



## LATVIJAS REPUBLIKAS SAEIMA

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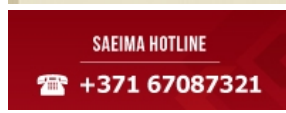
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## Structure of the Saeima

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UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

The Saeima has adopted and the President has proclaimed the following Law:

## RULES OF PROCEDURE

### OF THE SAEIMA

#### I. MEMBERS OF THE SAEIMA

1. The Saeima shall consist of 100 representatives of the people – Members of the Saeima, whose mandates have been approved by the Saeima.

2. The Saeima shall elect the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee, whose members shall verify election documents and investigate complaints about the elections if such complaints have been submitted to the Central Election Commission not later than four days after the official election results have been announced in accordance with the procedure prescribed by law.

*(As amended by the 2 March 2006 Law)*

3. (1) At a Saeima sitting, after the report by the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee, the Members, in alphabetical order, shall take a solemn oath:

"I, upon assuming the duties of a Member of the Saeima, before the people of Latvia, do swear (solemnly promise) to be loyal to Latvia, to strengthen its sovereignty and the Latvian language as the only official language, to defend Latvia as an independent and democratic state and to fulfil my duties honestly and conscientiously. I undertake to observe the Constitution and laws of Latvia."

(2) A Member shall take the oath in the Latvian language and shall confirm it with his/her signature.

(3) The Members shall take the solemn oath at the rostrum. If a Member is a person with a physical disability preventing him/her from reaching the rostrum, the Member may take the solemn oath while remaining in his/her seat in the Plenary Chamber.

(4) After taking the solemn oath, the Saeima shall rule on the mandates of the Members (Article 18 of the Constitution).

*(As amended by the 2 March 2006 Law)*

4. (1) A Member shall enjoy all the rights of a Saeima Member until the expiry of his/her mandate.

(2) The mandate of a Member shall expire as of the moment:

- 1) a newly elected Saeima has been convened;
- 2) the Member has given notice of his/her resignation, and the mandates of another Member has been approved to replace him/her (Articles 5 and 6);
- 3) the Member has been expelled from the Saeima (Article 18);
- 4) the Member has died.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

4<sup>1</sup>. (1) A Saeima Member has the right to maternity and childbirth leave, paternity leave, child adoption leave and childcare leave. Articles 154, 155 and 156 of the Labour Law apply to these types of leave unless stated otherwise in the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima.

(2) During maternity and childbirth leave, paternity leave, child adoption leave, as well as childcare leave, a Member keeps his/her employee status in the relevant Saeima convocation.

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Otrdien, 1.decembrī

**09:00** Saeimas 2020. gada 23. novembra attālinātās ārkārtas sēdes turpinājums

**10:30** Budžeta un finanšu (nodokļu) komisijas sēde

**12:30** Sociālo un darba lietu komisijas sēde

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*(As supplemented by the 15 June 2006 Law)*

5. (1) A Member shall have the right to give up his/her mandate during his/her term of office as Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister or during maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave, as well as childcare leave. Upon receiving notice about the giving up of a mandate, the Presidium of the Saeima (hereinafter – the Presidium) shall invite the next candidate to become a Member and shall notify the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee thereof. The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall verify the election documents and shall notify the Saeima of the results of this verification, and the Saeima, by its decision, shall approve the mandate of the said candidate.

(2) Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister or Minister who, in accordance with the provisions of this Article, has given up his/her mandate of a Member may renew this mandate if he/she resigns from the office of Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister or Minister or if the Government resigns. The Prime Minister's, Deputy Prime Minister's, Minister's application for the renewal of the mandate of a Member may be submitted to the Presidium within one week from the date when he/she has resigned from the office of Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister or Minister.

(2<sup>1</sup>) A Saeima Member who, in accordance with the procedure set forth in this Article, has given up his/her mandate during maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave, as well as childcare leave, may renew his/her mandate if he/she has decided to terminate maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave. To renew a mandate, the Saeima Member must submit a petition to the Presidium not more than seven days before he/she intends to terminate maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave.

(3) The Presidium shall submit the application mentioned in paragraph 2 and paragraph 2<sup>1</sup> of this Article to the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee, which shall inform the Members thereof at the next Saeima sitting. As of the moment of this announcement, the mandate of the Member invited under paragraph 1 of this Article shall end, and the mandate of the Member who had given it up for the term of office as Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister or during maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave shall be renewed.

(4) If a candidate has already been included in the Saeima as its Member under paragraph 1 of this Article, he/she shall not be invited to become a Member to replace another Member who gives up the Saeima mandate for the term of his/her office as Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister or during maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave.

