H4-H8 gives the corresponding figures for the structural conditioners. The coefficients are in most cases below the level of .66, which means that the conditioners' effect on transnational contacts is either weak or insignificant. In nine cases we find the conditioners to have more explanatory power, but in no case do these suggest more than a moderate connection. On the whole, this seems to confirm the necessity of including several variables in the theoretical model.

Looking closer at the six individual patterns of transnational contacts, we have for four of these identified one or more conditioner that has a moderate explanatory power. This applies to the two patterns of bilateral contacts and to the two patterns describing type of activity. The two exceptions are in both cases related to multilateral contacts for which no more than weak con-

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<sup>44</sup> It should be remembered that we in this study primarily are interested in testing the single hypotheses, or the relevance of each conditioner individually, rather than analyzing the possible interplay between the independent variables.

<sup>45</sup> As was emphasized in Chapter 1, it is important to remember that the original selection of NGOs was based upon quota and not upon a probability criterion. We will therefore not present any numbers indicating the statistical significance of the coefficients.

nections have been found. Moreover, to explain the individual patterns of transnational contacts we have, as we said before, to consider several factors. This goes for all patterns but seems to be particularly true when it comes to type of activity. In other words, there are fewer conditioners that can be dismissed for being insignificant when we seek to explain why some types of NGOs engage in certain types of activities.

Table 31. *Correlations between transnational contacts and a selection of conditioners related to actor and structure. Type of NGO*

Transnational contacts	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
<i>Scope</i>								
Bilateral	<b>.66</b>	<b>.70</b>	.05	.28	.31	.39	.01	.13
Multilateral	.56	.38	.18	.33	.25	.56	.05	.08
<i>Frequency</i>								
Bilateral	.64	<b>.79</b>	.12	.22	.28	.36	.02	.10
Multilateral	.15	.38	.17	.13	.09	-.04	-.16	.13
<i>Type of activity</i>								
Outward looking	.10	.34	-.41	<b>-.82</b>	<b>-.86</b>	-.23	.58	<b>-.73</b>
Inward looking	-.52	-.35	.64	<b>.66</b>	<b>.70</b>	-.15	-.60	<b>.69</b>

NOTE: H1 = Interest for Baltic Sea issues, H2 = Interest for influencing interstate relations, H3 = Personnel resources, H4 = Democracy, H5 = Technological progress, H6 = Geographical distance, H7 = Economic interdependence, H8 = International governmental institutions. Values of 0.66 or above, which indicate at least a moderate connection, are indicated in bold type.

An interesting result of the first test is the difference in relevance between conditioners related to actor and structure. This difference appears clearly in those cases in which the correlation coefficient indicates a moderate connection. If we want to explain the scope and the frequency of the bilateral transnational contacts, then it turns out that variables related to the actors' interests (H1, H2) offer the best explanations. If we, on the other hand, want to know why NGOs engage in certain types of activities, then we should first of all consider structural conditioners (in this case H4, H5, and H8). These findings suggest that NGOs have a significant room of freedom when it comes to if and how much they want to engage in transnational contacts. The freedom of action becomes much smaller when it comes to type of activity, i.e. the choice of activity is very much reflected by the context in which NGOs live and act.

The individual conditioners pass the test more or less successfully. The two interest based hypotheses (H1, H2) are in general doing rather well. Interest for influencing interstate relations in the Baltic Sea region (H2) can in no case be dismissed as an unimportant factor, and interest for Baltic Sea issues (H1) proves to be insignificant in only two cases. In other words, if the interest of one type of NGO becomes stronger, then we can expect this

group to soon have more transnational contacts. The exception to this is inward looking activities for which the correlation coefficients instead suggest a weak negative connection, i.e. an increasing interest tend to make NGOs focus less exclusively on the bilateral relationship as such. In connection to this, we should also note that there is no obvious trade off between inward and outward looking activities. If the interest becomes stronger, then we expect the NGOs to become less inward looking, but we cannot predict that the outward looking activities will increase as a result of this single change. The third actor related variable, personnel resources (H3), does not come out of the test equally well. This factor is insignificant in four cases and offers only weak explanatory power in two cases. Both of these are related to type of activity and indicate weakly that increases in personnel resources may make NGOs less outward looking and more inward looking instead. The support for this effect is however too weak to be worth serious consideration, and on the whole it must be concluded that this variable performs poorly. The reason for this may be linked to the fact that we study an elite of NGOs. Since most of them have considerable personnel resources (cf. table 26), it does perhaps not make that much difference for the transnational contacts if a NGO has say 10 or 20 people in its staff. It is also possible that the effect of this variable is somewhat reduced by technological development. Not least the arrival of the Internet and the possibility to communicate via e-mail has made it easier for people to uphold a large number of transnational contacts.

Turning to the structural conditioners, we find once again the tests to be decisive. First, we find the relevance of three conditioners – democracy (H4), technological progress (H5), and international governmental institutions (H8) – to be extremely varying. On the one hand, they have practically no role in explaining the patterns related to scope and frequency of transnational contacts. On the other hand, they offer significant explanatory power when it comes to type of activity. If the value of the three variables increases, then we can predict a trade off in which NGOs will become less outward looking and more inward looking. This suggests that once democracy is stabilized, once technological progress is achieved, and once international governmental institutions are in place, the incentive for the different types of NGOs to engage in more outward looking activities may become somewhat less. Second, we find geographical distance (H6) and economic interdependence (H7) to be of little relevance for understanding why some types of NGOs have more transnational contacts than others. In these cases we find no more than weak connections at the best. Geographical distance scores somewhat higher with respect to bilateral contacts and scope of multilateral contacts, while economic interdependence is more successful in explaining type of activity. However, the general conclusion must be that these two factors are of less importance when the transnational contacts are distributed on type of NGOs.

## Why do NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts?

We will now carry through a second test of the eight hypotheses, but this time the transnational contacts have been distributed on the respondent NGOs country of origin. The purpose of this test is to see to what extent the conditioners can explain why NGOs from some Baltic Sea countries have more cross-border contacts in the region than others. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 32, which has the same structure as the previous one. The table shows the correlation coefficients of the eight conditioners for six types of transnational contacts. Even though we once again find most coefficients to be either insignificant or to only indicate weak connections, we have this time discovered some connections that are to be considered as strong. In nine cases the coefficients are above the level of .86, which means that a change in one of these conditioners most likely will affect the transnational contacts. Beside, we also find three coefficients suggesting that there is a moderate connection between the conditioner and the contacts. Based on these first observations we can still claim it is important to consider several variables in analyses of transnational contacts, but since we this time have identified a number of strong connections it seems also possible to simplify our analytical model somewhat.

Table 32. *Correlations between transnational contacts and a selection of conditioners related to actor and structure. The respondent NGOs country of origin*

Transnational contacts	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
<i>Scope</i>								
Bilateral	<b>.99</b>	<b>.97</b>	-.36	.11	-.11	<b>.88</b>	<b>.67</b>	-.43
Multilateral	<b>.95</b>	<b>.94</b>	-.46	.02	-.16	<b>.87</b>	<b>.76</b>	-.52
<i>Frequency</i>								
Bilateral	<b>.91</b>	<b>.90</b>	-.41	-.05	-.19	<b>.89</b>	<b>.70</b>	-.52
Multilateral	.49	.39	.33	.27	.30	.37	.09	.08
<i>Type of activity</i>								
Outward looking	-.19	-.16	.08	.18	.12	-.07	-.20	.24
Inward looking	-.18	-.24	.54	.46	.54	-.27	-.38	.58

NOTE: H1 = Interest for Baltic Sea issues, H2 = Interest for influencing interstate relations, H3 = Personnel resources, H4 = Democracy, H5 = Technological progress, H6 = Geographical distance, H7 = Economic interdependence, H8 = International governmental institutions. Values of 0.66 or above, which indicate at least a moderate connection, are indicated in bold type.

The attempt to explain the six patterns of transnational contacts, when we take the respondent NGOs country of origin into consideration, is carried through with varying success. In three cases – scope and frequency of bilateral contacts, and scope of multilateral contacts – we have identified strong connections to as many as three conditioners. For these patterns we can only

exclude two conditioners on the grounds of being insignificant. As regards the remaining three patterns, we have found neither strong nor moderate connections. In two of these cases – frequency of multilateral contacts and inward looking activities – we find no more than weak connections. The result is even more discouraging in the case of outward looking activities since all tested conditioners fail to explain this pattern. Because of this, the result of the second test may be described as more polarized compared to the first one. We have more or less managed to explain three patterns, but are still missing important keys for understanding why NGOs from some countries have more frequent multilateral contacts and why they engage in certain types of activities.

In connection with the first test we saw how some patterns were better explained by actor related conditioners, while the understanding of other patterns required much more emphasis on structural conditioners. An interesting result of the second test is that this variation seems no longer to be important when we are to explain why NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts than others. If we focus on those patterns where the coefficients indicate at least a moderate connection, then we find that these are explained by variables related to actor as well as to structure. In other words, it is a combination of the two types of conditioners that provides the best explanation for these patterns.

The test of the individual conditioners singles out four of them as very important building blocks of a theory of transnational contacts. The four variables are interest for Baltic Sea issues (H1), interest for influencing interstate relations (H2), geographical distance (H6), and economic interdependence (H7). By paying attention to these conditioners we are able to explain rather well why NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts with respect to scope and frequency of bilateral contacts and to scope of multilateral contacts. This also means that if there is a change in one of the four conditioners, then we have good reason to predict a change in these types of cross-border contacts. This goes in particular for the three first mentioned variables for which the coefficients indicate strong connections. Another finding related to the four conditioners is that they, on the other hand, seem to have no or only marginal significance when we seek to explain the remaining patterns of transnational contacts (frequency of multilateral contacts and type of activity).

It is surprising to find that no less than four hypotheses prove to be of very limited relevance when we take the NGOs country of origin into consideration. Regardless of pattern (scope, frequency, or type of activity), we cannot find more than weak connections to personnel resources (H3), democracy (H4), technological progress (H5), and international governmental institutions (H8). The result is particularly discouraging for two conditioners, democracy and technological progress, which appear to be unimportant conditioners for all patterns of transnational contacts except for the pattern that

describes inward looking activities. The remaining two variables – personnel resources and international governmental institutions – are doing somewhat better since the test shows that there are at least weak connections between them and most of the patterns. However, since it is only a question of weak connections, this finding could also be used to support the argument that these conditioners should have a less prominent role or perhaps even be excluded from a model of transnational contacts. Because models are basically simplifications of reality, we should first of all seek to highlight the most important explanatory factors. Considering that we for three of the patterns (scope of bilateral and multilateral contacts, and frequency of bilateral contacts) already have identified a number of strong and moderate connections to independent variables, it should in these respects be possible to simplify the model somewhat. Even though these findings do not exclude the existence of other conditioners, theoretical simplification seems to be a possible advice for future research. As regards the remaining patterns of transnational contacts, we have to continue the search for conditioners before we can say anything more definite about a possible simplification. The fact that we did not even discover moderate connections in these cases may suggest that the model instead should be made more complex, i.e. we have to consider a large number of conditioners before the patterns can be explained.



## 4. Mapping transnational lobbying

### Introduction

The purpose of this and the following chapter is to approach the second research question on the conditions for successful transnational lobbying. The analysis begins with a mapping of seven attempts of Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks to lobby the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), i.e. one of the intergovernmental targets in the regional arena. The mapping identifies regional INGOs and networks that have approached the CBSS for lobbying purposes between 1992-2002 and seek to establish which of these organizations have been more or less successful. Having identified the pattern of transnational lobbying, the analysis then continues in the following chapter (Chapter 5) with an attempt to locate factors that can help to explain why some regional INGOs have been more successful than others.

The mapping will highlight three aspects of transnational lobbying. First, it establishes the intention of lobbying (cf. Arts, 1998: 30; 2000a: 138). The fact that a regional INGO has direct contact with the CBSS is obviously not sufficient for describing it as a case of lobbying, because there may be other reasons for having the contact. It is therefore necessary to first of all make sure that the contact can be linked to an actual intention of the regional INGO to influence the CBSS. By emphasizing the role of intention we also exclude cases in which the very existence of transnational actors have political effects (Jacobson, 1979: 11).

Second, the mapping looks more closely at the types of lobbying that have been used for exerting influence. In order to distinguish between different types of lobbying, we will consider the level of lobbying as well as the status of the lobbyist. As regards the level of lobbying, a distinction is made between the level of ministers and the level of officials. This distinction calls attention to the well-known fact that successful lobbying cannot only be achieved at the level of formal decisions, but equally important is to influence the level where preparations are being made (cf. Atwood 1997: 157; Greenwood, 1997: 8). The second aspect, the status of the lobbyist, concerns the type of access that the regional INGOs have to the CBSS and its policy-making processes. On this point, it is common in the literature on interest groups to make a distinction between insider and outsider status, depending

on whether or not the interest enjoys privileged access to policy-making and implementation (Maloney *et al*, 1995; Greenwood, 1997). In the case of insider status, a distinction is sometimes also made between core status (always centrally involved), specialist status (always centrally involved on technical issues), and peripheral status (only sometimes involved).

Finally, the mapping deals with the possible influence of the lobbying attempts. Of course, any attempt to establish some sort of a positive relationship between lobbying efforts and intergovernmental decisions involves severe methodological difficulties (cf. Arts, 1998: 75-7; 2000a: 137-39). This part of the analysis will therefore aim at merely pointing out the presence of three necessary conditions required for successful lobbying. It is assumed that successful lobbying requires that (a) the lobbying precede the CBSS decision, (b) the content of the CBSS decision is in congruence with the preference of the regional INGO, and (c) the target of the lobbying effort does something it otherwise would not do (cf. Dahl, 1957). This final requirement is not without problems. First, there is the aspect of resistance (cf. Lukes, 1986). In other words, should successful lobbying be reserved for the event when the CBSS changes from opposition to open support of a transnational proposal, or should it also include cases when the CBSS changes from inactivity to activity? This study will consider both types of changes. Second, changes may be lesser or greater in scope (Lukes, 1986: 2). A distinction will therefore be made between four levels of change (cf. Hermann, 1990: 5-6). The lobbying target may change its behavior with respect to (a) the level of effort (adjustment changes), (b) the means (program changes), (c) the goal (goal changes), and (d) the orientation (orientation changes). The latter change would occur if the CBSS, for example, were to decide to establish co-operation within a new issue-area.

The chapter is in what follows divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to a more detailed presentation of the target for the transnational lobbying, the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS). This section includes insights into the formation, membership, and mandates of the CBSS as well as its institutions and decision-making process. The following section contains seven case studies of transnational lobbying between 1992-2002. The cases represent regional INGOs and transnational networks that have attempted to influence the CBSS. The cases include protective interests (economic and territorial) as well as promotional interests (ecological and peace).

# The target: The Council of Baltic Sea States

## The formative context, membership, and mandates

The Council of Baltic Sea States was founded in 1992.<sup>46</sup> Its appearance on the North European scene is closely related to the break-up of the Soviet empire in 1991<sup>47</sup>, which opened several windows of opportunity for the peoples around the Baltic Sea. First, when the new regional map was being drawn on 1 January 1992 it included four newly independent states (the Russian Federation and the three small states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), a re-united Germany, and a fully independent Poland. Second, the principles of democracy and market economy were quickly adopted by the new regimes in Eastern Europe, and by 1996 all states in the Baltic Sea region had become members of the Council of Europe.<sup>48</sup>

Furthermore, the end of the Cold War also brought about changes in the international orientation of several states. As regards relations to the European Union, the only EU-members from the Baltic Sea region in the early 1990s were Germany and Denmark. However, in 1991/92 the governments of Sweden and Finland applied for accession, which was realized on 1 January 1995. The two countries had earlier, because of the policy of neutrality, considered this change of orientation impossible (Huldt *et al.*, 2001). Another four countries from the region have just become members of the European Union (at the time of writing). Poland and Estonia began formal negotiations on accession in March 1998, while Latvia and Lithuania started their negotiations in February 2000. In other words, from May 2004 all littoral states except Russia are members of the EU.

As regards relations to NATO, the development has so far been marked by continuity as well as by change. This means that Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland have held on to their membership, while Sweden and Finland have continued their policies of non-alignment. Poland joined NATO in 1999, while the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) formally became members on 29 March 2004.

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<sup>46</sup> Basic facts about the Council are found in its founding documents, including the *Copenhagen Declaration* and the *Terms of Reference for the Council of the Baltic Sea States*, Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Baltic Sea States, Copenhagen, 5-6 March 1992. For in-depth analyses of the CBSS, see Starosciak (1999) and Stålvant (1999).

<sup>47</sup> The USSR formally ceased to exist on 31 December 1991. Ten months earlier the Warsaw Pact had officially been dissolved.

<sup>48</sup> The Council of Europe was established in 1949 and every member "must accept the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (*Statute of Council of Europe*, 1949, article 3). The last countries in the Baltic Sea region to become members of the Council of Europe were Latvia (1995) and Russia (1996).

Finally, the dramatic events in 1991 also stimulated changes at the regional level. On the joint initiative of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Denmark and Germany, Mr. Uffe Ellemann-Jensen and Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, a conference was organized in Copenhagen on 5-6 March 1992 to lay a foundation for future cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. The meeting gathered the Ministers for Foreign Affairs from ten countries – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, and Sweden – and a representative of the Commission of the European Union. The most important result of the conference was the decision to establish a Council of the Baltic Sea States.

The CBSS is, with some modifications, best described as an international governmental organization (IGO) with limited membership and with a general mandate (cf. Jacobson, 1979: 12-4). Membership is limited to the actors that were invited to the Copenhagen conference in 1992, i.e. the littoral states of the Baltic Sea (including Norway) and the Commission of the European Union. The Commission is seen as a natural part of the cooperation because all states except Russia are members of the EU. In 1995 the Council decided to accept Iceland as a member. Because Iceland has no natural connection to the Baltic Sea, the decision was preceded by an agreement stating that this membership was an exception without any precedential effects (CBSS, May 1995).

The Copenhagen Declaration (CBSS, March 1992) gives the CBSS a rather broad mandate. The purpose is to "serve as an overall regional forum to focus on needs for intensified cooperation and coordination among the Baltic Sea States". As regards the outcome of the cooperation, the member states hope that it will "strengthen the cohesion among these countries, leading to greater political and economic stability as well as a regional identity". In connection to this, it should be emphasized that there is nothing in the document that indicates a will to go as far as establishing common rules or common policies for the Baltic Sea states. For instance, with respect to economic cooperation, the Ministers state that they want to promote "a new zone of growth in Europe". This goal however does not include any plans for creating a free trade area or a common market in the Baltic Sea region. Instead, the zone of growth is seen as "an important step towards further economic integration in Europe as a whole". In other words, even though there is an explicit goal to create a regional market, it should be clear that this does not refer to the establishment of separate supranational rules and institutions. Instead the Baltic Sea region is described as a link between the European Union and those CBSS countries that are not members of the EU. The cooperation between the Baltic Sea states is therefore best described in terms of open regionalism, i.e. it does not presume a conflict between different levels or that states have to choose between either the European Union or the Council of Baltic Sea States (cf. Hettne, 1999).

The founding conference in 1992 authorized the CBSS to deal with issues in several fields. Six areas of cooperation were singled out for special attention, namely: (1) Assistance to new democratic institutions; (2) Economic and technological assistance and cooperation; (3) Humanitarian matters and health; (4) Protection of the environment and energy cooperation; (5) Cooperation in the field of culture, education, tourism and information; and (6) Transport and communication. The mandate is in itself not limited to these fields since it was also agreed at the conference that the Council “may decide to include other matters and possible subjects for cooperation” (Terms of Reference, CBSS, March 1992). On the other hand, this should not be interpreted as a clear sign for cooperation in just any areas. It simply means that every expansion of the CBSS mandate has to be decided upon separately. A good example of these problems can be found in the field of security. This area was not touched upon in the founding documents, but in 1996 the Council designated civic security and combat against organized crime as a new field of cooperation (CBSS, July 1996). The mandate has however so far been restricted to soft security issues, while leaving military matters out of the cooperation.

## Institutions and decision-making processes

Cooperation within the CBSS framework is of a traditional intergovernmental nature. The cooperation is in principle guided by two types of documents. First, at the founding conference in 1992 the Ministers stated that they viewed the emerging CBSS cooperation on the basis of the principles laid down in the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris and other OSCE documents. These documents are part of international law and specify basic principles for interstate relations such as sovereign equality of member states, territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs. In other words, they contain the rules of the game of international politics. The second types of documents that guide the cooperation are those specifically worked out for the CBSS. The most important of these are the 1992 Copenhagen Declaration and the Terms of Reference for the Council of the Baltic Sea States, which was attached to the declaration. These documents explicitly state that CBSS cooperation should be of an intergovernmental nature:

This new Council should not be seen as a new formalized institutional framework with a permanent secretariat. Rather, the envisaged cooperation among the countries in question should be of a traditional intergovernmental nature, where the host country of each session assumes responsibility for providing secretariat services. (Terms of Reference, CBSS, March 1992).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> A CBSS Secretariat was actually established in 1998. This has however so far not indicated a shift away from the intergovernmental mode of cooperation.

From the beginning the organization was build up around a decisional body (the Council) and a small number of working bodies (the Committee of Senior Officials and three Working Groups). These bodies are still functioning but have over the years been supplemented by additional structures. The supreme decisional authority of the CBSS is the Council, which consists of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of each member state and a member of the Commission of the European Union. The Council normally meets once a year in one of the member states on a rotating basis. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the host country assumes the chairmanship and is also responsible for necessary coordination during the preceding period. As regards decision-making, it should be noted that the Council itself upon the proposal of the host country sets the agenda and that all decisions are taken by consensus.

