

DECISION No 1/2003 OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL, ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR MEMBER STATES, OF THE ONE PART, AND THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA, OF THE OTHER PART

of 28 February 2003

amending, through the setting up of a Joint Consultative Committee between the Committee of the Regions and the Estonian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions, Decision No 1/98 adopting the Rules of Procedure of the Association Council

(2003/464/EC)

THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL,

Having regard to the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Estonia, of the other part⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 114 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Dialogue and cooperation between regional and local authorities in the European Community and those in the Republic of Estonia can make a major contribution to the development of their relations and to the integration of Europe.
- (2) It seems appropriate that such cooperation should be organised at the level of the Committee of the Regions, of the one part, and of the Estonian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions, of the other part, by the setting up of a Joint Consultative Committee.
- (3) This means that the Rules of Procedure of the Association Council, adopted by Decision 1/98, need to be amended accordingly,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The following Articles shall be added to the Rules of Procedure of the Association Council:

'Article 18

A Joint Consultative Committee (hereinafter referred to as Committee) is hereby established with the task of assisting the Association Council with a view to promoting dialogue and cooperation between the regional and local authorities in the European Community and those in the Republic of Estonia. Such dialogue and cooperation shall be aimed in particular at:

1. preparing Estonian regions and local authorities for activity in the framework of future membership of the European Union;
2. preparing Estonian regions and local authorities for their participation in the work of the Committee of the Regions after accession of the Republic of Estonia;

3. exchanging information on current issues of mutual interest, in particular on up-to-date state of play concerning EU regional policy and accession process as well as preparation of Estonian regions and local authorities for these policies;
4. encouraging multilateral structured dialogue between (a) Estonian regions and local authorities and (b) regions and local authorities from EU Member States, including through networking in specific areas where direct contacts and cooperation between regions and local authorities from the Republic of Estonia and EU Member States might prove the most effective way of solving particular problems;
5. providing regular exchange of information on inter-regional cooperation between regional and local authorities from the Republic of Estonia and Member States;
6. encouraging exchange of experience and knowledge in the field of regional policy and structural interventions, between (a) Estonian regions and local authorities and (b) regions and local authorities from EU Member States, in particular know-how and techniques concerning preparation of regional and local development plans or strategies and most efficient use of Structural Funds;
7. assisting Estonian regional and local authorities by means of information exchange in practical implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in all aspects of life on regional and local level;
8. discussing any other relevant matters proposed by any side, as they can arise in the context of implementation of the Europe Agreement and in the framework of the Pre-accession Strategy.

Article 19

The Committee shall comprise eight representatives of the Committee of the Regions, on the one hand, and eight representatives of the Estonian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions, on the other hand. An equal number of alternate members shall be appointed.

The Committee shall carry out its activities on the basis of consultation by the Association Council or, as concerns the promotion of the dialogue between the regional and local authorities, on its own initiative.

The Committee may make recommendations to the Association Council.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 68, 9.3.1998, p. 3.

Members shall be chosen to ensure that the Committee is as faithful a reflection as possible of the various levels of regional and local authorities in both the European Community and the Republic of Estonia.

The Committee shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

The Committee shall meet at intervals, which it shall itself determine in its Rules of Procedure.

The Committee shall be co-chaired by a member of the Committee of the Regions of the European Community and a member of the Estonian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions.

Article 20

The Committee of the Regions, on the one hand, and the Estonian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions, on the other hand, shall each defray the expenses they incur by reason of their participation in the meetings of the Committee with regard to staff, travel and subsistence expenditure and to postal and telecommunications expenditure.

Expenditure in connection with interpreting at meetings, translation and reproduction of documents shall be borne by the Committee of the Regions, with the exception of expenditure in connection with interpreting or translation into or from Estonian, which shall be borne by the Estonian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions.

Other expenditure relating to the material organisation of meetings shall be borne by the Party which hosts the meetings.'

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels, 28 February 2003.

For the Association Council

The Chairman

K. OJULAND