

## EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region National Coordinators Group

### 5th Meeting under the Swedish Presidency, 2022-2023

**Date:** 03/04/2023  
**Time:** 09:30–13:00 CET  
**Venue:** online

#### MINUTES

##### 1. Opening of the meeting

The Presidency welcomed the participants and declared the meeting open.

##### 2. Approval of the agenda

The following item was added as agenda point 3: SMOR Working Party meeting on European Commission's 4<sup>th</sup> Report on the implementation of MRS.

The agenda was approved with the proposed amendments.

##### 3. SMOR Working Party meeting on European Commission's 4th Report on the implementation of MRS

The Presidency informed on the outcomes of the Council SMOR Working Party meeting held in Brussels on 28 March 2023 concerning the European Commission's 4<sup>th</sup> Report on the implementation of macro-regional strategies and the status of preparations for the Council Conclusions on the report. Strong support has been voiced by SMOR group members regarding the report. Furthermore, the NCG took note of the next steps in the adoption of the Council Conclusions. The NCG will continue discussion on the topic in the next NCG meeting.

##### 4. New PA Culture Steering Group Observers

The NCG took note of the silence procedure outcome of PA Culture from December 2022 regarding the appointment of the new Steering Group observers. The

endorsement will be completed with a Communication from the NCG, to be approved via silence procedure.

As it is a first time that such an extensive invitation to PA's Steering Group has taken place, the BSP asked the NCG for guidance and input on these processes in case a similar situation would arise in the future. The NCG indicated that in the future the BSP should take particular attention with regard to Russia's participation in any regional body set to participate as observers in PA's Steering Group meetings.

## **5. BSP Work Programme & Report**

BSP presented the updated draft of the BSP Work Programme. The NCG took note of the document and suggested further technical amendments. The document will be taken up for decision at the next NCG meeting.

Furthermore, the NCG took note of the BSP reporting timeline including reporting to the NCG and to Interreg BSR. The first reporting period of BSP will cover period between 1 October 2022 - 31 March 2023.

## **6. EUSBSR communications**

BSP presented the input paper on guidance for the EUSBSR communications and asked for comments from the NCG regarding the disposition and contents of the future document. The NCG took note of the input paper and reflected on the purpose and scope as well as strategic direction of the document. Shared understanding is needed on the EUSBSR objectives, its mission, vision and the key messages. The NCG also highlighted the role of Council Conclusions as a source of guidance. In order to facilitate a joint discussion involving the core EUSBSR implementing stakeholders, BSP is organising a joint brainstorming session for PACs and the NCs, among others, on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **7. EUSBSR Monitoring and evaluation**

BSP presented input material regarding the concept for the EUSBSR universal framework for monitoring and evaluation and asked for comments regarding the topics and indicative timeline. The framework is being designed in a way that benefits from and consolidates existing reporting duties of PACs bi-annually to the European Commission and to the Interreg Baltic Sea Region. The NCG recognised progress done on development of the framework and noted that the first version of the framework could serve as a test and be further developed and implemented gradually, considering the workload of PACs. Finally, the NCG discussed external evaluation and noted that efforts should be made to integrate the timeline of the evaluations to the Action Plan updates.

## **8. Trio Presidencies and MRS Week**

The Presidency presented the proposal from the Slovenian EUSDR Presidency on the Framework for cooperation of MRS Trio Presidencies group ahead of the MRS Trio Presidencies meeting in Brussels on April 28<sup>th</sup> and opened the proposal for discussion. Several MS did not support the idea of a written framework for the MRS

Trio Presidencies format. The NCG will continue the discussion at the next NCG meeting.

#### **9. MA Networks**

BSP informed on the status of cooperation with the Managing Authorities networks for the EU Structural Funds and asked for guidance from the NCG regarding further cooperation in line with embedding and funding sources for the EUSBSR implementation.

The NCG took note of the information and endorsed the cooperation with the ESF+, ERDF and possibly other networks as a strategic cooperation in preparation to the start of programming of the upcoming funding period, to the extent that the existing resources allow. The NCG also discussed possible engagement of PACs and PA Steering Groups into the MA Network cooperation. The BSP was instructed to continue cooperation and keep the NCG informed.

#### **10. Horizon Europe Missions**

The BSP will inform NCG on this item in the written form and the item will be lifted in the next NCG meeting.

#### **11. AOB and date for next meeting**

The Presidency informed about the status of the registrations for the upcoming closing Presidency meeting in Gotland on 4-6 June 2023 and invited those who had not register yet to do so.

The next meeting is to be held preliminarily on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> of April at 13:30-15:00 CET.

## PARTICIPANTS

Denmark	Anders Henriksson (NC)	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Estonia	Marika Post (NC) Raul Mälk	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Finland	Helena Tuuri (NC) Anu Kynkäänniemi	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Germany	Maurice Gajan (NC) Winfried Maier	Federal Foreign Office Federal Foreign Office
Latvia	Iveta Stanislavska (NC) Ita Klekere Andra Kuzmina	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Lithuania	Modesta Vanesa Viskontė	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Poland	Ewa Dębska (NC) Monika Langiewicz	Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Sweden	Anna Hagström (NC) (Chair) Anna Tofftén Alicia Nathanson Thulin Frida Bergström	Prime Minister's Office The Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation Prime Minister's Office Prime Minister's Office
	Juhani Ailio Viktorii Hladii Anja Karppinen Tom Schumacher Kirsi Ahlman Stefanie Wodrig	Baltic Sea Strategy Point Baltic Sea Strategy Point
	Petri Koistinen Elena Kolosova	European Commission, DG Regio Interreg Baltic Sea Region