Nordregio

An Evaluation of the Development and Effectiveness of Policy Area Secure 2013-2019

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Summary

Policy Area (PA) Secure in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) is a platform for collaboration and dialogue among a variety of actors, such as experts, governmental agencies, research institutes, civil society organisations and businesses from across the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). PA Secure gets its mandate from a Steering Group consisting of members from all eight EU Member States located in the BSR. The Steering Group also includes the CBSS' expert group Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB), the CBSS expert group on Children at Risk and the Union of the Baltic Cities, represented by the Safe Cities Commission. The Steering Group was founded in 2013 (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2018). PA Secure is supported by the PA Coordinators (PACs) namely the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB). The PACs help identify, facilitate and monitor projects within the civil protection, law enforcement and societal security space. The Coordinators also help identify funding opportunities and help identify projects that may have a macro-regional value (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2018). The EUSBSR is in and by itself an experiment in macro-regional governance. It is constantly moving and changing. This also means that the development of PA Secure can hardly be held to a strict parameter. PA Secure does not operate in a vacuum, and external effects and risks – whether geopolitical, climate related or societal challenges – are outside the scope of PA Secure's control. The objective is first and foremost being pre-emptive through collaboration.

By facilitating a common platform for developing new methodologies and governance structures PA Secure is encouraging and driving the creation of a societal security community in the BSR. This is evident in the trust and confidence that is emerging among actors in the region. Basing their work on the governance and policy rationale of a 'whole-of-society'-approach, PA Secure's work includes both regional bodies, national agencies and ministries, local actors and civil society organisation as well as international organisations. As PA Secure is moving towards a multi-level and multi-actor policy space, their increased focus on regional and local levels for implementing actions is forging stronger links between actors on sub-national levels. This regionalisation of security policy implementation may be just as transferrable as between the Member States in the BSR.

The collaboration between civil security actors challenges the presumption that civil protection and societal security has to happen from a 'whole-of-government' approach. The concrete collaboration with civil society organisations is also proving fruitful. The BALTPREP project funded by DG ECHO has been nominated for EUSBSR Flagship status under PA Secure. BALTPREP is a collaboration between Red Cross organisations from across the BSR.

Flagships are an important part of PA Secure's strategic and thematic work. With a total of 19 flagships under their belt (12 completed; 7 active), PA Secure can show to be growing and maturing. Several of these flagships can also be understood as flagship *processes*, indicating the maturity level of the Policy Area and the way in which they are able to maintain and support projects and processes over time. There are several examples of such projects but the most prominent two are From Gaps to Caps and the Baltic Leadership Programme. The methodologies and structures of these two Flagship processes are exemplary of how a Policy Area should work with implementation of activities. Both From Gaps to Caps and the Baltic Leadership Programme additionally support the underlying objective of the Policy Area, considering their focus on capacity building and developing common methodological tools. These strengthen cooperation and create benchmarks from which common analyses can take place. Furthermore, what we can see from the documents analysed for this evaluation is that there is a gradual orientation towards efforts that focus PA Secure goals, tasks and operative measures developing over time. This includes changing and improving the methodological and conceptual foundation for implementing e.g. flagships and the development of targets and indicators.

The Joint Position for Enhancing Cooperation in the Civil Protection Area (adopted in 2017) has also aided an increasingly targeted and coordinated implementation structure for both the PA Secure Member States and the PA Secure Coordinators. The Joint Position was developed based on expert analysis, recommendations, discussions and interactive processes. The adoption of the Joint Position reflects the PA Secure Coordinators' work regarding increasing ownership of the strategy and the Action Plan set out by PA Secure. Although the Steering Group has been actively involved in the development of PA Secure since its establishment in 2013, the commitment seen by this adoption sends important signals of a budding common societal security culture in the BSR. The declaration of a Joint Position should be considered a substantial achievement in and by itself,

and an indication of both the maturity and modernisation of the Policy Area. The Joint Position restructured the Policy Area's Action Plan and outlines eight prioritised areas that will necessarily restructure the objectives in the current Action Plan. Seeing the Joint Position in relation to the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adds an additional depth to the work undertaken by PA Secure and connects stakeholders further to an international standard.

The development of PA Secure actions is evident in both scope, method and efforts to increase visibility. The objectives and subobjectives have become increasingly solidified. The targets and indicators are moving towards measuring real qualitative impact in the BSR, which eventually speaks louder than statistics in the attempts to achieve their priority areas.

However, there are some challenges for supporting a fully integrated macro-regional Policy Area. This is particularly linked to the prioritisation of the Policy Area in Member States on the middle management level. Actors and experts engaged in PA Secure activities call for potent tools for raising the PA Secure profile in their thematic working areas. Increasing the visibility of projects may be one method for gaining momentum as the power of good examples cannot be denied. Taking action regarding the ability to influence future and present decision-makers, PA Secure offers the Baltic Leadership Programme. However, it might be interesting to consider whether there may be opportunities to explore more immediate remedies for such pressing issues.

Considering the operational aspect of PA Secure as it is vested in the PACs, it is clear that PA Secure is a dynamic and learning organisation in the way that they respond to feedback from their stakeholders. This is exemplified in the draft version of the new Action Plan, to be adopted in May 2020, as the connection between the new draft version and the stakeholder survey from the autumn of 2019 is evident in the way that it is shaping the priority areas and actions. This speaks to the capacity of the PACs to capture the perspectives of the stakeholders and act accordingly. The PACs are highly appreciated by the participants in the stakeholder survey, and their ability to work seamlessly in the guiding of the Policy Area is remarkable. The information flow, regular contact and the PACs' role in facilitating the platforms for cooperation is highly valued by the respondents in the stakeholder survey, which shows that there is a high level of trust in the PACs' ability to do a good job for the Policy Area.

1. Introduction: PA Secure

Policy Area (PA) Secure is one of 13 Policy Areas in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). Each Policy Area represents key areas of strategic importance for the overall improvement of the macro-region. The EUSBSR is the first of its kind and was the result of an extensive consultation with Member States and stakeholders following an urgent call from the European Parliament to tackle the environmental challenges in the region (European Commission, 2017). The Commission presented the EUSBSR Action Plan in 2009, and it was subsequently adopted by the European Council later the same year (European Commission, 2017).

The integrated and coordinated governance of actors on all levels in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) is the key factor for a successful macro-regional strategy (European Commission, 2017, p. 8). The success also heavily relies on the priority the strategy is given by the policy and decision-makers in the region. Working with key actors in a concerted effort to mitigate impacts of risks and threats in the BSR, whether man-made disasters, natural disasters or organised crime is thus key to unlocking the potential of coordinated security cooperation in the region. PA Secure states that their approach is a 'holistic societal security paradigm' and their efforts are firmly based on a belief that *'the common efforts of the Baltic Sea Region countries within our Policy Area save lives, prevent economic losses and contribute to making the region safer and more prosperous for people to live in'* (EUSBSR Policy Area Secure, 2018). The Policy Area is coordinated by the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB).

PA Secure is a platform for collaboration and dialogue among a variety of actors, such as experts, governmental agencies, research institutes, civil society organisations and businesses from across the BSR. PA Secure gets its mandate from a Steering Group (SG) consisting of members from all EU Member States located in the BSR. The SG also includes the CBSS' expert group Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB), the CBSS expert group on Children at Risk and the Union of the Baltic Cities, represented by the Safe Cities Commission. The Steering Group was founded in 2013 (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2018). The PA Secure Coordinators (PACs) help identify, facilitate and monitor projects within the civil protection, law enforcement and societal security space. The Coordinators also help identify funding opportunities and help identify projects that may have a macro-regional value (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2018).

The objective of this report is to evaluate the results of PA Secure's activities in the years 2013-2019. Based on documents provided, the analysis will centre around the effects and results of PA Secure activities, the added value of these activities and the efficiency of the implemented actions. First, the evaluation will provide a background on the status of the discourse on safety and security in the BSR. This will be followed by the overall analysis of PA Secure 2013-2019 in section 3 and an analysis of the evolution of the role of PA Secure Actions and Coordination in section 4. The evaluation will in the final sections provide a SWOT-table, key findings and recommendations.

Task

The commissioned task is formulated in the following manner (see Annex 1):

"The Consultant is contracted to perform an analytical task within the process of monitoring and evaluation of the EUSBSR PA Secure activities and their results in years 2013 – 2019

(….) The key objectives and sub-objectives of the M&E process are as follows:

> *There are two main goals of the PA Secure monitoring and evaluation action:*
> - *to assess the overall achievements throughout the entire PA Secure 2013 - 2020 period, and*
> - *to work out the premise for formulating recommendations for the operation of this area in the coming years."*

The Policy Area Coordinators place emphasis on the following overarching areas for the evaluation:

- The Impact and added value of PA Secure in terms of tangible results;
- Barriers to progress and fulfilling prioritised objectives;

- Appraisal of PA Secure coordination, including performance, strengths and weaknesses;
- Member State priorities and their impact on PA Secure, in terms of agenda, availability of resources, involvement and outreach at the national level.

The aforementioned areas are intertwined, and each play a role for accomplishing and achieving the overall goals of PA Secure. The purpose of the evaluation is to allow PA Secure to identify key enablers and impediments to successful cooperation and progress in the activities. This also includes considering and detecting the changes happening in the cooperation modes and priorities in the Policy Area because of the PACs and the activities undertaken in PA Secure.

At the time of the inception of this evaluation, PA Secure is at the start of revising their part of the EUSBSR Action Plan. This evaluation will be an important foundation for further developing the PA Secure activities and coordination of the Policy Area in the upcoming years. The analysis and evaluation are based on the documents available to the consultant.

Methodology and data
The evaluation is based on data and material produced by the PACs and the Steering Group, as well as the European Commission, external consultancies and other individual experts engaged or have otherwise been involved in assessing the EUSBSR since 2013.

The following documents provided by the PACs have been analysed to discern the common denominators and trace the main features of PA Secure's development:

- *PA Secure reports submitted to the Interreg BSR MA/JS,*
- *Survey results emanating from consultancy commissioned work on behalf of the European Commission, Interreg BSR MA/JS and other public bodies (e.g. COWI),*
- *Documents and reports spanning the thematic areas of PA Secure, with a specific focus on flagships,*
- *Independent analytical papers, academic articles, book chapters and other online written publications concerned with societal security in the Baltic Sea Region,*
- *Documents referencing PA Secure and PA Secure activities,*
- *PA Secure stakeholder survey conducted by the PACs,*
- *Overview of the implementation of the Joint Position and the mapping of the declaration of roles in the Joint Position and the Action Plan.*

The analysis of the aforementioned documents was conducted on a SWOT-basis, covering and identifying areas of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, resulting in an overall SWOT-diagram.

No interviews have been conducted for the purpose of this evaluation and the results of this analysis thus hinges on the availability of documents and materials provided to the consultant. The consultant also conducted an internet-based search for any references to PA Secure or PA Secure activities. This was limited to those documents and articles that were available in English and Swedish, due to language limitations of the consultant.

2. Safety and security in the BSR: Discourse Analysis
There have been various initiatives for creating a security community in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) since the end of the Cold War. In the years after the fall of the Soviet Era and the geopolitical changes that it brought, the Danish and German Ministries of Foreign Affairs saw the potential to help build and drive the development of mutual trust and confidence in the Baltic Sea Region (Council of the Baltic Sea States, n.d.). This was manifested through the founding of the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS), which started working on civil security issues in 1992, the year when the council was founded.

The CBSS is guided by three overarching objectives: Regional Identity, Sustainable & Prosperous Region and Safe & Secure Region (Council of the Baltic Sea States, n.d.). The establishment of the CBSS was soon after followed by the Northern Dimension policy initiative launched in 1999. The Northern Dimension, which became the 'common policy' across the EU, Russia and the non-EU Member States Iceland and Norway, aims to 'promote dialogue and concrete cooperation; strengthen well-being and intensified economic cooperation;

promote economic integration, competitiveness and sustainable development in Northern Europe' (European Union External Action, n.d.). According to Ekengren (2018), this first initiative to include Russia was a response to the accession of Finland and Sweden to the EU in 1995, to prevent further disparity and division between the countries in the BSR. The CBSS was instrumental in the development of the civil protection initiatives in the early 2000s. Focusing on risk management of man-made and environmental threats, cooperation in emergency services, waste and pollution, the projects in the years 2003-2005 were conceived within the framework of supporting and creating safe and sustainable development in the BSR (European Union, 2015). The added macro-regional value of the projects was the potential to mitigate risks from a cross-border perspective.

Creating a shared sense of a societal security culture is at the forefront of the rationale of Policy Area (PA) Secure, and as Barzanje et al. (2018) states: 'modern crisis management requires cooperation' (2018:1). As the security issues are increasingly complex and vast, PA Secure's adoption of the societal security perspective enables the ability to broaden the scope and actions. Since the merge between PA Crime and PA Secure in 2015, the Policy Area has seen a change towards a more holistic take on the security politics and issues in the BSR. PA Secure is thus an instrument for advancing the work in societal security and resilience in the BSR. This amplifies the need for addressing the underlying culture-political mechanisms that surface in the face of the attempt to harmonise collaboration and mutual risk-scenario understanding. However, the approaches towards reaching such a state of play required a depoliticised relationship between Russia, the Baltic Sea states and the European Union. Although Mouritzen (2001) doubted the success of such a collaboration due to its basis in the bottom-up Nordic fashion, and the missing preconditions such as a common political culture, it was later retorted by the fact that the collaboration seemed to function. However, the foreign politicization of Russia, in the wake of the annexation of Crimea in 2014, has muddled the objective of creating 'low politics' between regions and people (Ekengren, 2018, s. 509). Russia remains part of the collaboration through the Northern Dimension initiative, but it is more difficult for Russia to engage in matters of the BSR, let alone the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, launched in 2009.