(5) If two or more Members elected from the same list and in the same constituency have given up their mandates under paragraph 1 of this Article and if the mandate of one of such Members is renewed, the mandate of the Member who was the last to become a Saeima Member from the respective list and constituency under paragraph 1 of this Article shall end.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law, the 2 March 2006 Law, the 15 June 2006 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

6. (1) If a Member has died, has submitted notice of his/her resignation from the Saeima, has been expelled from the Saeima, or if his/her mandate has not been approved, as well as in the case referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, the Presidium, in accordance with the Saeima Election Law, shall invite the next candidate from the list to become a Saeima Member and shall notify the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee thereof. The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall verify the election documents and shall notify the Saeima of the results of this verification. After the said candidate has taken the solemn oath in accordance with the procedure set in Article 3, the Saeima shall rule on approving his/her mandate as a Member.

(2) If a candidate has refused to become a Saeima Member in the case provided for in paragraph 1 of Article 5, this shall not prevent the Presidium from inviting him/her to become a Saeima member in the cases provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article.

(3) If a candidate has taken the place of a Member who has given up his/her mandate for the term of office as Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister or during maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave (Article 5), this shall not prevent the Presidium from inviting this candidate to become a Member in the cases provided for in paragraph 1 of this Article. In this case, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 5, another candidate from the respective list shall be invited to become a Member to replace the Member who has given up his/her mandate for the term of office as Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister or during maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave. If there are no more candidates on the respective candidate list or if none of the candidates from the list agrees to become a Member, the mandate shall be renewed to the relevant Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister or a Member on maternity and childbirth leave, child adoption leave or childcare leave.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 24 October 2002 Law, the 2 March 2006 Law, the 15 June 2006 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

7. Every Member is obliged to participate in the work of the Saeima.

(1) A Member shall be permitted to be absent from the work of the Saeima for not longer than one week, provided that he/she has informed the Presidium and has requested leave in advance. This right shall not be used more than once during each session. This leave shall be unpaid and granted for a specific period of time.

(2) The Presidium shall submit the Member's request for leave together with its opinion to the Saeima in order that a decision be made (Article 54). In cases of urgency, the Presidium itself shall make a decision about the leave of a Member and shall inform the Saeima thereof at its next regular sitting.

(3) Requests for extending leaves shall be considered in accordance with the same procedure (Article 54).

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

9. Each Member shall inform the Saeima Administration of his/her address, telephone number and any other information necessary to ensure the fulfilment of their duties and shall receive a Member's identity card issued by the Presidium. The Member shall inform the Saeima Administration of his/her new address or telephone number if these have been changed and of his/her address during the recess of the Saeima.

*(As amended by the 15 October 2015 Law)*

10. Restrictions and obligations of Saeima Members concerning their business activities, income and performance of work outside the Saeima shall be prescribed by the Law on "Prevention of Conflict of Interests in Activities of Public Officials".

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 2 March 2006 Law)*

11. If a person holding a position incompatible with the position of a Member is elected to the Saeima, he/she shall either leave this position or give up his/her mandate as a Saeima Member within one month from the date his/her mandate has been approved.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

12. (1) While in office, in accordance with the procedure and schedule set by the Presidium, a Member shall receive a monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities. The monthly salary shall be paid from the Saeima budget.

(2) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

(3) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

(4) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

(5) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

*(As amended by the 16 May 2002 Law, the 24 October 2002 Law, the 13 December 2007 Law and the 23 December 2010 Law)*

13. (1) A Member shall be entitled to receive a monthly salary beginning with the first Saeima sitting convened after the elections or as of the date when he/she has become a Saeima Member (Articles 5 and 6).

(2) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

(3) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

(4) *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 24 October 2002 Law, the 15 June 2006 Law, the 15 May 2008 Law, the 28 October 2010 Law and the 23 December 2010 Law)*

14. (1) If a Member has incurred expenses while fulfilling his/her duties, the Member, in accordance with the procedure and schedule set by the Presidium, shall receive from the Saeima budget reimbursement set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities in the following amount:

1) If a Member lives in Riga or within 19 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure but not exceeding the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.15 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

2) If a Member lives within 20 to 39 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure but not exceeding the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.26 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

3) If a Member lives within 40 to 69 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.72 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

4) If a Member lives within 70 to 99 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.76 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of

Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

5) If a Member lives within 100 to 129 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.79 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

6) If a Member lives within 130 to 159 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.83 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

7) If a Member lives within 160 to 189 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.86 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

8) If a Member lives within 190 to 219 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.9 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

9) If a Member lives within 220 to 249 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.94 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

10) If a Member lives within 250 to 279 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 0.97 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

11) If a Member lives more than 280 km from Riga, he/she shall be entitled to receive reimbursement of transport expenses according to the actual expenditure and reimbursement of accommodation expenses according to the actual expenditure, but the total amount of the reimbursement shall not exceed the amount obtained by applying a coefficient of 1 to the average monthly salary set by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph 1 of this Article, actual expenditures shall be those incurred for the use of intra-city and inter-city public transport, as well as for the use of the vehicle owned or possessed by a Member.

