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EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Steering Group for Policy Area Culture

Rules of Procedure

Adopted on Oct. 20th 2021

Article 1

Scope

These Rules of Procedure apply to all meetings of the Steering Group (SG) for Policy Area Culture of the EUSBSR (PA). These Rules of Procedure also apply when the SG makes decisions by way of written procedure.

Article 2

Composition of the Steering Group

The SG consists of representatives of the national or regional governments of EUSBSR Member States. SG members should come from key ministries or authorities in the field of culture and creative industries. 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 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 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 NCG.

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.

The current composition of the SG is published on the PA website.

Article 3

Role and responsibilities

The SG provides strategic guidance to PA Culture, 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 of the Steering Group

The main tasks of the SG are:

Supporting the PACs in fulfilling their tasks, notably by

- Guiding the development of PA Culture 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
- Ensuring linkages to relevant national and regional policy-making;
- Monitoring and evaluating the PA, notably by endorsing the Work Plans and annual substantial reports on achievements for the PA, drafted by the PACs, and submitting these documents to the NCG for information.

¹ ² Decisions on substantial changes to the Action Plan remain the sole competence of the National Coordinators Group

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 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 is linked to the NC Group presidency and starts 1.7. each year, ending 30.6. the following year.

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

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

Article 6 **The Policy Area Coordinators**

The PACs are the key operational stakeholders of PA Culture, 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 PACs are responsible for ensuring timely reporting from all SG meetings. Such non-attributable reports should be made available on the EUSBSR website.

Article 12 **Revision**

These Rules of Procedure of the SG were adopted by means of written procedure ending Oct. 20th 2021 and shall be revised, as appropriate, by decision of the SG.