Beside the meetings of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, there are two additional institutions at the ministerial level. First, according to the terms of reference, it is also possible for ministers with responsibility for specific areas to meet on an ad hoc basis within the CBSS framework. In 1999-2001 Ministers of Culture, Education, Energy, Regional Planning, Trade, and Transport utilized this opportunity. Second, the Heads of Government of the member states have, together with the Presidents of the European Council and the Commission of the European Union, developed an informal practice of Summit meetings. The four Summits held so far – in Visby in May 1996, in Riga in January 1998, in Kolding in April 2000, and in St. Petersburg in June 2002 – reveal that the role of these meetings is to affirm support for the cooperation in progress and provide guidance for the future. For example, at the first Summit in 1996 the Heads of Government called upon the Council to adopt action programs in the areas of people-to-people cooperation and civic security, economic development and integration, and environmental protection (CBSS, May 1996).

The intergovernmental mode of cooperation is also evident at the administrative level. This means that the provisions relating to the Council, including the decision rule of consensus, apply to the working bodies as well. At first the CBSS only embraced two types of working structures, which met between the sessions of the Council. A Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), consisting of high-ranking representatives of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, was established to discuss and implement ideas and matters relating to the CBSS cooperation. The CSO was also assigned the task of assisting the host country in preparing the sessions of the Council. Besides the CSO, there are three working groups with specific mandates to elaborate recommendations for approval by the Council. The three groups are: the Working Group for Assistance to Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (WGDI), the Working Group for Nuclear Safety (WGNS), and the Working Group for Economic Cooperation (WGEC). These groups, which consist of

specialists from relevant ministries in the member states, are considered to be the major working structures of the CBSS.

The CSO and the working groups have over the years been supplemented by additional structures. In 1998 a permanent international Secretariat of the CBSS was established to lend practical support to the cooperation (CBSS, June 1998). This reform, which only a few years earlier had been explicitly excluded by the Ministers, was seen as a necessary step due to the substantial increase in the CBSS cooperation. The secretariat, which is located in Stockholm, is financed through contributions from the member states and has during its first years of operation been staffed by seven members.<sup>50</sup> The tasks of the secretariat are conventional, including (a) to lend technical and organizational support to the Chairmanship, the Council, and its working bodies, (b) to secure continuity and coordination of CBSS activities, (c) to provide information and handle public relations, (d) to be responsible for archives and databases, and (e) to maintain contacts with other organizations, national authorities, and media.

Furthermore, since 1992 a number of institutions with mandates limited to specific fields have been created within or in close connection to the CBSS framework. In 1993 the Council established the EuroFaculty to assist in reforming higher education at universities in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.<sup>51</sup> In 1994 the Council appointed a Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons belonging to Minorities. The Commissioner was considered an instrument for supporting the development of democratic and human rights institutions in the former eastern bloc countries. Following a CBSS decision in 1996, the Baltic Sea Business Advisory Council (BAC) was created to give business related policy advice. BAC consists of one business representative from each country, who is nominated by national business organizations and appointed by each government. The main task of the BAC is to forward the views of the business community with respect to trade barriers and related items. In practice, the BAC is not only linked to the phase of initiative, but it is also involved in preparatory work, including "to set out their views on economic development in the Region, identifying opportunities, bottle-necks and also indicating their own possible contributions towards economic development in the Baltic Sea Region" (CBSS, July 1997). Finally, it should be noted that the Heads of Government have set up two task forces of personal representatives to meet the specific threats of organized crime (1996) and communicable diseases (2000).

The growth of cooperative structures highlights the role of the CBSS as a regional coordinator, which was envisaged in the 1992 Copenhagen Declara-

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<sup>50</sup> The staff members are recruited from the region on three-year individual contracts.

<sup>51</sup> In September 2000 the EuroFaculty established a similar project at the Kaliningrad State University, Russia.

tion. However, considering the degree and the steady increase in Baltic Sea cooperation, the Heads of Government have found it necessary to return to the issue of how to secure continued coordination. At their third Summit in April 2000, they therefore recommended that “all regional intergovernmental, multilateral co-operation taking place among the group of CBSS members” should be consolidated within the CBSS framework (CBSS, April 2000). The Council approved this proposal in June 2000.

The governments dominate the decision-making process of the CBSS, which means that the other institutions have no authority to make binding rules or in other ways present constraints on the member-states. The intergovernmental nature can be seen in all stages of the decision-making process. First, the agenda of the CBSS is formally set at the level of the ministers, i.e. by the Council with inputs from the chairmanship and the Heads of Government. Initiatives and proposals may originate from outside the CBSS, but it is the governments and the Council that decide whether or not to accept them. Second, the CSO and the working groups prepare proposals for decisions. It is true that transgovernmental relations rather than intergovernmental relations dominate this phase, but the difference should in this case be quite small considering that the representatives are high-ranking officials in the Ministries for Foreign Affairs. Third, the Council makes the final decisions, which are taken by consensus. Finally, even though the CSO has been assigned the responsibility for implementation of ideas and matters related to the CBSS, it is the authorities of the member states that are responsible for the actual implementation at the national and sub-national levels.

As regards the decision-making process, it should be noted that the Council and its working bodies sometimes invite third parties as special participants, guests, or observers to its meetings. Participation of third parties is welcomed since it “may enhance the potential of the CBSS by improving the Council’s capacity for practical action and its overall ability to coordinate regional co-operation” (CBSS, February 1999). Another valuable aspect of third party participation is that it helps to disseminate information about the CBSS. Participation is not limited to any specific type of actor, even though it was decided in 1992 that particular attention should be given to representatives of regions, sub-regions and international organizations. By explicitly mentioning international organizations, the Council opened up an opportunity to give regional INGOs insider status.<sup>52</sup> As regards participation by third states, the Council decided in 1999 to give observer status to France, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

It should be emphasized that the intergovernmental nature of the decision-making process does not formally change in cases of third party participation. If third parties are invited, they “have the right to speak but they do not participate in decision making” (CBSS, February 1999). Invited parties thus

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<sup>52</sup> The practice of this strategy will be dealt with in more detail in the following section.

have an opportunity to present their standpoints and arguments to the Council and the working bodies of the CBSS, but it is the governments that finally decide whether or not to pay attention to them when decisions are being made. On the other hand, the procedure for third party participation is more than symbolic. It is a channel for receiving input, which was introduced for the explicit purpose of enhancing the potential of the CBSS.

## Case studies of transnational lobbying

This section is devoted to seven case studies of transnational lobbying between 1992-2002. The presentation begins with three cases of regional INGOs and networks gathering protective interests, including the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (case 1), the Baltic Sea Business Summit (case 2), and the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (case 3). The following two case studies focus on lobbying efforts by sub-regional interests, in this case represented by the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (case 4) and the Union of Baltic Cities (case 5). Finally, the section directs attention to lobbying by regional INGOs and networks representing promotional interests, including the Coalition Clean Baltic (case 6) and the Trans-Baltic Network (case 7).

### Case 1: The Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association

The Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA) was established in June 1992 in Rostock-Warnemünde, Germany. The membership of the BCCA is limited to chambers of commerce from the Baltic Sea region.<sup>53</sup> The 52 members (2000) come from Denmark (1), Estonia (1), Finland (13), Germany (8), Latvia (1), Lithuania (7), Norway (4), Poland (5), Russia (2), and Sweden (10). The size of the individual chambers varies considerably. The German chambers are relatively large, which is due to the fact that membership is obligatory. For example, the Chamber in Kiel has 52.000 members (2001), while the smallest ones in Sweden and Finland only have about 250. Altogether the BCCA represents more than 450.000 companies.

The highest authority of the BCCA is the General Conference of members, which meets once a year to debate and adopt a working program. The President, the Vice Presidents, and the Secretary General assume responsi-

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<sup>53</sup> Chambers of commerce are general business organizations. Their main tasks are to (a) look after the interests of the member companies in their relations with authorities (e.g. lobbying), (b) provide service to the members on business related matters (e.g. information about new regulations), and (c) provide a meeting point for exchange of ideas and experiences. The chambers in the Nordic countries are entirely private, i.e. membership is voluntary and financing is based on membership fees and incomes from its own activities. In the case of Germany, membership in chambers of commerce is obligatory according to public law.

bility for BCCA matters between conferences. Wolf-Rüdiger Janzen, who is also the secretary-general of the Kiel Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has been president of the BCCA since 1992. The leadership is supported in its work by a small secretariat, which is located at the facilities of the Kiel Chamber, and ad-hoc working groups with specific mandates.

The main purpose of the BCCA is to give the business community a common voice for improving the conditions for industry, trade and business in the Baltic Sea region. Particular attention is paid to the development of infrastructure, transportation, communication systems, human resources and the environment. Even though the BCCA mainly focuses on intra-regional matters, some of its attention is also turned outwards. For example, the Association has from the very beginning made efforts to emphasize the significance of the Baltic Sea region for the European Union. The mandate of the BCCA is quite similar to that of a national chamber of commerce (BCCA, June 1992). First, the BCCA is to protect the interests of the members by advising relevant political and administrative decision makers on business related affairs. This means that the Association has an explicit intention to lobby. Second, in order to strengthen the chambers of commerce, the BCCA operates partnership programs and supports exchanges of experiences and staff between the chambers. Third, the BCCA facilitates business by organizing meetings (such as the annual *Hansa Business Days* or the *Baltic Sea Partenariat*), publishing data on regional trade, and editing a newsletter.

The BCCA directs its lobbying towards different political targets. The Council of Baltic Sea States is considered a major lobbying target at the regional level, which is reflected not least by the fact that the BCCA was created only three months after the establishment of the Council. The Association quite soon achieved the status of a specialist insider, which means that it is more or less always centrally involved when trade issues are dealt with. The involvement is connected to different structures within the CBSS framework, foremost at the administrative level. The evidence suggests that the Council opened the door for the Chambers of commerce already during its first year in operation. In March 1993, the BCCA was invited to the second ministerial session in Helsinki to present a memorandum with recommendations on how to facilitate regional trade (CBSS, March 1993). The ministers responded to this document by instructing the CSO to examine the proposals further. On this occasion, the Council also expressed its support for the activities of the BCCA and an interest in maintaining working contacts. The Council has then repeatedly confirmed this statement.

The working contacts with the CBSS have gradually become more institutionalized. The relationship entered a new phase in March 1994 when the BCCA invited the WGEC to hold its third regular meeting in Kiel. In connection with this, the parties held a joint session, in which the CSO was also represented, to discuss future cooperation in promoting regional trade (CBSS, *The Second Year ...*, May 1994). As a result of these talks, the

BCCA has on several occasions been invited to the meetings of the WGEC and the CSO to inform of its activities and to discuss cooperation. The relationship between the two working bodies and the business community reached yet another phase in 1997 when the Business Advisory Council became operative. Even though the BCCA is not a formal member of the BAC, it has a close informal relationship. Five of the eleven members of the BAC represent chambers of commerce that are also members of the BCCA. Furthermore, the representative of the German business community is Wolf-Rüdiger Janzen, who is also the President of the BCCA. The Advisory Council provides input on business related matters on all levels of the CBSS framework. It interacts mostly with the working bodies but has occasionally also delivered messages to the Council and the Heads of Government.

The channels of influence are used by the BCCA to call attention to trade barriers and to give suggestions for how business and economic growth can be further stimulated. Two general conclusions can be drawn with respect to the results of the lobbying. First, due to the mutual interest among governments and business organizations to stimulate economic growth, the BCCA has sometimes been rather successful in getting relevant decision-makers not only to pay attention to and to better understand the nature of the existing trade barriers but also to take concrete actions. An illustrative example of this is the BCCA memorandum on trade barriers that was presented to the Council in 1993. On the one hand, this document was worked out and presented following an invitation of the CBSS itself. On the other hand, the document has in its turn contributed to a better understanding among the governments of the nature of the problems (CBSS, *Communiqué*, May 1994) and encouraged the member-states to take some measures (CBSS, *The Second Year ...*, May 1994). This suggests that the BCCA has produced at least an adjustment change, i.e. the CBSS members have changed their level of effort to stimulate economic growth, a goal that they share with the business community.

Second, the BCCA has met some resistance from the member-states when it has lobbied for the implementation of concrete goals. For example, one of the major trade barriers for business in the Baltic Sea region, that the Association has been calling attention to for a long time, is related to border crossings. At some crossings, especially at the Russian border, the clearance time often causes considerable delays for the transport of goods. In an attempt to reduce this problem, the BCCA launched the campaign "2 hours in 2000", which was aimed at reducing the clearance time to 2 hours as a maximum by the end of the year 2000. The outcome of this campaign was rather mixed. On the one hand, all relevant high-level decision-makers accepted the BCCA goal, including the Ministers of Trade and Economy in July 1998 (CBSS, July 1998), the CBSS Council in June 1999 (CBSS, June 1999), and the Directors General of Customs in September 1999. On the other hand, the lobbying efforts were more successful with respect to the

goal than to actual implementation. In response to this divergence, the Norwegian presidency in 1999-2000 argued that the WGEC “should seek to implement the proposal from the Baltic Sea Chamber of Commerce Association (BCCA) to reduce the time spent at border crossings to two hours by 2000” (CBSS, *Norwegian priorities ...*, 1999). This goal was however not realized. On the contrary, already in February 2000 the governments decided to change the timetable. At a conference in Bergen, to which the BCCA was invited as an observer, the Ministers for Trade and Economy adopted an action plan that included the objective: “By the end of 2001 the clearance time for border crossings should be less than 2 hours” (CBSS, February 2000).

In the meantime, the BCCA on its part continued the efforts for securing the implementation of reduced border crossing times. However, because the governments had already accepted the goal in all essentials, a certain shift of emphasis could be noted as far as strategy is concerned. Beside continued calls upon the governments to implement the clearance goal (BCCA news, 16 May and 6 June 2001), the BCCA paid increasing attention to the national customs authorities. This resulted in closer cooperation, which in 2001 among other things included a joint seminar on the “2 h 2001” initiative (BCCA News, April 2001) and the planning of a time study at different border crossings (selected by the business community) to see how the crossing times had developed (BCCA News, 16 May 2001). By this adjustment of the lobbying strategy, the BCCA gained access to the implementation phase. So even if the goal of the original campaign (“2 hours in 2000”) was not reached, the BCCA eventually succeeded in getting the CBSS members to adopt a specific goal (with a small adjustment) and in maneuvering itself into a position where it could localize implementation problems and present concrete solutions to them.

## Case 2: The Baltic Sea Business Summit

The Baltic Sea Business Summit (BSBS) was created in April 1996 and is an informal round table group of prominent big business leaders from the eleven CBSS member-states. It was established on the initiative of Peter Wallenberg, the leading industrialist in Sweden, and practices a policy of membership by invitation only. The BSBS has so far met every second year, and the number of invited business leaders has been 16-17 each time. A closer look at the list of participants at the third business summit in March 2000 reveals several characteristic features of the group (Table 33). First, the business leaders represent major corporations only, while small and medium-sized companies are excluded. In this respect the BSBS very much resembles the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), which has been described as an exclusive regional business elite or a rich-firm club (Greenwood, 1997: 110-13).

Table 33. *The members of the Baltic Sea Business Summit (March 2000)*

Name	Company
Peter Wallenberg (Chair)	Chairman Emeritus, Investor AB (SWE)
Percy Barnevik	Chairman, ABB Ltd, Investor AB, Astra Zeneca PLC, Sandvik AB (SWE)
Georg Ehrnrooth	President and CEO, Metra Corporation (FIN)
Olav Fjell	President and CEO, Statoil Group (NOR)
Mogens Granborg	Executive Vice President, Danisco A/S (DEN)
Hans-Dieter Harig	Chairman, PreussenElektra AG (GER)
Jukka Härmälä	CEO, Stora Enso Oyj (FIN)
Leif Johansson	President of AB Volvo, CEO of Volvo Group (SWE)
Viktors Kulbergs	Managing Director, Auto Riga SIA (LAT)
Bronislovas Lubys	President and CEO, Joint Stock Company "ACHEMA" (LIT)
Toomas Luman	Chairman, EE Group (EST)
Harald Norvik	Chairman, Oslo Stock Exchange (NOR)
Lars Ramqvist	Chairman and CEO, Telefon AB LM Ericsson (SWE)
Friedel Rödiger	Executive Vice President, Alliances Lufthansa Group (GER)
Hördur Sigurgestsson	Managing Director, EIMSKIP, The Iceland Steamship Company Ltd (ICE)
Cezary Stypulkowski	President, Bank Handlowy w Warszawie SA (POL)
Vladimir P. Yevtushenkov	Chairman, Joint Stock Financial Corporation Sistema (RUS)

NOTE: (DEN) Denmark, (EST) Estonia, (FIN) Finland, (GER) Germany, (ICE) Iceland, (LAT) Latvia, (LIT) Lithuania, (NOR) Norway, (POL) Poland, (RUS) Russia, and (SWE) Sweden.

SOURCE: BSBS, 2000.

Second, the members are corporations rather than individuals. This means, for example, that Leif Johansson replaced Sören Gyll when he took over as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Volvo in 1997. The circle of members has so far been rather fixed and the participants of the business summits have with few exceptions been the same. Third, the membership of the BSBS is geographically limited to the eleven CBSS member-states. The representation is however not strictly proportional since twelve corporations have their base in the market economies in Western Europe, while only five corporations come from the transitional economies in Eastern Europe. It is also clear that the initiative to form the BSBS originates from a Swedish industrialist since four members come from Sweden. Finally, the group is composed of business representatives from across sectors, i.e. it is not built around one specific business sector. Among the sectors represented are, for example, energy (PreussenElektra), investment (Investor), oil (Statoil), provisions (Danisco), telecommunications (Ericsson), and transport vehicles (Volvo).

The BSBS is part of a general growth of informal collective action among major European corporations (Greenwood, 1997: 126-8). These range from visible networks, such as round tables and issue-alliances, to privately organized gatherings, such as dining clubs. Compared to these, the BSBS appears to be more of a visible round table group. It is more visible than a dining club since there is a common intent for collective action, seen in the produc-

tion of action programs and lobbying efforts. On the other hand, the BSBS is less formal than, for instance, the ERT. While the ERT has a well-developed organization, including among other things a steering committee and a secretariat with a full-time staff (Cowles, 1995), the BSBS has refrained from creating a formal structure. So far it has been able to draw upon the administrative resources of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce, which has organized the business summits and assisted in the distribution of documents (declarations, press releases, etc.).

The aspiration of the BSBS is to look after a wider business interest. This means that the business leaders, even though they only represent major corporations, “argue for conditions that are mutually good for all businesses, small or large, in all countries” (BSBS, 2000: 6).

Furthermore, while general European business associations tend to focus on the operational level (e.g. responding to EU legislation), many of the new informal business groups prefer to concentrate on strategic issues. The ERT, for instance, has been described as a strategic player seeking to shape the European agenda (Greenwood, 1997: 112). In the same way the BSBS has shown an interest mainly in strategic issues. In the preface to the 1998 memorandum the business leaders state that they choose to concentrate on “structural measures” for economic development such as legislation, investments, and transports. At the same time they have consciously sought to avoid getting involved in the detailed everyday practices of regional affairs.

The business leaders have adopted a particular lobbying strategy. They have so far directed almost all of their attention towards the highest CBSS level, i.e. the Summit meetings of the Heads of Government. The strategy basically works in three steps. First, when a forthcoming CBSS Summit is announced, the BSBS begins preparation of a document on the views of the business community. Second, some week or weeks before the CBSS Summit, the business leaders gather in Stockholm to adopt the declaration. Finally, a smaller selection of one or more business leaders travels to the Summit to present the document. Apart from this, there is no direct lobbying of other CBSS targets. It therefore seems reasonably to conclude that the BSBS has achieved an insider peripheral status. It has access to the Heads of Government, but since they meet every second year the BSBS is only sometimes involved in the policy-making process.

At the first BSBS meeting in April 1996, the business leaders adopted an action program (*the Stockholm Declaration*), which specifies the measures needed to stimulate regional growth (BSBS, 1996). The document contains some eighty recommendations in all, summarized under nine headings: (1) Rule of law, (2) Less bureaucracy and better public administration, (3) Free trade, (4) Integrate Europe, (5) Stable monetary systems and prudent economic policies, (6) Greater flexibility, (7) Links in the Baltic Sea Region – improve infrastructure, (8) Sustainable development, and (9) Human Capital – a natural resource. The recommendations are related to conditions in the

transitional economies (1-2, 5, 9), in the western economies (6), and in the region as a whole (3-4, 7-8). After the Stockholm Declaration had been approved, Mr. Wallenberg presented it personally to the Heads of Government at the first Summit meeting in Visby in May 1996. The opportunity to lobby the highest CBSS level became possible thanks to an invitation from the Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, who at the time was the chairman of the CBSS and the host of the Visby Summit. The Prime Minister had one month earlier been invited to the BSBS meeting to present his view on regional development. He then took the opportunity to repay this by inviting the BSBS to Visby.

In October 1997 it was announced that preparations had begun for a second business summit (BSBS, Press release, October 14, 1997). Once again the invitation came from Mr. Wallenberg and, just as the first business summit, the plan was for the business leaders to adopt a document that could be presented before the forthcoming second CBSS Summit in Riga in January 22-23, 1998. The business leaders adopted the document (*Memorandum on Conditions for Growth and Development*) at a meeting in Stockholm three days before the CBSS Summit (BSBS, 1998). In the document the business leaders state that they still hold the Stockholm Declaration of 1996 to be relevant but that they now want to give special attention to measures within three problem areas: (a) The Legal Fabric (e.g. property rights, insufficiency of the court systems, public administration), (b) Other obstacles to foreign direct investments (e.g. customs, visa requirements), and (c) Transports (e.g. roads, railroads, ports and shipping, airports). In accordance with this, much emphasis was this time also placed on implementation and follow-up of proposals. It was for example suggested that the transitional economies should set up National Advisory Councils and Foreign Investors Councils to improve the dialogue between the business community, politicians, and civil servants on these matters. The memorandum was then presented to the Heads of Government at the CBSS Summit in Riga (BSBS, Press release, January 22, 1998). Three business leaders carried out the lobbying this time, including Peter Wallenberg, Mogens Granborg, and Viktors Kulbergs. In connection with the lobbying, the BSBS also arranged a seminar in Riga called the Baltic Sea Business Voices. The seminar, which was open to journalists, included among other things a presentation of the conclusions from the business summit in Stockholm.