(3) Members shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for business trip expenses (travel, accommodation, representation and transport expenses, per diem, premiums and other expenses set by regulatory documents), and these expenses shall be reimbursed according to actual expenditures.

(4) The procedure and amounts of reimbursement mentioned in paragraph 3 of this Article shall also apply to employees of the Saeima who have been on a business trip approved by the Presidium.

(5) Amounts of reimbursement mentioned in this Article are tax exempt.

(6) Transport expenses shall not be reimbursed to Members who, as officials of the Saeima, have been assigned a car for needs related to fulfilling their duties.

*(As amended by the 16 May 2002 Law, the 24 October 2002 Law, the 16 June 2005 Law and the 23 December 2010 Law)*

15. (1) Members who are excluded from the Saeima sittings, who miss the Saeima sittings without a valid excuse or who violate the provisions of Article 8 shall pay a fine equivalent to 20% of their monthly salary for each missed sitting. The fine shall be deducted from their monthly salary. After the total amount of the fine has been deducted in one calendar month, the remainder of Member's monthly salary shall not be less than the minimum monthly salary guaranteed by the state.

(2) In order to establish the presence of Members, the Presidium shall conduct registration. A Member shall be deemed present if he/she has registered himself/herself. The presence of a Member at a sitting which has not been held (Article 46) shall be established according to the last registration for the quorum.

(3) If a sitting has been closed because there was no quorum (Article 48), another registration shall be called after the last voting in order to establish the presence of Members.

(4) After the registration of Members, any Member may request the person chairing the

Saeima sitting to immediately verify, with the help of tellers (Article 24), whether a particular Member is actually present at the sitting.

(5) The Presidium shall verify the reasons for which a Member has been absent from the Saeima sitting and shall impose a penalty if the Member has no valid excuse for his/her absence.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law, the 28 October 2004 Law, the 23 December 2010 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

16. The leaves of Members, as well as missed sittings and imposed penalties, shall be recorded in a special register.

17. (1) Upon the request of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee, the Saeima shall rule whether it approves of initiating criminal prosecution of a Saeima Member, his/her arrest, search of his/her place of residence or any other restriction on the personal freedom of a Saeima Member.

(2) If the Saeima agrees that criminal prosecution of a Saeima Member be initiated, the respective Saeima Member shall lose the right to participate in the sittings of the Saeima, meetings of its committees and other institutions to which this Member has been elected or appointed by the Saeima until the charges are dismissed or until the court sentence enters into force. During this time the Prosecutor's Office and the court have the right to apply any of the coercive measures applicable under the criminal procedure laws.

(3) If a Member has been arrested, such a Member shall lose the right to participate in the sittings of the Saeima, meetings of its committees or other institutions to which this Member has been elected or appointed by the Saeima.

(4) Upon the request of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee, the Saeima shall rule whether it agrees that a Member be forcefully brought to the court, or his/her property be searched, or that documents possessed by this Member be seized.

*(As amended by the 14 June 2016 Law)*

(5) A draft resolution submitted under paragraph 1 or 4 of this Article shall not be regarded as an independent motion.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law and the 2 March 2006 Law)*

18. (1) A Member who has been convicted of a criminal offence shall be deemed expelled from the Saeima as of the date when the sentence comes into force.

