

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region National Coordinators Group

2nd Meeting under the Polish Presidency, 2024-2025

Date: 10/10/2024
Time: 10:00–11:39 CET
Location: Online

MINUTES

1. Opening of the meeting and approval of the agenda

The meeting was opened by the Presidency at 10:01.

The agenda points 4. BSP report and 5. BSP Work Programme were switched around. The agenda was approved.

2. Clarifications to the Action Plan update timeline

The BSP presented the agenda point. The first round of the PA templates is to be completed by the end of December 2024, and the deadline for the PA annual reports by the end of January 2025. In order to take into account the PA annual reports also when deciding on the PA composition, the BSP suggested either to postpone the decision on the new PA composition to February, or to continue with the PA composition decision without taking into account the report. Furthermore, concerning the governance part of the Action Plan, the BSP suggested to postpone the update of the outdated referencing and obsolete parts until spring 2025 due to the new developments on Ukraine and Norway (non-EU cooperation). The NCG took note of the suggestions and decided to postpone the governance section review until the spring 2025, and to postpone the decision on the new PA composition until 28 February 2025 in order to take into account the PAs' annual reports into the discussion and decision. The deadline on the submission of the PA templates will remain until the end of December 2024, and the PA annual reports - until the end of January 2025.

3. Annual Forum 2025

The Presidency informed that Pomorskie region is now confirmed as the Lead organiser of the Annual Forum in Gdansk in the second half of October 2025. The Presidency proposed to approve the draft Letter of Support from the organisers to the Interreg BSR provided. The NCG agreed on the content of the Letter of Support on the organisation of the Annual Forum 2025.

Estonia informed that the Annual Forum 2026 is planned to be held between 9-10 June 2026 in Tallinn.

DG REGIO representative informed that the MRS Days will take place in September 2025, with preliminary dates of September 24-26. Furthermore, DG REGIO representative informed the NCG that the European Commission representation at the Annual Forum should be coordinated via DG REGIO D1 unit representative covering the EUSBSR.

4. BSP Work Programme 2024-2025

The Presidency presented the agenda point and noted that according to the EUSBSR Action Plan “the BSP is guided by and accountable to the NCG, which decides on its terms of reference and its detailed tasks”. The Work Programme aims to provide the NCG the means to guide and monitor the activities of the BSP. The Programme spans a period of 12 months and is approved annually by the NCG. Changes to the Work Programme are possible during the period by NCG decision.

The BSP presented the BSP Work Programme for the next 12 months, which is closely connected to the Interreg BSR application, and explained the planned activities under each Work Package in more detail.

Following the presentation and the possibility to ask for questions and clarifications, the NCG approved the BSP Work Programme for the period of October 2024 - September 2025.

5. BSP report

The Presidency presented the agenda point. The NCG agreed on the content of the Letter to the Interreg BSR concerning the assessment of the BSP activities between April-October 2024 and concluded that the NCG is satisfied with the work of the BSP.

6. Future of the BSP

The Presidency informed that based on the BSP progress and achievements, the NCG is satisfied with the current consortium, and would like to request from the Interreg BSR to extend the current BSP project for the next three years i.e. till the end of 2028. NCG made also the following recommendations for this period:

- Further development and improvement in external communication,
- In addition to the current dissemination of information about EUSBSR, external communication should contribute to a dialogue between internal and external stakeholders
- Further development in internal communication,
- Further development in assuring the EUSBSR institutional memory base,
- More transparency in division of tasks within BSP,
- Providing relevant support to the NCG, the NCG Presidency and PACs,
- Proposing suggestions for better structuring of the rules of cooperation between the BSP and the host of the EUSBSR Annual Forum.

AOB and date for next meeting

AOB:

- Sweden informed that there has been a change in the Swedish representation of the PA Safe SG group, from the Swedish Transport Administration to Swedish Maritime Administration.
- Sweden informed that 650 participants are expected in Visby at the Annual Forum 2024.

- Presidency informed regarding the BSSSC organised round table meeting in Visby on how to work more effectively with cities and regions. The event will be opened by the Regional Commissioner and the EUSBSR Presidency. The round table will include discussion on the relations between the current EUSBSR structures and the regions and how to improve it.
- BSP informed about the upcoming EUSBSR Monthly on Monday 14.10. The information part will be short in this edition, and the workshop part will focus on the template and drafting the Actions. The NCG is warmly welcome to join the session to follow the discussions on how the PAs are defining their actions.

The next meeting is planned to take place in Visby on 29.10 in a hybrid mode.

The Presidency has concluded the meeting at 11:39.

PARTICIPANTS

Denmark	Peter Wilhelm Linde (NC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Estonia	Tõnis Nirk (NC) Andreas Sepp (Deputy NC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Finland	Helena Tuuri (NC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Germany	Sven Freitag (NC) Winfried Maier (Deputy NC)	Federal Foreign Office Federal Foreign Office
Latvia	Andra Kuzmina (NC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Lithuania	Robertas Bružilas (NC) Modesta Vanesa Viskontė (Deputy NC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Poland	Katarzyna Barcikowska (NC, Chair) Monika Langiewicz (Deputy NC)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sweden	Anna Hagström (NC) Anna Tofftén (Deputy NC)	Prime Minister's Office Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation
	Juhani Ailio (<i>Agenda points 1,2,3,4</i>) Viktorii Hladii (<i>Agenda points 1,2,3,4</i>) Tom Schumacher (<i>Agenda points 1,2,3,4</i>) Kirsi Ahlman (<i>Agenda points 1,2,3,4</i>)	Baltic Sea Strategy Point Baltic Sea Strategy Point Baltic Sea Strategy Point Baltic Sea Strategy Point
	Petri Koistinen	European Commission, DG Regio
	Elena Kolosova	Interreg Baltic Sea Region Secretariat