In March 2000 the business leaders met in Stockholm for a third Baltic Sea Business Summit. Even though the overall pattern from previous gatherings is easily recognized, the procedure was this time slightly different. The purpose of the meeting was to approve a document (*Report on Conditions for Growth and Development in the Baltic Sea Region*), which the following month was presented to the third CBSS Summit in Kolding, Denmark (BSBS, 2000). The report is very much in accordance with the previous two documents but gives special attention to the remaining trade barriers

and calls upon all parties concerned to intensify their efforts “to conclude the transformation process in the region” (BSBS, 2000: 6). However, in contrast to the previous occasions, the document was this time jointly drafted and agreed upon by the BSBS and the Baltic Advisory Council (i.e. the body that gives business related policy advice to the CBSS). The cooperation with BAC meant that the business leaders, besides lobbying the highest CBSS level, took advantage of a second input channel to the CBSS framework.

The efforts to influence the policy-making process of the CBSS have produced mixed results. The BSBS has itself concluded that it has only partly been successful with respect to actual implementation of concrete proposals. In the 1998 Memorandum the business leaders concluded that "Although much has been done during the last two years it is less than we hoped for, less than is needed and less than could have been done" (BSBS, 1998: 2). Similarly, in the 2000 Report it is said that great progress has been made to remove the remaining obstacles to growth and development, “but there are still obstacles” (BSBS, 2000: 6). On the other hand, considering that the BSBS has chosen to be a strategic player, it could be argued that it has been very successful. The Heads of Government have welcomed the impetus given by the business leaders (CBSS, May 1996), and in January 1998 they decided that the ministers of trade should follow-up the proposals in the BSBS Memorandum (Baltinfo, 1998: 10). Following a request by the Council that the relevant CBSS bodies review the implementation of the document (CBSS, June 1998), the Working Group on Economic Co-operation decided in December 1998 to initiate a survey on the progress of the BSBS recommendations (CBSS, May 1999). The survey, which was carried out by the CBSS Secretariat, asked the governments in the three Baltic states, Poland, and Russia to describe what measures they had taken to meet the proposals set forth in the Memorandum (CBSS, January 2000). The results of the survey were presented to the WGEK in January 2000 (CBSS, May 2000). In the final report the Secretariat concluded: “The results seem to justify some optimism as they indicate considerable progress in many of the topics under consideration. However, as the reader will see, many of the recommendations are still only partly implemented, i.e. a lot more needs to be done” (CBSS, January 2000, preface). It was therefore argued that the survey would have to be up-dated after some years.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that the BSBS has been successful in three respects. The business leaders have succeeded in gaining access to policy-makers, in getting them to pay attention to barriers to growth and development, and in getting them to adopt their recommendations as a checklist on progress. Two circumstances may modify the conclusion of successful lobbying. First, the fact that implementation in some cases has been slow may indicate that the BSBS has not yet overcome resistance from the member-states. However, considering that the governments have accepted the recommendations, it seems more likely that the problems reflect

some other factors, such as lack of resources or insufficient knowledge on how to implement economic reforms. Second, similar to the first case study, it is possible that the lobbying succeeded due to a mutual interest among all parties concerned to stimulate growth and development. On the other hand, even if this is the case, it was only after the BSBS had lobbied the Heads of Government that they became more active and more concrete on these issues. However, the change that was produced was more than just an adjustment change. It basically meant that the governments accepted the business leaders' approach to the situation as well as their proposals for specific goals.

### Case 3: The Baltic Sea Trade Union Network

In comparison to many of the other non-governmental actors in the Baltic Sea region, the trade unions acted relatively late to formalize a multilateral transnational cooperation (cf. Table 1). It was only in July 1999, in connection with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) congress in Helsinki, that a regional INGO – called the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network (BASTUN) – was established (BASTUN, 1 July 1999; 7 July 1999). Even though the idea of closer regional cooperation had been raised before, it appears above all to have been the enlargement process of the EU and its development of a Baltic Sea policy that eventually brought about the change. The co-operation therefore basically reflects an increasing strategic need to strengthen the Baltic Sea region in the changing European context. The Network initiative originated from Baltic Sea members of ETUC, but the membership is open to other trade unions as well. BASTUN has 20 member organizations (2001), and 13 of these are also members of ETUC. All members are national trade union confederations, except the Council of Nordic Trade Unions (NFS), which is a regional INGO for trade unions from the Nordic countries. The national members come from all ten Baltic Sea states: Denmark (3), Estonia (2), Finland (3), Germany (1), Latvia (1), Lithuania (3), Norway (1), Poland (1), Russia (1), and Sweden (3). Together the confederations represent some 20 million members.

The institutional framework of BASTUN has during the first years of activity included a general conference, ad hoc meetings, a working group, and a secretariat. The general conference (the Baltic Sea Conference) consists of the chairs of the member organizations. It is the highest authority of the Network and its main task is to decide on joint political and trade union initiatives. In addition to this, the trade unions each year hold a number of ad hoc meetings (the Baltic Sea Trade Union Meeting) that are aimed at preparing and implementing BASTUN initiatives. For these purposes, the Network sometimes invites representatives from national trade union centers, branch unions, the ETUC or other international trade union structures to the meetings. The working group of BASTUN has seven seats, which are distributed

according to the following: the Nordic countries 2, the Baltic countries 2, Germany 1, Poland 1, and Russia 1. The group functions as a general support to the Network and is responsible for the planning of its meetings and activities. The secretariat services, finally, are provided by the secretariat of the Council of Nordic Trade Unions, which is located in Stockholm.

The Baltic Sea Trade Union Network can be characterized as a regional interest organization. Besides giving traditional support to the member organizations, such as advice on organizational matters or on labor market issues, it also looks after their interests in the external arena. The main political goal of BASTUN is strategic, to strengthen the Baltic Sea region by developing its social and economic structures:

The Baltic Sea Region must develop into a European region characterized of democracy and fair societies. The social dimension must be implemented into the process of integration and transformation. It is in the interest of the trade unions that the dialogue between the social partners is strengthened and tripartite structures created in the region. (BASTUN, 1 July 1999)

The Baltic Sea region needs to develop into a European major region with social and economic structures which are characterized by growing homogeneity rather than by increased disparities. (BASTUN, 7 July 1999).

At the founding conference in 1999, the trade unions identified eight specific goals considered vital in strengthening the region's social and economic structures (BASTUN, 7 July 1999): (1) Comprehensive and employment oriented innovation strategy, (2) Comprehensive approaches to improved education and training, (3) Comprehensive forward-looking measures for the job market, (4) Policy for social minimum standards, (5) Promotion of the labor intensive industries, innovation ability and long lasting aims for growth, (6) Promotion of equal opportunities, (7) Promotion of the social dialogue, and (8) Developing a strategy leading to the promotion of the freedom of movement. The achievement of the eight goals requires, according to the Network, an effective cooperation between trade unions, relevant EU institutions, and the Council of Baltic Sea States. However, neither the EU nor the CBSS have so far, in the opinion of BASTUN, done enough to create a Baltic Sea policy on these matters. The Network has therefore expressed a strong interest in lobbying the two organizations. As regards the CBSS, several authoritative statements confirm the lobbying intention. The founding conference in 1999 established that the Network "must establish strong structures of political interest representation" with the CBSS (BASTUN, 7 July 1999). The working group at its first meeting in March 2000 agreed as one of its priorities "to put pressure on and try to influence the CBSS" (BASTUN, March 2000). The intention was once again confirmed in October 2000 when the chairman of the working group concluded that "we must continue our efforts to influence the CBSS" (BASTUN, October 2000). The

importance of the CBSS is also evident from the facts that the chairman of the Network and the working group represents the country that holds the CBSS presidency and that the BASTUN conference meets in connection with the meetings of the CBSS Council.

Since BASTUN was established only in 1999, it is still very much in the process of developing a relationship with the CBSS. The Network may at present best be described as an outsider. However, judging from the sources, it is clearly about to achieve the status of a specialist insider, i.e. a position where it is always centrally involved on labor market issues. The best evidence of this is that the CBSS has accepted the BASTUN proposal of establishing a social dialogue in the Baltic Sea region. The proposal was initially sent to the CBSS Summit in Kolding in April 2000 (BASTUN, March 2000). From what it seems, the idea of a social dialogue did not raise any strong objections among the CBSS states, and the Heads of government decided without further notice to support “the initiative to establish a dialogue on labor market issues and related topics between the CBSS and the social partners” (CBSS, April 2000). The trade unions interpreted this statement as a go-ahead signal and thought that they now only had to come up with concrete proposals to get the process started (BASTUN, May 2000). The CBSS added more fuel to the expectations of the trade unions when they invited BASTUN to send a representative to the Council meeting in Bergen in June 2000 (BASTUN, October 2000).<sup>54</sup> This was a regular meeting of the Council as well as a follow up to the CBSS Summit two months earlier. As regards the social dialogue, the Council made a statement in which it “asks the ministries for labor market policy of the CBSS countries and the social partners to follow up on the initiative to establish a dialogue on labor market issues and related topics. The Council asks the CSO to monitor developments in the area” (CBSS, June 2000).

The statements mentioned indicate that BASTUN was quite successful in lobbying. It approached the highest CBSS level and within a short period of time got two authoritative statements supporting the idea of a social dialogue. However, when the Network met in February 2001 the members were forced to point to the fact that “it has not yet been possible to establish a stable contact for a social dialogue” (BASTUN, February 2001). This observation raises the question of whether, despite the previous statements from the CBSS, there was some opposition to the reform. The minutes from BASTUN give no direct answer to this question. However, they reveal a number of circumstances that taken together may indicate some resistance or disinterest for the issue. The circumstances are all linked to the successive German presidency of the CBSS (July 2000 – June 2001). First, the working

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<sup>54</sup> This was the first time that trade unions were represented at a Council meeting (BASTUN, October 2000). The Network was given guest status, which means that it had the right to attend the meeting, but without the possibility to speak.

group of BASTUN invited in March 2000 a representative of the German government to present the plans for its forthcoming CBSS chairmanship. Afterwards the group concluded: "The plans are not promising from a trade union point of view" (BASTUN, March 2000). One reason for the pessimism was the fact that the German government had excluded trade unions from a list of 70 NGOs that it intended to invite to an NGO-forum as an input from the civil society. As the plan for the forum became clearer, BASTUN made an inquiry about the possibility to take part, which eventually received a positive response (BASTUN, February 2001).<sup>55</sup> Second, in October 2000 the working group noted that the German chairman of the CSO had sent a letter to some of the other regional INGOs (but not to BASTUN) in which he proposed cooperation in order to compile a priority list of projects for the northern dimension of the EU (BASTUN, October 2000). In response to this, the Network sent a letter to the chairman in which it informed him about the current trade union projects (BASTUN, February 2001). Third, as the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session of the CBSS Council in Hamburg in June 2001 was approaching, the Network noted that it unlike the previous year had not received an invitation to participate (BASTUN, February 2001). The Network therefore sent a letter to the German presidency in which it asked for guest status with a right to express its opinion. It also took the opportunity to propose that the CBSS should set up a working group for the social dialogue.

The lobbying of the trade unions in 1999-2001 was directed mainly at the political level, including the CBSS Summit, the Council, and the presidency. The lobbying was successful in the sense that the goal to establish a social dialogue in the Baltic Sea region was accepted. Obviously, it would go too far to speak of this decision as a typical example of a goal change since the governments had not rejected such a proposal before. Rather, it should be understood as an example where an actor changes its position on an issue from inactivity to activity (in this case decision making). However, as regards implementation the outcome seems almost to be the exact opposite since the CBSS did not follow up the decision during the following year. In order to overcome the resistance on the implementation level, BASTUN concluded that it must change its lobbying strategy. In February 2001 it therefore adopted something of a multi-level approach, including lobbying of the ministries of labor in each country, the CSO, and the presidency (BASTUN, February 2001).

#### Case 4: The Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation

The Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (BSSSC) is a transnational organization open to all regional authorities (sub-regions) from the ten Baltic Sea states, which are immediately below the level of central government.

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<sup>55</sup> The NGO-forum was held on 28-29 May 2001 in Lübeck, Germany.

Even if transnational relations developed quickly at this level as the Cold War was fading away, it was to a large extent thanks to an initiative of the CBSS that the idea of forming a separate INGO for sub-regional interests was realized. As a matter of fact, the CBSS showed a particular interest in the sub-regions already at its founding conference in 1992:

The Ministers underlined the importance of cooperation among the regions in the Baltic Sea area. A successful cooperation around the Baltic Sea area needs active participation of political decision-makers at all levels. ... The Council of the Baltic Sea States will encourage regional initiatives, public or private, as long as they contribute to the general aim of this cooperation. (CBSS, *Copenhagen Declaration*, March 1992)

One year later, in spring 1993 Russia put forward the idea of establishing a regional council of the CBSS (CBSS, 24-25 May 1994). Considering the regionalist tendencies within Russia at the time (cf. Stavrakis, 1997; Nicholson, 1999), it seems reasonably to assume that the proposal only partly reflected a genuine concern for Baltic Sea cooperation. The Committee of Senior Officials discussed the Russian proposal at a meeting in May 1993, but without taking a definite stance on the issue. Instead, Norway undertook to organize a conference on sub-regional cooperation with representatives from all levels concerned. The meeting, which was held in Stavanger on 7-8 October 1993 at the joint invitation of the Norwegian Foreign Minister and the chairman of the County Council of Rogaland, became the founding conference of the BSSSC (BSSSC, October 1993).

There are approximately 160 sub-regions in the Baltic Sea area and, according to one estimate, more than 100 of these had within the first five years some time participated in the annual conference of the BSSSC (Baltinfo, Fact Sheet, 1998).<sup>56</sup> The annual conference is the highest authority of the BSSSC. It decides on principles, goals, standpoints, and matters related to organization. The conference was for some years the only body of the organization, but in 1996-1997 the members agreed on several institutional reforms to increase its operational ability. First, a board with representatives from the regional level in each of the ten Baltic Sea states was set up to lead the work between the annual conferences. The chairman of the board is elected for two years. Second, a secretariat was established to support the decision-making bodies. The secretariat does not have a permanent location but is hosted by a sub-regional organization in the home country of the chairman of the board. Finally, the new BSSSC structure also includes three

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<sup>56</sup> In the case of the territorially larger states (Germany, Poland, and Russia), the membership is delimited to sub-regions neighboring the Baltic Sea. These include three German *Länder* (Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), three Polish *Voivodeships* (West Pomerania, Pomerania, and Warminsko-Mazurskie), and four Russian *Oblasts* (Kaliningrad, Leningrad, Novgorod, and Pskov) and the Russian metropolis of St. Petersburg.

permanent working groups. The respective focuses of these are: (1) Institution building and human relations, (2) Regional and economic development and cooperation, and (3) Nature protection and environment. The members have occasionally also established *ad hoc* working groups to deal with current themes, such as the information society and the northern dimension of the EU.

The BSSSC aims at an expansion of sub-regional cooperation in the Baltic Sea area. At the founding conference in 1993, the participants declared their readiness “to expand subregional co-operation with the aim of supporting democracy and sustainable economic development” (BSSSC, October 1993). As an additional effect, it was hoped that this could help to promote regional stability. The concrete objectives of the BSSSC are (Baltinfo, Fact Sheet, 1998):

- To promote cooperation and exchange of experience among the sub-regions around the Baltic Sea as well as ensuring the creation of new partnerships.
- To formulate a coherent Baltic Sea policy on the regional level by acting as an umbrella organization for other organizations in the Baltic Sea Area.
- To represent the interests of the sub-regions towards national governments as well as European and international organizations.

The three objectives show that the BSSSC is an organization driven by a protective interest. Its first priority is to look after the interests of the members rather than to promote some general value. The third aim is of particular relevance for this study because it confirms an interest in lobbying. Even though the expressed intention is to represent the sub-regions in relation to governments and international organizations in general, it should be clear that the Council of Baltic Sea States has been a main lobbying target for the BSSSC from the very beginning in 1993. The importance of the CBSS to the sub-regions is seen not least by the fact that the BSSSC chose to be particularly active in issue-areas that are the object of regional intergovernmental cooperation. This choice of orientation is, for example, reflected in the mandates of the three permanent working groups that were set up in 1997. That is, they were created with the purpose “(t)o implement the CBSS’ Action Programmes on a regional level, to promote the engagement of the sub-regions in the Baltic Sea co-operation, to encourage and to coordinate the subregional activities, and to interact with other actors in the area” (BSSSC, March 1997). The fact that the BSSSC fully supports the 1996 Kalmar Action Programs means that the lobbying in practice has been more concerned with implementation than with agenda setting. Because the sub-regional issues already enjoy a privileged place on the intergovernmental agenda, the

BSSSC has found it more relevant to focus on the post-decisional phase and on the realization of stated goals.

The sub-regions and the CBSS have established a close relationship, even though it is not as close as the former have hoped it to be. The BSSSC at first set the goal rather high as the founding conference in 1993 “underlined the need of having representation of the sub regions in the Committee of Senior Officials of the Council of the Baltic Sea States as a link to the Council” (BSSSC, October 1993). The sub-regions quite soon realized that this goal was set too high and already a year later they decided to modify their position. Instead of a place in the CSO, the BSSSC called upon the Council “to nominate a person responsible for sub regional issues and projects, to invite the chairman of the Conference and the Speaker of the sub regions to ministerial sessions as well as to the meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials and the Working Group on Economics” (BSSSC, October 1994). Even though only the latter part of the proposal was realized, the invitational procedure quickly became a frequent and widely spread practice. This practice works in both directions and includes all levels. The BSSSC is regularly invited to the meetings of the Council, the CSO, and the WGEC, while representatives of the CBSS institutions on their part are invited to the annual conferences of the BSSSC. In addition to this, there has also been an increase of exchange and cooperation between the secretariats (BSSSC, October 28-30, 1999).

The web of contacts has in the course of time brought the two organizations closer together. For example, following a proposal by the Ministers of Youth to create a Baltic Sea Youth Foundation the CBSS Council in 1998 encouraged the BSSSC to carry out a feasibility study as a first step (CBSS, 22-23 June 1998). A new phase in the relationship was entered in 1999 when the CBSS decided to give the BSSSC status of special participant (CBSS, June 14-15, 1999).<sup>57</sup> This decision formalized the invitational procedure and confirmed the BSSSC as a reliable and knowledgeable partner. The possibility of special participant status was suggested already in the early 1990s. The Baltic Sea governments then agreed that representatives of sub-regions should be given “particular attention” when the CBSS Council and its working bodies in the future invited special participants (CBSS, *Terms of Reference* ..., March 1992). However, despite the fact that participation by sub-regions was important for the legitimacy of the CBSS activities and for the implementation of its projects, it took until 1999 before the BSSSC received status of special participant. The fact that the BSSSC for some years had a rather weak organization helps explain this, but as was described earlier the

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<sup>57</sup> The status of special participant may be granted to third parties “which intend to participate in specified CBSS activities and projects” (CBSS, February 1999). Special participants may be invited to CBSS meetings where they have the right to speak, but without taking part in decision making.

capacity has been considerably strengthened since 1997. The status of special participant means that the BSSSC can be described as somewhat of a core insider. It enjoys privileged access to the policy-making process and it is often centrally involved when policies are being made on a number of issues, even though it does not take part in formal decision-making.

The lobbying demands of the BSSSC tend to be of a different type when compared to the demands of the business community and the trade unions. Instead of focusing primarily on policies, the sub-regions have put much more emphasis on developing the structural relationship with the Council of Baltic Sea States. For example, in the years 1998-2000 the BSSSC called upon the CBSS:

1. To enable and encourage the regional and local authorities to participate in the implementation and to further develop Baltic 21 as a long term process based on a bottom-up approach (BSSSC, October 22-24, 1998)<sup>58</sup>
2. To proceed with the envisaged strengthening of the CBSS, and in particular to consider how to widen the mandate of the new secretariat as a central information and contact point for the various fields and various initiatives within the network of the Baltic Sea cooperation (BSSSC, October 22-24, 1998; cf. BSSSC, October 28-30, 1999; October 26-28, 2000)
3. To further develop the announcement of the Norwegian Chairmanship that furthering sub-regional cooperation should become a priority of CBSS (BSSSC, October 28-30, 1999)
4. To overcome the increasing multitude of actions and conferences on Baltic Sea issues in order to better streamline and coordinate the various forms of cooperation (BSSSC, October 28-30, 1999)
5. To play an active role in further developing and implementing the concept of Northern Dimension by using the existing and successfully working framework of Baltic Sea cooperation (BSSSC, October 28-30, 1999)
6. To further develop its coordinating role towards a forum for Baltic Sea politics as well with a view to new initiatives and additional forms of cooperation (BSSSC, October 26-28, 2000)
7. To arrange the joint presentation of common interests and voice towards the EU in Brussels (BSSSC, October 26-28, 2000)
8. To elaborate a follow-up report on the implementation of the Action Programs adopted in Kalmar (1996) (BSSSC, October 26-28, 2000)

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<sup>58</sup> Baltic 21 refers to the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea region, which was adopted by the CBSS Council in June 1998.

