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Permanently Inhabited Small Islands Act

Passed 11.02.2003
RT I 2003, 23, 141
Entry into force 01.01.2004

Amended by the following acts

Passed	Published	Entry into force
22.02.2007	RT I 2007, 25, 133	01.01.2008
20.05.2010	RT I 2010, 29, 151	20.06.2010
19.06.2014	RT I, 29.06.2014, 109	01.07.2014, the titles of ministers replaced on the basis of subsection 107 ³ (4) of the Government of the Republic Act in the wording in force as of 1 July 2014.
11.06.2015	RT I, 30.06.2015, 4	01.09.2015, osaliselt 01.07.2015

Chapter 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1. Area of regulation of Act

This Act prescribes the specifications which arise from the special nature of the insular conditions of the permanently inhabited small island and which are not provided for in other Acts.

§ 2. Definitions used in Act

In this Act, the following definitions are used:

- 1) island rural municipality – rural municipality which administers a permanently inhabited small island or an archipelago as a whole;
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]
- 2) rural municipality which includes small islands – rural municipality which comprises permanently inhabited small islands, but is not constituting part of island rural municipalities;
- 3) permanently inhabited small islands (hereinafter *small islands*) – Abruca, Kihnu, Kessulaid, Kõinastu, Manija, Osmussaar, Piiressaar, Prangli, Ruhnu, Vilsandi and Vormsi;
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]
- 4) large islands – Saaremaa, Hiiumaa and Muhu.
- 5) permanent inhabitation – permanent and predominant residing on a small island;
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]
- 6) permanent inhabitant – a person who permanently and predominantly resides on a small island and data on whose residence are entered in the population register to the accuracy of a settlement unit located on a small island.
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

§ 3. Objectives of state and local governments

The objectives of the state and local governments in the administration of the permanently inhabited small islands include:

- 1) restoration, preservation and supporting the development potential of permanent inhabitation;
- 2) supporting the local government capacity and increasing the participatory democracy;
- 3) creation of workplaces and subsistence opportunities for permanent inhabitants and support of enterprise;

4) ensuring the availability of vital public services (police authorities and rescue service agencies, drinking water, postal services and electronic communications, electricity supply, transport connection, pre-school, basic and secondary education, and social assistance);

[RT I 2010, 29, 151 - entry into force 20.06.2010]

5) preservation of the specific features of the islands lifestyle and continuity of folk culture;

6) preservation and protection of the distinctive appearance of the landscape and natural environment of the small islands;

7) linking the permanent inhabitants' activities and interests with the state necessity of protection of the territorial sea and state border and the environmental conservation.

[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

§ 4. Small Islands Committee

(1) The Small Islands Committee (hereinafter *Committee*) shall be formed for discussion of the issues pertaining to the development of the small islands and counselling the Government of the Republic on the regional policy issues targeted at the small islands.

(2) The Committee is competent to:

1) present the opinion to the Government of the Republic regarding the programmes and development plans influencing the development of the small islands;

2) submit proposals to the Government of the Republic and ministries for the initiation and funding of the national programmes targeted at the small islands;

3) present the opinion to the Government of the Republic regarding the draft state budget based on its potential impact on the development of the small islands;

4) submit proposals to the Government of the Republic in connection with modifications to the list of the permanently inhabited small islands and restoration of the permanent inhabitation;

[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

5) submit proposals to the Government of the Republic for determining the connection for traffic to the small islands and the associated ports and port facilities;

6) coordinate the applications for the state investments on the small islands;

7) submit proposals for the creation of public sector workplaces on the small islands;

8) make recommendations for the resolution of problems arising on the small islands and intermediation in conflict situations;

9) perform other functions assigned to the Committee by its statutes.

(3) The Committee shall include with the right to vote the minister responsible for the area, two representatives of the Ministry of Finance, one representative of the Ministry of the Environment and one representative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, two representatives of the county governors, one representative of each island entered in the list of the small islands, one representative of the associations representing the islanders' interests and two members of the *Riigikogu* invited by the representatives of the small islands. The Government of the Republic shall approve the composition of the Committee.

[RT I, 30.06.2015, 4 - entry into force 01.09.2015]

(4) The Chairman of the Committee shall be the minister responsible for the regional policy. The Committee shall elect the Deputy Chairman from among its members who shall substitute for the Chairman in his or her absence. The Ministry of the Finance shall organise the clerical support to the Committee.

[RT I, 30.06.2015, 4 - entry into force 01.09.2015]

(5) The Committee has a quorum if at least one-half of the composition of the Committee is present. The Committee shall submit its proposals and positions to the Government of the Republic through the Chairman of the Committee.

(6) The Committee shall act based on the statutes approved by the Government of the Republic.

Chapter 2

SPECIFICATIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION

§ 5. General Assembly

(1) The General Assembly is competent to grant the approval for the small islands development plan, comprehensive plan, general principles of land use, development of transport connection with the continent or nearest major island, the regulations of the General Assembly and the procedure for election of an island governor, as well as other issues provided for in the statutes of a rural municipality of islands or a rural municipality which includes small islands.

