

STATUTES OF EUROREGION BALTIC

Malbork, 1998

revised

Lepaja, 2001

Elbląg 2004

Gdansk, 2007

Elbląg, 2008

INTRODUCTION

These Statutes constitute an integral part of the Agreement establishing Euroregion Baltic signed in February 1998 in Malbork. They were worked out from a Polish initiative to create a Euroregion in the southeast Baltic Sea area.

The Statutes were first revised as a result of a discussion during the year 2001 on how to make Euroregion Baltic more up-to-date.

The second revision followed the proposals made by the National Secretariats of Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden during the webmeetings on 25th March and 19th April 2004. The National Secretariat of Russia sent theirs in writing. At the meeting on 4th May 2004 the ERB Council rewrote §7 point 8 giving a new phrasing to the issue of Council meetings and decision-taking. These Statutes are also an integral attachment to the minutes from the ERB Council meeting, which took place on 4th May 2004 in Elbląg. The minutes were signed by ERB President Mr Jan Kozłowski.

Subsequent revisions occurred as a result of the improvement process of institutional capacities within Euroregion Baltic, enabling the establishment of the Youth Board (approved by the ERB Council in Gdańsk on 6th December 2007) and the extension of the Executive Board (approved by the ERB Council in Elbląg on 22nd February 2008).

Chapter I
Aims and forms of co-operation

§ 1

The aims of the co-operation within ERB are as follows:

1. improve the life conditions of the people inhabiting the area of ERB
2. promote mutual contacts
3. tighten bonds among local communities
4. eliminate historical prejudices
5. plan activities aimed at providing sustainable development among the Parties of the Agreement
6. support actions aiming at co-operation between regional and local authorities

§ 2

The aims listed in § 1 will be realised in the following ways:

1. Supporting common cross-border projects of social and economic development in various areas
2. Co-operation in the realisation of common municipal projects on the border-territories
3. Co-operation in spatial planning for the border territories and for the whole ERB.
4. Development of the border-crossings infrastructure
5. Increasing professional qualifications and directing re-qualification systems to decrease unemployment, especially among young people
6. Exchange of groups of scientists, sportsmen, people dealing with culture, youth and children
7. Co-operation in the scope of tourism development
8. Stimulating learning of neighbour-languages
9. Protection of common cultural heritage
10. Organising information channels of ERB and supporting media development to provide all the Parties with current information

11. Co-operation in the scope of fighting natural and ecological disasters, fire and other emergencies. Exchanging information about the above mentioned threats.

Chapter II

Rights and duties of the Parties

§ 3

1. On the basis of partnership relations the Parties work up crossborder and international projects, in co-ordination with competent administrative bodies of their countries, acting in accordance with the law in force in their country, taking into consideration conditions of other Parties of the Agreement.
2. The Parties inform each other about their own undertakings which could have crossborder or other international consequences.
3. The Parties of the Agreement will make the offices of the national secretariats available to the members of the Euroregion bodies.
4. The Euroregion membership does not exclude the right of the Parties to sign bilateral or multilateral agreements with other foreign partners.

Chapter III

The Euroregion bodies

§ 4

- 1 ERB has the following bodies:
 - 1.1 the Council
 - 1.2 the Executive Board
 - 1.3 the Youth Board
 - 1.4 the Working Groups
- 2 ERB administrative bodies
 - 2.1 International Permanent Secretariat (ERB IPS)
 - 2.2 the national secretariats

§ 5

The ERB Council

The ERB Council is the highest decision-making and co-ordinating body of the organisation.

- 1 The tasks of the Council are to:
 - 1.1 initiate changes and decide about the management structure of ERB
 - 1.2 approve action plans and other long-term programmes
 - 1.3 initiate and decide about revision of the Statutes and the Agreement
 - 1.4 approve financial plans for common projects
 - 1.5 approve the annual report from the President
 - 1.6 approve the annual financial report for ERB IPS
 - 1.7 approve annual activity and financial reports from the Youth Board
 - 1.8 approve annual reports from the Working Groups
 - 1.9 decide on enlarging of the ERB territory as well as withdrawal or suspension of Parties
 - 1.10 elect and approve the President and the Vice-President of ERB for one year
 - 1.11 confer the title of ERB honorary membership.
- 2 By approving the Vice-president the Council defines the rotation for the following year for the member country which will hold presidency. The President chairs meetings in the Council and the Executive Board. When the President cannot attend, the meetings will be chaired by the Vice-President.
- 3 President's term is for one year and a representative of each Party of the Agreement subsequently holds the position.
- 4 The President and the Vice-President represent ERB externally.

