

STATUTES OF EUROREGION BALTIC



Malbork, 1998

with revisions made in Lepaja (2001), Elbląg (2004), Gdańsk (2007),
Elbląg (2008), Stare Jabłonki (2009), Växjö (2010) and Gdańsk (2013)

Introduction

These Statutes constitute an integral part of the Agreement establishing Euroregion Baltic signed on 22nd February 1998 in Malbork in result of an initiative to create a Euroregion in the southeast Baltic Sea area.

The signatories of the Agreement were the national delegations from Denmark, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Russia and Sweden, consisting of the representatives of the local, regional and national authorities. Therefore, whenever the phrase "Party of the Agreement" is used in the text of these Statutes, it refers to any of the five following national delegations of representatives:

- Danish delegation consisting of the representatives of the Regional Municipality of Bornholm (successor to the County of Bornholm who was the original signatory of the Agreement),*
- Lithuanian delegation, consisting of the representatives of the Association Klaipeda Region (successor to the Klaipeda County's Governor Administration who was the original signatory of the Agreement), consisting of Municipalities of Klaipeda, Neringa and Palanga, as well as District Municipalities of Klaipeda, Kretinga, Silute and Skuodas.,*
- Polish delegation, consisting of the representatives of the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic and the Regions of Pomorskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie (existing in the areas of the old provinces of Elbląg, Gdańsk, Olsztyn and Słupsk whose Governors and Assemblies of Local Authorities were the original signatories of the Agreement),*
- Russian delegation, consisting of the representatives of the Association of Municipalities of the Kaliningrad Region, Government of the Kaliningrad Region, Municipality of Kaliningrad, and Regional Parliament of the Kaliningrad Region,*
- Swedish delegation, consisting of the representatives of the Regional Council in Kalmar County, Region Blekinge (successors to the Blekinge Association of Local Authorities, Blekinge County Council and County Administrative Board of Blekinge who were the original signatories of the Agreement) and Regional Council in södra Småland (successors to the Kronoberg Association of Local Authorities and Kronoberg County Council who were the original signatories of the Agreement).*

The Statutes also refer to the ERB member organisation which should be understood as any of the nine following bodies: the Association of Polish Communes Euroregion Baltic, Government of the Kaliningrad Region, Pomorskie Region, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Region, Regional Council in Kalmar County, Association Klaipeda Region, Regional Municipality of Bornholm, Region Blekinge, and Regional Council in södra Småland.

Chapter I
Goals and forms of co-operation
§ 1

1. Euroregion Baltic (ERB) shall undertake joint initiatives aiming at strengthening and promoting cooperation among the local and regional authorities of the Parties of the Agreement, as well as contributing to the sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region, with particular attention to the South Baltic area.
2. In the cooperation ERB shall represent and promote common interests of its member organisations and act on their behalf towards the national, European and international institutions. ERB will also implement strategic initiatives complementing local and regional agendas of the member organisations, and pursue organised exchange activities.
3. The Parties of the Agreement will at all times observe the principles of partnership, subsidiarity and self-governance. The Parties will also ensure that added value is generated in any joint initiative they will embark on.

§ 2

In order to attain the above goals the ERB shall:

1. act and lobby towards the national, European and international institutions on behalf of its member organisations, within the scope of jointly defined interests,
2. take an active role in the shaping of EU policies, and in particular the policies of concern for the member organisations and the ERB itself,
3. cooperate with the European Commission, European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, national governments, Baltic Sea Region networks and other international organisations,
4. implement actions of strategic importance based on the jointly designed and adopted development strategies, action plans, and cooperation agendas,
5. contribute to the growth of the participating regions, counties and municipalities by supporting the development of platforms for other forms of cooperation and actors, and in particular by facilitating networking and match-making among potential partners, and exchanging information and knowledge,

6. work towards the improvement of framework conditions for cooperation and investments, particularly those related to business development, environmental sustainability, regional attractiveness, and transport accessibility,
7. conduct exchange activities (e.g. of knowledge, information, best practices) in order to seek collaborative approach to common challenges and to progress in innovation and in operational efficiency of the cooperation.