The eight demands show that the lobbying of the BSSSC during these years was more concerned with developing relationships and procedures than with the specific content of policies, focuses that may very well be explained by the fact that the sub-regional issues were already on the intergovernmental agenda. As regards the outcome of the lobbying, it should therefore be remembered that we can hardly speak of an active resistance to the demands of the BSSSC. The first demand was quickly accepted as the steering group of Baltic 21 already in 1999 decided to accept the BSSSC as a member in the implementation process (BSSSC, October 28-30, 1999). The governments have moreover taken some steps regarding the role of the CBSS (points 2, 4-7) that are in accordance with the preferences of the BSSSC. Most notable among these is the decision by the third summit of the Heads of Government that the CBSS shall act as an overall coordinator of governmental cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. The remaining demands did not produce concrete results as quickly. If there was any resistance, then this may have been related to, for example, the role of the secretariat (point 2) or to the priority of the sub-regional issues (point 3). However, this seems less likely considering that a secretariat was actually set up and that the sub-regional issues were already on the agenda. Instead, the sub-regions have more or less met an open door policy and on many occasions even been encouraged to strengthen their activities and participation at the regional level.

### Case 5: The Union of Baltic Cities

In September 1991, representatives of 32 cities from the ten Baltic Sea states gathered in the Polish city of Gdansk to establish the Union of Baltic Cities (UBC, 2001). The UBC is a voluntary transnational organization for cities from the ten Baltic Sea states. The 101 member cities (2002) come from Denmark (10), Estonia (15), Finland (10), Germany (7), Latvia (8), Lithuania (7), Norway (3), Poland (12), Russia (7), and Sweden (22). Together the members represent some 25 million citizens, which makes the UBC highly representative. According to its own estimates, the Baltic Sea region has a population of around 100 million citizens of which 84 million live in cities (UBC, 1999).

The organizational structure of the Union is quite conventional, even though it stands out as somewhat more extensive compared to many of the other regional INGOs. The delegates of the member cities convene every second year in the General Conference, which is the highest decision making body (UBC, 1991). The Executive Board, which consists of one member city representative from each Baltic Sea country, acts as the highest authority between the sessions of the General Conference. The Chairman of the Board (since 1991 Anders Engström) also serves as the President of the UBC. The decision-making bodies are supported by a secretariat (located in Gdansk, Poland), an EU coordinator, nine commissions, and a number of networks

and working groups. The commissions and the networks carry out most of the practical work. The former coordinate and execute projects within what is called "vertical activity areas", which are also the responsibilities of cities. The nine current commissions have been set up to deal with business cooperation, culture, education, environment, health and social affairs, sport, tourism, transportation, and urban planning. The networks, on the other hand, focus on "horizontal activity areas". The main task of these bodies is to coordinate related activities within different sectors. The UBC networks include the Women's Network (1993), the EU Coordinators Network (1999), and the Youth Network (2000) (UBC, 2000).

The Union of Baltic Cities mixes protective and promotional goals (UBC, 1991). In a narrower sense it seeks to stimulate contacts between the member cities and to look after their interests in relations with governments and other actors. At the same time, however, it is also hoped that its activities will contribute to the general development of the Baltic Sea region – such as the development of democracy, economic growth, social welfare, environmental sustainability, and peaceful relations – which of course also may be of great interest to non-members. The specific aims of the Union are, according to Article 1 in the statute (UBC, 1991):

- To promote and strengthen cooperation and exchange of experience among the cities in the Baltic Sea Region,
- To advocate for common interests of the local authorities in the region,
- To act on behalf of the cities and local authorities in common matters towards regional, national, European and international bodies,
- To achieve sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region with full respect to European principles of local and regional self-governance and subsidiary.

The third aim establishes the UBC as a lobbyist. In order to fulfill this role, the Union is among other things expected to "[L]aunch initiatives and cooperate with the Baltic Sea Region governments and international organisations ..." (UBC, 1991: article 2f). The term lobbying, which is not explicitly mentioned in the statute of the UBC, has later been defined. In a strategy document from 1999 the members agreed on the following: "In the nearest future UBC should offer its member cities a quality consulting, assistance and lobbying. Here lobbying of three kinds is meant: lobbying of common regional interests, creating positive image of the organisation, and a network of contacts among Baltic Sea Region organisations" (UBC, 1999: item 34). From this definition we understand that the lobbying goal of the Union of Baltic Cities is quite broad. It does not only aim at affecting policies but also puts a lot of emphasis on developing structural relations with other organizations.

The relationship between the Union and the Council of Baltic Sea States has developed gradually over time. In this respect, there is a certain resemblance to the case of the BSSSC, but there are also some differences to be noted. Up until 1996, the UBC had only sporadic contact with the CBSS. The purpose of the contacts was primarily to exchange information. The Union informed about its activities and pointed at possible areas of cooperation, while the CBSS expressed its appreciation of and support to the activities of the UBC. The contacts produced very little concrete results. In this context, it should be noted that the founding documents of the CBSS, which show a clear interest in the sub-regions of the Baltic Sea area, do not say anything explicitly about the cities. This fact was clearly changed in 1996 when the Baltic Sea governments adopted the Kalmar Action Program. In this document, the governments acknowledge that contacts between cities and municipalities are "vital aspects of successful and concrete cooperation" and that the promotion of such contacts is "particularly important and should be a special characteristic of the Baltic Sea Region" (CBSS, Kalmar Action Program, 2-3 July, 1996). From this point on, the relationship developed into a practice of close contacts, which was codified in 1999 when the UBC was given the status of special participant (CBSS, 14-15 June, 1999).<sup>59</sup> The UBC today enjoys insider status, and it has access to the policy process whenever local matters are dealt with. The relationship covers all levels. Each year it participates in several meetings of the CSO, and it is regularly invited to the meetings of the Council.

Having access to the policy-making process of the CBSS, the Union is in a position where the prospects of influence are quite favorable. At the same time, we should already at this stage make clear that local interest groups have hardly met any direct resistance in their lobbying. Certainly, it was only in 1996 that the CBSS Council decided to place the concerns of cities higher on the agenda. But it would go too far to claim that the door was really closed before. It is true that the section on people-to-people contacts in the Kalmar Action Program was to some extent also inspired by the activities of cities (e.g. town-twinning arrangements), but it did not take any real lobbying from the side of the UBC to make the governments realize the significance of local initiatives.

The CBSS' acknowledgement of the local level in 1996 has meant that the UBC has been able to pay considerable attention to the final phase of the policy process. That is, much of the work of the UBC focuses on the task of implementing policy decisions rather than on bringing new issues onto the agenda. In this respect, the approach of the Union is clearly reminiscent of that of the BSSSC. The fact that the UBC has member cities in all Baltic Sea countries makes it a valuable partner in implementation. This circumstance

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<sup>59</sup> The UBC received the status of special participant at the same time as the BSSSC. For further information about the significance of the status, see case study 4.

is also noted by the CBSS. For example, the Council has expressed its appreciation of the active participation by the UBC in the implementation of the Kalmar Action Program (CBSS, 2-3 July, 1997), the EU pre accession process<sup>60</sup>, and the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (CBSS, 22-23 June, 1998). The leadership of the UBC, on the other hand, uses the power in implementation argument to gain influence and thereby also improve the prospects of successful implementation. For example, in the case of the Agenda 21 the UBC argues: "Governments and governmental authorities can support sustainable development by legal provisions and financial aid, but the concrete work must be carried out locally, in cities and other communities" (UBC, 2001). The argument has also been used in relation to the Northern Dimension of the European Union. At a CBSS consultation on this issue in May 2000, the representative of the UBC pointed at the considerable member base of the UBC and concluded: "The UBC will therefore have an impact on the implementation and success of the policies of the Northern Dimension" (UBC, 3 May 2000). In order to further strengthen the argument, the representative also stressed the importance of having an independent status in this context (UBC, 3 May 2000):

Within the UBC, cities and towns co-operate on equal footage independent of their country's international affiliation or status, or the size of their population or economy. The UBC therefore can offer useful experience to the governmental and Union level, not only of co-operation in chosen priority fields, but in implementing the political general principles, as well.

The Union of Baltic Cities has clearly succeeded in establishing a role within the policy process of the CBSS. However, as regards the question of whether or not the Union has also been successful in lobbying, i.e. in the sense that it has produced a change of policy, the conclusion has to be more cautious. On the one hand, there is little to suggest that the UBC has had such an impact, especially since the CBSS has not been directly opposed to bringing local concerns onto its agenda. On the other hand, considering that the UBC is actively involved in several CBSS cooperation projects in the region, it could very well be argued that the UBC makes a difference in implementation. In relation to the last point, because the focus on implementation puts pressure on budgets, we might also note that the UBC has been lobbying for improved funding opportunities. As pointed out by the chairman of the UBC in a statement before the CBSS in May 2000, the member cities can rather easily find bilateral funding, but when it comes to multinational projects the funding sources are much more limited (UBC, 30 May 2000). To attack this problem, Denmark soon after recommended the CBSS Council to establish a

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<sup>60</sup> In order to prepare the member cities for accession to the EU, the UBC has initiated specific projects as well as ensured that all other UBC activities pay attention to the EU enlargement (UBC, 2000).

financing facility for sub-regional cooperation (CBSS, 21-22 June 2000, Annex 5). This initiative was at first well received but proved rather soon to be difficult to realize. In June 2001 the Council welcomed a CSO proposal for an agreement on the establishment of a Fund for Sub-regional Development (CBSS, 7 June 2001). However, one year later the senior officials were forced to conclude that the initiative “did not receive the required support from member-states and was thus tabled indefinitely” (CBSS, July 2002). Even though this was a setback for the UBC, it should be remembered that the transnational activities of the member cities do not stand or fall with CBSS funding. If the prospects for funding improve, then this can be expected to make a difference by degrees and to further strengthen the role of the UBC with respect to implementation.

### Case 6: The Coalition Clean Baltic

As the political changes became apparent in the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, environmental NGOs were among the first to establish transnational contacts across the East-West divide. In the Baltic Sea area a regional network of environmental NGOs was quickly developing. In September 1989 it organized its first meeting, which was held in the then Soviet republic of Estonia (CCB, Hägerhäll, 2000; CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000). The network experienced a rapid institutional development. Already in February 1990, at a meeting in Helsinki, the members decided to formally establish a regional INGO, the Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB). By this step, the cooperation became more than merely regular interactions between NGOs. It was from then on associated with a high degree of institutionalization, including statutes, budget, decision-making bodies, and secretariat. The CCB has 21 member organizations, 5 organizations with observer status, and 6 cooperative partners (2000). The member organizations, which come from the nine littoral states of the Baltic Sea, are environmental NGOs and represent in all some 500 000 individual members (CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000).

The organizational framework of the CCB is made up of traditional bodies as well as cooperation projects. The former consists of a general conference, a board, and a secretariat. The general conference is the highest decision-making body of the Coalition. It convenes annually, and the first conference was held in Estonia in 1990. The CCB board is responsible for the daily work. The board has one member from each country, and is lead by a chairman and an executive secretary. The supreme bodies are supported by a secretariat, which is located in Uppsala, Sweden. Beside the formal bodies, the activities of the Coalition are organized around cooperation projects (CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000). The projects are strongly decentralized and bring together the member NGOs to focus on specific environmental needs. Depending on the conditions, the projects may be organized bilaterally or multilaterally and may be of varying lengths of time. By combining

the traditional bodies with cooperation projects, the CCB has achieved a flexible form of cooperation that provides a better possibility to take the local perspective into consideration as well as to adapt to changing conditions.

The Coalition Clean Baltic is a politically independent, non-profit organization. The aim of the Coalition is promotional in character. It does not look after the interests of a certain group or country but aims at protecting and improving the Baltic Sea environment in general. The environmental problems are attacked at different levels. At a general level, it seeks to convince states and societies of the necessity of having a sustainable ecologic development approach for dealing with the mismanagement of natural resources (CCB, Guterstam, 2000). This is a rather broad approach, which pays attention to environmental as well as social and economic developments. The CCB focuses particularly on the environmental and the social aspects (CCB, Hedlund, 2000). At a more concrete level, the CCB organizes and carries out various activities to deal with specific environmental problems. For example, in 1999-2000 the Coalition gave priority to six activities (CCB, 1999): (1) Ecological engineering, (2) River watch / River basin management, (3) Protection of the naturally spawning Baltic salmon, (4) Harmful installations and transports, (5) Promotion of sustainable agriculture, and (6) Local agenda 21. The choice of activities reflects the perception of environmental interdependence. That is, "Since the Baltic catchments with all of its river systems connect us all to the Baltic Sea, the CCB focuses very much on activities connected to water and Baltic river systems" (CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000).

To achieve the goal of a sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region, the CCB applies two main strategies (CCB, Hedlund, 2000; CCB, Lindén, 2000). One is directed towards the societies and the task of changing the minds of people. This is a long-term strategy, which seeks to raise public awareness of the environmental situation and how it is affected by the way people live. This strategy includes activities such as the production and distribution of informational material and the running of campaigns. Some of these activities are arranged in cooperation with municipalities in the Baltic Sea countries. The second strategy focuses on the states and the task of changing the minds of policy-makers. This is a short-term strategy, which is closely associated with political lobbying and the attempt to influence governmental actions and decisions. The lobbying goal of the CCB is rather general: "Where decision-makers meet with the Baltic Sea on the agenda, CCB is there to give a voice to peoples concerns and present their visions" (CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000). Since there are a number of regional policy-making bodies that are dealing with the Baltic Sea environment, the lobbying has been directed at several targets. Besides the CBSS, the Coalition has lobbied the Helsinki Commission (HELCOM), the International

Baltic Sea Fishery Commission (IBSFC), and the Commission of the European Union.

At first sight, the Coalition Clean Baltic appears to be somewhat of an outsider in relation to the CBSS. According to the definition given earlier, an outsider does not enjoy privileged access to policy-making and implementation. Scrutinizing the same CBSS documents that witnessed to an insider status for the protective interest groups does not indicate that the CCB has achieved this type of access. The documents of the Council, the CSO, and the working groups contain hardly any direct references to the Coalition at all. This fact seems paradoxical for two reasons. First, the CBSS has clearly pointed to environmental issues as one of its priorities (cf. the 1992 Copenhagen Declaration, and the 1996 Kalmar Action Program). Second, the CBSS Council has explicitly encouraged some regional INGOs (BSSSC, UBC) to contribute to the implementation of the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea region (CBSS, 22-23 June 1998). However, despite the specific environmental focus of the CCB and despite the experience of concrete projects, the Coalition has left very few marks in the official records of the CBSS.

On the other hand, the conclusion of this case study will be that the CCB has achieved at least peripheral status. This means that it is sometimes involved in policy-making on environmental issues, most notably issues related to the Baltic 21 process. The Baltic 21 refers to the agreement of the Baltic Sea states in 1996 to develop and implement an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region (Baltic 21 Secretariat, May 2000).<sup>61</sup> The regional agenda consists of goals and an action program for attaining sustainable development. The cooperation is directed towards seven economic sectors (agriculture, energy, fisheries, forests, industry, tourism, and transport) and spatial planning, which are assumed to be of crucial importance for the improvement of living and working conditions in the region.<sup>62</sup>

A steering group, the Senior Officials Group (SOG), has been set up to steer and monitor the Baltic 21 process. SOG consists of representatives of the Baltic Sea states and some 30 international governmental and non-governmental organizations (2001). There are three requirements for SOG-membership. The organization shall (a) be active in at least half of the Baltic 21 countries, (b) have competence relevant for the Baltic 21 process, and (c) be willing and able to contribute to the sustainable development in the Baltic Sea region and the implementation of Baltic 21 (Baltic 21 Secretariat, August 2000). In order to support the implementation process, the Baltic Sea states have established a Baltic 21 Secretariat<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> The Heads of Government of the CBSS member-states took the decision in June 1996, and the CBSS Council adopted the agenda in June 1998.

<sup>62</sup> In spring 2000, the CBSS member-states agreed to extend the cooperation also to include the sector of education.

<sup>63</sup> Since 1 January 2001, the Baltic 21 Secretariat is part of the Secretariat of the CBSS, which is located in Stockholm.

The Baltic 21 structure is considered to be an important influence target for the Coalition Clean Baltic. The CCB chairman Björn Guterstam made this clear with the following statement in the year 2000: "It's time for CCB to intensify our participation in the Baltic 21 work in general. Baltic 21 has understood the concept of sustainable development, it involves most participants in the Baltic Sea Region and it's close to the highest political power" (CCB, Guterstam, 2000). The Coalition is a member of the steering group.<sup>64</sup> The membership of SOG is associated with more than just observer status. It gives the member an active role, including the right to speak and to take part in the implementation work. So by becoming a member of SOG, the Coalition enjoys privileged access to the policy process. However, it should be emphasized that this access is strongly connected to the implementation phase. Since the goals of the Baltic 21 and the tasks of SOG have already been decided upon by the Council of the CBSS, the role of the steering group is limited to implementation work. Because of this, we should also note that the Baltic Sea states' representatives in SOG are civil servants and not ministers of the governments.<sup>65</sup> From these facts we have concluded that the status of the CCB comes close to that of an insider. But since the Coalition is only sometimes involved when the CBSS states deal with environmental issues (i.e. the Baltic 21 process), it seems equally clear that the Coalition should be seen as a peripheral insider.

As regards the possible influence on the Baltic 21 process, we have not found any evidence suggesting that the participation of the Coalition has so far made a difference with respect to choice of environmental policies. Certainly, the Baltic 21 Secretariat claims that the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region "has been worked out jointly by a partnership of national governments, regional networks of cities and regions, intergovernmental organizations, the business community, environmental NGOs, and international financial institutions" (Baltic 21 Secretariat, May 2000). However, even though SOG has more than 40 members and it might be difficult to link a certain decision to a given member, we have in the case of the CCB reason to believe that the impact has been very modest. First, the initiative and the decision to establish a regional agenda for sustainable environment was not a result of CCB lobbying. In fact, on this point it was the CBSS states that inspired the Coalition rather than the other way around. Thus, "In 1996 CCB started, as a response to the Baltic Prime Ministers decision to develop an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, a NGO-process to influence for a sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region" (CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000). As an output of this NGO-process, CCB in May 1998 adopted a new action program with perspectives and proposals for a sustainable de-

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<sup>64</sup> Among the other regional INGOs that have been awarded SOG-membership are the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation and the Union of Baltic Cities.

<sup>65</sup> The majority of the representatives are civil servants at the Ministry of the Environment.

velopment. Even though this document may form an important platform for future lobbying, it should be remembered that SOG has a rather narrowly defined mandate. If the Coalition is to have an impact, then it will be on implementation rather than choice of policy.

Second, some evidence clearly suggests that the governments have a more dominant position within the steering group than the non-state actors. This is evident not least when it comes to how the implementation of the Baltic 21 agenda is organized. For each sector, SOG distributes the responsibility for leading the implementation work to one or two of its members (Baltic 21 Secretariat, May 2000). The lead parties are expected to initiate and coordinate the concrete efforts as well as to make progress reports. So far, however, it is only the states and some intergovernmental organizations that have been selected for this role. The control is thereby still in the hands of the governments, and the non-state actors are obliged to resort to traditional lobbying.

The conclusion of this case study is that the CCB enjoys peripheral insider status but that it has not had any direct impact on CBSS policy. Of course, this is not to say that the Coalition does not play an important role for the protection of the Baltic Sea environment. On the contrary, by being a part of the Baltic 21 as well as the HELCOM processes, it is recognized as an important actor. The CCB also helps to strengthen these processes since it is a link to citizens and since it has concrete experience of fieldwork. At the same time however it is difficult to establish that the Coalition has successfully influenced any particular environmental policy at the regional level, or that it has made the member-states of the CBSS to do something they otherwise would not have done.

## Case 7: The Trans-Baltic Network

The Trans-Baltic Network (TBN) brings together non-governmental organizations and individuals with an interest in Baltic Sea security. The Network was established in 1994 and had its most active period up until the late 1990s. Since then, the status of the TBN has been somewhat unclear, and some members today even think of it as a dormant body (at the time of writing). During its most active years, it consisted of some 40 NGOs from the ten Baltic Sea states (1997). The members represent a broad spectrum of organizations. Besides typical peace groups, the Network gathers NGOs that focus on issues related to democracy, environment, human rights, and solidarity. Together, the member organizations represent nearly 100 000 people in the Baltic Sea countries.

The members of the TBN have so far refrained from establishing a formal organization. Instead, they have preferred to cooperate in the form of a network. Since this type of organization is typically characterized by a low degree of institutionalization, it is upheld primarily by the regular interactions

between the members (Keck and Sikkink, 1998: 8-10, 206f.). This also applies to the Trans-Baltic Network. This means that it is without, for example, statutes, budget, and traditional bodies such as a board and secretariat. It has a steering committee made up of eight member organizations, but this body does not have the same formal powers as a board (TBN, 1997). Moreover, to become a member of the Network an NGO has simply to take part in the interaction of the network, and there is no formal membership required (TBN, 1997).

The regular interactions between the members during the most active years were of two types. First, it used to arrange regular meetings. These included one or two major conferences each year as well as occasional seminars in the respective countries (particularly in the transitional countries). Second, the Network was also upheld by a regular exchange of information. This exchange was mainly channeled through an e-mail network and a quarterly newsletter. As was indicated above, the regular interaction within the Network has become much less frequent in recent years. Contacts do occur, but these seem today rather to be of a bilateral nature.

The Trans-Baltic Network should be described as an actor with a promotional interest. In other words, it seeks to promote a certain value rather than to protect the material interests of the members. The value in this case is security and, more specifically, sustainable security.<sup>66</sup> The following quote explains the meaning of this concept, as the Network perceives it (TBN, 1997):

The aim of the TBN is a community of states and peoples in the Baltic Sea region living together in sustainable security. Here, not only military conflicts will be prevented, but security for civil societies will be insured by a clean environment, respect for human rights, participatory democracy, and sustainable development.

