

Agreement
between
the Government of the Republic of Estonia
and
the Government of the Russian Federation
on promotion of interregional and cross-border cooperation

The Government of the Republic of Estonia and the Government of the Russian Federation (hereinafter – *the Parties*),

intending for development and extension of mutually beneficial relations between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation,

seeking to continue and develop long-term interregional and cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation,

recognizing practical importance and mutual benefit potential of sustainable development of interregional and cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation,

seeking to ensure that activities in the field of interregional and cross-border cooperation correspond to the territorial development strategies of the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation, and complementarity of these activities and events held within the framework of other programs and projects in the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation,

seeking to strengthen legal framework of interregional and cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation,

relying upon common principles and rules of international law,

have agreed on the following:

Article 1

The Parties shall strengthen and develop interregional and cross-border cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit in accordance with national laws of the Parties' States and international treaties binding on the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation.

Article 2

For the purposes of this Agreement the terms used in it shall have the following meaning:

region – an administrative-territorial entity of the Republic of Estonia or a constituent entity of the Russian Federation;

border region – an administrative-territorial entity of the Republic of Estonia or a constituent entity of the Russian Federation territory of which is adjacent to the state border between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation;

competent authorities – the Republic of Estonia and executive authorities of the Russian Federation competent and commissioned to make decisions in connection with implementation of this Agreement,

economic entities - entities that are registered in the Republic of Estonia or the Russian Federation;

Intergovernmental commission - the Estonian - Russian Intergovernmental Commission for interregional and cross-border cooperation created by the Parties to coordinate the implementation of this Agreement;

Multiannual Framework – a long-term joint action plan of the Parties in the sphere of interregional and cross-border cooperation, which sets out the main orientations of cooperation and activities in the area of interregional and cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation

Article 3

The Parties as well as the competent authorities shall promote cooperation in the sphere of interregional and cross-border cooperation in the following principal directions:

elaboration and implementation of strategies of territorial development, including strategies for border regions, and methods of preparing special long-term programs;

formation and implementation of regional policy with special attention to strengthening border cooperation as well as to socio-economic development of border regions;

implementation of regional investment policy and increasing investment activity in regions, including border regions;

development of innovations as one of the priorities of regional development;

addressing common challenges of border regions development;

promotion of establishing and developing contacts between state and local authorities of regions, *i.a.* by facilitating conclusion of agreements;

promoting business contacts between regions of the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation;

exchange of information in connection with interregional and cross-border cooperation;

other areas as may be agreed by the Parties.

Article 4

In order to facilitate interregional and cross-border cooperation the Parties and the competent authorities may:

conclude agreements, including agreements on particular areas of interregional and cross-border cooperation, in accordance with the national laws of the Parties' States;

establish joint coordination bodies and respective working groups in order to elaborate, develop and improve interregional and cross-border cooperation instruments;

develop and implement plans, programs and projects related to interregional and cross-border cooperation.

Article 5

The Parties shall create favorable conditions for direct contacts between economic entities and people in regions in order to promote interregional and cross-border cooperation.

Article 6

Based on the principle of reciprocity the Parties shall facilitate establishing favorable conditions for passenger traffic and carriage of goods in border regions.

The Parties shall promote establishment and strengthening of cooperation between the competent authorities in the spheres of interaction on development of border crossing points' infrastructure across the border between the Republic of Estonia and the Russian Federation.

Article 7

The Parties shall promote cooperation between the competent authorities in the sphere of environmental and nature protection and sustainable use of natural resources, including joint use of natural resources on the territories of border regions following the principle of sustainable development and based on equality and mutual benefit.

In order to provide for swift reaction, cooperation and mutual assistance in case of forest fires and emergency situations of cross-border nature the Parties shall facilitate cooperation between their competent authorities in assuming joint measures aimed at prevention of natural and technological disasters as well as accident management on the territories of border regions of the States.

Article 8

The Parties shall facilitate the cooperation between the competent authorities in connection with labour market and protection from unemployment in order to exchange information and experience, including the questions of legal regulations, monitoring methods, organization of work, prevention of occupational accidents, etc.

Article 9

The Parties shall promote cooperation in the fields of trade and economy, science and technology, including the field of information technology, infrastructure development, tourism, culture, including ethno-cultural cooperation, strengthening inter-religious and intercultural dialogue, cultural exchange, education, science, youth policy, sports, social development, health protection, including emergency service, agriculture, forestry and fishery, housing and utilities, state and municipal governance, and other fields.

Article 10

Coordination of implementation of this Agreement shall be the task of the Intergovernmental Commission.

The Intergovernmental Commission shall consist of Estonian and Russian sections headed by co-chairs of each Party.

Rules of procedure for the Intergovernmental Commission shall be approved by its co-chairs.

The Intergovernmental Commission shall meet as necessary, but at least once a year.

Article 11

For the purpose of this Agreement the Parties establish , if necessary, the Multiannual Framework and promote its implementation. The Multiannual Framework shall be approved by the Intergovernmental Commission created in accordance with Article 10 of this Agreement.

Article 12

Any disputes and disagreements between the Parties on implementation and (or) interpretation of the provisions of this Agreement shall be settled by the Parties by negotiations and consultations.

Article 13

On mutual consent of the Parties, this Agreement may be changed or amended by separate protocols.

Article 14

This Agreement shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties and the competent authorities under other international agreements to which they are the Parties.

Article 15

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of receipt of the later of the notifications on completion of the internal procedures required for the entry into force.

This Agreement shall remain in force for an indefinite period of time. Each Party may terminate this Agreement by notifying the other Party in writing through diplomatic channels, and the Agreement shall be terminated six months after the date of receipt of such notification.

Termination of this Agreement shall not affect obligations of the Parties in connection with projects started while this Agreement remained in force and unfinished by the time of termination of this Agreement.

This Agreement is concluded in Pskov on 18 May 2017 in duplicate, in the Estonian, Russian and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In the case of divergence of interpretation the English text shall be used.

For the Government of
the Republic of Estonia

For the Government of
the Russian Federation