

Statutes of the Working Community of the Danube Regions (ARGE Donauländer)

Preamble

The Danube is not only one of the lifelines of the European continent, but also a unifying bond for many population groups representing a great diversity of cultures, organizational structures and forms of societies. It is therefore only logical that these countries should be encouraged to intensify their efforts aimed at peaceful mutual relations and the pursuit of joint activities.

In their daily lives, the inhabitants of the regions along the Danube are often confronted with problems that are similar or identical in nature.

The members therefore declare their willingness to establish a Working Community and to cooperate within its framework.

Article I

Members

The Working Group comprises the following members:

Land of Baden-Württemberg (DE)

Land of Upper Austria (AT)

Land of Lower Austria (AT)

Land of Vienna (AT)

Land of Burgenland (AT)

Slovak Republic (SK)

Self-Governing Region of Trnava (SK)

Self-Governing Region of Bratislava (SK)

Komitat of Győr-Moson-Sopron (HU)
Komitat of Komárom-Esztergom (HU)
Komitat of Pest (HU)
Capital city of Budapest (HU)
Komitat of Fejér (HU)
Komitat of Bács-Kiskun (HU)
Komitat of Tolna (HU)
Komitat of Baranya (HU)

Osječko-baranjska županija (HR)
Vukovarsko-srijemska županija (HR)

Republic of Serbia (RS)
Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (RS)

Region of Montana (BG)
Region of Vidin (BG)
Region of Vratsa (BG)
Region of Pleven (BG)
Region of Veliko Tarnovo (BG)
Region of Ruse (BG)
Region of Silistra (BG)

District of Caraș-Severin (RO)
District of Mehedinți (RO)
District of Dolj (RO)
District of Olt (RO)
District of Teleorman (RO)
District of Giurgiu (RO)
District of Călărași (RO)
District of Ialomița (RO)
District of Brăila (RO)
District of Galați (RO)
District of Tulcea (RO)

District of Constanța (RO)

Republic of Moldova (MD)

Region of Odessa (UA)

Regions can also be admitted to the Working Community as observers.

Jihomoravský kraj (CZ)

Self-Governing Region of Nitra (SK)

The Working Community can enter into partnerships with other organizations dealing with issues relating to the Danube and matters of regional concern. Representatives of such organizations are invited to participate in the meetings of the bodies of the Working Community in an advisory capacity.

The Working Community has entered into partnerships with the following organizations:

- Danube Rectors' Conference (DRC)
- Danube Tourist Consulting (DTC)
- European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
- European Region Danube-Vltava (ERDV)
- Europa-Forum Wachau (EFW)
- Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM)
- Council of Danube Cities and Regions (CODCR)
- Assembly of European Regions (AER)

The Working Community is an entity without legal personality.

The bodies of the Working Community operate within the framework of the legal system of the respective countries.

Article II

Objective

The objective of the Working Community shall be to contribute towards promoting cooperation among its members with a view to an all-encompassing development of the Danube region in the interest of its inhabitants and peaceful mutual relations in Europe.

Article III

Tasks

The Working Community shall deal with and coordinate issues of shared interest to its members in an informative and subject-oriented manner.

Existing bilateral and multilateral contacts between the members shall not be impaired by the activities of the Working Community. Such contacts can be supported within the framework of the Working Community's possibilities.

Article IV

Formal bodies

Cooperation within the framework of the Working Community is characterized by a minimum of institutionalization.

On the basis of this approach to cooperation, the following bodies perform the tasks of the Working Community:

- Political Board
- Steering Committee
- Secretariat
- Working groups

Article V
Political Board

The Political Board is the supreme body of the Working Community. It deliberates on important political concerns and objectives of shared interest and decides on the Community's substantive priorities and its activities.

The meetings of the Political Board shall take place in the region holding the presidency of the Working Community.

The chairmanship of the Political Board shall rotate every two years.

Each member region shall have one vote.

Each member region shall be represented by the head of government or a person nominated to act as his/her deputy.

Decisions shall be taken unanimously.

Decisions can also be taken by way of circular resolutions.

Article VI
Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall be in charge of preparing the meetings and coordinating the activities of the working groups in substantive terms; moreover, it shall be responsible for the management of the Secretariat.

The Steering Committee shall comprise representatives of the acting presidency and the former presidency, the working groups and the permanent chair of the Steering Committee.

The permanent chair of the Steering Committee (General Secretary) shall be in the hands of the Department for International and European Affairs of the Office of the Lower Austrian Federal Government.

Article VII Secretariat

The Secretariat shall be responsible for ensuring continuity in the performance of administrative tasks, the conduct of business, the resolutions to be adopted and public relations work.

The specific tasks of the Secretariat therefore include:

- Administrative preparation of Political Board meetings and Steering Committee meetings; drafting of the minutes of these meetings
- Administrative coordination of the activities of the working groups
- Receipt of enquiries and proposals from the working groups
- Archiving of minutes, joint reports and publications
- Documentation of the bodies of the Working Community and their activities
- Establishment of contacts with other working communities and institutions
- Contacts and coordination of cooperation with partner organizations

The Secretariat shall coordinate its activities with the permanent chair of the Steering Committee and the chairperson of the Political Board.

Article VIII Working groups

The Political Board shall have the right to set up working groups tasked to provide substantive input for long-term issues and projects.

The working groups shall have the right to consult competent resource persons and expert bodies.

The results of the working groups shall be submitted to the Political Board after having been reviewed by the Steering Committee.

Article IX

Financing

The costs incurred in connection with the organization of meetings and conferences shall be assumed by the host region.

The costs of the chairmanship of the Political Board shall be assumed by the region holding the chair.

Travel and accommodation expenses for the delegation are covered by each member region.

The Working Community does not collect membership fees.