(2) All permanent inhabitants of a small island who are at least 15 years of age shall be invited to the General Assembly and have the right to vote at the General Assembly.

(3) The first General Assembly shall be convened by the council.

(4) The General Assembly shall be held at least once a year.

(5) The General Assembly shall have a quorum if at least half of the permanent inhabitants of a small island who have the right to vote participate in the Assembly.

(6) The General Assembly of a small island which is not a rural municipality shall elect an island governor. The island governor shall participate in the council meetings with the right to speak.

(7) The regulations of the General Assembly and the procedure for election of an island governor shall be provided for in the statutes of the rural municipality.
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

§ 6. Formation of rural municipality district

(1) At least half of the permanent inhabitants of a small island who have the right to vote shall have the right to make a proposal for the formation of a rural municipality district.
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

(2) The application for the formation of a rural municipality district shall be submitted and decided pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Local Government Organisation Act. If necessary, the council shall organise the islanders' poll on this issue or convene the General Assembly.

§ 7. Development plans

The development plan of an island rural municipality and a rural municipality which includes small islands shall address the development of all the small islands included in the rural municipality and comply with the objectives listed in § 3 of this Act.

Chapter 3 SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

§ 8. Transport services

(1) The transport service for the purposes of this Act is the connection by different means of transport between a small island and the continent or a large island.

(2) At least one regular transport connection with the continent or nearest large island shall be ensured for the small islands. The ship, small craft and ferry line or air service necessary for the creation of the transport connection shall be supported from the state budget pursuant to the Public Transport Act.

(3) If waterway connection is lost due to the ice condition or other reason, an ice road shall be created or regular air connection shall be ensured pursuant to the procedure established by the Government of the Republic.

§ 9. Ports and waterways

(1) The connecting road for traffic on a small island through which regular traffic is ensured between the continent and the island shall be determined by the Government of the Republic.

(2) The maintenance expenses of a port or port facility constituting part of the connection road for traffic to a small island shall be covered from the funds prescribed for such purpose in the state budget pursuant to the procedure established by the Government of the Republic.

(3) The expenses necessary for the renovation of a port or port facility constituting part of the connecting road for traffic on a small island and increasing the depth of a waterway shall be envisaged in the state investments programme.

§ 10. Communications services and electricity supply

(1) The emergency communication shall be in the public use of the inhabitants on the small islands around the clock in order to transmit critical alerts in case of disruption of telephone connection.

(2) The state shall ensure the supply of electricity to a small island. The additional expenses arising from the special nature of settlement shall be compensated pursuant to the procedure established by the Government of the Republic.

§ 11. Coordination of activities of police authorities and rescue service agencies

In the preparation of the action plan of the police authorities and rescue service agencies of a small island, the opinion of the General Assembly of the small island shall be heard.
[RT I 2010, 29, 151 - entry into force 20.06.2010]

§ 11¹. Island warden

To ensure compliance on a small island with the Nature Conservation Act, Heritage Conservation Act, Waste Act and other Acts and local government legislation and notification of the violation of the requirements arising from the aforementioned legislation, an island warden may be appointed to office. The island warden shall be appointed to office by the county governor on the proposal of the local government which administers a small island or an archipelago.
[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

§ 12. Supplementary payments to rural municipalities of islands and rural municipalities which include small islands

Supplementary funds from the state budget shall be allocated to the budgets of the rural municipalities of islands and rural municipalities which include small islands pursuant to the procedure established by the Government of the Republic.

Chapter 4 ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND NATURE CONSERVATION

§ 13. Support of economic activities on islands

The regional development programmes of the state shall envisage funds for supporting economic activities on the small islands through state special-purpose investments, loans at preferential rates and loan guarantees.

§ 14. Nature conservation

(1) The state shall support the activities targeted at the restoration, preservation and improvement of the natural environment and appearance of the landscape of the small islands from the state budget through the programmes prescribed for such purpose.

(2) The Ministry of the Environment shall organise the preparation of the action plan, making amendments thereto, if necessary, and the implementation thereof for the performance of the duties specified in subsection (1) of this section.

§ 14¹. Right of pre-emption of immovable

(1) The local government of a rural municipality of islands or a rural municipality which includes small islands shall have the right of pre-emption of an immovable located on a small island.

(2) The local government do not have the right of pre-emption if the thing is transferred to a spouse, descendant or parent or to a brother or sister or their descendants.

(3) On the basis of a unilateral unattested written petition by the local government, a notation shall be entered in the land register that the immovable is encumbered with the right of pre-emption specified in subsection (2) of this section. The petition and the notation entry shall contain reference to this section.

(4) If it is evident on the basis of the entry in the land register that the immovable is encumbered with a right of pre-emption for the purposes of this section, a notary shall, at the expense of the parties and within five working days after attestation of the transfer deed, send a copy of the transfer contract to the local government of the location of the immovable to be transferred for the exercise of the right of pre-emption.

[RT I 2007, 25, 133 - entry into force 01.01.2008]

Chapter 5 FINAL PROVISIONS

§ 15. [Omitted from this text.]

§ 16. Entry into force of Act

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2004.