Chapter II

The ERB bodies and administrative units

§ 3

1. ERB has the following bodies:
 - 1.1 Executive Board
 - 1.2 President
 - 1.3 Youth Board
2. ERB has the following administrative units:
 - 2.1 International Permanent Secretariat (IPS)
 - 2.2 Regional Secretariats

§ 4

The ERB Executive Board

1. The ERB Executive Board (the Board) is the highest decision-making body in ERB. It consists of up to two representatives of the highest possible political rank and one permanent deputy nominated by each member organisation and the Chairperson of the Youth Board. The Board members' terms in office commence on the day they are appointed, and expire when they are called off.
2. The tasks of the Board are to:
 - 2.1 initiate and adopt changes to the ERB Statutes,
 - 2.2 prepare and approve long-term programmes, biennial action plans, and other strategic documents,
 - 2.3 prepare, adopt and implement resolutions, joint statements and positions,
 - 2.4 elect the ERB President for the term of one year in accordance with the rotation sequence approved by all the Parties of the Agreement,
 - 2.5 elect the ERB Vice-President for the term of one year and by doing so, to define the rotation for the following year for the subsequent Party of the Agreement to hold ERB presidency,
 - 2.6 approve annual activity reports from the ERB President,

- 2.7 approve annual financial report from the IPS,
 - 2.8 approve annual activity and financial reports from the Youth Board,
 - 2.9 decide on enlarging of the ERB territory as well as approve withdrawal or suspension of the Parties,
 - 2.10 establish ad hoc task forces and delegate them with specific assignments,
 - 2.11 confer the title of the ERB honorary membership.
3. The Board debates during formal meetings which may be ordinary or extraordinary. The meetings are held in English and in public unless the Board decides otherwise. Ordinary meetings must take place at least three times a year and they are summoned by the ERB President. Extraordinary meetings may take place at any time decided upon by the Board. Ordinary meetings shall be scheduled in the biennial action plans approved by the Board together with the change of the President and shall be hosted alternatively by all the member organisations.
 4. Once a year the Annual Forum of Stakeholders shall be convened upon the initiative of the Board. It will be a meeting platform facilitating discussions of relevant stakeholders from the member organisations. The Forum will also provide the opportunity for ERB to be a successful promoter of the stakeholder approach in its cooperation by which interests of the member regions, local communities, authorities and other relevant actors are all taken into account. Thus, the Annual Forum will serve as an important tool strengthening the political cooperation in ERB.
 5. The Board decisions are based on consensus. Decisions to be taken by the Board will be drafted in the meeting agenda. Within 10 days after the meeting the IPS will send out minutes including the decisions taken at the meeting, and the Parties will be obliged to submit their comments within 14 days after the reception of the minutes. If no comments are submitted within the stipulated time, the decisions will be rendered valid by all the Parties. If, however, comments are submitted, decisions will be proceeded until consensus is reached. This procedure applies to all decisions to be taken by the Board.
 6. The Board members have the right to speak and take decisions. Other persons invited personally to the sessions are given the right to speak and/or advise.
 7. Each member of the Board may submit written suggestions concerning the particulars of the agenda of the Board meeting. The suggestions shall be sent in to the IPS at least ten days before the meeting.

8. The Board has the power to authorise any of its members and the head of the IPS to represent ERB externally.
9. The member organisations must inform the Board of any personnel changes in their representations to the ERB bodies and administrative units not later than 30 days after such change has occurred.

§ 5

The ERB President

1. The President chairs the Board and is the ERB's highest-ranking representative.
2. The President chairs meetings of the Board. When the President cannot attend, meetings will be chaired by the Vice-President.
3. The President's term is for one year and a representative of each Party of the Agreement subsequently holds the position.
4. The President and Vice-President submit to the Board the biennial action plan of the ERB cooperation.
5. The President submits the annual report of the ERB cooperation not later than March 31 of the following year.

