

**EU STRATEGY FOR THE BALTIC SEA REGION**  
**NATIONAL COORDINATORS GROUP**  
**1st MEETING UNDER THE LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY**

**15 September 2021**

**Minutes**

**§1 Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted as suggested by the Presidency and supplemented by an additional AOB on PA Culture, as asked by one delegation.

**§2 Presentation of the priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency of the National Coordinators Group**

Chair of the NCG presented the priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency (LT PCY) under the motto “*Revitalize -Recover-Recharge*”. Given the start of the new financial period, the LT PCY aims at engaging new stakeholders, preparing the establishment of the BSP, and to continue the initiatives of the German Presidency (such as Coffee with the Presidency). Three meetings of the NCG are planned in autumn 2021 (15/9, 25/11 and 16/12) and extra meetings are possible if needed. The NCG will continue the informal communications in between the meetings and will use the silent procedure where needed.

**§3 Impact Evaluation of EU Funds’ Investments on the Implementation of the European Union Strategy for Baltic Sea Region.**

The LT PCY aims at making the NCG meetings more interactive and bringing in some additional items and information to the discussion in addition to the procedural items. For this Lithuania has invited a consulting company BGI Consulting to present the evaluation results of the *Impact Evaluation of EU Funds’ Investments on the Implementation of the European Union Strategy for Baltic Sea Region* (for the period of 2009-2020, initiated by the Ministry of Finance of Lithuania in 2020).

**§4 Common structure for Rules of Procedure of EUSBSR Steering Groups - the model to be followed.**

The LT PCY recalled that the Common Structure and Modes of Operation has been agreed by the NCG and in force as of 11 May 2021. The Rules of Procedure adopted by PAs may not be in contradiction with the Action Plan, nor with the obligatory requirements specified in the Common structure. The document is fully in line with the Action Plan. Let’s Communicate (LC) presented the list of common questions raised by the PACs and SGs and the LT PCY proposed to circulate the NCG’s answers to the common questions to PACs. They could facilitate as guidance for the other PAs/ SGs to support them in their work.

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## §5 Rules of Procedure of EUSBSR Steering Groups - PA Nutri, PA Innovation

### PA INNO

Lead PAC INNO presented the draft Rules of Procedure of the PA INNO Steering Group.

### PA NUTRI

LC presented the draft Rules of Procedure of the PA NUTRI Steering Group.

In conclusion, the LT PCY proposed to prepare the draft reply on behalf of the NCG to each of the Policy Areas indicating its position on the respective Rules of Procedure.

## §6 Rules of procedure of the National Coordinators Group of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

The LT PCY informed to be working on a new document based on the draft prepared by the German Presidency. The latest draft needs to be further aligned with the Action Plan. There is also a need to agree on the order of rotation for NCG chairmanship and of rotation of EUSBSR Annual Forums for the next years, starting from 2025.

The LT PCY asked for a feedback in writing for the 17/2/2021 draft and will prepare a draft for the next meeting.

## §7 Interim report of the activities of “Let’s Communicate”

LC report was circulated in July 2021.

## §8 Activities of “Let’s Communicate” until the end of 2021

Let’s Communicate presented the “Highlights of Let’s Communicate Activities” which were presented in more detail in the interim report as well as highlighted the most important tasks ahead. NCs asked Let’s Communicate to compile an overview of the EUSBSR ongoing and finalized activities in order to get a better grasp of how the EUSBSR is implemented.

## §9 AOB

The LT PCY presented the preparation for the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EUSBSR and thanked Let’s Communicate for communication support.

Let’s Communicate presented the INTERACT Capacity Building training programme for MRS Support Structures. The training will start on 1/10/2021 [*NB: In the meantime the start was postponed to 4 November*] and proposed to circulate the materials about the training with the meeting materials.

The LT PCY informed that one country has been contacting the NCs regarding the strengthened cooperation within the framework of the EUSBSR.

One delegation informed about planned transfer of co-PAC (PA Culture) duties to a subordinate institution in the same country.

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## Participants

Lithuania, Robertas Bružilas (Chair), NC, MFA

Lithuania, Laura Čeponytė, MFA

Lithuania, Paulius Ratkevičius, MFA

Germany, Maurice Gajan, MFA

Germany, Winfried Maier, MFA

Sweden, Anna Hagström, Prime Minister's Office

Estonia, Karin Rannu, NC, MFA

Estonia, Raul Mälk, MFA

Denmark, Anders Henriksson, NC, MFA

Finland, Helena Tuuri, NC, MFA

Latvia, Ita Klekere, NC, MFA

Poland, Joanna Wojtkowska, NC, MFA

Poland, Kamila Wojsznis, MFA

European Commission, Petri Koistinen, DG Regio

Other invited participants:

Let's Communicate, Kirsi Ahlman (Centrum Balticum)

Let's Communicate, Juhani Ailio (Centrum Balticum)

Norway, Olav Berstad, MFA

Aušra Šilinskienė, BGI Consulting (Item 3)

Jonas Jatkauskas, BGI Consulting (Item 3)

Esa Kokkonen, Coordinator of PA INNO (Item 5)

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