Risks, whether man-made in nature or caused by natural disasters, are linked by the increasingly popular adoption of the idea of resilience, and it is finding its way into the security literature and discourse (Sundelius, 2016). Considering 'resilience' is at the core of the ability to create a safe and secure macro-region requires a broader understanding of 'resilience' to include dimensions of economics and society. Resilience from the Latin word 'resilire' refers to the ability to 'bounce back'. When it comes to governing unknown risks, it might be worth considering risks in terms of the possibilities it creates and the potential futures it might create. The BSR grapples with a range of transboundary issues that spans from climate change and extreme weather, to the prevention of human trafficking and crime. Thus, it covers both natural and man-made disasters and risks and aims to promote 'a comprehensive and coherent approach to reduce transboundary vulnerabilities' by focusing on building and enabling capacity for societal security (European Commission, 2017, p. 125). The society is not static; resilience-thinking in terms of 'bouncing back' is futile, and seen in light of the security discourse, it requires actors to always be one step ahead. Regardless of the activities that PA Secure may deploy, safety and security does not happen in a vacuum. Furthermore, '*State-by-state approaches to resilience are important, but insufficient. Resilience must be shared, and it must be projected forward*' (Sundelius, 2016: 166).

Resilience as part of the security discourse, as Sundelius points out, goes beyond ideas of sovereign national territory in the face of new adversarial contingencies that intrudes on the traditional definition of actor-based adversaries (Sundelius, 2016). Since the end of the Cold War, the BSR is no longer a territory that is outright compromised and is rather an area concerned with civil society, security, connecting people, prosperity and governance issues. Moreover, the interconnectivity through e.g. road networks, energy supply, communication and other societal infrastructure are simultaneously the source and key to boosting prosperity and a detrimental factor in terms of vulnerability. This is due to the contingency of future and unknown crisis. Furthermore, Sundelius' article states that in this sense, the considerations of security issues must build on a notion of whole-of-society and move away from the traditional perspective of whole-of-government. One example used by Sundelius to demonstrate the new forms of security issues is the example of cyber security – an issue that touches people's lives outside of traditional risks and threats, which is difficult to govern.

Coming back to Sundelius' comment on 'whole-of-society' vs. the traditionalist view of 'whole-of government' in security thinking is key to understanding safety and security in the BSR. Any global challenge that may pose a risk to human development should be part of the assessment of the safety and security of the area. PA Secure's position in the EUSBSR objective 'Increased Prosperity' is basing their creation of a security community within the political philosophy of Kantian liberal traditions of political cooperation, which is based on mutual economic interest (Deutsch et al. 1957). This focus is arguably influencing the PA's actions, targets and indicators towards the overtly quantifiable, without considering the overall qualitative nature of security politics. Nevertheless, considering PA Secure's composition, the focus is broader and encompass the idea of 'whole-of-society'. PA Secure's holistic approach including regional bodies in terms of international organisations, national governments, non-governmental organisations and other actors arguably attempts to redirect the idea from 'whole-of-government' towards 'whole-of-society' as the foundation for the operative rationale. PA Secure thus places emphasis on the need for sub-regional and local connections to ensure that new threats and risks are dealt with in a bottom-up manner. The very fact that PA Secure continues to thrive and finding its methods of governance is a testament against Mouritzen's argument that the diversity of political culture is a predicament to success in the region (Mouritzen, 2001).

It is difficult to assess the status of safety and security in the BSR as it is a complex area, especially considering the resilience of the BSR, but the initiatives taken within PA Secure indicates that traditional aspects of safety and security is underway. The relative interpretation of resilience seems to be based on a 'bounce back' mindset rather than a 'bounce-forward' conceptualisation of security issues, but the initiation of e.g. the BSR research network on societal security is an interesting move to keep up-to-date with the movements in the security discourse and its challenges. Translating the research projects into feasible objectives for policy makers remains key, in addition to strategically using communication to reach target audiences.

3. Analysis of PA Secure 2013-2019

This section provides an overview and analysis of the PA Secure stakeholders' and actors' self-assessment and an analysis of the role and effectiveness of PA Secure during 2013-2019. **The first section** (3.1) considers the self-assessment on a general level. The sub-section *3.1.1 Member States* dives further into the mechanisms surrounding the implementation of actions. Some links can be made to the stakeholder self-assessment. **The second section**, section 3.2. *Analysis of the role and effectiveness of PA Secure* considers the development of the Action Plan (3.2.1) before delving into an overview of the progress as illustrated in the progress reports from 2015-2018 (3.2.2). The coordination of flagships is discussed in **the third section** and is accompanied by a commentary on the current flagships (3.3.1) and targets and indicators (3.3.2). Finally, there is a note on the implementation of the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3.1 Analysis of PA Secure actors' self-assessment (2013-2019)

The PA Secure Coordinators conducted a stakeholder survey in 2019. There were 33 respondents to the survey, where Steering Group Members made up 15%, flagship leaders 15%, experts involved in PA Secure activities (70%) and others (9%) (PAC Secure, 2019b, p. 2). The survey was distributed to PA Secure Steering Group, stakeholder contacts provided by the Steering Group members and through the PA Secure Newsletter (PAC Secure, 2019b, p. 2). The results from the survey indicates that PA Secure has had an overall positive development since 2013, but that there is room for improvement. The respondents to the survey were primarily experts involved in different PA Secure activities, and the overall time spent working with PA Secure activities has been between 1-4 years for most of the respondents.

The survey generated some noteworthy insights that are relevant for this evaluation. Most interesting is perhaps the respondents' overall evaluation of the period 2013-2019 and what the respondents would have liked to have seen. The key advantages for the stakeholders in the survey were the regular contact with experts outside their own organisations, platforms for newfound partnerships, information and research, and access to experts and the exchange on best practices (Question 12: *What are the key advantages of participation in PA Secure for your organisation?).* The survey showed mixed scores on areas such "Assistance in the exploration of funding", "Enabling access to the results of projects and research", and "Enabling coordination of different multilateral and bilateral international cooperation activities in the BSR". Whereas the two former areas' lower

score can be detected in the overall assessment and evaluation of the challenges for PA Secure, it is surprising that the latter area scored somewhat lower, as this is one of the core tasks and competencies of PA Secure. Considering this in light of the positive scores around 'platforms for new partnerships' and 'exchange of best practices', the somewhat negative response could either be interpreted as a misunderstanding of the question posed, or a misunderstanding of the task of PA Secure and perceptions tied to how this should be performed.

The answers were revealing in the way that they highlighted both the capacity and capability of PA Secure, the ambitions of the respondents and the challenges ahead. Capacity and capability were highlighted by pinpointing the involvement and engagement of the appropriate authorities to ensure stronger communications and coordination of cooperation in projects (Question 13. *From your perspective, what would you like to have seen in the PA Secure activities during the years 2013 - 2019?*):

> *"Involvement of responsible authorities in the PA Secure work. (…) For example, PA Secure responsibilities also concern different national institutions (police etc.) and if they are represented in the meetings or other formats it might be easier to coordinate or cooperate in different areas of PA Secure or projects"* (PAC Secure, 2019i, s. 1).

On a policy level, the challenges are connected to the strength and scope of the middle manager level, as well as ensuring that the middle managers get the visibility and appropriate tools for raising the profile of their PA Secure-related projects:

> *"The gap between policy level and our middle management level is a problem. I think PA secure could play an important role for the project managers by creating a platform for us to report results. We have such few arenas today, either within my agency or outside. It is easy for a project manager to feel discouraged and invisible on a personal level. By lifting projects and creating visibility it will also raise the status of the work, and perhaps become easier to argue for resources from our middle management next time we want to start a new project"* (PAC Secure, 2019i, s. 2).

This was also noted by another respondent stating that development at the local level often is hindered by the tough prioritisation of resources that happens on the middle management level. PA Secure may play a role in ensuring that the resources for towards civil protection and societal security are prioritised by ensuring concrete tasks for implementation at the local level (PAC Secure, 2019c). Local actors play a key role in implementing civil protection and societal security measures, both regarding the maintenance and upkeep of rescue services and for building on the notion of the 'whole-of-society' in civil protection.

Another interesting observation is the request for more concrete and 'practical work', where investments in concrete priorities was requested in order to respond to the realities of the diverse playing field within the BSR:

> "(…) *The development level of the countries differs so the priorities of the more developed countries are not necessarily the priorities of the less developed countries"* (PAC Secure, 2019i, s. 1).

Seeing this in connection to the dismayed middle manager, there seems to be a roof of levels of engagement due to the perceived differences within the BSR. Not recognising that these differences may be a positive aspect and that initiatives on regional and local levels may be more transferrable on a *region-to-region* level between BSR states, is an opportunity for PA Secure to capitalise on. Keeping in mind that changing national policies and the shackled hands of middle managers in national agencies, focusing efforts and initiatives on the regional and local level may have long-term positive impacts on the national level.

Considering the requests above alongside the aforementioned survey dossier, it is clear that the size and visibility of the projects will need to become stronger. This is likely to happen in the next phases of PA Secure, as it is a relatively young collaborative platform. Looking at PA Secure's draft for the revision of the Action Plan for the EUSBSR (to be finalised by May 2020), it is clear that the focus ahead for PA Secure is responding to the answers given in the stakeholder survey; the new Action Plan is focusing on capacity building, building a common security culture in the BSR, and on more concrete policy-oriented platforms for law enforcement (PAC Secure, 2020a).

Stakeholders were in general very pleased with the Policy Area Coordinators' performance, their timely response and professional approach to guiding and developing the PA Secure platform. It is clear that that the respondents are seeing the development and institutionalisation of PA Secure as a platform for networking, collaboration and information as a positive development. This is supported by the answers to Question 4: "In what kind of activities within PA Secure has your organisation engaged in?" in that it connects the stakeholder's intentions with their engagement in the Policy Area with the platform provided by the PACs. Most of the respondents answered that the primary activities have been network building, capacity building activities, and implementation of common projects. Some also responded 'Steering Group meetings' but this response has a limited application, and it adheres only to those who are members of the Steering Group.

Result: The strengths and weaknesses displayed in the stakeholder survey complement each other, and highlights both opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Finding a common culture or common framework within a diverse context is difficult, but the awareness raising that PA Secure is undertaking is invaluable for this common culture to emerge. The varying visibility and the problem of hitting the target group in terms of raising civil security cooperation to the appropriate level of policy making remains a challenge, but not an impossibility. Focusing on the local level may be key to policies 'trickling up', which has an advantage both from a communications perspective and from a policy implementation perspective with the added, important value of local ownership. Although the national level is important for streamlined policy adoption in the BSR, local action and best practice examples are important for demonstrating the added value of projects and flagships.

3.1.1 Member states

All eight EU Member States, from the Baltic Sea Region, are part of PA Secure. From the Minutes from the Steering Group meetings, it is clear that these meetings are a forum for updates on the progress of the implementation of actions, clarifications and changes to implementation timelines, and finally important discussions around funding and potential projects (e.g. PAC Secure, 2019j; PAC Secure, 2017; PAC Secure, 2016). From what can be seen in the Minutes from the Steering Group meetings, the format and content have not changed substantially from 2016 – 2019. Nevertheless, seeing the Minutes from the November meeting in 2019 up against in e.g. the Minutes from the meeting in Stockholm on 10 November 2016, the meetings seem to have become more concentrated around the operative aspects of prioritised areas.

Considering the implementation of actions connected to the Policy Area Secure Action Plan and the Joint Position, it is clear that the Member States are actively involved through their participation in the PA Secure Steering Group and that their interest in declaring areas of responsibility was there from the start (PAC Secure, 2017). From the structuring of leadership roles for the strategic actions in the PA Secure Action Plan from 2015 and the Joint Position 2017, to the level of engagement seen throughout the Overviews of the implementation of the Joint Position (2019-2020), the Member States have been in charge of activities concerning their areas of responsibilities. Certain areas have progressed faster than others, for example Joint Position priority area number 4 'Increasing involvement of local authorities and civil society organisations'. Finland (Finnish National Rescue Association [SPEK]) took the leading role of the coordination of this area supported by the UBC Safe Cities Commission. Here, the BALTPREP project was nominated to gain EUSBSR Flagship status in 2019 (PAC Secure, 2020b). The coordination and implementation of this activity is characterised by a clear task and the involvement of external organisations such as the Red Cross added to the overall accompliment of the initial phases of this priority (PAC Secure, 2019f). This also speaks to the importance of identifying the correct partner to take on the task.

Two other notable action points connected to the leadership of the Member States in the implementation of the Joint Position is priority number 2 (*Combining national efforts in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* – Coordinator: Latvia) and number 3 (*Strengthening cross-sectoral cooperation in CBRN(E) preparedness* – Coordinator: Finland). Both show good progress and a variety of projects.

