

The Baltic states in the increasingly stronger North-European club

UK Prime Minister David Cameron organised a meeting with the heads of the Nordic states' governments and the three heads of governments of the Baltic States (the 'NB8' – Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia). The participants discussed the possibility of increasing the region's economic potential, including measures to develop new technologies. The heads of states also debated the idea of extending the regional North-European alliance of the NB8 states (including those that are not members of the EU or NATO) that share economic and security interests to the UK. The invitation of the Baltic states to join the group of countries that promote themselves as Europe's economic avant-garde constitutes an important promotion for them and emphasises their success in combating the effects of the crisis.

The leaders of the Baltic states used the participation in the debate in London to launch a joint appeal to the EU and the countries of Southern Europe to not delay economic reforms. The Baltic leaders thus, being cautious about initiatives that could cause divisions in Europe (as the London gathering of the countries partly seen as Euro-sceptic could be interpreted), underlines that they cared about the future of the whole EU. Despite caution, the leaders of the Baltic states' are enthusiastic about increasingly closer cooperation with the Nordic states. This is caused by acknowledging the increasing role of these states in Europe and the conviction that forming alliances with strong "regional players" effectively impacts the advancement of the interests in the EU that are priorities for the whole Baltic-Nordic region. The choice of the Nordic region is particularly important in case of Lithuania. This country has the largest potential to join regional initiatives, including those that aim at the extension of bilateral cooperation with Poland and the Visegrad Group. <jhyn>