§ 6

1. The Council consists of up to eight (8) persons appointed by each Party of the Agreement and all the members of the Youth Board. Each Party decides if it will use substitutes or not.
2. The Council and Executive Board members' terms commence on the day they are appointed, and expires when they are called off.
3. Each Party shall inform the ERB IPS, whether there are any personnel changes in ERB bodies, not later than 30 days after such change has occurred.

§ 7

1. The ERB Council debates in sessions. The sessions may be ordinary or extraordinary. The ordinary session must take place at least twice a year and it is convened by the President of the Euroregion. The extraordinary sessions may take place any time and they are convened on the President's or the Executive Board's motion or on request of at least one third of the members of the Council. The Council and Board sessions shall be scheduled for one year and approved at the Council session accompanying change of the President.
2. The sessions should take place in the country of the Presidency unless the Council decide otherwise.
3. The ERB IPS is responsible for sending out invitations to the sessions 20 days in advance together with a preliminary agenda. The Council members shall be notified of the final agenda 7 days before the sessions.
4. Each member of the council may submit written suggestions concerning the particulars of the Agenda to the ERB IPS. The suggestions shall be sent in at least ten days before the session.
5. The agenda of the session of the Council is set by the Council at the beginning of the session.
6. The sessions of the Council should be planned in such a way that the whole agenda can be finished during one day.
7. The sessions are public if the Council does not decide otherwise.
8. The Council decisions are based on consensus. Prior to the Council meeting the Parties are informed of draft decision to be taken by the

Council. After the meeting the ERB IPS sends out to all the Parties the draft minutes with the accompanying text of the decision, and the Parties are obliged to submit their comments within 30 days after the reception of the documentation. If no comments are submitted within the stipulated time, the decision is rendered valid by all the Parties. If, however, comments are submitted, the decision is proceeded until consensus is reached. This procedure applies to all decisions to be taken by the Council.

9. The Council members have the right to speak and take decisions. Other persons invited personally to the sessions are given the right to speak and advise.
10. The ERB IPS is responsible for the minutes of the sessions. The minutes in English and Russian shall be delivered to all the Parties not later than 30 days after the session.
11. ERB Council sessions are held in English and Russian, or in his native language upon the host's decision. The host provides interpretation into English and Russian.
12. The Presidency shall submit the annual report not later than March 31 of the following year.

§ 8

The ERB Executive Board

- 1 The ERB Executive Board is elected from the members of the ERB Council and consists of one representative from each member region within Euroregion Baltic, and the Chairperson of the Youth Board.
- 2 The ERB Executive Board tasks are as follows:
 - 2.1 preparing and submitting resolutions to the Council for approval
 - 2.2 implementing the resolutions of the Council
 - 2.3 accepting the annual reports from the President, Chairperson of the Youth Board and the Chairpersons of the Working Groups, and submitting them to the Council for approval
 - 2.4 establishing Working Groups
- 3 The sessions of the Executive Board shall be held in the country where the President resides, unless the Board decides otherwise.

- 4 The Board decisions are based on consensus. Decisions to be taken by the Board will be drafted in the meeting agenda. After the meeting the ERB 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.
- 5 The Executive Board has the power to authorize the Council members and the director of the ERB IPS to represent ERB externally.
- 6 The sessions of the Executive Board should be planned in such a way that the agenda can be finished during one day.

§ 9

The ERB Youth Board

1. The ERB Youth Board consists of one representative from each of the member regions within Euroregion Baltic.
2. A youth representative must be between 16 and 25 years old.
3. The election of the youth representatives must take place at an open meeting, preceded by a public announcement in the ERB member region at least two weeks before the meeting. Other aspects of the election procedure are decided upon by each member region.
4. The ERB Youth Board elects Chairperson among its memmmbers . His or her term is for one year and a representative of each Party of the Agreement subsequently holds the position.
5. The ERB Youth Board decisions are based on consensus with the presence of more than 50% of the 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 ERB Youth Board submits an annual activity and financial report on their activities to the ERB Executive Board. This becomes an integral pat of the annual presidency report submitted to the ERB Council for approval.