From the list of coordinators in the implementation of the Joint Position there are a few countries that are taking on more responsibility than others. All Member States are supporting the implementation and development of future actions; however, Member States taking on extra responsibilities are Finland (3) and Latvia (3 then 2). Denmark and Poland are also taking on coordination roles; Denmark as the Member State holding the Civil Protection Network Presidency succeeding Latvia, and they are also involved in the 'troika' (Latvia, Denmark

and Lithuania) in charge of priority area 8 (*Developing demand-driven and well-tailored training and education*). Poland has been in charge of priority area 6 (*Initiating projects as platform for innovation and cooperation*) and has seemingly been largely idle in the development of this priority area, noting that Poland is also not supported by any other Member States. In the update of the overview of the implementation of the Joint Position from November 2019, Poland will be participating in a Drive+ meeting to explore new opportunities (PAC Secure, 2019; 2020).

Considering the division of tasks, it might be fruitful to consider this to be even more diverse. Although the action areas most likely, and often evidently, pertain to areas of expertise within one Member State (e.g. the Finnish SPEK or Laurea University's role in coordinating the utilisation of research and project results), ownership to actionable policy areas and priorities may be understood as an operational concept, and could thus be important for the rate and willingness of policy implementation. A slightly more diverse list of coordinators may also help create a greater common security community, as more countries take part in the development of the ongoing and future actions.

Considering the level of engagement within the Member States and the number of responses to the PA Secure stakeholder survey, it is clear that most of the survey respondents have either been involved or regularly involved in PA Secure's activities in the past four years (Figure 1). The types of activities the organisations (referring to PA Secure Steering Group, stakeholder contacts provided by Steering Group members or others participating by responding to the newsletter) has been primarily network building activities (75.76%), capacity building activities (69.70%), implementation of common projects (54.55%) or Steering Group meetings (48.48%) (PAC Secure, 2019b, p. 3)

Figure 1. Level of engagement of the own organisation in PA Secure activities

We initialised several activities and played the leading role over the last 4 years.	6.06%	2
We are regularly involved in all relevant activities.	24.24%	8
We participated in several activities over the last 4 years.	48.48%	16
We participated in at least one activity over the last 4 years.	21.21%	7
We are informed about activities but do not participate in any activities.	0.00%	0
TOTAL		33

Source: Results from PA Secure Stakeholder Survey 2019 (PAC Secure, 2019b)

Furthermore, seeing the development of the implementation of the Joint Position in light of the PA Secure's survey responses in 2019 may shed some additional light on the level of success, especially with regards to the impact the actions have on national policies. Although the survey cannot clearly indicate the level of impact the Joint Position has had in the Member States, it is clear that there is a link to the level of implementation of the PA Secure Action Plan as defined in the EUSBSR. This somewhat tenuous conclusion is based on the number of years of involvement most of the respondents had been part of the PA Secure umbrella (1-4 years), and the age of the present Action Plan (PAC Secure, 2019b, p. 24). On a general level, the survey indicated that there has been a high level of impact in terms of the establishing international partners (51.61%) and involvement in macro-regional cooperation in the BSR (38.71%). The influence on national legislation in civil protection is rather spread out between the scores of *High* to *Low*. The methodologies developed for risk assessment and management, policy development, training activities, cooperation with civil society organisations and crisis management procedures are considered to have had *Medium* impact on national policy and practices in the area of civil security and the modus operandi of the respective organization (Figure 2).

Figure 2. PA Secure impact on national policy and practices in the area of civil security and/or modus operandi of the own organization
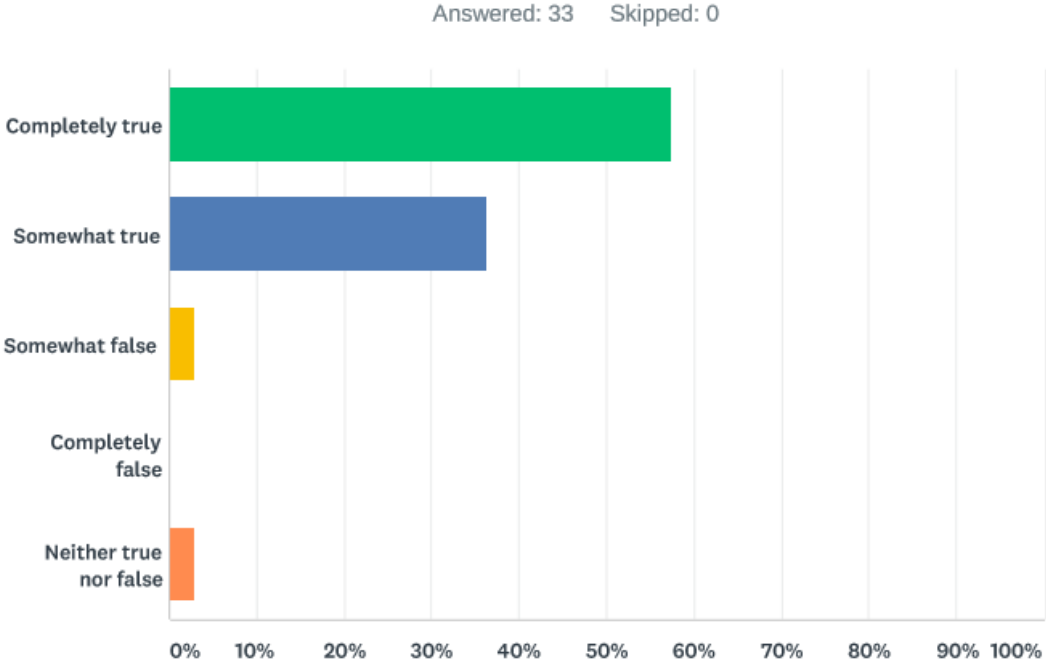
	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	NOT APPLICABLE	TOTAL
National legislation on civil protection	23.33% 7	23.33% 7	30.00% 9	23.33% 7	30
The methodology applied to risk assessment and risk management capacity assessment	28.13% 9	37.50% 12	18.75% 6	15.63% 5	32
Crisis management procedures	10.00% 3	43.33% 13	20.00% 6	26.67% 8	30
Involvement in macro-regional cooperation in the BSR	38.71% 12	45.16% 14	6.45% 2	9.68% 3	31
Implementation of the disaster risk reduction strategies	21.88% 7	34.38% 11	25.00% 8	18.75% 6	32
Crisis communication	12.90% 4	35.48% 11	32.26% 10	19.35% 6	31
Public awareness campaigns	6.67% 2	33.33% 10	30.00% 9	30.00% 9	30
Societal security research	13.33% 4	33.33% 10	23.33% 7	30.00% 9	30
Establishing working contacts with international partners	51.61% 16	25.81% 8	12.90% 4	9.68% 3	31
Training activities	19.35% 6	54.84% 17	12.90% 4	12.90% 4	31
Policy development process	16.67% 5	40.00% 12	30.00% 9	13.33% 4	30
Multilevel governance activities	23.33% 7	33.33% 10	26.67% 8	16.67% 5	30
Cooperation with civil society organisations	20.69% 6	37.93% 11	17.24% 5	24.14% 7	29
Internal cooperation between departments/divisions of the organisation	19.35% 6	35.48% 11	25.81% 8	19.35% 6	31

Source: Results from PA Secure Stakeholder Survey 2019 (PA Secure 2019b, p. 4).

When it comes to establishing contact with international partners, there have been several engagement opportunities through events and meetings that PA Secure monitors, reports on and supports. These have been communicated through the PA Secure Newsletter since 2017 and includes a plethora of different activities happening throughout the Baltic Sea Region. The activities include updates on the rotating chairmanship in the CBSS Civil Protection Network, expert visits between e.g. Hamburg and Riga, the FINEST Action cross-border cooperation, the large-scale exercises in 12 ports across the Baltic Sea States and going beyond the EUSBSR, the French Ministry of the Interior's Centre for Advanced studies' visit to the CBSS Secretariat. The latter bears witness to the proactivity vested in the adhering agencies to the PA Secure and that the Member States see the added value of engaging across borders to gain knowledge. Communication plays an important role for awareness raising and building transnational and transregional partnerships.

Finally, it is important to highlight that there is a high level of trust connected to the Steering Group, in terms of having built a professional rapport with people from across the member organisations (Figure 3). Gaining a greater understanding of the state of play of security issues in the BSR, alongside the opportunity to tie different security related topics together, were other important aspects that were highlighted by a few of the respondents (PAC Secure, 2019c).

Figure 3. Q8 Statement: "I am confident that if I reach out to my colleagues from the PA Secure Steering Group, I will get a timely and adequate reply"

Answered: 33   Skipped: 0

Source: Results from PA Secure Stakeholder Survey 2019 (PAC Secure 2019b, p. 9).

Result: Over the past few years working with the EUSBSR PA Secure Action Plan, and more recently the Joint Position, the level of engagement within the Member States has evidently developed. Although there seems to be certain imbalances between Member States taking the lead in implementing the relevant actions connected to the priority areas in the Joint Position – and thus by extension the EUSBSR PA Secure Action Plan due to the overlapping nature of the two guiding documents (PAC Secure, 2017c) – there is overall development happening across the BSR with regards to creating a safer and more secure macro-region. Drawing from the stakeholder survey, where most of the participants were *Experts involved in different PA Secure activities* (69%) (PAC Secure 2019b, p. 1) it is clear that the engagement with a wider network of actors is taking place. This is observed in the engagement of external organisation for the coordination of certain Joint Position priority areas, which is important for the overall implementation of activities in the BSR.

Another important observation regarding the engagement of the Member States for the implementation of the PA Secure Action Plan and the Joint Position is the ownership of the overarching objective of creating a common societal security culture in the BSR. Ownership of the strategy is tremendously important for the overall success of the EUSBSR. It should also be noted that this is made possible by a strong and well-functioning PAC, helping the strategy forward by gently steering the Member States in the implementation of the priority areas.

For the next survey, it would be good to see a greater number of PA Secure Steering Group Members participating, to get a better idea of the level of policy impact on the national level and the effects of PA Secure on the Member States' home organisation. Although the question of impact on national policies is posed, it is impossible to know in what capacity the respondent is answering, which would be necessary to know to make appropriate assumptions or knowledge-based responses to this question. That most of the respondents are very positive regarding their confidence in the PA Secure Steering Group is very good. This indicates that the trust between those BSR actors participating in the survey is strong. This is an important indication of a growing macro-regional security community. It would have been interesting to see in the next survey whether it would be possible to measure this impact after having established a baseline in the survey in 2019.

3.2 Analysis of the role and effectiveness of PA Secure (2013-2019)

Safety and security as an overarching issue of the EUSBSR has been on the agenda of the European Commission since 2009. This commitment set out by the European Commission to enhance territorial cohesion was manifested in four pillars with 15 adhering and prioritised Policy Areas (Stålvant & Visuri, 2014):

- An environmentally sustainable region
- A prosperous region
- An accessible and attractive region
- A safe and secure region

Priority area 'Safe and Secure' encompassed priority areas 13, 14 and 15. With the restructuring of the EUSBSR in 2012, Safe and Secure split based on an initiative from Sweden, with 'Safe' taking on the maritime aspects, and 'Secure' focusing on land based civil protection and the shoreline. Flagship project 14.3 'Macro-regional risk scenarios and gaps identification – developing scenarios and identifying gaps for all main hazards in the Baltic Sea region in order to anticipate potential disasters' became part of PA Secure. Focusing on national resilience, the PA Secure flagship (Project 14.3) has had positive effects in Latvia and Lithuania where it contributed to conducting the national risk assessments.

The restructuring of the Policy Areas emanated in the establishment of the current form of PA Secure, which is the departure for this evaluation. The EUSBSR Action Plan adopted in January of 2013 developed the three current pillars of the EUSBSR: Save the Sea, Connect the Region, and Increase Prosperity. The new PA Secure's core areas was centred around:

- Civil protection
- All-hazards perspective
- Prevention, preparedness, response and restoration
- Focus on emergencies and hazards

The implementation report from 2013 states that PA Secure contributes to achieving all three of the EUSBSR objectives: Save the Sea, Increase Prosperity, and Connect the Region, reflecting the newfound focus on both man-made and natural disasters as part of the overall policy objective. PA Secure's implementation report suggests that five of the sub-objectives are met with flagships and activities that corresponds to these. These activities generally demonstrate the security as a community issue aspect of the sub-objectives. Moreover, "it is not only the substantive outcome of the cooperation that is important, but the relationships and learning experiences as well" (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2013, s. 2). PA Secure now only responds to the *Increase Prosperity* objective. With Action Plan revisions in 2013 and 2015, the inclusion of former PA 'Crime' to PA 'Secure' (EUSBSR, 2015) and since then in 2017 and finally, 2019-2020, the strategy is developing in accordance with the development of the overall macro-region. Requiring a whole-of-society approach, PA Secure were encouraged to work on both institutional developments, whilst honing implementation methodologies for civil security in the BSR and keeping stakeholders and actors engaged through tangible activities.

