



Assembly of European Regions, AER

Statute

(as adopted by the AER General Assembly on 12 June 2015 in Västra Götaland (SE))

Appellation and Term

Between all regions adhering to the present Statute, there is formed an association named "Assembly of European Regions". The association is established for an unlimited duration.

Article 1 – Mission and Objectives

1.1 The Assembly of European Regions is the voice of the regions of Europe by

- a) Promoting regional interests in European and beyond;
- b) Fostering interregional cooperation to promote the exchange of experience and the development of regional policy.

1.2 The Assembly of European Regions embraces globalisation, beyond Europe, and acknowledges the need of diversity, inclusion and a multi-cultural approach in search of solutions.

1.3 The Assembly of European Regions' perspective of regional policy making is grounded in the territories, cultures, histories and lives of the citizens. It works to support and improve political place-based policy making.

1.4 The mission and the objectives are met by

- a) Encouraging the application of the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity between the local, regional, national and European levels;
- b) Fostering leadership excellence on all levels of governance;

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- c) Addressing political concerns of a pan-European nature in the European institutions (such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the Committee of the Regions) and through lobbying and advocacy;
- d) Running its own programmes and projects or participating in such organised by third parties;
- e) Supporting efforts and networking of regional youth parliaments, councils and organisations under the responsibility of AER;
- f) Supporting the activities of European interregional associations;
- g) Cooperating with enterprises of the private sector;
- h) Cooperating with organisations sharing interests with AER.

1.5 The bodies of AER are:

- a) The governing bodies: The General Assembly and the Executive Board;
- b) The Bureau for political discussion, debate and decision making a basis for lobbying and advocacy;
- c) The Thematic Committees for exchange and dissemination of best practise and running of programmes and projects.

The composition of all AER bodies should respect a geographical and gender balance.

1.6 The Assembly of European Regions is a non-profit organisation.

1.7 The working language of AER is English.

Invitations and draft agendas should be sent to members at least four weeks and working documents at least two weeks before the meetings.

1.8 Delegates in all bodies of AER must hold a regional political mandate. They may give due written authorization for a representative.

In case of absence or should a delegate's regional mandate be lost, the Executive Board is, after a period of a maximum of six months, charged to assign a substitute until the next General Assembly.

1.9 All votes in all AER bodies are by simple majority, defined as more than 50% of those present and voting, unless otherwise specified in the present statute.

All elections are carried out by secret ballot, unless a unanimous decision to the contrary is made by the body in question.

Other decisions are taken through a vote by show of hands, unless a member requests otherwise.

In the event of a tied vote, on issues other than elections, the President of the body in question

has the casting vote.

1.10 Common practice of political assemblies shall be applied to all AER meetings.

Decisions are, in principle and whenever possible, adopted by consensus of opinion. The consensus should be understood as being the absence of any objection formulated and submitted by a member which may constitute an obstacle to the decision in question.

Article 2 – Membership

2.1 The following are eligible as members of AER:

a) As Full members:

European regions, under the condition that they respect the basic fundamental principles of the Council of Europe.

Groups of regions within a state, unless all members of such a group already belong to AER on an individual basis.

b) As Associate members:

European or non-European territorial entities, organizations or associations, including administrative divisions below national or regional level.

The founding organisations of AER, the Interregional Associations of European Regions.

Associate members should respect the basic fundamental principles of the Council of Europe.

c) As Observers, for a limited time:

Any entity wishing to observe AER before joining as a full or associate member.

2.2 The term "Region" covers in principle territorial authorities between the central government and local authorities, with a political representation power as entrusted by an elected assembly.

2.3 Requests for membership must be addressed to the Executive Board and duly signed.

The Executive Board decides to accept new members. The General Assembly ratifies the Board's decision.

Pending ratification, members who are candidates and have paid their membership fee may participate according to their membership provisions in the work of AER.

2.4. Any member may withdraw by notifying the AER President of its decision before 1 January of the current year via a letter signed by the head of the regional executive authority, sent by registered post and with signature upon delivery.

Article 3 – Fees

3.1 Membership of AER is dependent upon the payment of an annual fee giving access to

- a) The governing bodies, including eligibility to be elected;
- b) The Bureau;
- c) The Thematic Committees.

Members pay their fee directly to AER.

Details are fixed in the Procedures.

