

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

Steering Group for Policy Area on Maritime Safety and Security

Rules of Procedure

Adopted on 22/11/2024

Article 1

Scope

These Rules of Procedure apply to all meetings of the SG for Policy Area Maritime Safety and Security (PA Safe) of the EUSBSR. Online meetings are encouraged. These Rules of Procedure also apply when the SG makes decisions by way of written procedure.

Article 2

Composition of the PA Safe Steering Group

The SG of PA Safe consist of representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States. SG members should come from key 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 PA Safe SG by informing the lead PAC in written form. A Member State can also appoint more than one representative to the SG, if this is necessary due to the structure of the Member State or other similar reasoning. In this case, one of the representatives has to be nominated as the main representative and act as one.

The PA Safe SG may be an existing cooperation body within the PAC organisation, if appropriate and approved by the NCG.

The SG 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 has to be endorsed by the NCG.

Furthermore, an SG may also invite representatives of regional, national or other organisations to join the group as members or observers, upon decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States.

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.

Article 3

Role and responsibilities

The SG provides strategic guidance to the PA Safe, holds policy discussions and identifies key ways 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 PA Safe SG are:

- Supporting the PACs in fulfilling their tasks, notably by
 - Guiding the development of the PA Safe in general by policy discussions and by endorsing new objectives, developments and operation formats, including flagships and support letters;
 - 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 PA Safe, notably by

- Endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the PA Safe, drafted by the PACs, and submitting these documents to the NCG for information.

In addition to their responsibilities within their group, PA Safe SG members representing national or regional governments serve as focal points in their respective administrations, where their functions notably include:

- Acting as liaison between the PA Safe 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.

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

Article 5

The rotating PA Safe SG Presidency

The PA Safe SG Presidency should rotate among the SG Members, normally on an annual basis. The SG decides among available candidates.

The rotation of the PA Safe SG Presidency should follow the NCG rotation.

The SG Presidency supports and works in close cooperation with the PACs.

The PA Safe SG meetings are prepared and organized by the SG Presidency, in close cooperation with the respective PACs.

Article 6

The Policy Area Coordinators

The PACs are the key operational stakeholders of the PA Safe, ensuring the implementation of the Strategy with support and guidance of the SGs. Their tasks include:

- Ensuring a general overview of the PA;
- Managing, coordinating and developing the PA;
- Monitoring and reporting on progress within the PA;
- Ensuring communication and visibility of the PA.

As the PA Safe has more than one PAC, the NCG decides which one of them is the leading PAC, following a proposal by the SG. The lead PAC is responsible for coordination among the PACs and for the administration of the PA.

The PACs should maintain a valid list that indicates the members and observers of the PA Safe SG. The list should also indicate the current PA Safe SG Presidency, its rotation between the member states and information on the PACs.

The PACs have to keep the SG Presidency and the Baltic Strategy Point updated as soon as changes in the composition of the SG membership occur.

The PACs are appointed and recalled by the NCG, following a proposal by the SG.

The PACs participate in all meetings of the SG, except for those that directly concern decisions regarding their performance and proposals for appointment or recall of PACs or lead PACs.

Article 7

Decision-making

The SG of PA Safe 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 SG.

The SG Presidency, or the PAC/Lead PAC after approval by the SG Presidency, can initiate a written decision-making process (written procedure) by sending a draft decision and related documents to all SG members, which shall have at least 7 working days to respond in writing to the Presidency and PACs. 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.

The PACs should maintain a valid list that indicates the members and observers of the PA Safe SG. The list should also indicate the current PA Safe SG Presidency, its rotation between the member states and information on the PACs.

Article 8

Agenda

The SG of PA Safe 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 PAC/Lead PAC, after approval by the SG Presidency, shall submit the draft agenda for the SG meeting to all SG members at least 5 working days before the meeting for consultation.

Documents for discussion shall be submitted to all PA Safe SG members at least 5 working days prior to the SG meeting, unless duly justified circumstances require circulating documents later.

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

Article 9

Meeting participants

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

In the context of PA Safe, the leaders of specific Actions, whose scope and activities are within the objectives of PA Safe in the EUSBSR, are expected to participate in SG meetings and provide relevant updates to the SG and PACs.

Article 10

Frequency of meetings

The SG of PA Safe should convene at least twice a year.

The PA Safe SG meetings can be performed as online meetings. However, it is recommended that at least one of the annual meetings would be a live meeting.

The PA Safe SG meeting participants may bring interpreters to the meetings on their own cost.

The EU member state hosting the PA Safe SG meeting bear the costs of the meeting, unless otherwise decided. The meeting participants cover their personal travel and accommodation costs.

Article 11

Reporting

The PACs are responsible for ensuring timely reporting from all PA Safe SG meetings. Such non-attributable reports should be made available on the EUSBSR website.

Article 12

Revision

The Rules of Procedure of the PA Safe SG are adopted and shall be revised, as appropriate, by decision of the SG.