3.2.1 Developing an Action Plan for a safe and secure Baltic Sea Region

The initiatives towards building a cooperative community in the Baltic Sea Region have since taken on different forms and methods in forging stronger ties between the Baltic Sea states, including opening for a more substantial and regular dialogue with Russia (Ekengren 2018). Focusing on issues surrounding the environment, investment in the region and infrastructure are placing shared challenges on the agenda. Establishing stronger links in the region additionally relied on a focus on cross-border cooperation with both public and private sector actors (Ekengren, 2018). According to an internal document, PA Secure's Implementation report from 2013 states that the focus has been to encourage and forge cooperative ties based on policy dialogues on (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2013, s. 4):

- o Climate change and civil protection
- o Multilevel governance (also channelled in projects such as 14.3 and BaltPrevResilience)
- o Shoreline
- o Women in leadership in civil protection

These focus areas were primarily centred around common civil protection measures for the Baltic Sea Region, including building capacity for effective international cooperation in crisis management and increasing the capacity for effective response to major disasters of transborder character. Considering the Action Plan from 2015, there has been a development in the priorities of the Policy Area. These are:

- o Strengthening capacity to respond and to recover from major emergencies and accidents: better risk assessment and crisis management;
- o Build up resilience and prevention towards emergencies and threats at local level;
- o Enhancing effective cooperation in protecting human beings against criminal threats including trafficking in human beings from all forms of exploitation;
- o Prevent and detect serious crime through developing efficient framework for law enforcement strategic and operational cooperation.

These priority areas respond to three overarching principles at the core of Policy Area Secure, as well including aspects of the former Policy Area Crime's objectives: 'Save human lives as well as protect physical and psychological integrity of human beings; protect public and individual properties against destruction, serious damages or illicit transfer', and 'preserve vital public functions by protecting critical infrastructure (European Commission, 2017, p. 125). The current state of affairs is evident in PA Secure's evolving role in the BSR and the activities are in line with the priorities, principles and actions laid out in the EUSBSR Action Plan (European Commission, 2017).

Since the Action Plan in 2015, PA Secure has firmly placed itself between the combat against risks and adversaries posing threats to the integrity of human beings through flagships such as Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings, Child Protection and ECoHuCy (*Enablement besides Constraints: Human Security and a Cyber Multi-Disciplinary Framework in the European High North)* and environmental risks. The environmental risks considered are addressed in the following flagships: CASCADE (*Community Safety Action for Supporting Climate Adaptation and Development)*; ResQU2 (*Enhancing the durability of learning experiences gained in ChemSAR, HAZARD, DiveSmart Baltic and Mirg-Ex projects on guidelines, operational plans and procedures and exercises related to incidents at sea and in ports)*; and FIRE-IN *(Fire and Rescue Innovation Network)*. Although these do address environmental aspects, the primary focus is on the increased preparedness and coordination of maritime rescue operations (ResQU2) in and influencing EU research and standardization agenda in Fire & Rescue (FIRE-IN). It is clear that the priority areas are increasingly focused and bridge the natural connection between human and environmental safety and security needs. The framing of the Action Plan is clearly in line with the objective of creating a common security culture in the Baltic Sea Region, as the priorities and activities are contingent on the ability to coordinate and cooperate in a cross-border and macro-regional setting.

Structuring the development of PA Secure
The initial capacity building within PA Secure was a positive and fundamental part of the development of the coordination structure of the Policy Area. Reaching out and contacting other BSR actors operating in or within the sphere of civil security was important for the broadening of the network of PA Secure. From the implementation report developed in 2013 to the PAC Secure reporting documents to the European Commission in 2016 and 2018, there is a clear development in terms of the methodological and conceptual foundation for implementing flagships. Setting targets and indicators became increasingly articulated following the implementation of the PA Secure Newsletter, forming a benchmarking backdrop.

 In the first year after the EUSBSR Action Plan revision of 2015, PA Secure became more result-oriented and focused. The EUSBSR 2015 Action Plan included more focused and streamlined objectives and lay out the role of the regional organisations and networks involved in implementing the strategy (see e.g. European

Commission, 2017). The progress report from 2015-2016 clearly demonstrates the first phase of the Policy Area maturity levels, according to the COWI study (COWI, 2019). This includes establishing and maintaining contact with actors both within and outside the region. It also pertains to the funding that came attached to these relations, as well as their newfound capacity to find new actions and projects. This phase includes establishing targets and indicators, tracing out roles and responsibilities.

The overall focus on the EUSBSR objectives has narrowed down with the revision of the Action Plan in 2015, which led to a more concrete set of objectives and subobjectives for PA Secure. Focusing primarily on cooperation and interoperability, prevention of serious crime, and safeguarding the society and the individual through targeted flagship projects; the adhering indicators were first and foremost rather quantitative (European Commission, 2017). This focus is even more evident in the tightening of the indicators and targets for PA Secure's monitoring and evaluation purposes (see e.g. PAC Secure 2018). Focusing on the need to measure and monitor, the PA Secure Coordinators saw the added value of more qualitative indicators for the purpose of their work. Balancing quantitative and qualitative indicators is difficult for a Policy Area that carries strong indicators for both but finding back to the original objective of creating a common security culture is guiding the newly revised Action Plan (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2019).

The development of the strategic actions and leadership in relation to the Action Plan was discussed and developed in 2017. Recognising the importance of leadership for each of the action points in the PA Secure Action Plan 2015 as well as the adhering and overlapping commitments in the Joint Position led the Member States to indicate their interest in taking on leadership for specific priority areas (PAC Secure, 2017c). The Joint Position is a comprehensive framework for the long-term civil security cooperation committing both financial and human resources to developing and implementing the priorities set out in the document. The reason for the Member States' indication of interest for specific areas is not known to the author, but it is assumed that the topics were of timely and relevant nature to the Member States in question. This division of tasks has since been implemented and coordinated by the Policy Area Coordinators, with frequent updates in an organic 'living' document (e.g. PAC Secure, 2020b).

Taking one step further and considering the current draft for the Action Plan revision for 2020, this gives further fuel to the understanding that PA Secure is a learning organisation. The revision is increasingly focusing its actions and have clearly stated operational tasks following the three priorities surrounding increased macro-regional capacity. This includes joint action by focusing on both the individual Member State's resilience from a multi-level and all-hazard approach including criminal threats, as well as the overarching notion of a common societal security culture: These areas are:

- Building capacities for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in emergency and crisis management;
- Strengthening mechanisms for joint strategic and operational actions protecting human beings and societies from criminal threats; and
- A common societal security culture in the Baltic Sea Region.

These concrete priorities indicate that the Policy Area is going into a new period with the objective to dive into the fabric of the cooperation and coordination of Policy Area Secure. Building and strengthening the underlying foundation is needed to enable further actions for Policy Area Secure in the Baltic Sea Region. It will also help the ongoing development of a common societal security culture.

Considering the development seen over the next four years in the EUSBSR PA Secure's reports, it is clear that the strengths of the coordination and set of actions are developing in tandem. This starts out with the establishment of structures and tools (e.g. the incorporation of the UN Sendai Framework and the institutionalisation of the Baltic Leadership Programme) and the establishment of dialogues with e.g. UNISDR Europe Office and the law enforcement networks such as the Baltic Sea Task Force against Organized Crime

and BSR Border Control Cooperation. Additionally, dialogues with line ministries and national agencies were established to improve PA Secure cooperation with such agencies.

It is important to keep in mind that the EUSBSR is a moving target, which means that the objectives and subobjectives of the PAs/HAs are, to some extent, elusive and intangible. Nor can the PAs' and HAs' development be compared extensively, due to the different maturity levels and working methods. Working with intangible goals without comparative benchmarking opportunities is a difficult process for any project manager. The only method to attain satisfaction from the development of a Policy Area is thus through projects and ongoing flagships and flagship processes. Setting targets and indicators for the foreseeable future is another way to measure internal development; nevertheless, it might be harder to measure overall impact of a Policy Area in and by itself as opposed to the project-by-project development currently observed. Translating project results into attainable language for policy makers is a key challenge, and something that PA Secure is looking at through its BSR Research Network for Societal Security. Connecting the BSR Research Network's results to the capacity building agenda for the stakeholders could be a fruitful long-term idea.

3.2.2 Development 2015-2019
This section will provide a compilation of the progress reports written by the PA Coordinators, which sum up the development in the respective working year. This section is meant to be an illustration of what areas were prioritised in the past years and what role PAC Secure has played for supporting these prioritisations. Each section is complimented by concluding remarks on the results.

Summary of the progress report 15/16
The progress report from 2015-2016 states that PA Secure worked strategically with planned targets. One of the main things that was introduced during the reporting year 2015-2016 was the introduction of the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction as a tool for integrating cross-boundary and cross-sectoral cooperation. In addition to this tool, the planned targets and achievements include the institutionalisation of the Baltic Leadership Programme as a way to increase capacity of the civil protection agencies; a permanent dialogue and cooperation with law enforcement networks in the BSR (Baltic Sea Task Force against Organised Crime and BSR Border Control Cooperation, including national line ministers and agencies), and the establishment of the a more strategic partnership with the UNISDR Europe Office. This was established to adequately address challenges connected to climate change and to ensure resilience.

PAC Secure efforts 15/16
When it comes to the process support, PAC Secure played an instrumental role by establishing and fortifying communication between the relevant actors working in the civil protection and societal security space in the BSR. In the progress report for 2015-2016, PAC Secure stated that both new and existing networks experienced an improved flow of information and results sharing, whilst encouraging new network collaborations through a joint framework. This improvement helps the comparability of risk assessment procedures. PAC Secure facilitated the development of a common risk assessment and management methodology. Furthermore, the support given by PAC Secure helped integrate the perspectives of the various stakeholders as well as bringing in new stakeholders to the cooperation. This has become a constant feature of initiatives happening in this space and is a step towards a more integrated Baltic Sea Region regarding creating a shared societal security culture.

The primary challenges connected to the coordination of PA Secure objectives is the relatively inconsistent commitment amongst line ministries and the National Coordinators, which are incremental for enhancing the impact of PA Secure's policy targets. Another challenge consistently brought up by the PACs in their Progress Reports are the weak links between PA Secure's activities in the civil protection area and the available EU-funding opportunities. Other issues brought up were the viability of projects. These rely on both institutional knowledge concerning regional cooperation, how to sustain long-term engagement and general capacity for the individuals participating in these projects. It is clear that to ensure project momentum, capacity building initiatives are necessary. This is something PAC Secure has been working consistently with – responding to the needs detected in in the Member States and actors working with activities in the field.

Comment on results

Connecting PA Secure to an overarching international framework such as the Sendai Framework helps integrating PA Secure into the overall national policies on Disaster Risk Reduction. For the PA Secure coordination aspects, this project period also highlighted various aspects that contributed towards understanding the key challenges in the thematic area of societal security. This has helped initiate actions for further closing the gaps and creating a foundation for the long-term perspectives of the thematic area in the years to come. Identifying the imminent and more steadfast challenges allows for strategic work to tackle and close structural and institutional gaps.

Summary of progress report 16/17

The progress report for 2016-2017 follows the same development as the progress report for 2015-2016. During the year 2016-2017, PA Secure supported and enabled the development of the strategic policy document *The Joint Position on Enhanced Cooperation in Civil Protection in the BSR.* The document is a comprehensive framework for long-term civil security cooperation. It also commits to allocating both financial and human resources according to the defined priorities in the document. The Joint Position was endorsed by the 15th meeting of Directors General for Civil Protection in the BSR in Keflavik, Iceland, May 2017. Following the Joint Position, declarations of interest from the Policy Area Secure Member States regarding the coordinative and/or supportive roles for the strategic actions were expressed (PAC Secure, 2017c).

The adoption of the Joint Position seems to have brought PA Secure back to the drawing board to some extent. This is evident in how the overview of the implementation of the Joint Position initially starts with the already existing actions (PAC Secure, 2018a), before gaining momentum in 2019 with a myriad of future actions conceived within the framework of an Action Plan (e.g. PAC Secure, 2019f; g; h; PAC Secure, 2020b).

The period 2016-2017 was also the year of the completion of the flagship project From Gaps to Caps. Connected to this is the implementation of the Baltic Sea Region methodology for risk and capability assessment and a stronger capability for the implementation of EU laws with regards to crisis management and civil protection. The work with the Sendai Framework was also continued during this reporting period, both regarding strengthening transnational cooperation and the capacity of the implementors at both national and local levels. The subsequent round of the Baltic Leadership Programme was connected to key issues related to Disaster Risk Reduction. Furthering the cooperation with the UNISDR also led to defining new projects related to climate change and civil protection. The final input is to be a comprehensive training curriculum and a series of courses for experts, which in turn will enable public authorities to act appropriately with more climate and civil security awareness in their planning processes. The local level was also involved to a greater extent with the UBC Safe Cities Commission appointed as a permanent member of the Steering Group. Additionally, the cooperation with law enforcement networks and support for the JATOC project intensified and developed. The year also saw a new communications strategy for ensuring better information flows, increase visibility and events. A general strengthening of the knowledge base for transnational cooperation and innovation continued through research project participation (e.g. FIRE-IN [Horizon2020] and seed-money initiatives for macro-regional partnerships for CBRNE prevention and preparedness). Finally, the year also saw an improvement of cooperation with academia in the ECoHuCy-project which was nominated for EUSBSR flagship status.