§ 10

Working groups

1. Working Groups are appointed by ERB Executive Board.
2. The Board also decides about the period when the Working Groups operate, what tasks they take, as well as how and when they shall report to the Council. The Board appoints the Party responsible for each Working Group, which in turn appoints its Chairperson.
3. Working Groups use English and Russian languages, possibly the language of the country where the meeting takes place. In this case, the Chairperson of the meeting provides interpretation facilities.
4. Members of Working Groups decide on how their work shall be carried out, the number of meetings and other practical details.
5. The Chairperson of the Working Group is responsible for results of its activities, for its reporting and finalising tasks in the time set.

§ 11

The ERB secretariats

- 1 The secretariats form the administrative network of the Euroregion.
- 2 Each Party of the Agreement shall establish a national secretariat as a contact point and liaison office. Each member decides how many people shall work in the secretariat and how it shall be financed.
- 3 The Parties of the Agreement may establish ERB International Permanent Secretariat (ERB IPS). A special agreement defining ERB IPS budget and the members' individual contribution will be made by the Parties.
- 4 ERB IPS will act as the Head Secretariat of the Euroregion Baltic.
- 5 The National Secretariat of the Party where ERB IPS is established shall be obliged to:
 - 5.1 provide the premises, telecommunications facilities, furniture and equipment, and archive amenities;
 - 5.2 sign an employment contract with a person who will work at ERB IPS, 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;

- 5.3 service current financial obligations and provide accounting and book-keeping services;
 - 5.4 submit periodical financial reports at the Board meetings, and an annual financial report at the Council meeting;
 - 5.5 submit the annual presidency report, which may include the financial report in a currency of and following accounting regulations of the country hosting ERB IPS. In order to ensure the clarity of the financial reports for all ERB Parties, the National Secretariat, which will perform the accounting task for ERB IPS, shall recalculate its national currency into EUR at the official Central European Bank's rate;
 - 5.6 ERB IPS shall organize meetings of the National Secretariats in preparation for ERB Council and Board meetings and their draft decisions. The meetings may take place within ERB territory or via the internet.
 - 5.7 Under the direction of the President and decisions by the Board and Council, ERB IPS is responsible for keeping contact with the National Secretariats, ERB internal and external correspondence, preparing meetings for ERB bodies, agendas, draft resolutions and decisions. ERB IPS deals with ERB promotion and information dissemination, making use of previous experience of ERB Parties and new guidelines from ERB Communication and Information Strategy. It also keeps in touch with media and updates the website, drafts reports, including the annual report, and schedules ERB events.
- 6 An ERB IPS's employee shall possess the following qualifications: university education or a similar level of qualifications, very good command of written and spoken English, and sound knowledge of Russian.
 - 7 The ERB IPS will make an effort to acquire funds to externally finance IPS, within the guidelines and directions from the Presidency, Board and Council.
 - 8 The ERB IPS will take minutes at the Council and Board meetings, in English and Russian languages.

- 9 The National Secretariats will assist the ERB IPS in gathering and providing requested information.

§ 12

Basic Documents circulation between ERB bodies and Secretariats.

- 1 The national secretariats shall receive the following documents from the ERB IPS:
 - 1.1 the minutes of the meetings of the Council and the Board sessions,
 - 1.2 provisions and decisions of the Council and the Board
 - 1.3 notices of establishing working groups and the results of their work, as well as other reports from the working groups
 - 1.4 changes in the Statutes, membership, and territory of ERB operation and organizational regulations
 - 1.5 programmes, expert appraisements and analyses
 - 1.6 information about personnel changes in the structure of the Council and Board members.
- 2 The ERB IPS prepares the following documents for the Council and the Board:
 - 2.1 documentation of the sessions of the Council and the Board
 - 2.2 drafts of resolutions, agreements and decisions to be approved
 - 2.3 annual report from the President
 - 2.4 notices to the Parties of the Agreement of the personnel changes in the Council and the Board
 - 2.5 information on ERB current matters.

CHAPTER IV

Financing

§ 13

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 budget of ERB IPS 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 meeting of the Council, the Executive Board, the Youth Board, secretariats and the Working Groups.
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.