



Baltic TRAM  
Principles of Open Data Access  
Letter of Intent



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Hereby, the signatory Baltic TRAM project partners do express their willingness to follow the principles of open data access formulated and executed in the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot.<sup>1</sup>

Acknowledging and highlighting a multitude of recommendations and resolutions developed over the last years, the signatory Baltic TRAM project partners will:

1. Emphasize their macro-regionally coordinated efforts to implement the **Debrecen Declaration**, adopted during the Week of Innovative Regions in Europe 2011, which highlights the need to “foster the use and development of state-of-the-art e-infrastructures mediating and supporting the research and innovation processes in a stimulating e-science environment”. Such joint activity presents not only further impetus to the implementation of the Declaration, but also brings added value to the **EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region** (EUSBSR), and its **Policy Area Innovation** (PA Inno) in advancing the European visions for research and innovation policy’s future, in a macro-regionally tailored manner.
2. Recognise the importance of the **Lund Declaration 2015** and its focus on open innovation enshrined in the reflection that “greater impacts on the challenges have to be achieved through involvement of the public sector and industry in knowledge creation, with stronger focus on open innovation and the role of end-users”, by implementing an open call addressing commercial enterprises which entails the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot.
3. Commit themselves to one of the priority actions of the **Lund Declaration 2015** structured under the thematic pillar “**Frontier research and European knowledge base**”; namely, to “strengthen open science including open access to both publications and data as well as fostering of knowledge exchange”. Such attempts are of specific relevance to the European advancement of open science, as well as the macro-regional thinking on the future multilateral support for innovation.
4. Fully share the view of the **High Level Group of Innovators for a European Innovation Council** regarding the “positive societal and environmental impact of innovation [...] as an important goal from a European perspective”.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in the context of Baltic TRAM being endorsed by the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)<sup>3</sup> and the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference,<sup>4</sup> it holds a potential to shape the macro-regional development of the overall European innovation ecosystem. Such potential lies in the capacity of Baltic TRAM network of Industrial Research Centres to build better connections between national innovation ecosystems. Likewise, Baltic TRAM offers engagement opportunities and supports public discussions among innovation stakeholders across the Baltic Sea Region.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more details please consult the Baltic TRAM *Activity 5.3 e-infrastructure and open data pilot*.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Short minutes of the second meeting of the High Level Group of Innovators for a European Innovation Council, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> 2016 CBSS Polish Chair’s Conclusions “Baltic Science: Renewing the Commitment to Science / Research Joint Actions in the Baltic Sea Region”

<sup>4</sup> Conference Resolution adopted by the 26<sup>th</sup> Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference

<sup>5</sup> Source: Short minutes of the second meeting of the High Level Group of Innovators for a European Innovation Council, p. 2.

5. Bear in mind the **Reflection Paper on Harnessing Globalisation**, and are thus committed to help businesses continuously innovate through modernisation of the economy by taking concrete actions at a Member State, regional and local level.<sup>6</sup> The Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot serves as one of such macro-regionally coordinated actions. It is implemented “as a test tool measuring in the field supply and demand of research data”<sup>7</sup> in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation.<sup>8</sup>
6. Share a common understanding that the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot is aligned with the **Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe** through its support to the **European Digital Economy**, implemented via the advancement of the Baltic Sea Region-wide enhanced interoperability of digital ecosystem. In practical terms, such efforts are translated through an engagement with the e-research infrastructure database<sup>9</sup> during the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot. This choice of digital infrastructure is of relevance to Baltic TRAM’s alignment with the overall goals guiding the implementation of **European Open Science Cloud**.
7. Recognise that Baltic TRAM takes into consideration the guidance of the **European Research Council** “towards open science, including open access to scientific publications”, as well as the Council’s attached “value to the extension of its open access policy to all forms of scientific publications” and “other forms of publication” in order to ensure an integrated approach to the implementation of open access policy.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, Baltic TRAM project partners rest committed to ensuring as much accessibility to the project’s generated data, information and analysis as possible.
8. Recall the European Union-wide commitment, expressed ahead of the cited Statement of the European Research Council’s Scientific Council, to promote open access to scientific publications.<sup>11</sup> Baltic TRAM recognises its role in advancing the **European Research Area**, thus the project will pay attention to ensuring open access to its generated research findings.
9. Take note of the ongoing European discussion on the unified **open science definition**, which has been concluded by an agreement “not to endorse a particular definition but to work on the basis of open science as a continuously evolving practice”.<sup>12</sup> Thus, Baltic TRAM’s exploration of open data practices in a science-business cooperation setting is of a