PAC Secure efforts 16/17

The Progress report of 2016-2017 indicates that significant work has been put into cultivating network building and strengthening the communication efforts and visibility of the work undertaken by PA Secure. This has led to both a stronger connection with academia and the subsequent nomination of the ECoHuCy project to be granted with flagship status in the EUSBSR. These efforts were also reflected in the adoption of the Joint Position in the enhancement of cooperation efforts in the area of civil security in the EUSBSR. The communications strategy is a step towards a more structured approach to reaching all relevant stakeholder groups and others in the wider societal discourse on civil protection. Being able to analyse the visitor statistics and map the website information ended in a Steering Group call for action to update the information available.

The primary challenges remain the same as for 2015-2016, with lack of funding opportunities through EU programmes, challenges related to the lack of commitment from National Coordinators and political leadership,

as well as the continued effort to ensure the sustainability of projects on both the institutional and individual level.

Comment on results

The efforts placed in cultivating new networks is an important job taken on by the PA Secure Coordinators, presenting the Steering Group and Task Forces with opportunities to form new partnerships through the PA Secure platform over time. Grounding the PA Secure actions and flagships projects in this way and transferring the ownership of these actions could potentially play an important role for ensuring the sustainability of the project objectives in the BSR. Coupled with the Joint Position, this ownership transition signals a committed network of actors and makes the conversation about a common societal security culture increasingly viable.

Furthermore, adopting a communication strategy play an important role for both network maintenance, the communication of the Joint Position and the nurturing of the idea behind a common societal security culture as well as ensuring that the communication gaps identified may highlight gaps in the strategies in general. However, when it comes to the communication strategy, this could be applied wider than merely identifying the lack of information on their websites. It could be used more strategically to lift the discourse on societal security in general and create momentum around certain projects. This could potentially be benefitting the long-term political commitment to PA Secure's EUSBSR objectives.

Considering what the visitors look at, and how much time they spend on the website may be helpful in determining what type of communication works and how to customise the messages to fit different audiences. Information about events and other activities are published on the various websites (including CBSS; MSB; PA Secure websites) as well as in the quarterly Newsletter, on Twitter and Facebook. It might be worth considering pushing the professional platform LinkedIn more for reaching a different audience. In either case, carefully investigating the different ways the various social media platforms are used and tailor the content accordingly may be a good idea: What story or message does the PA Secure communication officer want to tell?

Summary of the progress report 17/18

The adoption of the Joint Position enabled PA Secure to initiate several new activities in the prioritised areas during 2017-2018. However, the main focus of the period was furthering the existing areas and continuing the capacity building and knowledge base for efficient transnational cooperation in civil protection. Cooperation for the implementation of the Sendai Framework is still high on the agenda. The BLP is still widely used as a method for strengthening the capacity of public authorities in how to implement the Sendai Framework. For this, a comprehensive methodology for resilience measures in the face of extreme weather was further buttressed by the CRCC initiative, an initiative developed by PA Secure and HA Climate that led to successfully securing funding from DG ECHO for the CASCADE project starting January 2019.

The progress report also emphasised how stakeholders are continuing to use the applied methodology for risk and capability assessment derived from the From Gaps to Caps project. The monitoring of this methodology is also driving the identification of new activities connected to PA Secure, such as an increased focus on climate related risks. Cooperation with law enforcement continued and in addition to continuing the work with JATOC, the PAC (CBSS Secretariat) joined Goldfinger: "a project aiming to increase capacity to use external funding for implementation of law enforcement joint actions" (Progress report p. 1). The local level is also highlighted as being increasingly involved. Transnational cooperation for the prevention of, and response to, CBRNE accidents is also continuously being strengthened through the mapping of data on roles and responsibilities carried out by PAC Secure, for the purpose of creating a greater knowledge-base and increase the stakeholders' institutional capacity. A new cooperation area in this field is emerging: STAC-CBRNE. The STAC-CBRNE additionally has established connections with wider European CBRNE networks and initiatives as well as the Directorate General HOME.

PAC Secure efforts 17/18

The Policy Area Coordinators are invaluable coordinating and supportive partners for the project implementation processes. In addition to supporting the projects, PAC Secure facilitates, supports and coordinates ongoing flagship processes. The PACs are also initiating policy dialogue work packages to connect

the entire project cycle through a more integrated approach – including the participants and end-users. This increases the sense of ownership to the flagship processes amongst the actors.

Best practice cases are highlighted as an effective tool for demonstrating the added value of PA Secure to a wider audience. These best practice cases are primarily shared through the PA Secure Newsletter. Best practices in this instance refers to cases that demonstrate excellent international cooperation for reaching a common goal.

Connecting and establishing a dialogue with other Pan-Baltic organizations for joint activities have also been important in this period. This also goes for the connections with local and regional governments as well as the academia. Connecting and carefully focusing on these groups would help spread the idea of the added value of macro-regional cooperation in the EUSBSR. The progress report states that it is important to map these organisations to determine whether they are interested in PA Secure, whether they are relevant for the cause and whether they are already participating in other thematic areas and there are synergies to be found in the BSR.

The primary challenges remain the same as the years before, though it is interesting to note that the key issues are not being dealt with explicitly, including the commitment of the national line ministers. The other issues related to funding opportunities are somewhat outside the scope of PA Secure to do anything about, whereas the sustainability of transnational projects is continuously being worked on. The progress report for 2017-2018 adds the point of "*[s]trengthening the SG members capacity to cooperate efficiently in multilateral settings".* This is an indication that the Steering Group may be at the core of opening for better connections both to the line ministries, the political discourse and thus eventually the manifestation of the projects. Attempts to strengthen the Steering Group's capacity is done with the support of HA Capacity and has been successful.

Comments on results

The model and methodology of From Gaps to Caps are widely used, and the project has proven successful and viable, even as it is entering its 5th year post-project finalisation. The success of the project might be due to its tangible and transferrable nature. Investigating the nature of this project and what makes it tick may be a good idea. As PA Secure pointed out in the progress report, there are several established pan-Baltic organisations working in the same thematic policy area where synergies can be detected. This is particularly interesting regarding topics such as resilience and migration. The Joint Position also demonstrates a positive development as it is actively used as a method to initiate projects, and due to its nature has the potential to engage a wider network of actors to a greater degree.

Final remarks on PA Secure Progress and self-assessment

Despite the formidable levels of activity demonstrated by PA Secure since 2013, there are still structural issues that need to be grappled with, such as the role and engagement with the National Coordinators. A lot of attention was initially given to activities and projects for playing up the visibility of PA Secure, but the underlying issues connected to stakeholder engagement, in terms of the National Coordinators, and the funding issues seem to persist throughout the progress reports. Attention is devoted to the Steering Group's capacities and capabilities, but the activity level of the Steering Group as seen in the Overview of the Implementation of the Joint Position is formidable. Enhancing the level of capacity within the Steering Group will contribute to an increasingly strengthened Policy Area but focusing on the issue area of enhancing the capacity of the National Coordinators may be more important in the future. Nevertheless, the focus on capacity and capabilities amongst actors in general bode well for the development in the next Action Plan. This may also support other issues observed, such as the sustainability of projects and the commitment of stakeholders.

Regarding the weak links between PA Secure and EU funding opportunities, this remains an external problem that is difficult to exert impact on from within PA Secure itself. Using short stakeholder surveys at a regular/annual basis would help PAC Secure to understand their strengths and weaknesses and monitor the qualitative aspects of their efforts as well as the impact. It may also be useful for the stakeholder surveys to connect with flagship project coordinators and to organize short feedback sessions post-events, to keep improving structures and content. To what extent the funding opportunities have changed with the development of a concrete and targeted EU Strategy is difficult to say.

Considering the progress reports and the stakeholder survey, it is evident that the development of PA Secure is much down to the professionalism and the availability of competence of the PA Secure Coordinators. The CBSS Secretariat, one of the Coordinators of PA Secure, has a long tradition of engagement in the field of civil protection, predating the EUSBSR and PA Secure (Council of the Baltic Sea States, n.d.). The other Coordinator, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), draws from the tradition in the Swedish Rescue Services Agency and Emergency Management Agency with Baltic networks. Together, these two organisations have decades of experience in the area signifying both an extensive network and thematic knowledge. This is clear especially in the stakeholder survey where the stakeholders evidently place high levels of trust in the PACs and their competence as Coordinators (EUSBSR PAC Secure, 2019, p. 8). This is also evident in the high scores indicating good information flow, regular contact between parties and experts, and their role and focus on facilitating platforms for cooperation (EUSBSR PAC Secure, 2019)

The PA Secure lens, now also with the Joint Position, becomes an additional method for focusing and targeting development and progress. This may additionally be the added value of the work undertaken regarding the macro-regional strategy, alongside the increased access to other Policy Areas and Horizontal Actions working in conjunction for achieving a concerted Baltic Sea Region.

3.3. Coordination of Flagships under PA Secure 2013-2019

Flagships are one of the implementation measures of the EUSBSR, and they are measured by showing to the "process and progress of the [strategy] and may serve as pilot examples of desired change" (European Commission, 2017, p. 17). Since its inception PA Secure has been the host of, or partner to, 20 flagships (ongoing: 7, finalised: 13). Considering the finalised and ongoing flagships and the plethora of actors and agencies involved, it is clear that the maturity level of both the Policy Area and the coordination of it is rather high.

PA Secure has worked in a Flagship process modality since the Policy Area's establishment. The Flagship processes' focus in PA Secure is determined by the 8 areas in need of increased cooperation, which are outlined in the Joint Position on Enhancing Cooperation in Civil Protection Area, adopted by the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region in 2017. Three of the outlined priority areas are accompanied by ongoing Flagship Processes.

Example 1: Priority 2. *Combining national efforts in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* is covered by a Flagship Process, consisting of a logical chain of projects: Project 14.3 – From Gaps to Caps – CRCC – CASCADE.

Example 2: Priority 8. *Developing demand-driven and well-tailored training and education* has its own Flagship Process: Baltic Leadership Programme and Alumni meetings.

Example 3: Priority 3. *Strengthening cross-sectorial cooperation in CBRN(E) preparedness.* Seed-money was provided to the STAC-CBRNE project, following the submission of an application by an international consortium to DG HOME for a large CBRNE cross-sectoral forum in BSR. If successful it will become institutionalized.

Furthermore, there is an ongoing debate as to the definition of flagships in the EUSBSR. Moving from a project to a flagship process has been an undertaking since late 2018. As the development and existence of the PAs and HAs occur through joint activities, projects, flagships and flagship processes, it would make sense to take a closer look at the underlying developments leading from a flagship project to a flagship process. A flagship project is considered a way to define the level of ambition with the Policy Area, and are often pilot projects developing solutions and methods, or serve as a cooperative network or platform (COWI, 2019).

FORMER PA SECURE FLAGSHIPS:

1. HAZARD – Mitigating emergencies and accidents in Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) seaports in the Baltic Sea Region.

2. From GAPS to CAPS – Risk Management Capability on GAPS Identification in the Baltic Sea Region.

3. TRACE – Trafficking as a Criminal Enterprise.

4. Turnstone – Northern European Project Against Cross Border Crime in the Baltic Sea Region.

5. MOCG – Strengthening the fight against Mobile Organized Crime Groups from the Baltic Sea Region.

6. STROM and STROM II – Strengthening the Role of Municipalities in the Work against Trafficking in Human Beings in the Baltic Sea Region.

7. EVAPREM – improving the assessment of the prevention measures by rescue services.

8. Citizens for Safety – contributing to the PA Secure action to Enhance a joint urban safety and prevention approach in the Baltic Sea region.

9. BRISK – a EUSBSR flagship project addressing the Sub-regional risk of spill of oil and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea.

10. BaltPrevResilience – enhancing joint urban safety and prevention approach in the Baltic Sea region.

11. BALEX-DELTA 2018 – a broader scope and include chemical and shore response in addition to oil spill response at sea.

12. 14.3 – developed scenarios and identify gaps for all main hazards and the potential of such hazards.

13. Adstringo – Addressing trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation through improved partnerships, enhanced diagnostics and intensified organisational approaches.

The changing nature of what is considered a flagship is somewhat confusing, especially as the present Action Plan defines flagships as either 1) a single project; 2) a set of projects (group) contributing to the same action; or 3) a process. The definition set out by EUSBSR Support (2018) is that *'"Flagships process" [sic] are designed to "live" as long as long as the challenge in question needs intervention'*. Considering the nature of Policy Area Secure, based in unknown contingencies, the *end* of a flagship process may be difficult to define unless otherwise defined by the end of funding. Moreover, due to the nature of coordination and the development of flagships through phases, it would be difficult to separate flagship processes from flagship projects as the development model purported by the EUSBSR Support suggests that they are mutually dependent.

Flagship processes are aiming to deal with the larger macro-regional challenges and is to reap larger policy benefits than the 'demo' flagship-pilot project can. PA Secure's continued process of the flagship Child Protection may fulfil the process-criteria, due to its annual revision-based development. In their comment to the COWI report[1], PAC Secure counter that the flagships in Policy Area Secure are operating within the new framework of flagship 'processes' despite being framed as flagship projects, as seen in both project 14.3 and from Gaps to Caps, CASCADE and the BLP (PAC Secure, 2019e). Other examples could be both the BSR-RNSS and the use of the Sendai Framework to push the idea of resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction as these are dealing with the overarching policy objective that are means to the macro-

[1] Comment: COWI's inclusion of 'flagship processes' as it is defined in the EUSBSR (2019)[1] – a draft for the future PAC/HAC Manual – is a little misleading, as assessing flagship processes in the draft for the future manual was premature and somewhat unfair, as the concept of 'flagship process' was only introduced in 2018.

regional collaborative end. As such the pilot projects are to demonstrate the possibilities, the processes are to build capacity for implementation.