Armed forces can no longer guarantee the security of the Baltic Sea region. Today, the threats to our security are things like violations of human rights, environmental catastrophes, economic disparity, or political disputes over sovereignty, territory, and resources. What we need is a new, "sustainable" security, where elements of both "hard" and "soft" security are taken into account. Sustainable security must be based on human needs and entrusted to governments, acting in cooperation, and peoples of the region, as individual "citizen diplomats," and through their non-governmental organizations.

From this we understand that the TBN in at least two respects has adopted a broad view on security (cf. Karlsson, 2002). As regards the referent point for

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<sup>66</sup> Interestingly, as noted by Matthew Evangelista (1999: 16-17), scholars have over the years made rather different assumptions about the relationship between transnational relations and high politics (security). Thus, while the original theorizing, which appeared in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, assumed that transnational relations would predominate outside this issue-area, this assumption is no longer taken for granted.

security, which deals with the question of whom or what threats are directed at, we find that the Network is concerned with the security of states as well as with the security of societies and individuals.<sup>67</sup> Second, it is clear that the Network focuses on a broad range of security issues, i.e. it emphasizes threats to Baltic Sea security within several issue-areas. For example, applying Barry Buzan's distinction between military, political, economic, environmental, and societal security (e.g. Buzan, 1991: 19-20, 116-34), we find that the TBN is actually concerned with all five.<sup>68</sup> Interestingly, we might also note that the Network sees the possibility of integrative aspects or links between the different categories of security.<sup>69</sup>

The Trans-Baltic Network has tried to further the goal of sustainable security by a number of different means. Political lobbying is among these, together with activities such as publications (e.g. press releases, reports), seminars, education, and concrete projects (e.g. beach clean-up actions in the Baltic states). The lobbying goal has been formulated in a rather general way. The Network "seek(s) to give NGOs a voice in the political processes in the region, governmental, inter-governmental, and non-governmental" (TBN, 1997). As a consequence of the broad definition of political processes, the TBN is ready to approach the states at different levels as well as through different types of actors. In addition to this, it should be noted that the network character of the TBN sets certain limits to the content of the lobbying. Since it has no mandate or capacity to formulate policies, the lobbying is basically aiming at promoting the goal of sustainable security and at helping the member NGOs to bring forward their specific concerns on security issues (TBN, 1997).

The Network approached the Council of Baltic Sea States on a number of occasions during the first years of existence. To begin with, the TBN presented written statements to the meetings of the CBSS Council. Partly as a consequence of this, it was in March 1995 invited by the CSO to present the Network and its activities.<sup>70</sup> As a result of the meeting, the CSO "expressed its appreciation and continued interest in the activities, and encouraged TBN to continue its interest in CBSS" (CBSS, 18 May 1995). However, despite an apparently mutual interest in continued contacts, the evidence clearly suggests that this was never realized. There is no further mention of the TBN in

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<sup>67</sup> In relation to this point, we should note that there is an ongoing debate among scholars (cf. Buzan, 1991: 35-56; Morgan, 1997: 23-4; Terriff *et al.*, 1999: 18-20). Security studies have traditionally been concerned with the security of states, but there is today an increasing interest also to study the security of societies and individuals.

<sup>68</sup> On the debate over whether or not to include other threats than the threat of war in security studies, see e.g. Morgan (1997: 21-3), and Terriff *et al.* (1999: 20-2).

<sup>69</sup> It should be clear that the other regional INGOs also express a general concern for values such as peace, human rights, and democracy, but from what it seems only the TBN has developed a more comprehensive understanding of the meaning of security.

<sup>70</sup> At the time, the CSO also had a general interest to keep itself informed of the various transnational activities that were going on in the Baltic Sea region.

the CBSS documents, and within a few years the Network itself became less active. From this, it should be obvious that the TBN stands out as a clear outsider in relation to the CBSS. It never came close to an insider status, and nothing suggests that the few contacts it did have in any way influenced the agenda or the policy decisions of the CBSS. Of course, it is possible that the activities of the Trans-Baltic Network have contributed somehow to more sustainable security in the Baltic Sea region. This, however, does not change the fact that with respect to lobbying of the CBSS, it cannot be considered to be a successful actor.

Even though the CSO expressed an interest in continued contacts, it should be remembered that there has been a clear reluctance among especially the Nordic governments to bring national security issues onto the agenda of the CBSS (Værnø, 1999: 199-200; cf. Knudsen, 1996: 9). Grethe Værnø (1999: 199) identifies three considerations behind this position:

Firstly it did not make sense to allow conflicts between two countries or more to overshadow the effort to upgrade a common interest.

Secondly it is desirable to avoid issues that might imply – or raise expectations about – involvement in or obligations to the defence of the Baltic states in the case of a conflict with Russia.<sup>71</sup>

Thirdly multilateral regional cooperation should not provide the point of departure for establishing any regional security regime. ... The Nordics have insisted that regional fora should not discuss issues that should be left to treatment at a balanced European level as they are not ‘regional’ in character...

As a consequence of this reluctance, the CBSS has maintained a low profile with respect to security. The founding documents in 1992 did not single out security issues as an area for cooperation. Moreover, when the member-states in 1996 adopted an Action Program on civic security it was understood that the cooperation should only deal with the non-military elements of soft security.<sup>72</sup> The exact meaning of the term ‘civic security’ is however not entirely clear. In fact, as noted by Clive Archer and Christopher Jones (1999: 173), the concept was brought up by the CBSS primarily in the context of the fight against organized crime. There is no evidence suggesting that this cooperative step was taken as a result of the lobbying of the Trans-Baltic Network. Certainly, the Network has been lobbying for more regional cooperation on soft security issues, but as was clear from the Networks’ definition of sustainable security, there are threats other than organized crime that are given attention.

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<sup>71</sup> Cf. the debate in 1996 on a Swedish leadership role, including giving security guarantees to the Baltic states (Karlsson and Knudsen, 2001: 193-4).

<sup>72</sup> For more detailed analysis of the security role of the CBSS, see Joenniemi and Stålvant (1995: 30-1) and Knudsen and Neumann (1995: 7ff.).

Finally, since the TBN has become less active, and according to some even become a dormant body, we should stress that this does not necessarily have to apply to the individual members. If the extent to which the members are engaged in Baltic Sea issues is a reflection of the international security agenda, then it could be argued that during the last years there have been more acute conflicts calling for attention. In the first half of the 1990s, there were many issues that could cause potential conflicts in the Baltic Sea region, including for example the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states or Russia's talk of a near abroad (i.e. that Russia has special rights in the territory of the former Soviet Union). Because these issues are no longer on the agenda, while extra-regional conflicts have escalated (e.g. the Middle East) the members of the TBN have quite naturally redirected much of their focus and peace efforts towards other parts of the world.



## 5. Explaining the patterns of transnational lobbying

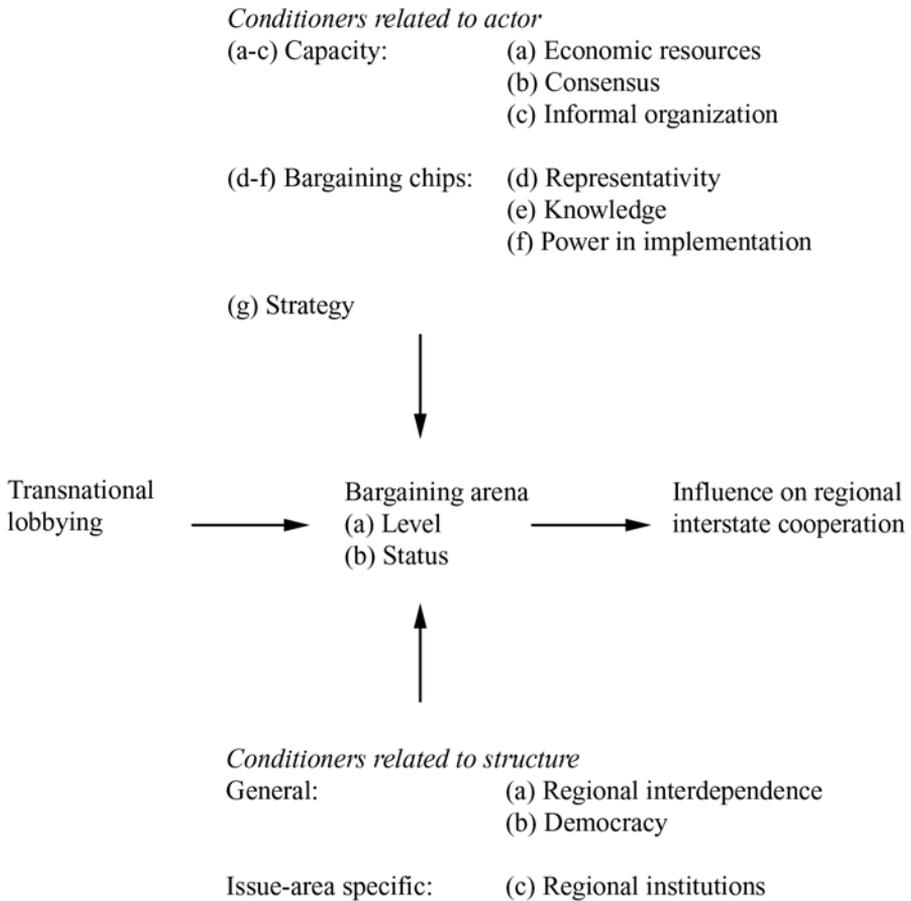
### Conditioners for successful transnational lobbying

Why have some regional INGOs and transnational networks been more successful than others in their lobbying of the Council of Baltic Sea States? What conditions have facilitated the lobbying of interest groups gathering protective and sub-regional interests? Why have the business interests been more successful than the trade unions? How are we to understand the difficulties of the promotional interests? The purpose of this chapter is to look for the conditioners that affect the success of transnational lobbying. Conditioners refer to factors that in various ways affect the probability that transnational lobbying will succeed. For example, is successful lobbying a result of an actor's capacity or choice of strategy? Or, is it because the lobbyist controls some asset that is of vital importance to policy makers? Furthermore, how important are structural conditioners? Can variations in the success of transnational lobbying be explained by factors such as democracy or regional interdependence? And how does the institutional structure of the CBSS affect the probability of successful lobbying? For example, has the establishment of the Working Group for Economic Cooperation made it relatively easier for the business interests (the Chambers of commerce and the big business leaders of the BSBS) to affect the governments?

The analysis of the patterns of transnational lobbying will be carried out with the help of a model (Figure 2) that identifies what is assumed to be important conditioners (cf. Karlsson, 1999). The model, which brings together conditioners that are emphasized or hinted at in much of the literature on transnational relations, seeks to answer the question of under what conditions transnational lobbying is likely to influence regional interstate cooperation. It contains three types of variables. The independent variable, transnational lobbying, is defined as an informal mechanism of influence in which non-state actors (in this case regional INGOs and transnational networks) put forward their opinions through direct contacts with public representatives (in this case within the framework of the CBSS). The dependent variable, influence on regional interstate cooperation, refers to a situation where a group of

geographically adjacent states consciously change their policy coordination as a result of transnational lobbying. The independent and the dependent variables were both mapped in Chapter 4.

The connection between the independent and the dependent variables is supposed to take the form of a bargaining arena (cf. Young and Osherenko, 1993: 239-40). This is the point where the transnational actor and the group of state representatives interact, whether this occurs through formal negotiations or just a communication of opinions and ideas. As was mentioned in the preceding chapter, the interaction may be categorized with the help of the two variables level and status. The case studies shows that the interaction takes place mainly on one of two different levels, the level of officials or the level of ministers. The majority of regional INGOs – the BCCA (chambers of commerce), the BSSSC (sub-regions), and the UBC (cities) – have established more or less regular contacts with some of the working bodies of the CBSS (e.g. the Committee of Senior Officials and the Working Group for Economic Co-operation). The business leaders of the BSBS deviate from this pattern since they target the highest CBSS level (the Summit meetings) only. Even the trade unions of BASTUN initially focused on the level of ministers, but they have since then broadened their lobbying strategy so as to pay more attention to the CSO. Finally, the two promotional lobbyists – the Coalition Clean Baltic and the Trans-Baltic Network – have not established a regular direct contact with any of the central CBSS bodies. As regards status, the case studies indicate that all regional INGOs except the Trans-Baltic Network have achieved insider status, i.e. access to the intergovernmental policy-making process. The degree of access however differs considerably. The BSSSC and the UBC enjoy core status (always centrally involved), the BCCA has achieved specialist status (always centrally involved on technical issues related to trade), which also BASTUN is about to do when it comes to labor market issues, while the status of the BSBS and the CCB is more peripheral (only sometimes involved).



*Figure 2.* Conditioners affecting the influence of transnational lobbying on regional interstate cooperation

A third set of variables consists of conditioners (explanatory variables) that determine if and how transnational lobbying will influence interstate cooperation. The conditioners are supposed to be related to both actor and structure. The former refers to factors that can be linked to the transnational actor himself. A basic distinction is made between three types of actor related conditioners. Transnational influence may be seen as a result of the actor's capacity, bargaining chips, and choice of strategy. Capacity refers to qualities that make it possible for a regional INGO or network to lobby at the international level. The model highlights three qualities, namely economic resources, consensus, and informal organization. Bargaining chips, a term that has been borrowed from Justin Greenwood (1997: 16), refers to assets that make a transnational actor more or less indispensable to policy-makers. The model assumes that the three qualities of representativity, knowledge,

and power in implementation are particularly valuable to governments. Strategy, finally, pays attention to the fact that lobbyists can hardly attain their goals without taking into consideration the competition from other actors.

Besides focusing on actors, it is assumed that successful lobbying is also dependent on conditioners related to structure. These variables can be conceived of as windows of opportunity (cf. Young and Osherenko, 1993:238). That is, they open up possibilities for transnational lobbying to be effective. Depending on whether a structural conditioner is related to any specific issue area or not, it can be categorized as either general (interdependence, democracy) or specific (regional institutions). While the former affects the chances of influence at large, the latter can help explain why lobbying succeeds within one issue area and not in another.

The model is applied in the two following sections. We will go through the conditioners one at a time starting with those related to actor. For each conditioner a hypothesis is formulated, which links the conditioner with influence on regional interstate cooperation. The proposition is then confronted with evidence from the case studies that were presented in the preceding chapter. Before we apply the model, we have however to point at two difficulties. First, we are not in a position to give exact measures of the degree of influence. We cannot, for example, say that one actor has been 50 per cent more influential than the other actors. Instead we have to speak in more relative terms and give estimates of which lobbyists have been more or less influential in comparison to the other cases. Second, the findings will not give a final answer to why some regional INGOs and networks have been more successful than others. However, by comparing the different cases, which will be done in the final chapter, we will hopefully be able to specify under what conditions transnational lobbying is more or less likely to succeed.

## Conditioners related to actor

### (a) Economic resources

Economic resources are often assumed to have significant explanatory power in analyses of transnational influence. It is generally assumed, writes Virginia Haufler, that "(c)orporations have more resources and influence than social interest groups ... (and) are capable of constraining state behavior through their market power" (Haufler, 1993: 106). An often-used argument for studying the role of large multinational corporations is that some firms command more resources than states (Greenwood *et al*, 1992: 14; Greenwood, 1997: 18). Due to the economic muscles of many companies, argues Justin Greenwood, "(p)ublic policy-makers are dependent upon business to

perform; key factors such as employment, balance of trade and wealth creation, and indeed the popularity of public institutions, including ruling parties, count on business activities” (Greenwood, 1997: 18). An often mentioned example of how major corporations can affect interstate cooperation was when the European Round Table of Industrialists, an exclusive group of almost fifty business leaders of some of the largest firms in Europe, in the early 1980s lobbied European governments directly with, in Maria Green Cowles’ words, ”a simple message: support the single-market programme or European industry will move its investments out of Europe” (Cowles, 1995: 226-7).

For the sake of clarity, it should be noted that resources could account for transnational influence in different ways, as means enabling actors to take part in international policy-making processes (which is the aspect considered here) and as assets highly valued by states (which will be dealt with in the three sections on bargaining chips). As regards the capacity to carry out transnational lobbying, it seems reasonable to expect that protective interests in general stand a better chance than promotional interests of performing it successfully. This expectation follows from the fact that the two groups tend to have members with very different economic prerequisites. The members of the protective interest groups are typically companies, trade unions, or territorial authorities, while the members of the promotional interest groups rather are individuals. This circumstance makes the resource base of the two groups look very different and, as a consequence, we expect that the protective interest groups are those that first of all can afford transnational lobbying. This pattern is quite familiar. For example, studies of the European Union show that economic resources help explain why over two-thirds of all groups based in Brussels are business groups (e.g. Aspinwall & Greenwood, 1998: 3-4; Greenwood, 1997: 10). Considering the importance of economic resources, we have formulated the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 1: The more economic resources a transnational lobbyist has, the greater the influence he or she can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

If we assume that economic resources are reflected by type of members and by international secretariats, then we find that the protective interest groups in general have a larger resource base. The members of the protective interest groups are basically collective units rather than individuals, i.e. the members are business companies (BCCA, BSBS), trade unions (BASTUN), and territorial authorities (BSSSC, UBC). The members of the promotional interest groups, on the other hand, are first of all aggregations of individuals. It is true that the members of the CCB as well as the TBN to a large extent are national NGOs, but these are in turn aggregations of individuals. As regards international secretariats, we find a similar difference between the two

groups, although not as clear-cut. All protective interest groups, except the BSBS, have set up their own international secretariats. Three of these have a fixed geographical location (BCCA, BASTUN, and UBC), while one is rotating among the members (BSSSC). In the case of the BSBS, the members have so far relied on the organizational support of a local business association. The two promotional interest groups have chosen different administrative solutions. The TBN has refrained from setting up a secretariat and relies solely on the resources of the most active members. The CCB, on the other hand, has established a permanent secretariat. Taken together, we find that the protective interest groups can benefit from a larger resource base and that they therefore should have better possibilities to carry out transnational lobbying.

The support for the resource hypothesis is generally strong. The economically stronger regional INGOs and transnational networks (BCCA, BSBS, BASTUN, BSSSC, and UBC), which are exclusively representing protective interests, have all to some extent been able to influence the policy-making process of the CBSS. On the other hand, none of the economically weaker promotional actors (CCB, TBN) have been able to exert a similar degree of transnational influence. Furthermore, even though the two business lobbyists have not been awarded the same formal insider status as the territorial interests, which have received the status of special participants, the case studies indicated that they have been somewhat more successful than the other protective groups in influencing actual policy. This seems to be true of the BSBS as well as the BCCA, i.e. we have not found any evidence suggesting that the leaders of the multinational corporations have been more successful or have had a more powerful voice than the chambers of commerce. Neither have we found any conscious attempts by the business interests to utilize their considerable resources to put pressure on the governments. This possibility has only sporadically and indirectly been hinted at. For example, in the 1998 memorandum the business leaders simply stated that "(w)e represent major corporations and important businesses in our home countries" (BSBS, 1998: 1). Similarly, in connection with the 1998 Baltic Sea Business Summit, the chief executive officer of Volvo, Mr. Leif Johansson, emphasized that there were many countries that competed in trying to attract the foreign investments of the companies (*Svenska Dagbladet*, 20 January 1998). The test of the first hypothesis supports the proposition that economic resources must be taken into consideration if we are to fully understand the outcome of transnational lobbying.

## (b) Consensus

A low degree of consensus among members can harm an actor's ability to work effectively. Following Gunnar Sjöblom (1968: 183-4) in a study on party strategies, lack of internal unity can for example make an actor indeci-

sive (“one does not know what ‘one wants’”), incapable of negotiating, inward looking (i.e. resources that otherwise could have been used for external work must be employed to create internal unity), and reduce the actor’s total capability (e.g. members withdraw their resource support). The devastating effect of internal division is well illustrated in the literature on transnational relations. For example, the previous split within the trade union movement in Europe not only made it a weak counter-voice against fascist aggression in the 1920s and 1930s (Chatfield, 1997: 35-6), but also gave an advantage to market forces in lobbying the European Community in the 1980s (Visser and Ebbinghaus, 1992: 206-7). Lack of unity has also been put forward as a possible explanation for why transnational organizations failed to exert much direct influence on the United Nations disarmament negotiations in the 1970s and 1980s (Atwood, 1997: 141) and for why it has been “difficult for environmental NGOs in Brussels to speak with one voice” (Rucht, 1997: 207).

The reasons that transnational consensus has been difficult to achieve in these cases varies. Among the factors mentioned are ideological and political cleavages, the national contexts, and differences in experiences and size. The last factor mentioned is often analyzed from the perspective of rational choice collective action theory. For example, Aspinwall and Greenwood (1998: 7) argue that “one would expect a broad consumer organization made up of individuals to face greater problems of collective action than a small group of very large businesses. One would also expect a federation of national associations to face different calculations of self-interest and rationality than direct membership organisations” (Aspinwall and Greenwood, 1998: 7). In the light of these findings it seems reasonable to expect that the chances of successful lobbying of the CBSS increase if the regional INGOs and networks have a high degree of internal consensus.

*Hypothesis 2: The higher the degree of internal consensus a transnational lobbying organization or network has, the greater the influence it can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

The case studies provide strong support for the consensus hypothesis. Regional INGOs and networks with a high degree of consensus (BCCA, BSBS, BSSSC, UBC) were in general more successful in their lobbying than actors for which one or more examples of internal division could be documented (BASTUN, TBN). The CCB may at first appear to be a deviant case since the lack of influence on the Council could not be explained by a limited consensus. The hypothesis is however supported if we consider its influence on HELCOM. The fact that the business interests are split into two regional actors does not seem to indicate a lack of unity. There are two reasons for this. First, the case studies point to an informal division of labor since the BSBS is a strategic actor avoiding day-to-day work, while the BCCA fo-

cuses more on the continuing process of problem solving and decision-making. Second, the two business actors do at certain times also coordinate their behavior. For example, the BSBS report in 2000 was also adopted by the BCCA (BSBS, 2000: 3). Interestingly, three of the successful lobbyists are direct membership organizations – BSBS (big companies), BSSSC (sub-regional authorities), and UBC (cities) – i.e. the type of organizations in which consensus making was assumed to be easier. On the other hand, the case of the BCCA, which is a federation of national chambers of commerce, suggests that this does not necessarily diminish the chances of successful lobbying.

