

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Steering Group for Policy Area Education

Rules of Procedure

Proposed update on 09 September 2024

Article 1

Scope

These Rules of Procedure apply to all meetings of the Steering Group for Policy Area Education of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). Online meetings are encouraged. These Rules of Procedure also apply when the Steering Group makes decisions by way of written procedure.

Article 2

Composition of the Steering Group

The Steering Group consist of representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States. Steering Group members should come from line 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 Steering Group by informing the lead PAC in written form. A Member State can also appoint more than one representative to the Steering Group, 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 as regards the decision-making. The lead PAC has to keep the SG presidency, the BSP and the respective NC updated as soon as changes in the composition of SG membership or observers occur.

The Steering Group 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 must be endorsed by the National Coordinators Group.

Article 3

Role and responsibilities

The Steering Group provides strategic guidance to the Policy Area, 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 Policy Area Coordinators in fulfilling their tasks, notably by
 - Guiding the development of the Policy Area in general by policy discussions and by endorsing new objectives, developments and operation formats, including flagships,

- Endorsing proposals to update targets, references etc. that do not change the Action Plan substantially, in close dialogue with the EC¹,
 - Ensuring linkages to relevant national and regional policy-making.
- Monitoring and evaluating the Policy Area, notably by
- Endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the Policy Area, drafted by the Policy Area Coordinators, and submitting these documents to the National Coordinators Group for information.
- In addition to their responsibilities within the group, Steering Group members representing national or regional governments serve as focal points in their respective administrations, where their functions notably include:
- Acting as liaison between the Policy Area 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 Steering Group Presidency

The Steering Group Presidency should rotate among the Steering Group members, normally on an annual basis and following the Presidency of the National Coordinators Group.

The Steering Group Presidency supports and works in close cooperation with the Policy Area Coordinators. Steering Group meetings are prepared and organized by the Steering Group Presidency, in close cooperation with the respective Policy Area Coordinator.

Article 6

The Policy Area Coordinator(s)

The Policy Area Coordinators are the key operational stakeholders of the Policy Area, ensuring the implementation of the Strategy with support and guidance of the Steering Group. Their tasks include:

- Ensuring a general overview of the Policy Area,

¹ Decisions on substantial changes to the Action Plan remain the sole competence of the National Coordinators Group.

- Managing, coordinating and developing the Policy Area,
- Monitoring and reporting on progress within the Policy Area,
- Ensuring communication and visibility of the PA.

If the Policy Area has more than one Policy Area Coordinator, the National Coordinator Group decides which one of them is the leading Policy Area Coordinator, following a proposal by the Steering Group. The lead Policy Area Coordinator is responsible for coordination among the Policy Area Coordinators and for the administration of the Policy Area.

The Policy Area Coordinators must keep the Steering Group Presidency and the Baltic Strategy Point updated as soon as changes in the composition of the Steering Group membership occur.

The Policy Area Coordinators are appointed and recalled by the National Coordinator Group, following a proposal by the Steering Group.

The Policy Area Coordinators participate in all meetings of the Steering Group, except for those that directly concern decisions regarding their performance and proposals for appointment or recall of Policy Area Coordinators or lead Policy Area Coordinators.

Article 7

Decision-making

The Steering Group 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 Steering Group.

The Steering Group is not quorate if less than two thirds of the members are present.

The Steering Group Presidency, or the Policy Area Coordinator/Lead Policy Area Coordinator after approval by the Steering Group Presidency, can initiate a written decision-making process (written procedure) by sending a draft decision and related documents to all Steering Group members, which shall have at least **5 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 Steering Group shall address topics at the request of its members and respond to the needs of key stakeholders with regard to the implementation of the objectives of the Policy Area.

The Policy Area Coordinator/Lead Policy Area Coordinator, after approval by the Steering Group Presidency, shall submit the draft agenda for the Steering Group meeting to all Steering Group members at least **10 working days** before the meeting for consultation.

Documents for discussion shall be submitted to all Steering Group members at least **10 working days** prior to the Steering Group meeting, unless duly justified circumstances require circulating documents later.

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

Article 9

Meeting participants

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

Article 10

Frequency of meetings

The Steering Group should convene at least twice a year.

Article 11

Reporting

The Policy Area Coordinators are responsible for ensuring timely reporting from all Steering Group meetings. Such non-attributable reports should be made available on the EUSBSR website.

Article 12

Revision

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