Flagship projects remain an important part of the PA's strategic work and is part of the concrete actions taken to elevate the understanding and make the objective of cooperation in the BSR visible. Flagships are key for moving beyond the theoretical concept of macro-regional collaboration and into the civil society sphere, connecting the macro-regional objective to the grassroots.

3.3.1 Current Flagships

The revised Action Plan points out the following projects as particularly successful: 14.3 which "developed six disaster scenarios for the BSR; From Gaps to Caps explored the countries' capabilities to deal with them. The results directly informed national risk assessment strategies and improved national legislation. The latest project CASCADE focuses on prevention of risks posed by climate" (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2019). Below is an overview of existing flagships.

- **CASCADE** (*Community Safety Action for Supporting Climate Adaptation and Development*, http://www.bsr-secure.eu/cascade-project-information-brochure/): The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction emphasizes the close connection between climate and security, and the CASCADE project is one measure to bring climate risk management closer to the local level in the Baltic Sea Region (Council of Baltic Sea States PAC Secretariat, 2018). The attempts to address this was first initiated in 2015 within the framework of the EUSBSR inspiring collaboration between Policy Area Secure and the Horizontal Action Climate.

- **RESQU2** (http://www.bsr-secure.eu/category/resqu2/): This is a project platform with four adhering projects, and has been formed to develop joint guidelines and procedures, and ensure joint exercises. The platform includes the following projects:
  - **HAZARD** (EUSBSR Flagship PA Secure, funded by Interreg BSR): Accidents involving harmful chemicals in ports.
  - ChemSAR (EUSBSR Flagship PA Safe, funded by Interreg BSR): Maritime search and rescue
  - DiveSmart Baltic (funded by Interreg BSR): Passenger ship accidents
  - MIRG-EX (Partly funded by INTERREG IVA 2 SEAS Programme): A training program for response teams managing incidents on board ships.

  The **HAZARD** project is a commitment to mitigate the effects of e.g. spillage or leaks of hazardous substances in port areas. To mitigate these potentially devastating emergencies, a platform consisting of the relevant authorities, knowledge-partners, rescue services and logistics partners was formed. A more effective response and preparedness is to be achieved through increased levels of communication and more efficient and coordinated action. This includes e.g. harmonising standards and regulation, joint exercises, and increased communication both between actors in the field and with the public. The project was finalised in the spring of 2019.

- **TFTHB Strategy 2018-2020** (*Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings*, http://www.bsr-secure.eu/category/flagship-projects/tfthb-strategy-2018-2020/): Trafficking in humans being is a persistent global problem and a persistent issue in the Baltic Sea Region, both between, to, and internally to the Baltic Sea states. Trafficking is not a static thematic area, but subject to constant change in both type of trafficking and trafficking patterns. The Task Force aims to initiate and carry out actions connected to closing the gaps in existing regulation and legislations and promote better cooperation and approaches to abolishing trafficking. The Task Force also aims to strengthen the support structure and assistance to victims.

- **The Baltic Leadership/Excellence Programme in Civil Security** (http://www.bsr-secure.eu/category/flagship-projects/baltic-leadership-programme/): The BLP/BEP is a capacity building and leadership programme designed to contribute to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). The BLP/BEP offers a combination of theory and practice. Carefully

selected professionals in key positions, dealing with civil security, get the opportunity to work with their colleagues from the BSR to strengthen their intercultural and strategic leadership skills. It also helps strengthen the capacity of strategic advisors in relevant agencies and help shape the idea of a common societal security culture in the BSR amongst future decision-makers. To date, seven modules of the programme have been offered, and around 100 civil security professionals, from all eleven countries in the BSR, have been trained in the courses. In 2016, the BLP/BEP was endorsed by the Directors General for Civil Protection in the BSR, and a commitment was made from all the 11 members of the Civil Protection Network to organise a full-fledged course or a seminar during their chairmanship in the network. This means that the programme has been institutionalised in one of the PA Secure networks.

- **FIRE-IN** (*Fire and Rescue Innovation Network,* http://www.bsr-secure.eu/category/flagship-projects/fire-in/): The FIRE-IN project aims to improve the national and European capability development. The task of the CBSS Secretariat and PA Secure is to connect the Fire and Rescue services, stakeholders and experts in the BSR to the project. The project is funded through Horizon 2020 and has been operative since 2017.

- **Comprehensive and sustainable child protection** (http://www.bsr-secure.eu/category/flagship-projects/comprehensivesustainable-child-protection/) is a series of activities focused on multisectoral collaboration supporting children at risk. The flagship is headed by the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk (CAR) consisting of senior officials from the CBSS Members states.

- **ECoHuCy** (*Enablement besides Constraints: Human Security and a Cyber Multi-Disciplinary Framework in the European High North,* http://www.bsr-secure.eu/category/flagship-projects/ecohucy/) focuses on the cross-border areas between Finland, Norway and Sweden, and consider the conditions in the high north driving regional digital development.

In the EUSBSR Support Help Desk in 2018, PA Secure communicated that all projects selected are based on the overall EUSBSR objectives. The selection of flagships has followed a preordained template with a set of selection criteria.

3.3.2 Targets and indicators

Working with targets and indicators have been a challenge for PA Secure. During the EUSBSR Help Desk meeting in September 2018, it was clear that the existing indicators do not correlate strongly to the structures that the PA Secure platform is trying to achieve. Concerns around the capability to measure successes and failures over time is closely tied to having reliable baseline values, and finding these will be the first step towards a better framework for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) (EUSBSR Support HELPDESK, 2018). The balance between quantitative and qualitative indicators is particularly difficult, as the objectives of PA Secure remain primarily qualitative. It is clear that this may be measured in declining or increasing numbers of initiatives and actions; however, the real impact on lives, increased prosperity and a more connected region is difficult to adequately measure as statistics may not be providing a holistic picture of the situation. What is clear is that the Action Plan is a process, and there are several phases/stages before something can be fully achieved.

Throughout the Help Desk discussion, it became clear that creating a baseline and defining the added value of PA Secure is necessary for the processes ahead, also when going into the Action Plan revision period. Furthermore, it was clear that defining the capabilities and the role of PA Secure is a cornerstone for this to be evaluated (EUSBSR Support HELPDESK, 2018). Considering the newly revised Action Plan (2019), it is clear that the targets and indicators have become qualitative and will be based on stakeholder surveys and the monitoring and evaluation of secondary sources connected to these which bear witness to a maturing and learning organisation. This change in targets and indicators suggests that the PA has defined its space in the civil security landscape, and will be acting on indicators that are connected to the objective of being "*a platform for cross-border, cross-sectoral and multi-level cooperation to strengthen societal security, and allows for better coordination of activities dealing with prevention and preparedness related to both natural and man-made threats and developing methods for responding to security risks posed by climate change.*" (EUSBSR PA Secure, 2019, s. 1).

This qualitative move is important both for the internal mechanisms of the PA Coordinators and for determining how to measure the success.

Note on the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the SDGs

Since the forest fires that wreaked havoc in Europe throughout the summer of 2018, the application and relevance of the UN Sendai Framework as a guiding policy document for PA Secure is ever more evident. The interlinkages between the Sendai Framework and the SDGs are not addressed in the COWI reports of 2019, somewhat giving a limited impression of the thematic and governance-related successes of PA Secure. Furthermore, in the comments on the COWI report, the PA Secure Coordinators emphasize the link between the Sendai Framework and the SDGs: (as stated in the European Commission's Sendai Framework Action Plan for DRR, 2016), that: *"(...) Investing in disaster risk management enhances resilience and can act as a driver of innovation, growth and job creation"* (PAC Secure, 2019e).

The Sendai Framework Action Plan for DRR is part of the overall actions to reach and achieve Agenda 2030 (UNDRR, 2019). Considering the connection between the Sendai Framework and Agenda 2030, it is evident that PA Secure does relate to more than merely SDG 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive safe, resilient and sustainable and no. 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. This includes SDG 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere) and SDG 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact) (CBSS Latvian Presidency, n.d.) (UNDRR, 2019).

PA Secure is actively working with the SDGs regarding Disaster Risk Reduction and is constantly working to make sense of the connection between PA Secure, other EU frameworks as well as global agendas such as SDGs. The connection is also clearly traced out in the overview provided by the CBSS and the Latvian Presidency 2018-19 in the follow up of the Joint Position on Enhancing Cooperation in the Civil Protection area and its connections to the SDGs (CBSS Latvian Presidency, n.d.). For the 2018-2020 period, this mapping was also one of the deliverables under PA Secure Support. During the EUSBSR Help Desk in October 2018, it was clear that the revision of the Action Plan needed to further integrate the Joint Position to align the objectives, although it is evident that there are significant overlaps between the two.

The added value of showing the Sendai Framework's connections to the SDGs is evident in a long-term macro-level perspective. The Sendai Framework provides an additional, concrete lens through which it is possible to work targeted with the SDGs through the alignment of strategies and objectives. PA Secure may reap extra benefits from showing this connection in that it solidifies the idea of macro-regional collaboration through an internationally adopted framework recognised by all Member States in the BSR. One way to clearly demonstrate the connection between the PA Secure flagships, the SDGs and the Sendai Framework could be to present the connections in the overview of the flagships on the PA Secure website and to have it as a requirement for all activities and projects to show the connections. This may in turn encourage future flagship projects to be more explicit in their objectives and how these are connected to the two frameworks.

4 The evolution and the role of PA Secure Coordinators

This section considers the effects of PA Secure's activities on safety, security and cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. PA Secure is focusing on overcoming the gaps between the theoretical aspects of a security culture and translating these into practical knowledge-sharing and collective leadership for a common security culture. Important are structures to support and influence decision-makers to understand the added value of a common security culture.

The first section considers the role of PA Secure as a knowledge broker and platform for knowledge exchange and sets the scene for the chapter. This section is followed by an analysis of the institutional impacts of PA Secure (4.1.1) and finally PA Secure's evolution and its impact from a cross-border perspective (4.1.2). **The second section** concerns the role and effectiveness of the PA Coordinators, regarding their approaches to governance and coordination.

4.1 The effects of PA Secure activities on safety, security and cooperation in the BSR

Regarding the prior sections it is safe to state that PA Secure has played a significant role as a relationship and knowledge broker, connecting the key stakeholders in the BSR by creating a common platform to discuss civil

protection issues and streamline approaches to societal security. Moreover, PA Secure has played an important role in showcasing best practices of international cooperation in this area – an important proof of concept. The platform serves as a forum for identifying common threats and areas of risk and testing the implementation of activities. The projects are pertinent for creating a shared sense of security culture in the area. The very symbol of having a platform where security issues are being discussed is an important step towards creating a common security culture. This may indicate a slow – but evident – change of mindsets.

The roles within PA Secure are clearly defined and the PAC is working seamlessly with the development of the Policy Area. However, ensuring that line managers at the national level are engaged, or indeed the correct people are in place, is more difficult to exert power over. This has both to do with the visibility of the EUSBSR on the national level and the perception of the need of a pan-Baltic security culture and cooperation; however, though focusing on best practice cases the added value of cooperation may surface. The same goes for highlighting good practice cases within the BSR at the local and regional level, as drawing inspiration for possible implementation processes is important for the development and understanding of the feasibility of a project or activity. Actions towards ensuring the division of roles for priority area implementation was taken following the adoption of the Joint Position in 2017. The roles are clearly drawn up in the PA Secure documents on the declaration of roles pertaining to the division of labour for the implementation of the Joint Position and the Action Plan. The progress of these is clearly stated in the organic document: Overview of the Implementation of the Joint Position on Enhancing Cooperation in Civil Protection area in the Baltic Sea Region (e.g. PAC Secure, 2020b).

The recent steps towards creating ownership to the priority areas set out in the Joint Position and the Action Plan have positive implications for the accomplishment of the tasks. Furthermore, the construction of the Overview of implementation actions are supplemented by a section on future actions, which are discussed during the Steering Group meetings (see e.g. PAC Secure, 2019j). Staying ahead and mapping out the road towards creating a safer and more secure Baltic Sea Region are important features, as it demonstrates the capacity and willingness of the adhering PA Secure Members to look farther into the future. It is clear that PA Secure is filling a gap in the Baltic Sea Region, and the coordination of civil protection as a joint policy area has never been attempted prior to the EUSBSR PA Secure. As to be expected, there are certain capacity and commitment issues still present in the BSR as seen in the Progress Reports, but this is actively sought to be overcome. Measures to overcome capacity issues are also the focus of the current draft of the PA Secure Action Plan put forward as the proposal for the revision of the EUSBSR Action Plan in 2020 (PAC Secure, 2020a).