Article 4 – The General Assembly

4.1 The General Assembly is the highest authority of AER and convenes representatives of all its full members.

Associated members and observers are invited to participate and may address the assembly.

However, they don't have the right to vote.

The General Assembly charges the Executive Board to implement its decisions.

4.2 The General Assembly is convened at least once a year by the Executive Board.

The presence of two thirds of the full members who have registered in writing 10 days before the General Assembly shall be necessary to constitute the quorum.

4.3. Each Full member of AER, after paying the membership dues, has one vote at the General Assembly.

The vote will be expressed

- a) Directly by one of the representatives of the member region present;
- b) By proxy from one absent region to one region present.

4.4 Should a quarter of the full members so request, the Executive Board is bound to convene a General Assembly.

4.5 The General Assembly

- a) Approves the accounts of the previous year;
- b) Ratifies the budget forecast of the current year;
- c) Approves, upon the Executive Board's proposal, the draft budget for the following year;
- d) Adopts the annual reports from the Executive Board, the Bureau and the Thematic Committees;
- e) Ratifies the Executive Board's decision concerning the admission of new members and decides upon the loss of membership;

f) Adopts the Procedures.

4.6 The General Assembly elects separately, for a mandate of two years, the members of the Executive Board:

- a) The President;
- b) The Vice-President Treasurer;
- c) Three Vice Presidents, with assignments defined by the Board;
- d) The Presidents of the Thematic Committees;
- e) A representative of the region hosting the secretariat is an ex officio member.

The members of the Executive Board may be re-elected for a second consecutive mandate. Only two consecutive mandates are possible.

In addition to the above, the President of the AER Youth Regional Network (YRN) is member of the Executive Board.

4.7 The General Assembly ratifies, for a mandate of two years and on the suggestion by the Regions of the different states represented in AER, the members of the Bureau and their substitutes.

The Bureau consists of the members of the Executive Board and two representatives per State represented within the AER.

The members of the Bureau may be re-elected for a second consecutive mandate. Upon proposal by the Regions within a State, they can serve a third consecutive term.

Between assemblies, the Executive Board decides to accept new nominations for members of the Bureau, for ratification by the following General Assembly.

4.8 The General Assembly elects, for a mandate of three years, three members, not involved in other governing structures of AER, to form a Monitoring and Evaluation Group. One of the politicians will have a coordinating role.

The group, reporting to the General Assembly, will be responsible for:

- a) Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the mission and objectives of AER, in compliance with the provisions of the Statute and the Procedures;
- b) The efficient and sound use of financial and human resources.

The members of the group will be supported by an officer/officers from their region.

The group will assess the outcomes of the actions and activities and make strategic recommendations. They will have unrestricted access to all AER documents and meetings.

4.9 Minutes shall be taken of the proceedings in the General Assembly. They shall be signed by the President, adopted at the following meeting and should be at the disposal of all members.

Article 5 – The Bureau

5.1 The Bureau is the primary political voice of AER.

The meetings of the Bureau are open to the public.

5.2 The Bureau

- a) Debates issues of a pan-European and global nature emanating from members;
- b) Establishes the political base for AER lobbying and advocacy;
- c) Invites international, interregional, regional and municipal organisations to take part in the Bureaus discussions whenever these deal with matters relevant for AER;
- d) Prepares declarations and decisions which, whenever relevant, are submitted to the Executive Board or the General Assembly.

5.3 Invited to the meetings of the Bureau are

- a) The outgoing Presidents of the AER;
- b) The Presidents of the various AER Programmes and projects;
- c) The Presidents of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) (European Union), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) (Council of Europe), the Chamber of Regions of the CLRAE and the Interregional Member Organisations;
- d) Members of the AER holding the highest position within the CoR, the CLRAE and its Chamber of Regions.
- e) Invited as full members of the Bureau are one representative of regions where AER has an office.

5.4 The Bureau meets at least twice a year. Whenever indicated, appropriate or necessary, the meeting can be combined with another event.

Article 6 - The Executive Board

6.1 The Executive Board prepares the work and all the decisions of the General Assembly. It is responsible for the management of the AER and charges the Secretary General to implement its decisions. Between assemblies, it is the highest authority of AER.

The President(s) of the AER Programmes are adjunct of the Board on a strictly personal basis, reporting on the activities of their respective body.