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Reflection Paper on Harnessing Globalisation, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Reference to the more elaborate guidelines outlined in the Baltic TRAM *Activity 5.3 e-infrastructure and open data pilot*, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (Text with EEA relevance).

<sup>9</sup> Reference to the more elaborate guidelines outlined in the section *Technical specifications of the Baltic TRAM Activity 5.3 e-infrastructure and open data pilot*, pp. 37 – 43.

<sup>10</sup> Source: Statement of the ERC Scientific Council on the Berlin “Expression of Interest in Large-scale Implementation of Open Access to Scholarly Journals”, 21 March 2016, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Draft Council conclusions on the European Research Area Roadmap 2015-2020 – Adoption, Brussels, 19 May 2015, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Adopted Minutes of the third Meeting of the Open Science Policy Platform, 20 March 2017, p. 3.

value in terms of shaping a potential macro-regional agreement on the definition of open science. Fully recognising the importance of this potential, Baltic TRAM project partners rest committed in continuing the multi-lateral discussion on open science definition in close collaboration with the business sector representatives interested in Baltic TRAM services. The results of this discussion will be mirrored in the reflections on the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot implementation made accessible to the wider public during the second implementation phase of the project.

10. Recognise that the practical implementation of open data access principles in the Baltic TRAM's adopted science-business cooperation model is largely dependent on two factors:
  - a) Firstly, the level of open data access depends on the willingness of industrial partners to grant the accessibility of data to the wider audiences, depending on the contents of the agreement among research facility partners as to the non-confidential nature of the experiments and the consent of the SMEs<sup>13</sup> benefiting from the experiments that the data generated from the experiments are neither related to patent issues nor trade secret information.
  - b) Secondly, the level of open data access depends on the technical readiness to make the data available in the e-research infrastructure database<sup>14</sup>, also termed as collaborative data infrastructure.
11. Expect the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot to deliver insight into acceptance and usage of open data collected under its regime which will be presented in an evaluation report. Depending on its findings, modification of the operational concept might be discussed among the Baltic TRAM project partners to establish sustainable long-term open access to data.
12. Bear in mind the valuable analytical work and practical testing carried out via the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot, thus being of relevance in shaping the long-term cooperation structures developed within the macro-regional governance framework. Baltic TRAM aspires to ensure the implementation of a sustainable model for enhanced science-business cooperation.
13. Underline their joint commitment of encouraging a gradual passage towards the adoption of a unified model of data accessibility in the future operation of Baltic TRAM's established science-business cooperation.
14. Intend to ensure Baltic TRAM High Level Group's awareness about the factors influencing the evolution of the Baltic TRAM open access concept. Therefore, Baltic TRAM project partners are committed to provide regular updates to the Baltic TRAM High Level Group via the CBSS Secretariat, which acts as the coordinator of Baltic TRAM High Level Group's work.

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<sup>13</sup> Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361. Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en)

<sup>14</sup> Reference to the more elaborate guidelines outlined in the Baltic TRAM *Activity 5.3 e-infrastructure and open data pilot*, pp. 27 – 34.



15. Recognise this Letter of Intent as elaborating on the initial Baltic TRAM's components which further the macro-regional innovation governance in the framework of the EUSBSR. Thus, this Letter of Intent will be communicated to the PA Inno Coordinators as one of the first Baltic TRAM project outcomes bearing relevance to the Mid-Term Evaluation of the PA Inno Strategy Guide: Putting the Action Plan into Practice.
16. Agree that in the process of implementation of the planned cooperation model of the Baltic TRAM Open Data Pilot, the primary point of contact will be Kainuun Etu Oy (Baltic TRAM Project Partner 4).
17. Share a common understanding that this Letter of Intent is not legally binding.



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