4.1.1 PA Secure evolution with institutional impacts

PA Secure has certainly intensified, or rather solidified, international cooperation in the civil protection area. This has happened on both an activity level and in terms of the scope and nature of the stakeholders involved and the projects deployed. The wider range of partners bears witness to the topicality of civil security on the national agendas, as well as it indicates an increasingly 'curious' civil security community in the Baltic Sea Region – recognising the benefits of learning and cooperating transnationally. Furthermore, the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the commitment to the Joint Position are two important movements that demonstrate a growing understanding of the importance of cooperation in civil protection and on societal security matters.

Another interesting development is the inclusion of PA Secure in academic research projects through Horizon 2020 and the involvement of academia. Projects such as CASCADE also demonstrates the strengthening of PA Secure as it successfully secured funding from DG ECHO; and last but not least, PA Secure's participation in the ECoHuCy project (co-funded by NordForsk) shows how the ties to the academia are strengthened.

PA Secure's activities and flagship projects/processes have primarily been geared towards capacity and capability building for the relevant stakeholders and agencies in the PA Secure related activities. This includes the Baltic Leadership Programme, Goldfinger and JATOC; the methodology that emanated from the project From Gaps to Caps is focused on increasing and strengthening the necessary capacities as well.

One issue that remains connected to the area of law enforcement cooperation is that this field does not have a common working platform to the same extent as civil protection, aside from the Baltic Sea Task Force against

Organized Crime and BSR Border Control Cooperation, covering all 11 BSR states. This is partly due to the political tensions between the EU and Russia following the annexation of Crimea, but also partly due to the existing EU agencies (EUROPOL and FRONTEX) that are to some extent monopolising the available instruments (EUSBSR Support HELPDESK, 2018). Furthermore, the nature of the work undertaken by PA Secure and the EU agencies regarding civil protection and societal security differs in terms of their covert and overt operations and thematic areas. Whereas EUROPOL and FRONTEX deal with compromising issues requiring a certain level of secrecy, PA Secure is primarily working with cooperation around non-controversial topics. The EUSBSR provides a possibility and a platform for countries to cooperate – with or without the inclusion of Russia.

The inclusion of the local and regional levels, and the increased focus on these, is interesting, as the project results then are transferrable to a more local context. Focusing the local and regional levels may be key to ensuring a common security culture in the long run. The local and regional levels have smaller and more compact structures and are more agile in meeting new projects and collaboration. Although this hinges somewhat on the nature of the multi-level governance structure in the country at hand as well as the finances available, this may indeed be a part in the civil security chain that could absorb the activities, messages and practices more quickly.

4.1.2 The PA Secure evolution impact from a cross-border perspective

On a macro-level, the adoption of the Joint Position is an important win for PA Secure. This cooperation framework aims to mitigate the vulnerabilities that surface in cross-border areas alongside the law enforcement authorities and the civil protection agencies in the area during the Icelandic Presidency in the CBSS in 2017. During the Latvian CBSS Presidency in 2018, the connection between the Joint Position and the SDGs was addressed through the mapping of the connections between the strategic documents. Both the method for the development of the Joint Position, meaning the broad stakeholder consultations, and the mapping of the connections between the Joint Position and the SDGs to ensure policy coherence, is demonstrating a maturing Policy Area.

Although it is difficult to identify changes in the law or national policies, which is a slower beast, it is interesting to note that there is additional focus on resilience in the Baltic Sea Region over the last years. Focusing and capitalising on this policy hype would be wise for PA Secure going forwards. Moreover, the stakeholder survey indicated that the added value of PA Secure is that it exemplifies, and provides a platform for, the possibility of international cooperation in the area of civil security. This is perhaps the most important contribution by PA Secure: the role as a platform for facilitating cooperation between actors despite differences in national regulations and operative systems.

One of the most important things considering being a cross-border facilitator is being a platform for networking – demystifying what is happening across the border and encouraging dialogue. For example, the Baltic Leadership Programme has had different focus over the years but bringing together over 100 experts is a positive indication of a newfound interest for what is moving 'beyond the border'. Strengthening ties, sharing experiences and best practices and acquiring new knowledge are important components of creating a common security culture. Facilitating events is pertinent to reach out to different target groups and coordinating these by keeping a macro-regional perspective.

4.2 Analysis of the role and effectiveness of PA Coordinators for the Policy Area's coherence

Generally, PA Secure is a prime example of the development and maturity of a PA/HA when considered up against the recent COWI-review of the EUSBSR (COWI, 2019). The review shows how the PA/HAs mature, their phases and their involvement of external partners increasing the PACs capacity to introduce and implement new activities. These simultaneous developments indicate a strategic coordinative work by the Policy Area Coordinators and demonstrate that the continuous development of the Policy Area, and the maturity of the PA Coordinators, have to develop in tandem, as processes – not merely projects.

According to the COWI report, commissioned by the European Commission to evaluate the EUSBSR, the PAs' and HAs' maturity develop through their engagement with external stakeholders, and the role of the Policy Area

Coordinator develops in tandem with the Policy Area's maturity level (COWI, 2019, s. 13). Furthermore, the report stresses that the development is not static and can go forward as well as backwards (COWI, 2019, s. 13) depending on the level of engagement and rapport with the Member States, Steering Group capabilities and funding. PA Secure is one of two PAs/HAs with both a national agency and a pan-Baltic organisation in charge of the coordination efforts. Additionally, all BSR states are members of the Steering Group and the Steering Group has connected the UBC to the work as well. However, considering the progress report for 2017/18, it is clear that the capacity and capability of the Steering Group members are limited and that active measures need to be taken to ensure that the activity and engagement with the PA is needed. This may be due to the division of responsibilities as seen in the new Joint Position adopted in 2017, where lead coordinators and supporting Member States have taken on different roles. Naturally, the activity level rose significantly in terms of projects and project outputs in the following year after the adoption of the Joint Position. This indicates a well-functioning format where ownership of the strategy is cemented into the background. The ownership of, and leadership for, the strategy is important for the overall ability to alter the idea that civil protection and societal security stop at the national border.

The PA Secure Coordinators, and their role in the Baltic Sea Region, have been gradually evolving with the mandate and inclusion of new members in the Steering Group. Although there is something to say for the relative weight the expansion of the Steering Group indicates, there are still issues connected to the level of political commitment and leverage in national policies for manifesting a cooperative security community in the BSR. Regardless of the experienced difficulties connected to the National Coordinators and the lack of capacity in the Steering Group, the PA Secure Coordinators' role has become stronger and further institutionalised. This is clear from the nature of the projects reeled in and the strength of the PAC organisations as facilitators. As PA Secure has become stronger and more able to identify funding opportunities and attracting members and cooperation partners, the nature of actions has evolved too. This is particularly evident in the FIRE-IN project where one of the PACs (the CBSS Secretariat) is a project partner. Finding funding opportunities remains and issue but this is also down to external factors, or to some extent – the ability to identify gaps and potential wider synergies between projects. However, this may distract from the objective and mandate of the PA and is thus an evaluation of capacity and capability.

The PA Secure Coordinators themselves point out the necessity and positive development of employing full-time staff members to coordinate, drive and push the network ahead. This strategic employment of one full-time equivalent is generally also seen as a positive in other similar constellations, such as in the Nordic Council of Ministers cross-border committees. Having a platform to confer and collaborate, understanding cultural differences in terms of societal security and civil protection, and knowledge-sharing for best practices, are significant improvements in and by themselves. A one-stop-shop project instigator and platform based on common issues and transboundary challenges is important for Policy Area coherence.

Governing PA Secure has been conducted expertly by the PA Coordinators from the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Secretariat. The institutional capacity, including the careful rapport-building with key organisations and actors in the civil protection area, has grown since its initiation, and as mentioned several times before – this is a major step in the right direction. Focusing on the institutional capacity of the PAC was crucial for exploring new possible project synergies, and for preparing and lifting these in relation to the Steering Group. These types of synergies allow for a tighter and more coherent approach to societal security issues by closing the gaps that appear between the projects and activities. As stated in the Position paper sent to the EUSBSR in 2014, PA Secure's role and its connection to the EUSBSR is invaluable as it acts as the platform needed to connect stakeholders and actors in the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR PAC Secure, 2014). The strength of the PACs is essential to the survival and drive of PA Secure as a whole.

5   SWOT – Analysis of the development of PA Secure

Summary of the expressed assessments will be presented in the format of a SWOT analysis table on the next page (page 29).

Strengths

Coordination and involvement of actors from across the spectrum.

Increased focus on the local level as key for enabling change.

Focus on establishing networks and personal connections.

Increasingly clear objectives and mission for the BSR: a focus on core aims.

Strong Policy Area Coordinators: Driving the process and setting the framework for cooperation.

Targeted capability and capacity training for the Steering Group.

Use of best practice cases from activities.

Information and research available to stakeholders and National Coordinators.

Institutional capacity, maturity and agility developing over time.

The adoption of the Joint Position and the involvement of Member States.

The adoption of the Sendai Framework for an additional dimension.

Increased ownership to strategy areas and priorities through the JP delegation of responsibilities.

Weaknesses

Continuity and sustainability of projects.

Adequate support for stakeholders regarding finding funding opportunities.

A prevailing idea of national (territorial) threats and risks, and the oversight of transboundary risk.

Translating research on societal security to tangible policy objectives in the Member States. This is seen as key to create understanding for the transboundary dimension as well as for understanding the notion of risk and resilience in Member States and what this might look like as part of a more horizontal approach to civil protection policy development.

Lack of engagement in line ministries and from the National Coordinators.

Need for a greater diversity of Member States taking the lead in implementing Joint Position activities.

Challenges connected to the area of law enforcement, partly due to the existing EU agencies that are to some extent monopolising the available instruments.

Opportunities

Capacity-building for leadership which may influence the forthcoming cohort working with civil protection issues to increase professionalism and promote a holistic perspective.

Joint Position connected to the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for an even stronger multi-level governance approach.

Resilience thinking as an increasingly important part of national policy.

The power of the good example by highlighting successful flagship processes.

Continue working with the local level for implementing actions.

Foresight/Scenario activities for mapping both man-made and nature-based disasters in the Baltic Sea Region may be a natural next step in terms of activities.

Increased visibility in national and international media – a more ambitious communication plan.

Increasingly strategic use of communication, in both traditional media and online, on best practice-cases.

Increased level of access to *translated* research results for policy makers.

Benchmarking through stakeholder survey to see the development of an increasingly concerted BSR regarding PA Secure.

Threats

Geopolitical changes resulting in absence of cooperation with key countries.

Unknown contingencies (ranging from climate change to cyber security issues).

Limited view of possible risks (limited to the traditional national idea of risks and threats).

Fragmented policy area if not adequately demonstrating e.g. the link between security and climate.

Lack of engagement from National Coordinators due to an unlevel playing field in the civil protection areas ('receivers' vs. 'drivers').

Not committing to the Joint Position.

Possiblility of poor personal chemistry between key stakeholders.

Overdependency on the Policy Area Coordinators to drive the platform forward.

Not reaching the idea of a common security community.

6   Key Findings

PA Secure's position as part of the EUSBSR objective 'Increased Prosperity' is placing trust in the incentive of mutual benefits and interest for the development of a common security community in the Baltic Sea Region. Finding a common security culture and a common security framework is a difficult undertaking, but PA Secure has been instrumental in creating the framework for this common culture to emerge. The way that PA Secure is **finding methods and governance structures** to encourage and drive the BSR community collaboration is a testament to the **trust and confidence that is emerging among actors** in the region.

Working from the policy rationale of **'whole-of-society'**, PA Secure's work include both regional bodies, national agencies and ministries, local actors and civil society organisation as well as international organisations. The aspect of working with a **variety of experts from outside the own organisation** was also one of the aspects listed as a key advantage by respondents in the stakeholder survey conducted by PAC Secure. This pertains also to the establishment of platforms for **new partnerships, information and knowledge sharing** opportunities and **exchanging best practices**. PA Secure is working concretely to **increase the involvement** of both local authorities and the civil society through e.g. the involvement of youth.

One very successful example highlighted in this evaluation is the development of the BALTPREP project funded by DG ECHO, which has been nominated for EUSBSR Flagship status under PA Secure. BALTPREP is a collaboration between Red Cross-organisations from across the Baltic Sea Region. **Focusing on operationalisation,** PA Secure encourages the involvement of actors from across the spectrum. In addition to examples such as BALTPREP, this is also evident in the policy implementation space. The implementation aspects of e.g. the Joint Position demonstrate that **initiatives on regional and local levels** may be just as **transferrable on a *region-to-region* level** between Member States in the Baltic Sea Region. Furthermore, focusing efforts and initiatives on the regional and local levels may have long-term positive impacts on the national level. **The regionalisation of security policy implementation may be an opportunity for PA Secure** to explore in the future.

The concrete **collaboration between civil security actors has been challenging**; however, the **previously held presumptions** that civil protection and societal security measures predominately happen **in a 'whole-of-government' rationale** is now moving towards a **multi-level and multi-actor** policy space. Further considering how to manoeuvre multi-level policy networks is something that might be worth looking further into, in order to cement the excellent work undertaken across all decision-making levels. As we have seen in this evaluation, the challenges with this is particularly evident in the **strength and scope of action of the middle manager level**. Ensuring sufficient resources for implementation of the PA Secure Action Plan is often not prioritised, according to respondents in the stakeholder survey. Actors and experts engaged in PA Secure activities need **stronger tools for raising the PA Secure profile** of thematic working areas**. Increasing the visibility of projects** may be one method of gaining such momentum. Further strengthening these actors to find ways to **influence decision-makers** of this calibre is in line with the overall working objective of PA Secure: Focusing on the **operative aspects of the Action Plan** whilst **bolstering the capacity of actors to influence national, regional and local agendas** (e.g. BLP/BEP).