Two regional actors (BASTUN, TBN) have experienced how limitations in internal consensus can affect lobbying negatively. The consequences have not been as far-reaching in the two cases, because the degree of internal division differs. The trade unions of BASTUN are united on many issues, but as regards the Eastern enlargement of the European Union they disagree considerably on the need for a transitional period (BASTUN, Newsletter 2-2001). The idea of a transitional period reflects a concern among some of the trade unions in Western Europe for the effects of the enlargement on the domestic labor market. The German member organization, DGB (Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund), wants a transitional period of 7 to 10 years. The three members from Finland prefer a flexible transition period, i.e. the parties involved should after a certain time see if the period could be shortened. The Polish member (NSZZ Solidarnosc) firmly opposes every idea of a transitional period. The observed split corresponds well with the fact that the lobbying of BASTUN, at least initially, has not been effective enough to make the CBSS realize the proposal of a social dialogue in the Baltic Sea region. As regards the TBN, the case study indicates even more devastating effects of internal division. The lack of consensus eventually made the Network incapable of finding common standpoints and of agreeing on suitable strategies for collective action. It is also symptomatic that the Trans-Baltic Network has more or less cancelled its lobbying, despite an open attitude in the CBSS.

### (c) Informal organization

Transnational collective action appears with various degrees of formal organization (Greenwood, 1997: 57-8). Some transnational actors appear as formal international organizations, i.e. "purposive entities, with bureaucratic structures and leadership, permitting them to respond to events" (Keohane, 1993: 28). Others are less formal and, even though there is still a common intent for collective action, lack governing and administrative structures. In the literature on European integration there is a debate on the role played by various types of transnational actors. One important conclusion from this exchange has been put forward by Philippe C. Schmitter who stresses "the

importance, not of well-entrenched European-level interest associations, but of *ad hoc* and even *ad personam*, informal groups such as the European Business Roundtable” (Schmitter, 1996: 8). One reason for this slight change of focus is that these groups are generally believed to be more influential “since their exclusive and informal nature means that decision-making and collective action problems either do not arise or are relatively small in comparison to those of some formal groups” (Greenwood, 1997: 104). Considering this, there is reason to assume that transnational actors with a lower degree of formal organization will be relatively more successful in their lobbying.

*Hypothesis 3: The more informal organization a transnational lobbyist has, the greater the influence he or she can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

The case studies give no support for the organizational hypothesis. Only two of the seven studies indicate a connection as the one proposed. Two of the regional actors (BSBS, TBN) have a more informal organization in the sense that they have not created any other structures besides annual or bi-annual meetings. The outcome of their lobbying is however totally different. The case of the Baltic Sea Business Summit is in accordance with the hypothesis, i.e. the success of their lobbying corresponds well with their lower degree of formal organization. On the other hand, the lobbying of the Trans-Baltic Network does not seem to have benefited from having a more flexible organization. The remaining case studies produce even weaker support for the hypothesis. Five regional actors have a more formal organization that includes, among other things, a secretariat and working groups. However, among these it is only the case of the Coalition Clean Baltic that actually supports the hypothesis. In all other cases – the BCCA, BASTUN, and the territorial interests (BSSSC, UBC) – the findings indicate the opposite relationship, i.e. transnational actors with a more formal organization have exerted a great influence on regional interstate cooperation.

The findings point to the necessity to develop and test new hypotheses on the role of having an informal organization in transnational lobbying. The crucial question must then be to specify the situations in which transnational actors benefit from having an informal organization. Obviously, the dependent variable (regional interstate cooperation) is too broad in this context. One alternative would therefore be to make a distinction between two types of regional interstate cooperation. On the one hand, if the cooperation involves problem solving on a day-to-day basis, then it could be assumed that an informal organization can make a difference. The transnational lobbyist would then need an organization that is flexible enough to allow for quick decisions and speedy actions. A formal organization could in such cases make decision-making and collective action much more problematic. On the other

hand, if the regional interstate cooperation were more concerned with strategic issues and on creating long-term policy, then the assumption would be that difference in formal organization is less important. Because the case of the CBSS clearly belongs to latter category, we can conclude that it must be some other variable than the degree of formal organization that accounts for the observed variations.

#### (d) Representativity

It is a commonly held view that democracy is incompatible with international politics (Goldmann, 1986; Nincic, 1992). Decision-making processes at the international level typically occur with little public accountability (Smith, Pagnucco, and Chatfield, 1997: 74). The usual explanations for the incompatibility is that international politics is made through bargaining with outsiders, it concerns the nation's existence and integrity, and it tends to be more or less remote for the individual citizen (Goldmann, 1986: 4-8). Even though transnational lobbying in no way constitutes the solution to this problem, many scholars have noted that it can make a significant difference. For example, it is widely argued in the research literature on European integration that interest groups can play an important role in legitimizing decisions of community institutions and by this help to reduce some of the democratic deficit (cf. Haas, 1958; Andersen and Eliassen, 1996; Greenwood, 1997). Similarly, the presence of transnational social movement organizations in global political processes has been assumed to enhance government accountability (Smith, Pagnucco, and Chatfield, 1997: 74).

Considering this, it seems highly plausible that representativity can also help to explain why some transnational actors have been more successful in their lobbying of the CBSS than others. The term representativity (a noun to representative) is used here to denote the share of an imaginable constituency of entities that is represented by a regional INGO or a transnational network. The constituency, which geographically is delimited by the eleven member states of the CBSS, may be based on citizens as well as on national associations of interest groups (e.g. chambers of commerce, trade unions, environmental groups, or peace groups) or of other types of actors (e.g. companies, sub-regions, or cities). The assumption is that a transnational lobbyist stands a better chance of being successful if he or she represents a considerable part of a constituency. Representativity gives governments an indication of whether or not there is constituency support for certain types of international cooperation. In other words, representativity could operate as a bargaining chip in interactions with governments seeking to enhance the legitimacy for regional interstate cooperation.

*Hypothesis 4: The more representative a transnational lobbyist is, the greater the influence he or she can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

The case studies provide, with one notable exception (the BSBS), rather clear support for the hypothesis. The seven regional actors can be divided into two groups, depending on their degree of representativity. The first group consists of INGOs that represent a high degree of their respective constituencies. This group includes the BCCA (52 chambers of commerce representing 450.000 companies), BASTUN (20 trade unions representing 20 million members), the BSSSC (100 sub-regional authorities), the UBC (100 cities), and the CCB (some 25 NGOs representing 500 000 individual members). In these cases, the findings support the proposition that representativity increases the chance for successful transnational lobbying. The second group is made up of networks representing a significantly smaller degree of their constituencies. This group consists of the BSBS (business leaders of 17 major companies) and the TBN (40 NGOs and individuals representing nearly 100 000 members). In these cases, the findings go in opposite directions. The latter case supports the hypothesis, while the case of the BSBS indicates that transnational influence was possible despite a low degree of representativity.

The business leaders of the Baltic Sea Business Summit certainly claim that they work for conditions that are good for large as well as small businesses. However, several circumstances reveal a considerable lack of representativity. First, because the BSBS de facto has excluded small and medium-sized companies from its membership, it can obviously not be said to represent the whole constituency of business. Second, since the BSBS practices a policy of membership by invitation only, neither can it be said to represent the constituency of major corporations. Perhaps a counter-argument would be that the BSBS still has some representativeness due to its cross-issue-area character, but this does not change the basic fact that the imaginable constituency has not elected the 17 business leaders. Finally, the BSBS also lacks geographical representativity since corporations from Western Europe, and in particular Sweden, clearly outnumber corporations from Eastern Europe. Considering that representativity has been shown to be important in all cases except the BSBS, this suggests that it is somewhat of a deviant case. The reasons that the shortcomings mentioned have not been critical in this case are unclear, but the fact that these actors are the most internationalized and powerful of all transnational actors may affect the relative importance of representativity.

## (e) Knowledge

If a transnational actor possesses scientific or otherwise reliable knowledge, then this can be a valuable asset in motivating governments to change their behavior (cf. Atwood, 1997: 157; Young and Osherenko, 1993: 235-7). If the production and communication of knowledge is a major function of the transnational actor, then it may be referred to as an epistemic community. Peter M. Haas, who coined the term, defines epistemic community as "a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area" (Haas, 1992: 3). The significance of these knowledge-based communities has proved to be particularly high in issue-areas that are characterized by complexity and uncertainty, which applies to for example economic and environmental issues.<sup>73</sup> The term epistemic community has also been used in studies of non-governmental organizations. For example, Charles Chatfield (1997: 33) argues that some of the NGOs that in the 1920s rather successfully lobbied the League of Nations could very well be described as epistemic communities.

There are many ways in which the production and communication of knowledge may help a transnational actor to facilitate interstate cooperation. This can, according to Charles F. Alger (1997: 264-5), be done by, for example, (a) preparing background papers and reports, (b) educating delegates, (c) narrowing knowledge gaps between delegates (e.g. on technical issues), (d) serving as third-party sources of information, and (e) expanding policy options. By providing knowledge a transnational actor may help governments to find technical solutions as well as to understand complex issues and to identify alternative approaches (e.g. Atwood, 1997). Knowledge has been assumed to make a difference especially when there are asymmetries in information. For example, research on interest representation in the European Union shows that many corporations, industrial associations and some public-interest groups (e.g. environmental groups) possess considerable information and expertise (Greenwood, 1997: 18 and 190). In combination with the rather small administrative resources of the Commission of the European Union, it is therefore not unusual to find that such interests play a specialist role in the policy-making processes of the EU. Asymmetries in information, claims Dieter Rucht (1997: 208), frequently make EU executive bodies dependent on the expertise of lobbyists. Considering the modest resources of the CBSS, it seems relevant to look more closely at how Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks have been acting with respect to the production and distribution of knowledge.

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<sup>73</sup> In fact, all articles except one in the special issue of *International Organization* from 1992 that was devoted to epistemic communities can be more or less directly linked to these two issue-areas (Haas, 1992).

*Hypothesis 5: The more knowledge a transnational lobbyist brings forward, the greater the influence he or she can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

The support for the knowledge hypothesis is very strong. The most successful lobbyists (BCCA, BSBS, BSSSC, UBC) are also the ones that have presented one or more reports, which have communicated some more or less reliable knowledge about regional affairs to the CBSS. The trade unions of BASTUN, which have only partly been successful in their lobbying, and the two promotional interest groups (CCB, TBN) have not used this method to communicate knowledge to the CBSS. In the case of the most successful lobbyists, either the own working groups or external experts have produced the knowledge. The business leaders of the BSBS rely more than the other lobbyists on studies by external experts. In the preface to the 1998 memorandum the business leaders declare that "(i)n order to be able to speak more in depth, we have gathered information from many different sources in the business communities and from other relevant sources. We have also commissioned and partly financed three separate and independent studies" (BSBS, 1998: 1). The latter have all been produced by independent academic expertise.<sup>74</sup> In this context, we should also note that the Business Advisory Council has emphasized the importance of bringing scientific support into the CBSS process (BAC, January 19, 1998):

To further the integration process in the Baltic Sea area, scientific support is needed. As resources are limited, scientific institutes dealing with issues in question should be invited to contribute with research programmes giving a scientific contribution to the integration process.

Furthermore, a common feature for the successful lobbyists is that they have distributed reports on issues linked to the economy or the environment, i.e. issues that are characterized by complexity and uncertainty. The governments appear to have been well aware of this aspect, considering that they not only have welcomed transnational input but in some cases also invited regional INGOs to present reports. In the case of the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association, the governments explicitly recognized that the report had contributed to a better understanding for the nature of the problems. The conclusion of this should be that the nature of the issues, in combination

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<sup>74</sup> Kaj Hobér, professor of East European Commercial Law at Uppsala University, did a study on "Protection of Property Rights in the Baltic Sea Region. Potemkin Villages or Reality?" Dr. Inkeri Hirvensalo and Colin Hazley at the Research Institute of the Finnish Economy (ETLA) wrote a report on "Barriers to Foreign Direct Investments". Finally, Dr. Hans Böhme, Dr. Claus-Friedrich Laaser, Dipl.-Volksw. Henning Sichelschmidt, and Prof. Dr. Rudiger Soltwedel at the Institut für Weltwirtschaft in Kiel carried out a study on "Transport in the Baltic Sea Region - Perspectives for the Economies in Transition".

with the fact that the CBSS lacks significant administrative resources, helps explain why the hypothesis received such strong support.

#### (f) Power in implementation

The implementation of policies often has a political aspect because policies encourage participation by outside actors (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984: 213). Depending on how much these outside actors are affected by or responsible for the implementation, they may cause delays or even determine if it will succeed or not. Similarly, we can assume that if a transnational lobbyist somehow can contribute to the implementation of interstate agreements, then this may be perceived as a bargaining chip that increases the chances of successfully lobbying the preceding decision. Studies of transnational relations show that this contribution can be more or less direct. For example, the agricultural policy of the European Union can hardly be developed without hearing the farmers first, “because farmers have the ability to make or break such a policy in that they would be the key actors responsible for implementation” (Greenwood, 1997: 19). A similar role has been played by industrial actors in the development of a European technology community (Cram, 1997: 84), or by NGOs in the implementation of environmental projects (Smith, 1997b: 181). Transnational actors can also play an indirect role in implementation by being able to, for example, “assemble information critical to verifying government compliance with agreements” (Smith, Pagnucco, and Chatfield, 1997: 74). Taken together, these findings point to the reasonableness of considering the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 6: The more power in implementation a transnational lobbyist has, the greater the influence he or she can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

The power in implementation hypothesis receives rather strong support when tested against the seven case studies. Some regional INGOs can obviously claim to have a bargaining chip with respect to implementation. The support of the territorial interests is important because many CBSS policies can hardly be implemented without the active support of sub-regional and local authorities. This was also the main reason that the CBSS in 1999 decided to give special participant status to the Baltic Sea States Subregional Cooperation and the Union of Baltic Cities, which is practiced when third parties somehow can contribute to “the Council’s capacity for practical action” and to “the achievement of the goals of CBSS” (CBSS, February, 1999). The CBSS Council has also encouraged the two INGOs “to contribute to the process of implementation of Baltic 21”<sup>75</sup> (CBSS, June 22-23, 1998) and

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<sup>75</sup> Baltic 21 refers to the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region.

acknowledged their role “in implementing the necessary changes in connection with the EU enlargement process” (CBSS, June 14-15, 1999). The activities of the two business actors are equally important as they help to realize CBSS goals on growth and welfare. However, in this case it should be noted that decisions on reducing various obstacles to trade and investments are primarily directed towards various state actors. The role of the business groups is therefore more linked to the monitoring of how states implement reforms, exemplified by the BSBS checklist or the BCCA involvement in the planning of a study of crossing border times.

The Baltic Sea Trade Union Network, the Coalition Clean Baltic, and the Trans-Baltic Network have not played a similar role. The CCB is with respect to implementation clearly involved in concrete environmental activities, which has given it an observer role in HELCOM. However, this has not been a bargaining chip in relation to the CBSS, which despite an interest for environmental issues (e.g. a special action program and the Baltic 21) has not awarded the environmental INGO the status of a special participant. It is therefore only the case of the CCB that contradicts the hypothesis.

### (g) Strategy

It is a matter of course for studies of transnational lobbyists to pay attention to strategy (Moon, 1988; Mingst, 1995). Strategy has been defined as “an actor’s extensive and comprehensive planning of the use of available means with the object of attaining certain goals attempted in competition with others” (Sjöblom, 1968: 30). Similarly, it may be presumed that transnational lobbyists do not act in a vacuum in which they can achieve goals without taking into consideration the activities of other actors. In other words, regional INGOs will have to compete with other INGOs as well as other type of actors (e.g. governments or companies) if they want to influence regional interstate cooperation. There are a number of different strategies that transnational lobbyists can employ to exert influence. Chung In-Moon (1988) and Karen Mingst (1995) have in their work made a distinction between four transnational strategies, referred to as the power approach, the technocratic approach, coalition building, and grass-roots mobilization. The strategies are more or less directly linked to lobbying. The first strategy focuses on how the lobbying itself is carried out, while the latter three are complementary strategies that in various ways affect how successful the lobbying will be.

By using the power approach, transnational actors “attempt to target top decision makers” such as high-level government officials (Mingst, 1995: 238). We expect this strategy to be used rather frequently in the Baltic Sea region. The reason for this is that all states in the region (except Russia) today are rated as free (cf. Chapter 3), and democracy is generally assumed to make it easier for lobbyists to get access to policy-makers (cf. Risse-Kappen, 1995a). The second strategy, the technocratic approach, implies that transna-

tional actors "use knowledge of procedural mechanisms as well as the legal system" (Mingst, 1995: 239). For example, by referring to an international regime, transnational actors can put extra pressure on governments to comply with principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures.<sup>76</sup> If a government has made commitments to an international regime, then reminders of non-compliance can be quite embarrassing (Keck & Sikkink, 1998: 24). The technocratic approach is strongly related to issue-area because international regimes have shown to be more frequent within some areas (such as environment, human rights, and trade) than others. The third strategy, the coalition-building approach, characterizes situations where transnational actors "utilize domestic actors to build coalitions, forging domestic policy consensus" (p. 240). By building coalitions with important interest groups a lobbyist can hope to loosen up governmental opposition to regional cooperation. Finally, transnational actors may also employ the strategy of grass-roots mobilization, which means that they "try to build widespread public involvement in several countries" (p. 240). By mobilizing public opinion to activities such as letter writing and demonstrations, decision makers can be put under extra pressure. However, as noted by Julian Greenwood, it is often believed that "the less public an interest makes its affairs the more successful it tends to be, because it is able to get its needs met on the 'inside track' of public policy-making. ... Increasing use of public appeal strategies may signify the erosion of insider status" (Greenwood, 1997: 16-7). This observation actually suggests that there may be a trade-off between grass-roots mobilization and the power approach. If both strategies are selected, then there may be a risk that the former reduces the effectiveness of the latter.

Considering the distinction between the four transnational strategies, we have formulated a hypothesis based on the assumption that influence depends on how strategic the lobbyist is. Our focus will be on the number of strategies being used, which implies that it is more effective to use a combination of strategies rather than to rely on just one single strategy. The only exception to this may be cases where actors combine the power approach with the strategy of grass-roots mobilization.

*Hypothesis 7: The more strategic a transnational lobbyist is, the greater the influence he or she can exert on regional interstate cooperation.*

The strategy hypothesis receives rather strong support when tested against the seven case studies. We find that the protective interests in general have been acting more strategic than the promotional interests and that the former have also been the most influential ones. The protective interests have com-

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<sup>76</sup> On compliance with international agreements, see e.g. Tallberg (1999) and Underdal (1998).

bined first of all the power and the technocratic approaches. The former approach has been employed somewhat differently in the individual cases. The major corporations of the BSBS have targeted the highest political level (i.e. the Summit meetings of the Heads of Government) exclusively, while the other interest groups have focused much more on the levels of officials and ministers (or the levels of preparation and decision making).<sup>77</sup> The former target was initially also the main focus of the trade unions (BASTUN), but they have eventually come to approach other targets as well.

Besides the power approach, the protective interests have also put a lot of emphasis on the technocratic approach. International and regional regimes are frequently referred to when proposals are put forward or when comments are made upon CBSS policies and standpoints. Not least the common market rules of the European Union are repeatedly referred to. One of the most successful actors, the Baltic Sea Business Summit, is also among those that most systematically employ the technocratic approach. For example, the 1998 memorandum that was headed over to the CBSS Summit in Riga contains references to international regimes governing trade as well as human rights. First, it is established that "(t)he trade regimes in the region are centered around the EU. ... In this perspective there is no need and no time for vague designs about trade cooperation in the region" (BSBS, 1998: 7-8). In this case the major corporations not only put pressure on the Eastern countries to liberalize trade but also reminded the EU to, among other things, abolish remaining import restrictions on products from applicant countries. In connection to the free trade issue, the BSBS also urged the Russian government "to remain committed to WTO membership and to take the appropriate steps to qualify for membership" (p. 8). Second, the business leaders found support in the European Convention on Human Rights in which the Council of Europe prescribes a minimal level of protection for individual freedoms. In the 1998 memorandum the BSBS accordingly reminds the countries that they have all ratified the Convention and "thus undertaken to uphold and protect those liberties" (p. 12). It is also emphasized, with special address to the transitional economies, that the Convention "has given arguments for provisions of the right to appeal authorities' decisions" (p. 20).

The two promotional interests, the Coalition Clean Baltic and the Trans-Baltic Network, have both been acting less strategic. First, none of them have more than in exceptional cases employed the power approach. The lack of contacts with top decision makers has also been recognized as a problem by the leadership of the CCB and was one of the reasons that it in the year

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<sup>77</sup> Interestingly, in the case of the BSBS it should also be noted that in the 1998 memorandum the business leaders argue for establishing various high-level corporatist-like structures at the national level. Even though there is no evidence that the BSBS itself will claim a place in these structures, they do in fact open up a possible national avenue of influence. It could, for instance, be mentioned that Percy Barnevik, one of the Swedish members of the BSBS, is a member of the National Advisory Councils in both Russia and Poland.

2000 wanted to intensify the participation in the Baltic 21 process. Second, even though the two transnational actors are active within issue-areas that include a number of international regimes, they have made little use of the technocratic approach. Both have the opportunity to make reference to a number of environmental and disarmament regimes respectively, but neither has systematically adopted this strategy to lobby the CBSS. Finally, since the CCB and the TBN are strongly decentralized actors, they have good possibilities to employ the strategies of grass-roots mobilization and coalition building. These strategies have however not been adopted by the promotional interests to lobby the CBSS. In fact, judging from the case studies, there is very little evidence suggesting that that these two strategies have played any significant role at all. Certainly the business leaders of the BSBS in 1998 arranged a public seminar in connection with the lobbying of the Summit meeting in Riga, but this was a single event and was not intended to mobilize grass roots.

