



A vision for the Black Sea Region: New perspectives & Challenges for Black Sea Region

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Who we are

- ❑ Non-profit organisation
- ❑ BSEC related body and its acknowledged think-tank
- ❑ Independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region

What we do

- ❑ Publications of research papers and studies
- ❑ Organisation of various events, e.g. Annual Symposium, Summer School, Annual Conference, Annual Lecture
- ❑ Coordination & management of research projects

Aims & Perspectives

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- ❑ **Fostering a comprehensive and cohesive regional approach**
- ❑ **Promoting multilateral cooperation among the BSEC, the EU and International Organisations**
- ❑ **Focusing on “Knowledge and Sustainability”**
- ❑ **Promoting the emergence of a new development concept that of “Sustainability”**

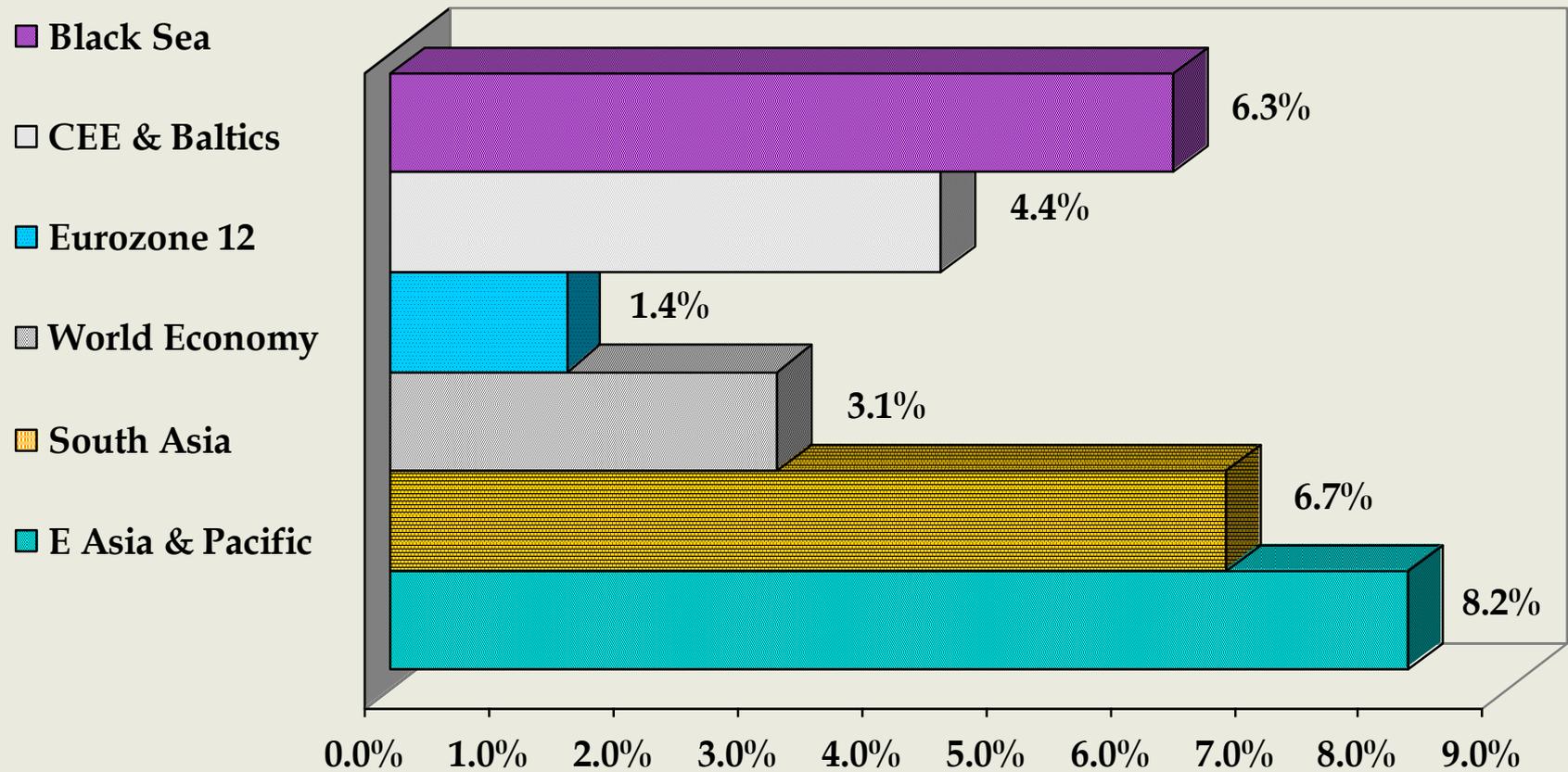
The Black Sea Region

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- **The Black Sea is a geographic entity but at the same time it defines a region that has been developed throughout centuries as a region with specific aspects in respect of culture, politics, economy and geo-strategy.**
- **With a population estimated at 350 mil people, populating an area of 20 mil square kilometres, with huge oil and mineral stockpiles, with excellent conditions for agriculture and with a position at the crossroad of East – West and North – South transport corridors, the region has a large potential for growth.**

The development trend of Black Sea Region

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The Question of a Vision

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In the midst of an economic crisis the word ‘vision’ may bring about a cynical grim. And yet vision is important to motivate action and, as we speak, at least four distinct concepts concerning the future of the Black Sea region in particular need to be discussed and debated, namely the EU-Black Sea Synergy (2007), the Eastern Partnership (2009), ‘A 2020 Vision, for the Black Sea Region’ of the Commission of Black Sea (2010) and the ‘Greening the Black Sea’ Policy brief of ICBSS (2010).

The Possible & Visible of Vision

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- **There is a critical question: Can we define among the different Visions their common objectives, which can lead to visible and operational Strategies?**
- **If yes, what are the prerequisites in order to ensure successful outcomes?**
- **One obvious direction of Black Sea area is that of “a regional policy hub”, allowing the states to make the most out of human and material resources allocated by the Black Sea countries, by the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Trade Bank etc.**

Suggested Course of Action: A Synergy Approach

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In reality, two strategic principles could be suggested:

- **a bottom up approach to networking and policy development;**
- **a focus on synergies**

Recently, the ICBSS has submitted a thorough and well documented policy brief with the rather ambitious call for ‘Greening the Black Sea.’

Additionally, the “Joint Declaration on Combating Climate Change in Black Sea” of the Foreign Ministers of BSEC countries (2010), highlights similar strategic priorities for the future.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, it should be noted that the international community views favorably the consolidation of the BSEC as the institutional expression of the Black Sea region.
- However, we also need to build upon ‘visions from within,’ such as the ‘Greening the Black Sea’ report.
- The ICBSS takes the view that the countries of Black Sea Region should focus on a bottom up strategy, initiating, developing and implementing a series of synergetic policies
- Of up most importance is the synergy and cohesion among, environmental policy, spatial planning, regional policy, transportation and energy policy.
- Summarizing, the crucial dilemma of the Black Sea Area is to change its paradigm of policy development from a top-down to bottom-up and from hierarchical to cross-sectoral approach, promoting a real integrated region. In such way, “Visions” for the Black sea will not remain wishful goals but can be operated in effective and legitimate policy implementation.



Thank you for your Attention!

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