What can be seen in the documents analysed for this evaluation is that there is a gradual orientation towards efforts to **focus the PA Secure goals, tasks and operative measures** developing over time. From the various implementation and progress reports since 2013 to the revisions of the PA Secure Action Plan, the **methodological and conceptual foundation for implementing e.g. flagships** improve alongside the adhering **targets and indicators**. The flagships are an important feature of PA Secure's **strategic work** and the **concrete results** these can show are important for **demonstrating the added value of cooperation** in the BSR. One specific example of such a success is the From Gaps to Caps project, which shows the development of a common risk assessment and management methodology adopted across the Baltic Sea Region. **Flagships are key** to move beyond the **theoretical perception of macro-regional collaboration,** connecting the macro-regional objective to the civil society and **visualising the added value of cooperation.**

Translating the theoretical aspects of the role of macro-regional cooperation in security issues is a key challenge and will continue to be **a challenge as new risks and threats emerge**. Translating research findings

into **attainable language for policy makers and decision makers is key**, and it should be a constant objective of the BSR Research Network for Societal Security. Connecting this network's results and key findings to e.g. the objective to work on capacity building in the Steering Group and beyond, could be a fruitful long-term idea. This may also contribute to the notion of ownership and the possibility for seeking leadership, as the understanding of security related conceptualisations and logic is greater.

Regarding PA Secure's implementation capacity, it is evident that the **role of ownership and leadership** to the priority areas has developed significantly over the past few years. Since the adoption of the **Joint Position**, the PA Secure Member States are **actively involved in ensuring the progress of the Policy Area** in a concerted manner, and they take responsibility for the **development of future trajectories.**

It is clear that the draft version of the PA Secure part of the Action Plan of the EUSBSR is **a response to the feedback** from the stakeholder survey. Although this draft is subject to change, the connection between the draft version and the stakeholder survey speaks to the role and importance of the stakeholders' opinions in shaping the policy space, and the **Policy Area Coordinators' capacity to capture these.**

Another interesting observation is that the **focus on capacity building**, strengthening capacity for **joint action** and the focus on **building a common security culture** in the BSR are firmly placed within a **resilience** thinking framework. In this regard, the way resilience is interpreted matter for its effectiveness. Considering 'resilience' at the core of the ability to create a safe and secure macro-region, it begs a broader understanding of 'resilience' than what its biology origins can provide, by including economic and social components as well. Understanding both man-made and natural risks and disasters in terms of a **'bouncing-forward' conceptualisation of security issues**, may be key to handle the **naturally changing state of a security landscape**. Although 'resilience' in biology usually signifies the possibility of reverting back to its former shape or form, in social situations resilience may refer to the idea of **changing the status quo**. This is a potential lens for understanding the nature of the changing notion of security threats and risks, and how to meet these in the future. As PA Secure is currently demonstrating, this may be done by **preparing the ground through capacity and capability building** but also by **engaging in research and development** through the BSR research network.

The **Policy Area Coordinators** are **highly appreciated** by the respondents of the stakeholder survey, and their ability to work seamlessly in the guiding of the Policy Area is remarkable. This might be because of the PA Coordinators' (CBSS Secretariat and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, MSB) **institutional capacity and long history** of working with societal security, but the **capacity to adjust** to the changing nature of the Policy Area is highly professional. The **information flow, regular contact** and the PACs' role in **facilitating the platforms** for cooperation are highly valued by the respondents of the stakeholder survey, which shows that there is **a high level of trust** in the PACs' **ability** to do a good job for the Policy Area.

Finding the structure over time, the work has been further **solidified through the adoption of the Joint Position** by the Member States; the **PACs consistent work to ensure an increasing notion of ownership amongst their members is evidently coming to fruition**. The main **challenges** connected to the coordination of the PA Secure objectives is the **relatively inconsistent commitment** amongst line ministries and the National Coordinators. Another challenge consistently brought up by the PACs in their Progress Reports were the **weak links to the EU funding programmes**. Funding opportunities are important but considering the **level of success** in securing funding through the EU, it is evident that the capacity and relevance of PA Secure's topics are interesting also to external partners (e.g. the ECoHuCy project). The **participation in various projects with other partners** is also **witness** to the a **clear 'brand' and profile** that the PACs have constructed around the Policy Area.

7. Conclusion

"Safety and security is a required baseline for achieving economic growth, prosperity and wellbeing for many people in our region. The steadfast achievements in the Policy Area Secure therefore have major consequences also for other policy areas and for the overarching objectives of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The sight is set on 2030 in this important work of direct benefit to society, to business and to our people."

(Sundelius, 2016)

Creating a common security culture and a well-functioning cooperative structure in a macro-regional structure is a challenging undertaking. EUSBSR Policy Area Secure is taking the first steps in **constructing a framework and platform for cooperation**. Working to overcome the national and territorial conceptualisation of risk and threats, PA Secure is focusing on operative measures as a proof of concept whilst encouraging mind-set changes. Connecting societal security issues to frameworks such as the Sendai Framework has been an important move towards breaking the traditional territorial notions; the adoption the Joint Position for Enhancing Cooperation in the Civil Protection Area is an important testament to a changing status quo. Finally, the very existence of a platform for discussing societal security is a starting point for creating dialogue. The changing nature of risks and threats prompts a need for collaboration. **The existence of PA Secure and the commitment of the Steering Group in implementing the priorities are demonstrating a growing mutual trust and confidence in neighbouring countries; communication across borders is the symbol of an increasingly shared sense of a common societal security culture in the Baltic Sea Region.**

8. Recommendations

Below is a list of recommendations based on the key findings from this evaluation. These recommendations are meant as guiding tools to prompt ideas surrounding potential aspects and focus areas for the future.

Level	Recommendation
PA Secure	**Conduct scenario analyses:** Identify potential transboundary risks for BSR. Realistic scenario development may be an effective tool for showcasing the necessity of a connected region.
	Develop clear multi-level governance structures. This may help overcome the issue of the room to manoeuvre for middle management.
	Focus on the local and regional levels for policy implementation. In addition to being closer to decision-making bodies and more agile governance structures, this increases local ownership whilst it may 'trickle up' to the national level.
	Develop a BSR Model of Societal Security and Civil Protection. Identify common ground and what sets the BSR approach aside from other regions in the world.
	Focus on resilience-thinking as the framework for the capacity to act. Resilience is more than reverting to the status quo.
	Ensure a balanced leadership of the Joint Position. A greater diversity of actors taking the lead would help manifesting the Joint Position even further.
PAC Secure	**Build trust for a common security culture and regional stability.** Ownership to processes and co-creation is important for recognising the necessity of actors in implementing priority areas. This may lead to a greater investment in time and resources from 'middle management'.
	Delegate and divide responsibilities. Continue to encourage ownership of the strategies and Action Plans to ensure long-term sustainability of the Policy Area.
	Develop tangible targets and indicators for both the priority areas and the development of the Policy Area Coordinators.
	Conduct stakeholder surveys on a regular basis. This creates benchmarks and will provide insight into the development of the Policy Area and what is needed from the PACs.
	Target the communication plan to increase visibility. This may help raising the potential and profile of cooperation in civil protection to the appropriate level of policy making.
	Ensure attainable language for policy makers and decision makers. Translate priority areas into bite sized and tangible objectives and show best practice cases.
	Enable personal rapport between Steering Group members. This is important for trust, confidence and a sense of added value.

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PA Secure Monitoring & Evaluation Toolkit
Terms of Reference for Consultant

11/04/2019

1. **The Consultant is contracted to perform an analytical task within the process of monitoring and evaluation of the EUSBSR PA Secure activities and their results in years 2013 – 2019.**

2. **The M&E process is steered by the guidelines approved by the PA Secure Steering Group and endorsed by the Directors General for Civil Protection in the Baltic Sea Region. These guidelines define key objectives and sub-objectives of the M&E process and the Consultant needs to accommodate to them the whole analytical work and the way how the results are presented. The key objectives and sub-objectives of the M&E process are as follows:**

There are two main goals of the PA Secure monitoring and evaluation action:

- *to assess the overall achievements throughout the entire PA Secure 2013 - 2020 period, and*

- *to work out the premise for formulating recommendations for the operation of this area in the coming years.*

To this end, the following aspects of the M&E process will be prioritized:

- *to identify areas where PA Secure made a real impact and accomplish tangible results;*

- *to highlight where there are barriers to accomplishing PA Secure objectives / where PA Secure does not achieve sufficient progress on given priorities;*

- *to appraise PA Secure coordination – identify strengths and weaknesses of existing coordination mechanisms and how the coordination activity is performed;*

- *to explore priorities of the MSs regarding including specific areas of interest on the PA Secure agenda, designation of resources, level of involvement in various initiatives and level of outreach at the national level.*

3. **The Consultant will perform the qualitative part of the secondary analysis of existing documents and data based on the following guidelines:**

- *The M&E process will start with gathering and analysing relevant information and data, which have been produced by the PA Secure Coordinators and Steering Group, by the European Commission, consulting companies and individual experts who were assigned to make various types of assessment regarding functioning of the EUSBSR (also in a broader context of all EU macro-regional strategies) since 2014. The following documents will be scrutinized:*

  o *all PA Secure reports submitted to the Interreg BSR MA/JS;*

- *written and registered answers to the surveys conducted by different consulting companies on request of the EC (DG REGIO and other DGs), Interreg BSR MA/JS or any other public body;*

- *the analytical papers provided by independent researchers and experts published in various forms (books, articles, on-line publications), which address issues of societal security in the BSR.*

  - *It is also expected that the Consultant will conduct a search of other relevant documents and reports that reference PA Secure and PA Secure activities.*

- *The aim is to extract from the documents and various assessment proceedings the common denominator and outline the main features of PA Secure's successes and failures. This analytical work will result in listing the following features of activities undertaken within PA Secure and its results:*

  - *the changes in the cooperation in civil security area which happened during years 2013-2019 because of the PA Secure initiatives and activities;*

  - *the factors related to the activities of the PA Secure and its stakeholders which contributed to the improvement of cooperation in the civil security area;*

  - *the key obstacles which hinder the cooperation and slow down the progress in developing a variety of initiatives.*

Based on the results of the analysis a map of strengths and weaknesses of PA Secure activities will be constructed. The following dimensions will be included in the description of the PA Secure activities:

- *the added value of the activities undertaken within PA Secure;*

- *the efficiency of implemented actions;*

- *the coherence of undertaken initiatives;*

- *the impact on policies and practices at the national, regional and local levels.*

4. **The qualitative part of the secondary analysis of existing documents and data should consist of three parts and contain following categories of evidence:**

The first part of the qualitative analysis will aim at the reconstruction of the key elements of the self-assessment made by the PA Secure actors in recent years. To this end, the following evaluative statements will be extracted from the PAC's reports to the Interreg and from the answers to the EC questionnaires and some surveys conducted by consulting companies contracted by the EC:

- on successes and failures of the PA Secure actions; the focus should be put on the reasons of deviations to declared goals and the factors which contributed to the successful completion of actions;

- on contextual conditions which facilitated or hindered the achievement of the PA Secure goals;

- on the relationship of the PA Secure activities to the needs of various stakeholders.

The second part of the qualitative analysis will aim at the reconstruction of the evaluation of the role and effectiveness of PA Secure in the various reports and analytical papers published in recent years.

The information on the following aspects of the PA Secure functioning should be searched for:

- What influence has the PA Secure activities had on safety and security in the BSR, its evolution/modernization?

- Can it be shown that PA Secure has intensified international cooperation in the civil security area. If so, in what ways?

- Are there any cases of actions undertaken or successfully completed due to the opportunities provided by the network setting up within the PA Secure?

- Are there any examples of the impact of the PA Secure activities on the national policies, agencies' modus operandi or practices applied by the services?

- Are there examples of attempts to make changes in the national policies and/or agencies' modus operandi as a follow-up to the PA Secure projects that were not taken up? What were the reasons that this happened?

- How have the capacities of agencies dealing with various aspects of civil security been strengthened because of PA Secure?

The third part of the qualitative analysis concerns the reconstruction of the evaluation of the role and effectiveness of the Policy Area Coordinators (PACs) in coherence in the policy area:

- How have the PACs enlarged or amplified the resources received for individual projects in connection with previous or successive initiatives?

- How have the PACs made effective use of existing networks to strengthen the different projects or initiatives?

- How have the PACs managed to connect different actors, experts or networks with each other?

Summary of the expressed assessments will be presented in the format of SWOT analysis table.

5. **The Consultant will be assisted by the PA Secure team in terms of access to all documents relevant for the analysis that are at the disposal of the team, receiving information on all relevant documents and/or posts published by various subjects which touch upon matters related to the M&E process, providing information about the progress and results of the other parts of the M&E process. The PA Secure team will support the Consultant on request in other forms, if possible.**

6. **The work on the matters defined in this ToRs should be launched on 1st September 2019 and be completed by 1st December 2019.**

Annex 2

See separate document regarding the extension of the project.

Annex 2