

Rules of Operations of the VASAB Secretariat

According to par. 12 of the Resolution of the Third conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region, which took place in Tallinn, Estonia on 7-9 December 1994, the Ministers established a common VASAB interim Secretariat to support the Committee for Spatial Development in the BSR, and welcomed the countries and regions participating readiness to contribute to Secretariat's budget, and the Polish proposal to host the Secretariat from 1996. This call for countries' contributions was confirmed during the sixth Conference of Ministers, responsible for Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region, in Gdańsk in September 2005.

Since January 2007 VASAB Secretariat is located in Riga, Latvia as associate entity of the State Digital Development Agency. Mandate of the VASAB Secretariat is set by the VASAB Committee on Spatial Planning and Development in the BSR (herein after - CSPD/BSR).

According to par. 14 and 15 of the Declaration of the Ninth conference of Ministers for Spatial Planning and Development of the Baltic Sea Region, which took place in Wismar, Germany on 2 June 2023, the Ministers affirm the continuity of the VASAB Secretariat located in Riga, Latvia as functionally independent entity until 31 December 2029 enabling the Secretariat to benefit from the established local networks and the competent team in Riga and reaffirm our commitment to provide VASAB with the necessary financial resources to execute their tasks efficiently.

Tasks of VASAB Secretariat

1. According to the said Resolution of the Third Conference of Ministers, the main tasks of VASAB Secretariat are:
 - a) to perform Secretariat functions for the CSPD/BSR,
 - b) to push forward the approved actions and assist in the preparation of BSR Ministers' meetings, support common activities decided by CSPD/BSR,
 - c) organise the ongoing concertation process with other institutions,
 - d) promote the concept of co-operation in BSR,
 - e) promote and accompany research and pilot projects,
 - f) identify new required common actions,
 - g) organise the mutual information among BSR countries and regions.
2. CSPD/BSR may define additional tasks of VASAB Secretariat as required for implementation of Resolutions of the Ministerial Conferences.
3. Activities of the VASAB Secretariat are financed from the yearly countries' contributions. Budgetary lines of VASAB activities are approved annually by the CSPD/BSR.

4. With the consent of the CSPD/BSR, the VASAB Secretariat may participate in projects and similar activities funded by the external sources.
5. All VASAB Secretariat's financial inflows and expenses are accounted for in accordance with regulations of hosting country.

VASAB Secretariat's financial management and annual report is subject to a review done by an external auditor. The VASAB Secretariat's annual report with the auditor review has to be presented to the contributing Ministries and the CSPD/BSR.

Operations of VASAB Secretariat

6. Head of VASAB Secretariat and Deputy Head are appointed by the CSPD/BSR. Recruitment is organized by VASAB chairmanship and supported by the hosting agency.
7. The Head of VASAB Secretariat is responsible for:
 - a) the execution of tasks according to the actual CSPD/BSR guidelines and decisions,
 - b) financial matters, including economic and effective spending of contribution of VASAB member states and other financial sources, according to budgetary lines approved by the CSPD/BSR,
 - c) preparing a draft budget for VASAB operations. The draft budget is submitted by the Secretariat to the CSPD/ BSR for approval,
 - d) daily operations of the VASAB Secretariat,
 - e) representation of the VASAB Secretariat towards the CSPD/BSR, State Digital Development Agency and other institutions.
8. Deputy Head of VASAB Secretariat substitutes Head of VASAB Secretariat during his/her absence as well as performs other duties as agreed with the Head of Secretariat.
9. Staff of the VASAB Secretariat is hired for the period no longer than the mandate of the Secretariat or than the project implementation period the person is working for.
10. Duties of the staff members of the VASAB Secretariat are described in their job descriptions developed by the Head of VASAB Secretariat.
11. The working language of the Secretariat is Latvian. However, the Secretariat serves the CSPD/ BSR in English and when cooperation in projects, the working language is English.