## Conditioners related to structure

### (a) Regional interdependence

It is a common view that interdependence has brought fundamental change to international politics. In Robert Keohane's and Joseph Nye's seminal work *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, interdependence is defined as "situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries" (Keohane and Nye, 1977: 8). The core of interdependence, according to Oran Young, is that it "arises when the actions of individual members of a social system impact (whether materially or perceptually) the welfare of other members of the system" (Young, 1992: 188). The phenomenon has been particularly visible in issue-areas related to economic, social, and environmental affairs (Zacher, 1992: 67).

Interdependence has clear implications for international cooperation. The literature suggests that there is a positive relation between the two, since "(a)t higher levels of interdependence, the opportunity costs of not coordinating policy are greater" (Keohane, 1993: 35). Interestingly, this proposition has also been linked to the discussion on transnational actors. Keohane and Nye assumed (1977: 34): "The nearer a situation is to complex interdependence, the more we expect the outcomes of political bargaining to be affected by transnational relations". Mark W. Zacher has similarly noted that "(w)hat is occurring in the world is not a serious demise of states as the central actors in the system (although certain transnational actors are achieving greater prominence) but rather their acceptance that they have to work together in controlling a variety of interdependencies" (Zacher, 1992: 67; cf.

Risse-Kappen, 1995a: 30 note 53). Considering this, and keeping in mind that interdependence can be issue-area related, it is proposed that transnational lobbying will be more successful in areas marked by regional interdependence.

Hypothesis 8: *The more an issue-area is marked by regional interdependence, the greater the influence transnational lobbyists can exert on regional interstate cooperation within that area.*

The development of interdependence in the Baltic Sea region has been most varying. The general pattern suggests that the Baltic Sea states are becoming more interdependent. It should however be noted that the pace of the change varies considerably between issue-areas. The phenomenon is most salient in areas such as fishery and environment, i.e. areas that are directly related to the state of health of the Baltic Sea and more generally to the living conditions in the region. The Baltic Sea states have for a long time been aware of how environmental actions by one state easily impact on the welfare of the other states (e.g. Hjort, 1992). This is not least reflected by the fact that regional interstate cooperation on these matters was established already in the early 1970s.<sup>78</sup> The reciprocal effects in the environmental area are also clearly perceived by the Coalition Clean Baltic. In fact, it was very much the awareness of this aspect that originally got the environmentalists to decide on establishing a regional INGO (CCB, Norén and Cronström, 2000).

Regional interdependence has not developed in the same way in the economic and social issue-areas, i.e. areas that are more directly linked to the political economy of the Baltic Sea states. In the case of economic interdependence it took until the 1990s, or the post-Cold War years, before a significant change began to occur. A major indicator such as trade shows that the region is approaching a situation where economic actions by one actor significantly impact on the welfare of the other states. As was clear from Chapter 3, 47 per cent of the total volume of exports from the nine littoral states was in the year 2000 directed towards the Baltic Sea area.<sup>79</sup> The potential of the region to reach a situation of economic interdependence has also been envisaged by one of the business related interest groups:

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<sup>78</sup> The cooperation is in both cases based on an international convention, which is administered by a regional organization. The International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission is the governing body of the 1973 Gdansk Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources in the Baltic Sea and the Belts. The Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (also known as the Helsinki Commission or HELCOM) is the governing body of the 1974 and 1992 Conventions on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area.

<sup>79</sup> Of course, this does not have to imply a situation of evenly balanced mutual dependence. It is, writes Keohane and Nye, “*asymmetries* in dependence that are most likely to provide sources of influence for actors in their dealings with one another” (Keohane and Nye, 1977: 10-1).

Western companies can find new competitive suppliers as well as customers in the countries in transition, while the rapidly developing firms in the eastern part of the region can find both technology and markets in the western part of the region. As the eastern part of our region develops this will also benefit the countries in the western part of the region (BSBS, 1998:2).

The level of social interdependence is still very low in the Baltic Sea region. The movement of people and labor was practically non-existent at the regional level during the Cold War.<sup>80</sup> The cross-border flows of people have increased considerably since then, stimulated by among other things the relaxation of visa requirements. However, this applies first of all to non-labor flows such as intra-regional tourism. As regards the movement of labor, social interdependence can hardly be expected to develop before the Eastern enlargement of the European Union. The common market rules of the EU, which also apply to the movement of labor, at present (at the time of writing) cut straight through the Baltic Sea region. However, the prospect of change has increased in recent years considering that Poland and the three Baltic states became full members in May 2004. This development was also one important reason that BASTUN was created in 1999, but in this case it was also the vulnerability dimension of interdependence that was highlighted.<sup>81</sup> In other words, the trade unions feared a scenario in which the enlargement would undermine Western social and labor standards (BASTUN, 7 July 1999).

As regards regional security, we can hardly talk about interdependence in the same sense as in the other issue-areas. There are however some signs that the phenomenon of regional interdependence is also making its entry into this issue-area. This might at first seem to be an impossible combination in the case of the Baltic Sea region. On the one hand, it should be remembered that one characteristic of regional interdependence is that governments do not use military force toward each other (Keohane & Nye, 1977: 25). On the other hand, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the Baltic Sea states have been and still are deeply divided on matters related to military security, which not least can be seen on the issue of NATO membership. Despite this however, there are some signs that security interdependence is slowly developing in the Baltic Sea region. First, in the case of military security, it has been argued that NATO membership of former eastern bloc countries (such as Poland and the three Baltic states) should not be viewed as an offensive move or as a threat to neighboring states. This logic suggests, in

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<sup>80</sup> It should be noted that the level of social interdependence was, and still is, much higher in the Nordic region (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden). Cooperative achievements such as the Nordic Passport Union in 1952, the Common Nordic Labor Market in 1954 (extended to Iceland in 1982), and the Nordic Social Security Convention in 1955 contributed to this (Thomas, 1996).

<sup>81</sup> This dimension "rests on the relative availability and costliness of the alternatives that various actors face" (Keohane and Nye, 1977: 13).

the words of James Sperling and Emil Kirchner (1997: 9), “that many of the means by which European states attempt to increase their own security *increase* the security of others”. Or, to put it differently, reciprocal security effects have become one characteristic of post-Cold War Europe. Second, in the area of non-military threats, the Baltic Sea governments have become increasingly aware of how security actions of one state impact on the welfare of the other states. This awareness has formed the basis of regional cooperation in recent years on, for example, nuclear and radiation safety, communicable disease control, and the fight against organized crime (cf. Karlsson, 2004).

The interdependence hypothesis receives rather strong support when tested against the case studies. In other words, regional interdependence tends to open the door to policy-makers at the intergovernmental level and make them relatively more receptive to transnational lobbying. Accordingly, there is a high level of correspondence in the case of the two business actors. The successful lobbying of the BCCA and the BSBS took place in an issue-area (economic) marked by increasing interdependence. The result of the BASTUN case study is perhaps somewhat more mixed, but it seems at least clear that the partly successful lobbying corresponds with the prospect of an increasing social interdependence. Stronger support is found in the case studies of territorial interests. The achievements of the BSSSC and the UBC can partly be explained by the fact that their activities, among other things, include a heavy focus on economic and environmental issues. Coalition Clean Baltic may at first appear to be a deviant case, considering it has not been awarded an insider status by the Council of Baltic Sea States despite the fact that it is working in an area marked by interdependence. However, the hypothesis is supported if we consider that the CCB has observer status in the HELCOM and takes part in the Baltic 21 process. Finally, the case of the Trans-Baltic Network shows the difficulties of exerting transnational influence when you are active in an area (security) where there is a low level of interdependence. Together these findings suggest that the success of the regional INGOs and transnational networks were dependent on whether or not the lobbying took place in an issue-area marked by regional interdependence.

## (b) Democracy

The spread of democracy has been remarkable since the end of the Cold War. Progress in democratization has occurred in several regions, including Eastern Europe, Southern Africa, and Central America.<sup>82</sup> In the Baltic Sea

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<sup>82</sup> It is debated among scholars whether this change in a historical perspective should be seen as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of democratization that began in the 1970s or if it should be referred to as a new 4<sup>th</sup> wave of democratization.

region the demise of the former socialist bloc brought into existence five new democracies (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia). Even though the transition to democracy has worked more smoothly in some countries than others (see Chapter 3), all five had by the mid 1990s become members of the Council of Europe (see Chapter 4). Because of this development, the Baltic Sea is today almost completely encompassed by democracies.

It is a widely spread opinion among scholars specializing in international relations that there is a positive relation between democracy and interstate cooperation (e.g. Zacher, 1992: 94-95). This proposition, I would argue, is also of some significance for a study of transnational lobbying. Findings in Thomas Risse-Kappen's *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In* (1995a) indicate that transnational actors, on the one hand, find it easier to gain access to democratic than non-democratic governments. On the other hand, if they manage to gain access to a non-democratic regime their influence might be considerable, while the influence on a democratic regime might be rather small since there are numerous other actors trying to influence the government. In other words, it will in the latter case be more difficult for a single lobbyist to exert influence because of tougher competition from other interests. In accordance with this assumption, there might also arise situations in which different interests balance each other (cf. Cowles, 1998: 113; Kriesberg, 1997: 15). For example, the growth of European level organizations of labor and environmental interests is sometimes described as a counterweight to industrial interests. If these findings are translated into international relations, they suggest that transnational actors will not find it particularly difficult to gain access to intergovernmental or transgovernmental targets if they operate in a region made up of democracies. However, the results of their lobbying run the risk of being rather limited.

*Hypothesis 9: The more a region is marked by democracy, the more difficult it will be for a single transnational lobbyist to exert influence on regional interstate cooperation, even though it will be easier to get access to the policy-makers.*

The hypothesis will be tested, not by a comparison of regions, but by a comparison of seven cases of transnational lobbying from one and the same region. This means that the democracy variable will have a fixed value, while there are variations in access and influence. The support for the democracy hypothesis is somewhat mixed when it is confronted with the results of the case studies. The assumption about the accessibility of policy-makers appears in general to be correct. Most regional INGOs and networks have established more or less regular contacts with one or more bodies of the CBSS. The territorial interests (BSSSC, UBC) have been given status of special participants. The two business actors (BCCA, BSBS) have both received

insider status, but in a way that complement each other. The BCCA has established close contacts at the level of officials, while the big company leaders of the BSBS have recurrent contacts at the highest CBSS level (Heads of Government). The trade unions of BASTUN have also achieved insider status, but in this case the evidence indicated some difficulties in realizing the particular relationship aimed at (i.e. establishing a social dialogue in the Baltic Sea region). The promotional interests (CCB, TBN), finally, are in this context to be considered as outsiders, which is in contradiction to expectations. However, the fact that the Coalition Clean Baltic in 1991 was awarded observer status of HELCOM is in line with the hypothesis. This conclusion is to some extent also valid for the Trans-Baltic Network, which in 1995 was encouraged by the CSO to continue its interest in the CBSS.

The support for the democracy hypothesis becomes weaker when we look at the actual influence on the CBSS. It was expected that it would be difficult for a single transnational actor to maximize its influence in a context of competing interests. The case studies however do not seem to fully support this proposition. It is above all the lobbying of the business actors that have been more successful than expected. The result is surprising because we would expect that the labor interests (BASTUN) and the environmental interests (CCB) to some extent would balance the business lobbyists. However, the potential balancing interests have for various reasons been either weak or lacking. The trade union network BASTUN was only created in 1999, while the business actors were established in 1992 and 1996, respectively. The CCB has so far focused more on HELCOM than on the CBSS, while the lobbying of the TBN in general has been very limited. Taken together this means that the business interests for several years, and especially during the formative years of the CBSS, have been able to lobby relatively undisturbed by other interests. In addition to this, it should also be noted that the territorial interests (BSSSC, UBC) have not played a counterweight role since they partly have had a common interest in promoting trade and growth and partly focused on other issues. Finally, considering the appearance of BASTUN on the regional level, it is possible that the strength of the hypothesis will increase in the coming years. A first example of this is perhaps indicated already in BASTUN's own lobbying for a social dialogue in the Baltic Sea region, which at least initially has proved somewhat difficult to realize.

### (c) Regional institutions

International institutions have come to play an increasing role governing the relations between states (Young, 1989: 5-6). International institutions have been defined as "persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations" (Keohane, 1993: 28). The occurrence of institutions has been found to vary

with issue-areas. For example, intergovernmental organizations are more common in issue-areas related to economic, social and cultural matters than to military matters (Jacobson, 1979: 53), and international regimes are more common in the field of international political economy, particularly trade and monetary issues (Young, 1989: 5-6; Keohane, 1993: 38).

The existence of international institutions can provide favorable political opportunity structures for transnational influence (Smith, Pagnucco, and Chatfield, 1997: 68-70). Institutions have sometimes been described as “institutionalized channels of access” (Rucht, 1997: 207) or “institutional avenues” (Knopf, 1998: 25) for non-governmental interests. The metaphors imply that institutions are important because they provide targets for transnational lobbyists. In other words, institutions such as intergovernmental and transgovernmental organizations, conferences and meetings could provide important entrances into the regional policy-making process. The logical assumption that follows from this is that transnational actors operating in issue-areas already covered by regional institutions can be expected to be more successful in their lobbying of regional interstate cooperation. This hypothesis should apply to the Baltic Sea region since the CBSS cooperates in selected issue-areas and since it has become more institutionalized in recent years (cf. Chapter 4).

*Hypothesis 10: The more institutionalized an issue-area is at the regional level, the greater the influence transnational lobbyists can exert on regional interstate cooperation within that area.*

The case studies provide rather strong support for the last hypothesis. The successful lobbying of the two business actors (BCCA, BSBS) corresponds well with the fact that the CBSS has a well-developed administrative structure for economic issues, including the Working Group for Economic Cooperation as well as the Business Advisory Council. Similarly, the lack of a corresponding working group for labor market issues helps explain why the trade unions of BASTUN have experienced difficulties when they have lobbied for the implementation of a social dialogue at the regional level. The weak influence of the promotional interests (CCB, TBN) is also in accordance with the hypothesis, considering that the CBSS has not set up any particular bureaucratic structures (e.g. working groups) for environmental or military issues within the framework of the formal organization. On the other hand, the fact that the CBSS member-states have pointed to environmental issues as one of its priorities (cf. the 1992 Copenhagen Declaration, and the 1996 Kalmar Action Program) shows that the Coalition Clean Baltic has either missed or consciously refrained from utilizing one opportunity structure for influence. The influence of the territorial interests (BSSSC, UBC) corresponds to available institutional avenues if we consider their rather all-embracing focus. Support for the hypothesis does however de-

crease if we take into consideration the fact that the CBSS has not responded to the request for setting up a separate body for sub-regional or local issues. Finally, it should also be noted that general targets – such as the CSO, the Council, and the Heads of Government – have proved valuable access points for some transnational interests as well. In the case of the business leaders of the BSBS, the findings suggest that the high-level institution of Summit meetings may even compensate for the absence of lobbying of issue-area institutions such as the Working Group for Economic Cooperation.



## 6. Conclusions

### Introduction

This book has analyzed transnational relations in the Baltic Sea region some ten years after the end of the Cold War. We have found interactions between non-state actors to be flowing across nation-state borders in this area. Many non-governmental organizations today have regular contacts with counterparts in the other littoral states. In some cases, the non-state actors have deepened their cooperation and established regional INGOs or transnational networks as well. The purpose of this has been, among other things, to establish a platform from which they can interact with the Baltic Sea states and have an influence on regional intergovernmental processes. In this concluding chapter we will complete the analysis of the two research questions – (1) Why are some non-state actors more successful in developing and maintaining durable patterns of transnational interaction than others? (2) Why are some transnational actors more successful in their lobbying than others? For each question we will first give a short summary of the empirical results and the theoretical implications. Then, we will reflect upon the findings and discuss why the study produced certain results. For this purpose we will consider explanations related to methodological aspects (e.g. the design of the study or the reliability of the chosen procedures for data collection) as well as to empirical aspects (e.g. the post-Cold War context or the enlargement of the European Union). Finally, we will also point at some avenues for future research.

### Transnational contacts

The first part of the book dealt with transnational contacts between non-governmental organizations. More specifically, we wanted to find out under what conditions regular NGO interactions across nation-state borders were developed. The analysis was carried out in two steps. The first step was devoted to a mapping of the contacts, while the second step focused on the task of explaining. Based upon an e-post questionnaire, which was answered by a total of 447 NGOs (response rate 52.1 per cent), we mapped the regional

interactions with respect to types of NGOs as well as to the NGOs country of origin. In the former case, we found transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region to be most common among NGOs focusing on business and internationalism. Regional interactions were also rather common among environmental and social welfare NGOs while being relatively less common among NGOs concerned with labor, knowledge, and primordial issues. Transnational contacts were least common among NGOs focusing on democracy related issues. The observed variation was seen with respect to both the scope and the frequency of the contacts. As regards type of activity, we found environmental and democracy NGOs to be comparatively more outward looking, while NGOs focusing on primordial issues and internationalism were the most inward looking ones.

Turning to the respondent NGOs' country of origin, the discovered patterns showed that organizations from the countries on the eastern rim of the Baltic Sea (with the exception of Russian NGOs) had more transnational contacts in the region than NGOs from the southern rim. In other words, NGOs from Finland and the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) tended to have more regional contacts than NGOs from Denmark, Germany and Poland. This pattern appeared when we studied the scope as well as the frequency of the contacts. Moreover, because the eastern rim NGOs also tended to have most of their regional contacts with organizations from the other eastern rim countries, we found reason to speak of a transnational sub-region in the Baltic Sea area. The existence of a Nordic sub-region appeared as well, even though this pattern of transnational interactions was less clear. As regards type of activity, we found Swedish and Polish NGOs to be the most outward looking organizations, while inward looking activities were given relatively more attention among Finnish and Danish NGOs. Finally, it should be noted that the map of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region is in one respect less clear. This concerns the role of the Russian NGOs, which due to a low response rate were excluded from this part of the analysis. However, considering that the NGOs from the other eight Baltic Sea countries have very few regular contacts with Russian counterparts, we have reason to suspect that Russia is the least integrated country in this transnational region.

In order to explain the discovered patterns of transnational contacts we turned to previous research. We found a certain support for focusing on a smaller selection of eight variables. Of course, regular NGO interactions across nation-state borders may be affected by a large number of factors, but following previous studies some factors appear clearly to be more important than others. The eight variables were brought together in the frame of a model, which although being a simplification of reality was expected to provide considerable explanatory power. However, after hypothesis testing, we found the relevance of the specific variables to be rather varying. If we want to know why some types of NGOs have more transnational contacts than

others, then the Baltic Sea case suggests that we should pay attention to interests, democracy, technological progress, and international governmental institutions. If we instead want to know why NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts than others, then our findings stress the importance of interests, geographical distance, and economic interdependence. This means that the relevance of the individual structural conditioners depends on which type of transnational contacts we are studying, while actors' interests (for regional issues as well as for influencing interstate relations) appear as given conditioners. Another finding was that personnel resources at large failed to explain the two main patterns of transnational contacts.

These findings only apply to the overarching picture, and as soon as we start to scrutinize specific patterns of transnational contacts we will find various deviations. Starting with the six patterns considering type of NGO, we were only able to partly explain four of these.<sup>83</sup> Interest based explanations offered some understanding of bilateral contacts, while three of the structural conditioners (democracy, technological progress, and international governmental institutions) helped explain type of activity. However, in none of these cases did the test indicate more than moderate connections. For three variables – personnel resources, geographical distance, and economic interdependence – the conditioners' effect on the transnational contacts was either weak or insignificant. All variables more or less failed to explain why some types of NGOs have more multilateral contacts than others.

The findings were only partly reiterated when we moved on to analyze the six patterns that are related to the NGOs' country of origin. Once again the model accounted for bilateral contacts, but this time it failed to explain why NGOs from certain countries are engaged in certain types of activities. As regards multilateral contacts, the model managed to explain the scope of the contacts, but not the frequency. Another finding concerns the relevance of the single variables. On the one hand, when we focused on type of NGO we found that the individual patterns were best explained by reference to either actor or to structure. On the other hand, when we considered the NGOs' country of origin, we found – in cases where the model proved to be relevant – that a combination of actor and structurally related variables offered the best explanation. Interests together with geographical distance and economic interdependence offered a solid knowledge of bilateral contacts as well as of scope of multilateral contacts. We should also remember that the second test of the hypotheses was more successful in the sense that most of the relevant correlations turned out to be strong rather than moderate. In other words, the

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<sup>83</sup> The two main patterns of transnational contacts - type of NGO and the NGOs' country of origin - were both analyzed with respect to scope (bilateral and multilateral), frequency (bilateral and multilateral), and type of activity (outward and inward looking).

model was relatively more successful in explaining why NGOs from some countries have more transnational contacts.

In order to perform a thorough examination of the model we must also take a closer look at how it was constructed. The model was based on three premises. The first premise stressed the importance of considering variables related to actors as well as to structures. This assumption seems to be more or less supported by the empirical test. If we consider all correlations, then we find an actor-structure mix of variables among ten of the twelve contact patterns (83 per cent). In the remaining two cases, the model performed too poorly to make any reliable conclusions possible. An additional finding in connection with the first premise concerns the difference between the two main patterns of transnational contacts. If we focus on type of NGO, then the evidence shows that actor related variables play a more prominent role in explaining bilateral contacts, while various structures carry greater weight when it comes to type of activity. This variation did not appear when the focus was shifted to the NGOs' country of origin.

