

Policy Area Education

Steering Group Meeting, Riga, 3 October 2023

TIME	3 October 2023, 13.00-17.00
VENUE	Swedish Embassy, the Residence, Jura Alunana iela 7, Riga
MINUTES	<p>1. Words of welcome Ms Karin Höglund, Swedish Ambassador to Latvia, welcomed the Steering Group to the Embassy and gave a short introduction to the history of the Swedish Embassy, the building, and some milestones until present time. She wished the group a successful meeting.</p> <p>2. Opening Ms Aļona Babiča, Ministry of Education and Science, Latvia, Chair of the Steering Group thanked the Ambassador for hosting the meeting. Afterwards she declared the meeting to be opened.</p> <p>The participants introduced themselves.</p> <p>3. Adopt the agenda The Steering Group decided to adopt the draft agenda without changes.</p> <p>4. Update and exchange on current PA EDU topics</p> <p>a. Targets and indicators Mr Anders Bergström presented the four PA Education actions in the Action Plan from 2021 with their respective targets and indicators. The set indicators are related to the added value of macro-regional strategies being (1) policy impact in the form of policy briefs, (2) engaged stakeholders and (3) absorbed funding. The two latter related to the two no's, no new funding, and no new institutions. Please find the presentation attached.</p> <p>REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall, Steering Group members agreed that the quantitative indicators from the Action Plan are setting quite ambitious goals. Even if the targets have not been reached, we should bear in mind that the baseline often is set to zero. Hence progress has been made. The set goal might be not realistic in some cases in light of the external factors such as pandemic, war in Ukraine etc. that influenced the possibility to reach the targets. - Another reason while targets have not been reached is the funding. With no funding allocated to the implementation of the Strategy the results are dependent on project funds that have been granted or not. From this autumn and for a year, flagships, platforms for collaboration are being prepared with funding from smaller funds often the Swedish Institute. Next steps are ESF+ funding where calls will be available next year. - The present Action Plan with its targets and indicators can't be changed by the Steering Group. A new revision of the Action Plan is not yet decided but a qualified guess is that it will be done in 2026, in good time to prepare the Strategy for next MFF. - Important to establish a monitoring and evaluation system on both EUSBSR level and programme level (mainstream programmes) focusing on the macro-regional added values. - General remark: the BSP is working on the monitoring and evaluation system for the EUSBSR. - General remark: It is also important to strengthen the transnational dimension, focusing on measures that can provide impact with support of transnational cooperation.

b. Communication

The meeting welcomed the new communication officer, Sandra Zetterman. Ms Zetterman introduced the principles of the soon ready communication plan. Please find her presentation attached.

REFLECTIONS AND FEEDBACK

- Quality over quantity: it is important to address the most interesting/emerging topics, choose effective communication channels and appropriate target groups.

c. Cooperation with Ukraine

Mr Anders Bergström presented the newly launched project, the Civil Protection Faculty a joint project with PA Secure using non-formal education for training of fire fighters in emergency medicine and other capacities needed in Ukraine. Please find the presentation attached. Ms Nadia Afanasieva, PAC PA9 People and Skills in EUSDR added that children in the war zones need help. She sees a potential for cross-MRS collaboration to be explored.

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Steering Group agreed that the project provides valuable knowledge that can be used both in times of crisis and in civilian life situations. There is a potential for cross-MRS cooperation, for example, in distance learning.
- Ms Aļona Babiča emphasized that supporting Ukraine and contributing to its reconstruction is one of the priorities of the Latvian Presidency.
- Members of the Steering Group informed about the recent support measures and provided statistical data on Ukrainian civilians integrated in education systems in their countries.

d. BSR Integrate Now

Ms Merle Andraschko gave an update on the emerging flagship on integration of migrants. Please find the report enclosed.

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Steering Group took note of the report and supported further work within the emerging flagship.

e. Economy of Wellbeing of People

Mr Imants Gross, Policy Officer at PA Health reported on the newly launched project funded by the Swedish Institute. The project will start building of a joint flagship with PA Health and PA Education. Please find the presentation attached.

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Steering Group noted the importance of lifelong learning, including re-skilling and up-skilling in education and employment policies, emphasizing the importance of availability of appropriate funding and qualitative monitoring.

f. BSR Social Innovation

Another cross-PA flagship being prepared is BSR Social Innovation together with PA Innovation. Ms Renāte Lukjanska, Social Innovation Centre in Latvia, one of the partners in this Interreg BSR project introduced the project named "Regional Ecosystems for Social Innovation and Social Transformation, RESIST" with implementation over three years starting in November 2023. This project will develop what will be the flagship BSR Social Innovation.

REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS

- Steering Group welcomed the introduced project and overall cross-PA cooperation, which allows to reach more stakeholders and thus more impressive results.

	<p>5. Other updates</p> <p>a. School to Work Mr Gunnar Anderzon, flagship leader gave a brief report on the status of the flagship. Please find the report enclosed.</p> <p>b. Baltic Sea Network – European Social Fund Ms Tereza Vilén, present Chair of the network gave a brief update on the activities. Next meeting will be held early 2024. On the agenda will be programme priorities, PA EDU will be invited.</p> <p>c. Baltic Science Network Mr Anders Bergström gave a brief report based on the report prepared by the flagship leader Mr Klaus von Lepel. Unfortunately, he was unable to participate due to illness. His report is enclosed.</p> <p>6. Next meeting Ms Aļona Babiča informed the members of the Steering Group about next meeting to be held online in February 2024. The date will be announced later preliminary two months prior to the meeting.</p> <p>7. Closure Ms Aļona Babiča thanked the Ambassador for hosting the meeting and members of the Steering Group and guests for their active participation in the discussions.</p>
MEMBERS	<p>POLICY AREA FOCAL POINTS / MEMBERS OF THE STEERING GROUP</p> <p>Denmark <i>Ms Anna-Kathrine Gottschalk-Hansen, Embassy Secretary, Danish Embassy</i></p> <p>Estonia <i>Mr Siim Krispin, Deputy Head of Mission, Estonian Embassy</i></p> <p>Finland <i>Mr Henrik Ruso, Ministry of Education and Culture</i></p> <p>Latvia <i>Ms Aļona Babiča, Ministry of Education and Science</i></p> <p>Lithuania <i>Mr Raimondas Paškevičius, Ministry of Education, Science and Sports</i></p> <p>Sweden <i>Ms Cecilia Ragnarsson, Ministry of Education and Research</i></p> <p>POLICY AREA COORDINATORS</p> <p>Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg Senate Chancellery <i>Ms Merle Andraschko, Policy Area Coordinator</i></p> <p>Norden Association Sweden <i>Mr Anders Bergström, Policy Area Coordinator</i> <i>Ms Sandra Zetterman, Communication Officer</i></p>
GUESTS	<p><u>Flagship leader</u> School to Work <i>Mr Gunnar Anderzon, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions</i></p> <p><u>Other guests</u> Baltic Sea Network – European Social Fund <i>Ms Tereza Vilén, Swedish ESF Council</i> <i>Mr Kasper Holden Ladefoged, Danish Business Authority</i></p> <p>EUSBSR Policy Area Health <i>Mr Imants Gross, NDPHS Secretariat</i></p> <p>EUSDR PA9 People and Skills <i>Ms Nadja Afanasieva, Ukrainian Institute for International Politics</i></p> <p>BSR Social Innovation (RESIST) <i>Ms Renāte Lukjanska, Social Innovation Centre, Latvia</i></p> <p>Baltic Sea Strategy Point <i>Mr Juhani Ailio, project manager</i></p>