

PA Hazards Steering Group
4 October 2023

Agenda item 6

b. Rules of Procedure (RoP)

Submitted by: PAC



COMMON STRUCTURE FOR RULES OF PROCEDURE

of EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Steering Groups

*based on the EUSBSR Action Plan (SWD(2021) 24 final) and
approved by the National Coordinators Group on 11 May 2021*

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Section 2.3.1. of the EUSBSR Action Plan¹ stipulates that the National Coordinators Group shall provide a common structure for the Rules of Procedure for EUSBSR Policy Area Steering Groups. This document responds to this obligation.

Regarding SGs, the Action Plan contains i.e. the following provisions:

Policy Areas (PAs) represent the expertise in their respective areas of activity and ensure the implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan. Having an overview of the relevant sectors, PAs hold policy discussions and identify keyways to achieve the EUSBSR Objectives through different means of actions and determine how to best implement the required solutions.

PAs are managed operationally by PA Coordinators (PACs), supported, and guided strategically by their respective Steering Groups (SGs).

Each PA has a Steering Group (SG). SG members are representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States. The SG may be an existing cooperation body within the PAC organisation, if appropriate and approved by the NCG.

SG members have two kinds of tasks. On the one hand, they represent their governments in their respective SG. On the other hand, they perform their tasks as focal points at the national level.

The objective is that all SGs include members from all EUSBSR Member States. However, a Member State can choose not to participate in a specific SG. A Member State can also appoint more than one representative to an SG if this is necessary due to the structure of the Member State or other similar reasoning. In this case, one of the representatives must be nominated as the main representative and act as one.

SG members should come from key ministries or authorities in the relevant field. They should have sufficient capability, mandate, and resources to fulfil their tasks as required by the EUSBSR.

*An SG may also invite representatives of **non-EU neighbouring countries or organisations to join the group as members or observers**, upon a decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States representatives in the group. However, before such a decision is implemented, it has to be endorsed by the NCG.² Such representatives of non-EU neighbouring countries or organisations cannot block decisions of the EUSBSR Member States, but they may choose to opt out of specific decisions taken by the SG. This must be appropriately reflected in the SG Rules of Procedure.*

PACs must keep the SG Presidency and the BSP updated as soon as changes in the composition of SG membership occur.

¹ <https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/action-plan/17-action-plan/download>

² The PAC informs the NCG of the SGs decision to include an observer. The NCG endorses it in their next possible meeting. It is recommended that the aim to make such a decision in the SG is communicated to the NCG Presidency / BSP asap so potential problems can be avoided.

SGs should convene at least twice a year. Online meetings are encouraged. The meetings are prepared and organized by the SG Presidency, in close cooperation with the respective PAC/PACs. The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis.

SGs make decisions by consensus. In accordance with these provisions of the Action Plan, each SG is required to adopt a set of Rules of Procedure. Such documents need to conform to a common format and satisfy several obligatory minimum requirements, as set out in this Annex.

SGs can adopt further rules adapted to the specific requirements of the Policy Area concerned if such rules are not in contradiction with the provisions of the Action Plan and the obligatory minimum requirements set out in the Annex. The PAs may consult the BSP in the drafting process.

ANNEX: Common Structure for Rules of Procedures of EUSBSR Steering Groups & List of members, observers and guests of PA Hazards SG

**EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
Steering Group for Policy Area Hazards**

Rules of Procedure

Adopted on 4 October, 2023



Article 1

Scope

These Rules of Procedure apply to all meetings of the SG for Policy Area Hazards of the EUSBSR. These Rules of Procedure also apply when the SG makes decisions by way of written procedure.

Article 2

Composition of the Steering Group

The SG consists of representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States. SG members should come from key ministries or authorities in the relevant field. They should have sufficient capability, mandate, and resources to fulfil their tasks as required by the EUSBSR.

An EUSBSR Member State can choose not to participate in the SG by informing the lead PAC in written form. A Member State can also appoint more than one representative to the SG if this is necessary due to the structure of the Member State or other similar reasoning. In this case, one of the representatives must be nominated as the main representative and act as one.

The SG may also invite representatives of non-EU neighbouring countries to join the group as members or observers, upon decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States. Furthermore, the SG may also invite representatives of regional, national, or other organisations to join the group as members or observers, upon decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States. However, before such decisions are implemented, they must be endorsed by the NCG.

The lead PAC must keep the SG presidency, the BSP and the respective NC updated as soon as changes in the composition of SG membership or observers occur.