The second premise concerned variables related to the actors (the NGOs) themselves. It was assumed that a thorough understanding of transnational contacts requires that interests as well as resources be taken into consideration. This seems at first sight to be a too rigorous assumption. Interests are certainly important for explaining many of the patterns. The explanatory power proved significant for ten of the twelve patterns, and for half of these the evidence indicated either a moderate or a strong connection. On the other hand, in the case of personnel resources we could not find more than weak connections at the best. The failure of this variable to come up with any significant explanatory power does not necessarily have to imply that it should be excluded from the model. Because we are studying an elite among NGOs, it is possible that the effect of personnel resources is somewhat reduced. For example, if an NGO has computers and is connected to the Internet, then it might not make that much difference for the scope and the frequency of the external contacts if the organization has, say, ten instead of twenty employees. As previously argued, technological developments make contacts across state borders much easier.

The third premise of the model focused on structural variables. Previous research made us expect transnational contacts to be influenced by political opportunity structures at different levels of analysis. For that reason the model included variables at three levels of analysis, including the national level (democracy, technological progress), the relational level (geographical distance, economic interdependence), and the systemic level (international governmental institutions). The results of the hypothesis test show that this was a fairly reasonable assumption. We found for seven of the twelve patterns a mix of structural variables belonging to more than one level of analysis. Five patterns deviate, but none of these give us reason to change the basic assumption. Three of the patterns can only be linked to a structural

conditioner at one level, but in none of these cases did the test suggest more than a weak connection. The final two patterns could not be structurally explained at all.

The results of the hypothesis test suggest that the model represents one additional step towards a more thorough understanding of transnational contacts. It seems, however, equally clear that we have to take more steps before we can arrive at a robust theory. Certainly the test confirms the relevance of at least seven of the selected eight variables, but when these are taken together they appear rather to belong to a basket of variables than to a well-designed model. Of course, there may be many reasons that we have reached this result. In the following we will therefore try to approach this question more systematically by looking at both methodological and empirical aspects. Starting with the former, one reason for the outcome has to do with how we define the dependent variable, i.e. regular transnational contacts. As long as we talk about transnational contacts in general the model proves fairly relevant. However, as soon as we start to specify the phenomena we want to explain, the relevance of the individual variables begins to vary considerably. This was clearly seen in the case of the five structural conditioners, which turned out to have rather different explanatory power depending on whether we focused on the interaction of different types of NGOs or on the contacts of NGOs from different countries of origin. The same problem appeared when we sought to explain various aspects of the transnational contacts (scope, frequency, and type of activity). Considering the dependent variable problem, the model should therefore in the first place be seen as a basket of variables. The importance of the single conditioners depends on exactly which type of pattern we are looking at. If we change focus from one type of transnational contact to another, then the balance between the conditioners will change as well.

Another methodological aspect that might have affected the results concerns the reliability of the chosen procedures for data collection. The data for this part of the analysis was collected through an e-post questionnaire. Our experience of using this technique of gathering data has been mainly positive. It clearly creates new opportunities for future studies of transnational relations, especially when these are distributed among a large number of countries. Even so, there are also some obvious problems connected with it. One well-known problem is the difficulty in achieving a high response rate. Even though our response rate of 52.1 per cent is about the same as for similar studies, it is clearly one source of uncertainty. The implication of this is not obvious, but it seems reasonable to suspect that NGOs with regular transnational contacts may be somewhat over represented among the respondents.<sup>84</sup> Put differently, a NGO with no transnational contacts may find the

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<sup>84</sup> For example, some 76 per cent of the respondents reported that they have regular bilateral transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region (see Tables 7 and 15).

questionnaire less meaningful. A related problem concerns the choice of language. We decided to conduct the questionnaire in English, but since this is only a secondary language in this region at best it probably helps to explain the low response rate. Another aspect of the language problem is that it inevitably entails difficulties in understanding. To take but one example, have all respondents been absolutely clear about the meaning of the term the Baltic Sea states? In the introduction to the questionnaire we talk explicitly about the nine littoral states, but this does not guarantee that some respondents have confused this term with the Baltic states, i.e. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Remembering that these countries (together with Finland) were particularly embedded in regional transnational contacts suggests that this possibility cannot definitively be ruled out.

Beside methodological aspects, we have also reason to believe that the results have been affected by some real world developments not explicitly addressed in this study. For example, previous research suggests that transnational relations are most likely affected by changes in the security context and by expansions of the state system (cf. Chapter 3). These conditioners were however not included in this study because they have fixed values. That is, we present a snapshot of transnational contacts in the Baltic Sea region in the year 2000 / 2001, but to be able to say something about the importance of these factors we must have at least two measurement points. For example, if this study had been preceded by a similar study some ten or twenty years ago, then it would have been possible to analyze the effects of changes in both variables. The expectation would then be that the present transnationalization of the Baltic Sea region would hardly have taken place had not the end of the Cold War and the break up of the Soviet Union occurred. Another potential conditioner, which probably will increase in importance over the next years, is the current enlargement of the European Union. The EU has in recent years expanded into the Baltic Sea region. Germany and Denmark were joined in 1995 by Finland and Sweden, and Poland and the three Baltic states have just become full members as well (at the time of writing). The arrival of the European Union will bring a new institutional context to the Baltic Sea region, which will most likely further stimulate transnational relations. For example, the Commission of the EU is known for encouraging transnational relations as a way to increase legitimacy, to secure expertise input, and to influence public opinion, among other things (e.g. Greenwood, 1997; Mazey and Richardson, 2001).

We would like to complete the first part of the conclusions by pointing at some potential avenues for future research. Three tasks stand out as particularly important. First, we see a clear need for more research on the size and the characteristics of the entire population of non-governmental organizations. Because of the lack of reliable sources, we had to base the selection of NGOs on quota rather than on a probability criteria. A more accurate picture of the population would enable us to say to what extent the discovered corre-

lations are statistically significant. Second, the model needs to be tested against other cases. Our goal was to construct a model with general applicability and to test it on the Baltic Sea region. Because the findings yielded a certain support for the premises and the assumptions, the next step should involve comparisons with other regions. Each case study will then be a critical test of how generally applicable the model really is. For this purpose, it would also be of great value to repeat this study some ten years from now. It will then be possible to some extent to see how transnational contacts are affected by changes in the single variables, and not least how they will be affected by the institutional context of the EU. Third, more work is needed on the model. Because different parts of the model turn out to explain different types of transnational contacts, it should in some cases be possible to simplify or even split the model. As regards the selection of conditioners, we see a need for more studies on how electronic technologies and the arrival of the Internet have changed the conditions for transnational contacts. This need is motivated not least by the failure to establish a connection to personnel resources. A related issue concerns the search for additional variables. Even though we found much support in previous research for choosing the conditioners we did, it is part of the job to look at this with a critical eye. For example, one aspect that was only very briefly touched upon in Chapter 1, but which probably needs more attention, concerns the somewhat elusive term NGO. To be more precise, it would be a meaningful task to test the model on different populations of NGOs depending on their degree of autonomy in relation to the state. If semi-autonomous organizations throughout have more transnational contacts, then we have reason to treat this an additional conditioner.

## Transnational lobbying

Why are some transnational actors more successful in their lobbying than others? This question, which formed the basis of the second part of the book, was approached in two steps. The steps focused on the tasks of mapping and explaining, respectively. To begin with, we carried out seven case studies of transnational attempts in 1992-2002 to lobby the main intergovernmental target in the Baltic Sea region, i.e. the Council of Baltic Sea States. We have previously estimated that there are some 25 INGOs and transnational networks in the Baltic Sea region that gather non-governmental actors from the nine littoral states (Table 1). At least seven of these regional actors have consciously lobbied the CBSS but with varying degrees of success.<sup>85</sup> The

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<sup>85</sup> In connection to this, we should recall some of the findings from the e-post questionnaire that were reported in Chapter 2. We found that 17.4 per cent of the NGOs were members of Baltic Sea INGOs and transnational networks (cf. Table 8), and about one third of these had

main pattern indicated that organizations representing protective interests have been more successful than those representing promotional interests. The most successful lobbyists have been the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association and the Baltic Sea Business Summit. Both networks enjoy insider status in relation to the CBSS. The former is regularly involved when trade issues are on the agenda (specialist insider), while the latter choose only to be involved on strategic occasions (peripheral insider). The business-oriented actors have made decision-makers pay more attention to various trade barriers and have had an impact on business-related goals. Another actor with a protective interest is the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network, which is a relatively new player on the regional scene. The Network has received support for the idea of establishing a social dialogue in the Baltic Sea region and is expected to become a specialist insider once this is implemented. Two other successful organizations are the Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation and the Union of Baltic Cities, which represent different territorial interests at the sub-national level. These actors come close to having a core insider status, which means they enjoy privileged access to policy-making and to implementation on a broad range of issues. Because sub-national matters already have a prominent place on the CBSS agenda, the influence has been less related to policy and more to procedural matters and implementation. The actors who have been least successful with respect to transnational lobbying are the Coalition Clean Baltic and the Trans-Baltic Network, i.e. two groups that represent promotional interests. The involvement of the former is restricted to the Baltic 21 process (peripheral insider), while the latter has no access to the policy-making process at all (outsider).

To be able to draw conclusions about which actors have been successful or not in carrying out transnational lobbying, we laid down three criteria. First, an obvious requirement was that the lobbying must precede the CBSS decision. This applied more or less to all cases but turned out to be somewhat more complicated than expected in the cases of sub-national and environmental issues. The reason for this was that the lobbyists within these issue-areas to a larger extent reacted on initiatives taken by the CBSS. This fact had implications for the lobbying, which tended to focus less on overarching policies and more on implementation of established goals. The second criterion stressed that the content of the CBSS decision must be in congruence with the preference of the lobbyist. On this point we noted an important difference among the successful cases. We found congruence on a general level, but in the case of the business interests (the Chambers of commerce, and the big business leaders of the BSBS) we also discovered correspondence at the more concrete and detailed level. Finally, we established the criterion of resistance from the CBSS. That is, if we are to talk

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been involved in political activities such as lobbying and opinion formation (Table 14). The latter share was higher for groups representing protective interests than promotional interests.

about successful lobbying, then the target of the lobbying must do something it otherwise would not do. The strongest resistance was found on matters related to national security, which the Trans-Baltic Network was not able to get past. Otherwise, if there was any clear resistance to change, then this appeared on the level of implementation rather than on the level of goal.

Having mapped the patterns of transnational lobbying, we turned to the task of explaining the various outcomes. In other words, we asked why some transnational actors were more successful in their lobbying than others. Following previous research, we expected to find significant parts of the answer among a selection of ten variables. These included variables related to actor as well as to structure. The former highlighted the role of capacity (economic resources, consensus, and informal organization), bargaining chips (representativity, knowledge, and power in implementation), and strategy. The structural conditioners included regional interdependence, democracy, and regional institutions. The ten variables formed the building blocks of a theoretical model, which passed the empirical tests rather well. Most variables proved to have explanatory power, but two of them did not perform as expected. The two exceptions were informal organization and democracy. In the former case, we assumed that transnational lobbyists with an informal organization would stand a better chance to exert influence. This was only supported by two case studies (Baltic Sea Business Summit, Coalition Clean Baltic). As regards the role of democracy, we assumed a positive effect when it comes to access to policy-makers, while at the same time making it more difficult for a single transnational lobbyist to exert influence. The conclusion on this point is mixed. We found support for democracy's positive role in making access to policy-makers easier, but there is very little that indicates a negative effect on influence. Not least the case studies of the two business interests showed that transnational lobbyists could be influential despite the presence of counter-balancing interests, such as trade unions and environmental organizations.

Apart from the two exceptions, we found strong support for eight hypotheses. This means that our assumptions in general were supported by six or seven case studies. The main conclusion of the empirical test is that the influence of transnational lobbyists can be explained by a combination of four types of variables. First, the capacity of the lobbyist makes a difference. The probability that a transnational actor will be successful increases if he or she has considerable economic resources and can act upon a high degree of consensus. For example, economic resources explain why actors with a protective interest in general were more successful than those with a promotional interest. The importance of consensus was most clearly seen in the case of the Trans-Baltic Network, which appeared to be somewhat paralyzed by internal division. Second, if a transnational actor possesses some bargaining chip, then he or she has an advantage compared to other lobbyists. The prospect of influence increases if the regional INGO is highly representative,

has expert knowledge, and has power in implementation. There is much empirical evidence to support the importance of bargaining chips, but in two cases we arrived at a more complex conclusion. The Baltic Sea Business Summit was influential despite a lack of representativity, and the Coalition Clean Baltic was less influential despite significant power in implementation. However, as regard the other bargaining chips, the evidence was much in accordance with the main assumption. Third, a transnational lobbyist has a better chance to succeed if he or she operates with a broad strategic repertoire. The case studies showed that INGOs with a protective interest, which were relatively more successful in their lobbying, in general used more strategies to influence the CBSS than groups with a promotional interest. The most successful lobbyists used a combination of the power and the technocratic approaches. Finally, transnational lobbying is also dependent on structural conditions. The findings suggest that the probability of influence by non-state actors will increase if the context is marked by high degrees of interdependence and institutions. The only exception to this was the case of the Coalition Clean Baltic, which despite favorable structural conditions in both of these respects was less influential than expected.

The widespread support for eight of the hypotheses suggests that the premises of the analytical model have been basically sound. The first premise emphasized the need to pay attention to variables related to actor as well as to structure. This was largely supported by the case studies. Certainly, the exact combination of the specific variables varied somewhat from case to case, but the fact remains, it was a combination of the two types of variables that offered the best explanation. The second premise focused on actor related conditioners. The assumption here was that influence partly depends on the qualities of the transnational lobbyist himself. More specifically, we made a distinction between an actor's capacity, bargaining chips, and choice of strategy. This distinction proved at large to be relevant, even though we in the case of capacity found reason to narrow the selection of variables somewhat because type of organization did not turn out to play the role expected. The final premise of the model stressed the importance of structural conditions. Transnational lobbying was expected to be more successful if it took place in a context characterized by regional interdependence, democracy, and regional institutions. The general assumption was supported throughout by the case studies, even though not all structural variables played the same role. The presence of interdependence and institutions created a favorable context for transnational lobbying, while the variable of democracy only partly performed as expected. In the latter case it was the effect of counterbalancing interests that was missing. Of course, there may be different explanations for this, but considering the capacity and so on of the successful business interests, this suggests that actor related variables may take away some of the effect of this conditioner.

The seven case studies have produced a combined result that is promising from a theoretical point of view. The premises of the model appear to be basically sound and the relevance of the specific conditioners has in most cases been confirmed. Considering the model was put together by pieces from previous research, it seems therefore reasonable to conclude that we today have a rather good understanding of why some non-state actors are more successful than others in carrying out transnational lobbying. However, before we make this conclusion final, we need to systematically reflect somewhat more about why we have reached this result. In other words, are the findings in this part of the book to some extent a result of the choices we have made with respect to methodological and empirical aspects? Beginning with the former, we find reason to first pay attention to the dependent variable. We have been interested in the phenomena of transnational lobbying, i.e. conscious attempts by non-state actors to influence policy makers across state borders. However, judging from the case studies, we find reason to make a distinction between two types of lobbying. Some cases of lobbying occur in the form of single contacts and have the character of a one-way communication. This type of lobbying was found in the cases of the Baltic Sea Business Summit, the Baltic Sea Trade Union Network, and the Trans-Baltic Network. Other cases of lobbying takes place within more of a corporatist-type of relationship. That is, the parties concerned have established a procedure of recurrent contacts in which the communication flows in both directions.<sup>86</sup> This type of relationship was seen in the case studies of the Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association, the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation, the Union of Baltic Cities, and to a lesser extent also in the case of the Coalition Clean Baltic. By making a distinction between these two types of lobbying we want to stress the methodological difficulty of establishing a link between regular contacts and a specific policy. Put differently, there is a risk of underestimating the influence of the four latter lobbyists simply because regular contacts also pave the way for less visible and more indirect and diffuse channels of influence (cf. Lukes, 1974; 1986).

A second methodological aspect that must be taken into consideration relates to our source of evidence. The data for the seven case studies was collected by documentation. We used mainly primary documents such as administrative documents, communiqués, minutes of meetings, and written

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<sup>86</sup> Corporatism can be described as “a highly institutionalized and formal method of political participation and influence, often with negotiations and agreements implying mutual obligations for the participants” (Rommetvedt, 2000: 116). This type of organized relationship between policy makers and interest groups is first of all to be found at the national level and in advanced industrial states in Europe (Katzenstein, 1985). Corporatist-type arrangements have also been established within some sectors at the European level, foremost within the highly institutionalized context of the European Union (Greenwood, 1997). In the case of the Council of Baltic Sea States we can speak of certain participation by some interest groups, but without the elements of formal negotiations and agreements. The contacts therefore represent something more than traditional lobbying but do not go as far as corporatism.

reports. Certainly documents have much strength, but we should not forget the weaknesses of using this method of data collection (cf. Yin, 1994: 80). Beside typical problems such as irregular occurrence, limited access, and reliability, we have reason to pay special attention to the risk of biased reporting. For example, in order to appear as a powerful and successful actor, the parties involved might consciously exaggerate or underestimate the influence of transnational actors. This problem has at least partly been handled by collecting documents from both sides, i.e. from the CBSS as well as from the transnational lobbyists. By comparing the two versions, the conditions for handling biased documents have been somewhat more favorable. At the same time, we should not leave out the fact that the case studies in some respects probably would have gained from using other sources of evidence as well. Interviews seem to be an obvious complementary source in this case, but because this method demands considerable resources to carry out at the international level it would in our case have required a different research design (e.g. fewer case studies). Considering the methodological aspects, we might conclude that the results of the seven case studies are promising indeed, even though the evidence is not as robust as we originally hoped it would be.

A thorough analysis of the results of the case studies also requires some reflections upon the empirical context in which they were carried out. In conformity with the previous section we find reason to consider the possible effects of particularly two real world developments, namely the change in the security context and the ongoing enlargement of the European Union. In the former case, an obvious remark would be that neither the CBSS nor the transnational lobbyists (i.e. the regional INGOs and transnational networks) would probably have been around had not the Cold War ended. On the other hand, once these regional actors are in place, we see two scenarios of how increasing inter-state tension in the future may affect the prospects of successful lobbying. One scenario suggests that all intergovernmental cooperation will be paralyzed and that transnational actors, regardless of capacity and so on, will not make a difference. The second scenario suggests that because the CBSS focuses on low politics it will still operate and provide an arena for non-state actors to influence regional cooperation. In other words, the outcome depends on whether or not we assume there is a hierarchy among issues, i.e. that all issues are subordinated to military security (cf. Keohane and Nye, 1977: 26-7). As regards the enlargement of the European Union, we would like to raise the question of a possible transitory effect on our results. What we have in mind is the circumstance that governments and powerful interest groups for a period of time make a joint effort to maximize the prospects of successful accession negotiations. These efforts are among other things supported by corporatist-type arrangements, which open doors for mutual influence. This phenomenon has been seen at the national level, for example in the case of Sweden (e.g. Karlsson, 2000: 93-5), but seems to

some extent to appear within the framework of the CBSS as well. Part of the reason that some protective interest groups, especially those related to business (BCCA) and territorial interests (BSSSC, UBC), have been given special status within the CBSS is linked to their power to implement common policies and rules of the EU. If this status disappears once the enlargement process is concluded, then we can expect that it will be more difficult for these actors to influence inter-state cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. If, on the other hand, the CBSS continues to develop semi-corporative arrangements as a harmonization to the way policies are made on many issues within the EU, then we can expect the influence even to increase.

Considering the model came out of the empirical test fairly well, it may seem somewhat paradoxical to conclude this part of the analysis by suggesting new avenues for future research. But here it is important to remember that research should always aim at falsification. That is, the best way to develop and improve theoretical tools such as models is to expose them to new and challenging tests. Because of this, we have identified three important tasks for future research on transnational lobbying. First, we need more case studies to find out whether our findings are generally applicable or not. Case studies from other regions would help us to identify general conditions for lobbying as well as possible unique characteristics of the Baltic Sea region. We also think that more case studies from the Baltic Sea region would be helpful because they would give us a possibility to check if the assumptions of the model also hold across time (e.g. after the current enlargement of the European Union has been completed) and space (i.e. issue-areas not included in this study). Second, looking closer at the cases already included in this book, we think it would be a worthwhile task to make more extensive studies of the two business interests (Baltic Sea Business Summit, Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association) and the Coalition Clean Baltic. The results of these case studies are in most respects in accordance with the general findings, but in certain respects these actors appear to be somewhat deviant cases. The lobbying of the two business interests was more successful than expected because the effect of counter-balancing interests did not seem to apply in these cases. The CCB, on the other hand, was despite favorable structural conditions less successful. More extensive studies of these cases would reveal why they deviate and possibly also give rise to hypotheses about the interplay between factors. Finally, before we move up one step on the theorizing ladder, we see some possibilities to improve the existing model. One such task would be to further explore the roles of informal organization and democracy. Because the findings in these two respects were not entirely in accordance with expectations, it would be relevant to develop and test some supporting assumptions about under what conditions they are significant.



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# Transnational Relations in the Baltic Sea Region

- Why are some non-state actors more successful than others in developing and maintaining durable patterns of transnational interaction?
- Why are some transnational actors more successful in their lobbying than others?

This book is a case study of the Baltic Sea region that addresses such questions. Many non-governmental organizations today have regular contacts with counterparts in other littoral states. In some cases, the non-state actors have also deepened their cooperation and established regional international non-governmental organizations or transnational networks. Their purpose has been, amongst other things, to establish a platform from which they can interact with the Baltic Sea states and influence regional intergovernmental processes. In explaining these patterns of transnational relations, the author highlights a broad range of conditions relating to the actors themselves as well as to structure.



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