6.2. The Executive Board

- a) Manages the coordination of all AER activities;
- b) Recommends the General Assembly to set up or disband the Thematic Committees;
- c) May entrust precise mandates, with limited time scales to third persons in order to achieve objectives decided on by the Board;
- d) Closes the accounts of the previous year before their approval by the General Assembly.

6.3 By delegation, the Executive Board is authorised to meet and to make decisions in accordance with the association's statutory objectives or useful to its smooth running. Decisions made in this way are submitted to the General Assembly.

6.4 The invitation and draft agenda should be sent to members at least two weeks and the working documents at least one week before the meeting.

Decisions of the Executive Board are valid if at least 50 % of the members + 1 are present, including participation by means of ICT.

Article 7 - The President

7.1 The President prepares the work and all the decisions of the Executive Board.

The President represents the organization in all external relations.

Notwithstanding the Vice President Treasurer's financial responsibility, the President remains fully responsible overall.

7.2 The President

- a) Chairs the meetings of the AER governing bodies and has the power to make all necessary decisions concerning the implementation of the decisions of the said bodies;
- b) Chairs the Bureau;
- c) Has the right to take legal action in the association's name and on its behalf. The President may delegate such right to a representative, through a duly signed and dated written authorisation form.

7.3 Should the President's regional mandate be lost, one of the Vice-Presidents shall, after a period of a maximum of six months, act as substitute until the next General Assembly.

Article 8 - The Vice-Presidents

8.1 The Vice-Presidents

- a) May represent the President;

b) Have assignments as decided by the Executive Board.

Article 9 - The Thematic Committees

9.1 The Thematic Committees are open to all members of AER

- a) The Economy Committee for Economy and Regional Development;
- b) The Social Committee for Social Policy and Public Health;
- c) The Cultural Committee for Culture, Education and Youth.

9.2 The Committees are responsible for

- a) Exchange and dissemination of best practise;
- b) Running of programmes and projects.

9.3 The Committees may prepare, decide and implement initiatives in the framework of their assignments. Whenever relevant for the Forum and within their budgetary limits, they may

- a) Assign ad hoc Working Groups and Task Forces to assist in its activities;
- b) Initiate studies and reports;
- c) Engages in training and capacity building;
- d) Cooperate with international, interregional, regional and municipal organisations;
- e) Use relevant tools in the AER Toolkit.

9.5 Each Committee is chaired by a President, elected by the General Assembly on proposal by the committee itself and with a term of 2 years, renewable once.

The President is responsible for the committee's smooth running.

9.6 The Committees will meet at least twice yearly for exchange of best practise and dissemination, project generation, consultations, and debates.

Minutes shall be drawn up after each meeting, signed by the President and should be at the disposal of all members.

Article 10 - The Treasurer

10.1 The Vice-President Treasurer is responsible for the administration of finances, in particular the management of assets and the supervision of income and expenditure, and shall report to the Executive Board and the General Assembly.

Article 11 - The Secretary General

11.1 The Secretary General is appointed by the Executive Board, and may be dismissed following the same procedure.

11.2 The Secretary General reports to the Executive Board and

- a) Is in charge of the Secretariat and is responsible for implementing the decisions of the governing AER bodies.
- b) Manages the staff of the Secretariat.
- c) Is charged to actively ensure the daily management of the finances, in cooperation with the Vice-President Treasurer.
- d) Represents, with the agreement of the President, the AER in all external relations.
- e) Submits a quarterly activity report before the Executive Board and an annual report to the General Assembly.

11.3 The Secretary General is entitled to take part in the meetings of all AER bodies, but without having the right to vote.

11.4 The functions of the Secretary General are performed and remunerated within the framework of a contract concluded by the President.

Article 12 – Finance

12.1 The financial year of the AER corresponds to the calendar year. A forecast statement and a closing balance sheet are drawn-up for each financial year

12.2 The AER meets its financial commitments by means of its assets. The financial resources break down as follows:

- a) Membership dues in accordance with Article 3;
- b) Grants from public and private institutions;
- c) Donations and legacies;
- d) Income from its own activities;
- e) Income generated by its own assets;
- f) All resources authorised by law.

Article 13 - Procedures

13.1 Within the framework of the Statute, the Procedures specify general rules of administrative, financial and technical procedure.

The text of the Procedures is adopted by the Executive Board and ratified by the following General Assembly.