§ 6

The ERB Youth Board

1. The ERB Youth Board (Youth Board) consists of one representative from each of the ERB member organisations.
2. A member of the Youth Board must be between 16 and 25 years old.
3. Each ERB member organisation appoints one representative to the Youth Board. The election procedure is decided upon by each member organisation.
4. The Youth Board elects Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson among its members. The term of the Youth Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson is for one year and a representative of each Party of the Agreement subsequently holds the position.
5. The Youth Board decisions are based on consensus with the presence of more than 50% of the Youth Board members. The members agree on their

tasks and activities, as well as the operational rules which are submitted to the ERB Executive Board for approval.

6. The Youth Board contributes to the ERB Biennial Action Plan and submits an annual activity and financial report on their activities to the ERB Executive Board. This becomes an integral part of the annual presidency report.

§ 7

The ERB International Permanent Secretariat

1. The ERB member organisations establish ERB International Permanent Secretariat (IPS) to coordinate the ERB cooperation. IPS will act under the direction of the President and in line with decisions by the Board.
2. The member organisation hosting the IPS shall be obliged to:
 - 2.1 provide the premises, telecommunications facilities, furniture and equipment, and archive amenities;
 - 2.2 sign an employment contract with IPS staff, deal with issues referring to tax and social contributions resulting from the contract, and keep personnel files. The contract shall be co-signed by ERB President;
 - 2.3 service current financial obligations and provide accounting and book-keeping services;
3. The IPS shall be responsible for:
 - 3.1 submitting periodical financial reports at the Board meetings;
 - 3.2 assisting the President in submitting to the Board annual reports, consisting of activity and financial reports. The financial report will be made in a currency of and in line with accounting rules of the country hosting the IPS. In order to ensure the clarity of the financial report the data provided in national currency will also be calculated into EUR;
 - 3.3 assisting the President and Vice-President in submitting to the Board the biennial action plan of the ERB cooperation.
 - 3.4 keeping regular contact with the Regional Secretariats and co-organising with them monthly on-line meetings. These meetings may also be face-to-face and held more frequently upon the request of the ERB member organisations,
 - 3.5 maintaining close working relations with the member organisations,
 - 3.6 preparing meetings for the Board, drafting agendas, resolutions and decisions,
 - 3.7 sending out invitations to the Board meetings not later than 20 days in advance together with a preliminary agenda, and final agendas not later than 7 days before the meeting takes place,
 - 3.8 writing minutes of the Board meetings in English which shall be sent to the Board members not later than 30 days after the meeting,

- 3.9 maintaining internal and external correspondence, conducting promotion and information dissemination activities.
4. IPS staff shall have university education or a similar level of qualifications, very good command of written and spoken English, and sound knowledge of Russian.
5. The IPS will take efforts to acquire funds to externally finance IPS, within the guidelines and directions from the President and Board.

§ 8

The ERB Regional Secretariats

Each member organisation will establish a Regional Secretariat dealing with all issues related to the ERB cooperation. These Regional Secretariats shall act as a liaison between the IPS and ERB member organisations. All the personnel involved in the implementation of the ERB cooperation, including the staff of the IPS and Regional Secretariats shall share the responsibility for the successful execution of the tasks resulting from the day-to-day management of the ERB work, implementation of the biennial action plan and realisation of other assignments delegated by the President and Board.

CHAPTER III

Financing

§ 9

1. The Parties of the Agreement should aim at working out principles of financing of common activities. The Parties may sign an agreement to specify membership fees and their individual contribution to the IPS budget by declaring to support it in the scope stipulated by these Statutes.
2. Each Party of the Agreement covers the costs of delegating its representatives to the meetings of the Board, the Youth Board, and Regional Secretariats.
3. In case of the Euroregion Baltic liquidation its property and obligations will be divided among all the Parties of the Agreement proportionally to the contributed funds.
4. Withdrawal of a Party from the ERB entitles the Party to raise property claims towards the Euroregion, proportionally to the contributed funds.