

**The NDPHS Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR)
Acting as Steering Group for EUSBSR
Policy Area Health**

Rules of Procedure

Adopted in written procedure by NDPHS CSR on 16 August 2022
Adopted by EUSBSR NCG on 6 September 2022

Article 1

Scope

These Rules of Procedure apply to all meetings of the Steering Group (SG) for Policy Area Health (PA Health) of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). If the SG is an existing cooperation body within a Policy Area Coordinator (PAC) organisation, it shall apply these Rules of Procedure when addressing issues regarding the Policy Area. The NDPHS Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR) is acting as Steering Group for EUSBSR PA Health. These Rules of Procedure also apply when the SG makes decisions by way of written procedure. The assignment to NDPHS as the Policy Area Coordinator for PA Health is fulfilled by the NDPHS Secretariat.

Article 2

Composition of the Steering Group

The SG consists of the CSR representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States.¹ 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 SG by informing the NDPHS Secretariat 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 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 to join the group as members or observers, upon decision taken by consensus by the EUSBSR Member States. 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. However, before such decisions are implemented, they have to be endorsed by the EUSBSR National Coordinators Group (NCG).

The PAC has to keep the SG Presidency, the Baltic Strategy Point (BSP) and the respective National Coordinator (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 Policy Area Health, 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 CSR as the SG are:

- Supporting the Policy Area Coordinator in fulfilling its tasks, notably by
 - Guiding the development of PA Health 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 EC²

¹ CSR representatives of EEA member states Norway and Iceland are similarly full members of the SG, within the limitations stipulated by article 7.

- Ensuring linkages to relevant national and regional policy-making
- Monitoring and evaluating the PA Health, notably by
- Endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the PA Health, drafted by the Policy Area Coordinator, and submitting these documents to the NCG for information.

In addition to their responsibilities within their group, 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 Health 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 SG Presidency**

The SG Presidency should rotate among the SG EU Member States, normally on an annual basis, and whenever possible shall follow the order of the rotating EUSBSR presidencies. The SG decides among available candidates.

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

Article 6 **The Policy Area Health Coordinator**

The Policy Area Coordinator is the key operational stakeholder of the PA Health, ensuring the implementation of the Strategy with support and guidance of the PA Health SG. Its tasks include:

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

If the Policy Area has more than one Policy Area Coordinator, the NCG decides which one of them is the leading Policy Area Coordinator, following a proposal by the SG. The lead Policy Area Coordinator is responsible for coordination among the PACs and for the administration of the PA Health. Currently the NDPHS Secretariat acts as the only Coordinator (PAC) of the Policy Area Health.

The Policy Area Coordinator has to keep the SG Presidency and the Baltic Strategy Point updated as soon as changes in the composition of the SG membership occur.

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

The Policy Area Coordinator participate in all meetings of the SG, 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.

² Decisions on substantial changes to the Action Plan remain the sole competence of the National Coordinators Group.
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Article 7 **Decision-making**

The SG 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 Policy Area Coordinator 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 10 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 SG shall address topics at the request of its members and respond to the needs of key stakeholders regarding the implementation of the objectives of the Policy Area Health. The Policy Area Coordinator, after approval by the SG Presidency, shall submit the draft agenda for the SG meeting to all SG members at least 10 working days before the meeting for consultation. Documents for discussion shall be submitted to all SG members at least 10 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.

Article 10 **Frequency and format of meetings**

The SG should convene at least twice a year. Online meetings are encouraged.

Article 11 **Reporting**

The Policy Area Coordinator is responsible for ensuring timely reporting from all SG meetings. Such non-attributable reports should be made available on the EUSBSR website.

Article 12 **Revision**

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