Article 14 - Amendment of the Statute

14.1 This Statute can only be amended by a General Assembly. The agenda of said assembly must expressly mention this item.

Article 15 - Dissolution and Liquidation

15.1 The dissolution of the Assembly of European Regions may only be decided by an Extraordinary General Assembly, defined as more than 2/3 of those present and voting.

15.2 The dissolution of AER or the withdrawal of a member shall not entail restitution of the contributions made by the members.

Article 16 - Legal base

16.1 The Assembly of European Regions is based in Strasbourg.

It may be transferred elsewhere by proposal of the Executive Board after approval from the General Assembly.

16.2 The Assembly of European Regions is governed by Sections 21 to 79 of the local Civil Code (code civil local alsacien-mosellan) and by this Statute. It is registered at the Registry of Associations at the Strasbourg District Court.

16.3 (Clause conferring jurisdiction) The jurisdiction of the Court of Appeal of Colmar is responsible for any dispute arising from the interpretation or application of this Statute.

Article 17

17.1 The Assembly of European Regions instructs the President to effect the prescribed formalities of declaration and publication and in particular to register with the Registry of Associations. The President shall be given full powers to this end.



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Procedures

(as adopted by the Executive Board on 10 June 2015 in Västra Götaland (SE))

Article 1 – Drafting, adoption and modification of the Procedures

1.1 Drafting, adoption and modifications of the Rules of Procedure are specified in the Statute.

1.2 The English version of the AER Statute is the reference.

Article 2 – Observers

2.1 The status of observer according to the present Statute is granted for a determined and non-renewable period: One year from the month following the Executive Boards decision to accept the request, the entity having been granted observer status shall inform AER of its wish to become a member or not.

2.2 The status of observer cannot be granted to regions that were full or associate members of AER during the last three years.

Article 3 – Fees

3.1 The annual membership fee is due for the current year and must be paid in full.

For new members, the fee is due the month following the Executive Board's decision to approve membership and is calculated as the remaining twelfths of the annual fee.

For existing members, the full annual fee is due within two months following the call for membership fees, sent out by the Executive Board.

3.2 The membership fee for Full members is based on the population and the GDP per capita of

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the member regions. It is calculated and decided by the Executive Board and ratified by the General Assembly.

3.3 The membership fee for Associated members is decided by the Executive Board and ratified by the General Assembly.

3.4 Any additional fee for participation in additional activities and programmes is decided by the Executive Board and ratified by the General Assembly.

3.5 Every member region will be granted access to the tool used by the Executive Board to calculate the annual fee.

3.6 No membership fee discount will be applied, except in exceptional circumstances, duly justified and approved by the Vice-President Treasurer.

3.7 Members not having paid their fee will have their membership rights suspended and the member will no longer be eligible, without prejudice to the recovery of unpaid fees.

The Executive Board is charged to take legal action to obtain recovery of all membership fees.

Article 4 – Convening and functioning of the General Assembly

4.1 Proposals to be presented at the General Assembly, can be submitted up to the evening before the start of the Executive Board meeting preceding the General Assembly.

The Executive Board will give its opinion on the proposals to the General Assembly.

Article 5 – The Thematic Committees

5.1 Each Committee decides on its own working structure and may appoint leaders to sub-entities, as long as they respect the principles of the AER Statute and Procedures and are in compliance with the budgetary framework and provisions.

5.2 Each Committee President's region is charged with assigning a seconded officer, acting as secretariat.

Article 6 – Communications to media

6.1 All official communication with press is at the discretion of the President of the body in question.

Article 7 – Financial commitments

7.1 The annual budget for the AER makes a distinction between the ordinary expenditure of the governing bodies, the Political Bureau and the Committees on the one hand, and the expenditure of other AER activities that are necessary in order to achieve stated objectives, on the other.

The former should in full be covered by the expected membership fees. The latter should in full be covered by fees, submitted by the concerned parties.

Article 8 – Organisation and procedure of elections and votes

8.1 The member regions shall be informed four months in advance of the elections taking place at the General Assembly or the Committees.

8.2 The candidates are invited to send an application letter at least two months before the election.

8.3 The portfolio of the candidates will be distributed to all members at least two weeks before the election.

8.4 The election will be presided over by the oldest representative of a member region, assisted by the youngest representative of a member region.

In case of a second round of voting, only the two candidates in the lead can stand.