

## EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Policy Area Secure

### 22<sup>st</sup> Steering Group Meeting

31 October, 2024, Visby, Gotland,

#### EUSBSR Annual Forum

Venue: Clarion Hotel Visby, Strandgatan 6

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#### 15:00 – 15:10 Welcome Address, Adoption of Agenda and Previous SG meeting Minutes

**EE** and **PACs** (CBSS and MSB): PA Secure presence at EUSBSR Annual Forum was successful: resilience as a topic was present throughout panels/workshops. PA Secure organised or co-organised several events: from high-level DG dialogue to food security workshop. UA colleagues from Civil Protection Faculty project with their tactical medicine demonstration were in the centre of the forum and received a lot of attention.

Minutes from the 21st meeting and the current meeting agenda were adopted with one modification: DG Regio and BSP time slots were replaced by UA delegation input.

#### 15:10 – 15:25 Presidency Updates and Upcoming Events (*Ketlin Tammsalu, Estonian Rescue Board*)

Updates included key past and upcoming events of **EE** presidency such as online kick-off, and more specifically:

- Fire Safety Working Group (and possibility to continue its work during PL presidency), seminars on public awareness ([recording available](#)), disaster management, and civil protection.
- **EE** enquired about low attendance reasons in presidency events. SG members consensus was - while topics are relevant and interest is high, competing commitments and budget constraints might prevail.
- **EE** requested confirmations for participation/not participation in good time.
- **EE** will coordinate UA participation in the mass evacuation seminar.
- **EE** reminded about the DGs meeting on 3-4 June and asked to mark these dates in the DGs calendars.

#### 15:25 – 15:40 Policy Area Coordinator Updates (*PACs*)

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- Ongoing projects and initiatives such as BSR NOVA Network of volunteers and authorities upcoming meeting on 26 Nov 2025, Secure Kids (final conference 28–29 January 2025), NEEDS online course on societal security is open and free (<https://cbss.org/civseccourse/>)
- EUSBSR Action Plan timetable shared (in December PACs will ask SG for inputs on the first draft of PA Secure Action Plan)
- PA Secure/CBSS participation planned at UNDRR Regional Platform in Budva, Montenegro.
- PA Secure updated flyer – [available for download here](#)
- Two Interreg core projects in pipeline – CREWS (DE lead, on volunteerism) and ClimaResponse (CBSS lead – on urban climate preparedness with DRR angle, update from 18.11.24 – [both projects received funding](#) )

**15:40 – 16:00 Ukraine Civil Protection Faculty project update** (*Serhii Chumachenko, project partner, Vovchok High School founder, full report attached*)

- Pre-Medical Care & Tactical Medicine: Developed standards for humanitarian demining medical support with UNDP and ministries. Trained over 12,000 individuals, certified 8 instructors to TCCC/TECC standards, and provided 4,000+ first-aid kits. Collaborations include universities, National Police, and community groups for tactical medicine training.
- Mental Health: developed psychological assistance training program, held trainings in Ukraine and Lithuania
- Education & Volunteering: Introduced Swedish pedagogy through seminars and published key textbooks. Developing ToT programs and advancing volunteer movement efforts.
- Current needs: Training programmes for instructors, assistance in opening second folk high-school school in Rivne, psychological program adaptation, development of major incident management programmes, and volunteer development support in civil protection.

**Ukrainian Firefighters Foundation** (*Andriy Tverdovskyi, founder [www.firefighter.com.ua/en](http://www.firefighter.com.ua/en)*)

- Need for armoured evacuation vehicles for first responders in UA.
- Assistance in developing volunteerism in civil protection – BSR experience in organising effective cooperation between authorities and volunteers would help UA in establishing its own system. Interested in joining BSR-NOVA network.

**Kherson region** (*Maria Bohodukhova, Head of investment department of Kherson Regional Military Administration*)

- Ready to share experience with BSR in crisis communication during war
- Good practices in demining of the region
- Under-water demining expertise is needed.

**16:15 – 17:30 Roundtable: National Updates and Discussion**

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**PACs & SE** summarised some of the statements from the high-level dialogue on resilience with region's DGs in civil protection organised within the EUSBSR Annual Forum as a source of potential projects/initiatives for PA Secure:

- Developing further Nordic capitals informal network (from NO experience)
- Building trust through permanent contact (PL)
- Focus on inclusive, whole-of-society approach since most instrumental actors in any crisis are elements in society and not government agencies. Hence an urgent need to involve business more effectively in preparedness and response (SE)
- Focus on preparedness and building mutual resilience in EU from ["Safer Together Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness"](#) report of former FI President Sauli Niinistö (Fi)

**PL:** Proposed to focus next Baltic Excellence Programme on crisis management skills and base it at the Polish Fire University with inclusion of a joint exercise in the programme (tabletop or another format).

**FI:** Reiterated its proposal on creating an RDI network structure in the region with focus on practical outcomes in comprehensive security. Network will be open for different participants: HEI, research institutions, businesses, etc.

**PAC:** suggested to use BALTinnoSEC and BSR NRSS projects' experiences/contacts as inputs for the RDI network.

**SE:** informed about the [new DG](#) and planned changes in the MSB structure and name.

**NO:** IS, Liechtenstein and NO, and EU have now [signed an agreement on a new funding period for the EEA and Norway Grants](#). For the 2021–2028 period, partners are providing 3.2 billion to 15 EU Member States to enhance cohesion in Europe. A total of EUR 183 million has been earmarked for measures to help address the ramifications of Russia's war on Ukraine in the Beneficiary States.

**NO** had national self-preparedness week with outreach to households ([brochure in English](#))

**LT** informed about the [new DG](#) of the Fire and Rescue Services.

**BBK** informed about pending staff changes and potential participation in PA Secure/CPN networks. A special mail will be sent later to the SG members.

### 17:30 – 17:45 AOB and Summary

**PACs:** based on the ideas voiced in EUSBSR Annual Forum and today's meeting, SG members will explore different potential initiatives and projects in societal security, which could potentially benefit entire region and fill in the last column of the National updates document. The proposals will be discussed at the next meeting, which will be in full-length format on **8-9 April 2025**.

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