



EUSBSR PA Tourism Steering Group Meeting
Tuesday 30/09/2025 12.30 AM CET - 16.00 PM CET
Hotel Mercure Gdansk Stare Miasto / online
Jana Heweliusza 22, 80-890 Gdańsk, Poland

MEETING MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS:

1. *Estonia - Mr Aleksandr Michelson, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications*
2. *Finland - Ms Susanna Markkola, Visit Finland*
3. *Latvia - Ms Inese Sirava, Investment and Development Agency of Latvia*
4. *Lithuania - Ms Lidija Bajaruniene, The Ministry of Economics and Innovation*
5. *Poland - Mr Karol Biedrzycki, Ministry of Sport and Tourism*
6. *PAC Tourism / PTB - Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło*
7. *PAC Tourism / Council of Oulu Region - Ms Anna-Maija Toivonen*
8. *PAC Tourism / Council of Oulu Region - Ms Tiina Rajala*

Welcome

On behalf of the Estonian Presidency to EUSBSR PA Tourism Steering Group and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications Estonia, Mr *Aleksandr Michelson* welcomed all the participants to the meeting.

Presentation and adoption of the meeting's agenda

Chair of the meeting, Mr Aleksandr Michelson, presented the meetings' agenda to all the Steering Group members and asked if there were any issues regarding the agenda and asked if they accept it. Because the European Commission, DG REGIO representative Ms Blagovestka Riiser was unable to



attend due to a delayed flight, it was decided to postpone her presentation (Point 7. on the Agenda) until the next meeting. The SG Members adopted the meeting Agenda with this change.

Quick recap

The Steering Group meeting for EUSBSR Policy Area Tourism focused on discussing tourism challenges and opportunities in the Baltic Sea region, including preparations for upcoming events and webinars, while addressing issues like border closures and rising energy costs. Updates were provided on various tourism projects and initiatives, including the Region T platform and its focus on regenerative tourism across the region. The group reviewed organizational changes and strategies for improving efficiency, while also discussing preparations for the upcoming Baltic Sea Tourism Forum and potential future meetings.

Summary of PA Tourism activities June 2025 - September 2025

The Policy Area Coordinators presented an overview of PA Tourism activities between June and September including project & stakeholder meetings, finalising the Action Plan and preparations for the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum and Food Tourism Webinar.

Action Plan update

The coordinators provided an update on the Action Plan, its timetable and presented the proposed new actions. In September, during consultations with the Baltic Sea Strategy Point, the draft Action Plan received positive feedback and a suggestion to make a few clarifications to the indicators. The updated version will be sent to the Steering Group members for review and acceptance.

Upcoming events & activities

The Policy Area Coordinators introduced the upcoming events after the BSTF2025. Plans for the next weeks included attending a conference in Suwalki, Poland, regarding tourism in the border regions, EUSBSR Annual Forum where PA Tourism has two sessions: one on Coastal Tourism and another on Cultural Routes and UBC conference where PA Tourism has joint workshop with the RegenT project platform regarding Climate-Neutral and Regenerative tourism.

RegenT project platform and PA Tourism expert group idea

Ms Magda Leszczyna-Rzucidło presented the Interreg BSR funded project platform RegenT and its key objectives: to collect results from 7 previous projects, with best practices and ready-to-use tools, provide local and regional authorities with support for planning and smarter use of resources and connect people and policies across the region to create systemic change. Next step could be engaging the EUSBSR PA Tourism Steering Group by forming an expert working group on regenerative tourism under the Steering Group.



Rules of Procedure / change in timeline for the silence / written procedures

The Policy Area Coordinators proposed to shorten the timeline for the silence / written procedures as the Baltic Sea Strategy Point has announced this possibility. The SG members discussed and accepted the change.

News & updates from each country

All the SG Members from participating countries and the DG Regio representative shared their information on currently run tourism-related initiatives, presented the tourism statistics in their home country and informed them on planned events and activities that may be important for the EUSBSR tourism cooperation. Notes and presentations were distributed to participants.

Next Meeting & Any other business

It was noted that the steering group will meet for the next two days at the Baltic Sea Tourism Forum and the related Master Class. The next meeting is planned for spring 2026. The meeting will be held during Estonia's Presidency, so the Coordinators will discuss the matter with the Estonian representative and send a survey to the members of the Steering Group regarding a suitable date.