Article 3

Role and responsibilities

The SG provides strategic guidance to the PA, holds policy discussions, and identifies keyways to achieve the EUSBSR Objectives through different means of actions and determine how to best implement the required solutions. Its main tasks are set out in Article 4.

Article 4

Tasks

The main tasks of the SG are: - Supporting the PAC/PACs in fulfilling their tasks, notably by

- Guiding the development of the PA in general by policy discussions and by endorsing new objectives, developments, and operation formats, including flagships, projects, and other activities.

- Endorsing proposals to update targets, references etc. that do not change the Action Plan substantially, in close dialogue with the EC³ ;

- Ensuring linkages to relevant national and regional policy making⁴;

- Monitoring and evaluating the PA, notably by

- Endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the PA, drafted by the PAC/PACs, and submitting these documents to the NCG for information.

In addition to their responsibilities within their group, SG members representing national or regional governments serve as focal points in their respective administrations, where their functions notably include:

- Acting as liaison between the PA and the respective administration, ensuring linkages between macro-regional and national or regional policy processes.

- Raising awareness and ownership of the Objectives, means and achievements of the EUSBSR within their respective administrations and by other relevant stakeholders.

- Cooperating with relevant Managing Authorities in their respective home countries, regarding the operational level.

- Supporting their respective National Coordinator in promoting political commitment to the Strategy as well as in raising national awareness and promoting visibility of the EUSBSR.

Article 5

The rotating SG Presidency

The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis. The SG follows the EUSBSR NCG presidency rotation.

The SG Presidency supports and works in close cooperation with the PAC/PACs. SG meetings are prepared and organized by the SG Presidency, in close cooperation with the respective PAC/PACs. The SG Presidency is chairing the SG meetings.

Article 6

The Policy Area Coordinator(s)

³ Decisions on substantial changes to the Action Plan remain the sole competence of the National Coordinators Group

⁴ The SG members when they come from relevant departments in relevant ministries and agencies provide a linkage to national decision-making. The aim is for the PAs path to achieve policy impact.

The PAC Hazards is the key operational stakeholders of the PA, ensuring the implementation of the Strategy with support and guidance of the SGs. Their tasks include:

- Ensuring a general overview of the PA.
- Managing, coordinating, and developing the PA.
- Monitoring and reporting on progress within the PA.
- Ensuring communication and visibility of the PA.

The lead PAC is responsible for coordination among the PACs and for the administration of the PA. The PAC have to keep the SG Presidency and the Baltic Strategy Point updated as soon as changes in the composition of the SG membership occur.

The PACs are appointed and recalled by the NCG, following a proposal by the SG. The PAC participate in all meetings of the SG, except for those that directly concern decisions regarding their performance and proposals for appointment or recall of PACs or lead PACs.

Article 7

Decision-making

The SG makes decisions by consensus. However, representatives of non-EU neighbouring countries or organisations cannot block decisions of the EUSBSR Member States but may choose to opt out of specific decisions taken by the SG. The SG Presidency, or the PAC after approval by the SG Presidency, can initiate a written decision-making process (written procedure) by sending a draft decision and related documents to all SG members, which shall have at least 10 working days to respond in writing to the Presidency. In case of issues, which require national coordination, the period can be adapted to those needs. In the absence of any reaction, it will be deemed as a silent agreement. The use of written procedures should take due account of holiday periods.

Article 8

Agenda

The SG shall address topics at the request of its members and respond to the needs of key stakeholders regarding the implementation of the objectives of the Policy Area.

The PAC, after approval by the SG Presidency, shall submit the draft agenda for the SG meeting to all SG members at least 10 working days before the meeting for consultation. Documents for discussion shall be submitted to all SG members at least 10 working days prior to the SG meeting, unless duly justified circumstances require circulating documents later.

The final agenda is adopted at the SG meeting as first agenda item.

Article 9

Meeting participants

The SG may decide to invite one or several guests to participate in a specific meeting.

Article 10

Frequency and format of meetings

The SG should convene at least twice a year. Meetings are to be held in English. Online meetings are encouraged.

Should a physical meeting be arranged, preferentially, this meeting will be organized in connection with another relevant macro-regional event. Other meetings will be organized whenever needed.

Members should inform the chair if they cannot participate in the meeting. In case of absence, members can make their views known to the chair via e-mail *before* the meeting, which will be included in the meeting minutes.

Article 11

Reporting

The PAC is responsible for ensuring timely reporting from all SG meetings. Such non-attributable reports should be made available on the EUSBSR website.

Article 12

Revision

The Rules of Procedure of the SG are adopted and shall be revised, as appropriate, by decision of the SG.