(2) A Member may be expelled from the Saeima by a decision of the Saeima if, upon approval of his/her mandate, it is established that he/she:

- 1) as been elected in violation of the provisions of the Saeima Election Law;
- 2) lacks command of the official language at the level necessary for the performance of his/her professional duties;
- 3) holds a position which is incompatible with the mandate of a Saeima Member;
- 4) during the period of a current session has been absent from more than half of all the Saeima sittings without a valid excuse;
- 5) has committed a crime in a state of diminished responsibility or, after committing the crime, has become mentally ill, which made him/her incapable of taking a conscious action or controlling it;

6) *(Deleted by the 16 October 2014 Law).*

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

19. If a Member has been suspended from participating in the work of the Saeima on the basis of Article 17 of this Law, he/she shall lose entitlement to the reimbursement prescribed in Article 14, and his/her monthly salary shall be reduced by 50 %. If arrest as a security measure has been applied to a Member, the payment of his/her monthly salary shall be suspended for the period of arrest as well. If the case in a criminal matter has been dismissed and if the Member has been found not guilty or has been acquitted, he/she shall receive the full amount of monthly salary and relevant reimbursement not paid to him/her during the time of his/her suspension from office.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law, the 13 December 2007 Law, the 15 May 2008 Law and the 23 December 2010 Law)*

19<sup>1</sup>. Former Members of the Saeima, as well as those Members of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia who voted for the 4 May 1990 Declaration "On the Renewal of the Independence of the Republic of Latvia", are granted admission to the Saeima buildings. Members who have been expelled from the Saeima shall not enjoy this right (Article 18).

*(As supplemented by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

## II. SAEIMA OFFICIALS

20. The Saeima Presidium shall include the Speaker of the Saeima, two Deputy Speakers, the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary.

21. (1) The Speaker shall represent the Saeima and shall chair and maintain order during the Saeima sittings. During the Speaker's absence and upon mutual consent, his/her duties shall be fulfilled by one of the Deputy Speakers. The Speaker and the Deputy Speakers shall divide the current responsibilities among themselves, including the duty of chairing the Saeima sittings.

(2) The Speaker shall promulgate in the official publication *Latvijas Vēstnesis* decisions of general significance adopted by the Saeima. This provision shall also apply to the cases referred to in Articles 30 and 30<sup>1</sup>.

(3) ~~The Speaker shall appoint the head of the Speaker's Office. (Deleted by the 15 October 2015 Law)~~

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 15 May 2008 Law, the 11 December 2008 Law, the 16 October 2014 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

22. The Secretary and the Deputy Secretary shall ensure that minutes be taken during the Saeima sittings and, if necessary, they shall read out documents during the Saeima sittings, check the transcripts and supervise the work of the Saeima Administration, mutually agreeing upon how to divide these responsibilities among themselves.

*(As amended by the 15 October 2015 Law)*

23. (1) The Presidium shall:

1) determine the procedure regarding visiting the Saeima building and conduct therein, as well as the internal rules and work procedures of the Saeima Administration and other organisational units of the Saeima;

2) establish and terminate employment relations with the Secretary General of the Saeima Administration, the heads of the Saeima organisational units, with the exception of the heads of the Presidium members' offices, and upon the recommendation of the Secretary General of the Saeima Administration shall establish and terminate employment relations with the heads of organisational units of the Saeima Administration;

3) give opinions on the documents submitted and forward these documents as prescribed by the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima;

4) in coordination with the Council of Parliamentary Groups (Article 190), resolve issues which cannot be settled through the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima and the decisions of the Saeima;

5) decide on business trips and the payment of expenses for these trips;

6) prepare the agenda of the Saeima sittings.

7) decide upon the list of employment positions (staff list) of the Saeima and the remuneration of the Saeima employees;

8) set the procedure for granting health and accident insurance to Members of the Saeima and the Saeima employees, ~~as a system of benefits and system for granting remunerations for the Saeima staff by taking into account the system of benefits and remunerations for civil servants;~~

9) appoint a Saeima representative at the Constitutional court if the Saeima has not ruled otherwise;

10) determine the procedure for the protection (security) of the property of the Saeima.

(2) The proceedings of the Presidium meetings shall be audio-recorded and, if necessary, a transcript of a particular part of the meeting shall be made. The opinions given and decisions taken shall be entered into the minutes of the Presidium meeting. Documents submitted to the Presidium shall be attached to the minutes. The minutes of the Presidium meeting shall be signed by the person chairing the meeting – the Speaker or a Deputy Speaker – and the Saeima Secretary or the Deputy Secretary.

(3) The Secretary General of the Saeima Administration shall establish and terminate employment relations with the heads of the Presidium members' offices, assistants and advisors to the Presidium members based upon the recommendation of the relevant Presidium member and in accordance with the Labour Law. Employment contracts with the heads of the Presidium members' offices, assistants and advisors to the Presidium members are concluded for the term of office of the relevant Presidium member. The limitation of the term of employment contract specified in paragraph 1 of Article 45 of the Labour Law shall not apply to the above employees.

(4) The Secretary General is appointed by the Presidium of the Saeima for the duration of its mandate, plus a twelve-month extension. Prior to the expiration of the existing contract, the newly-elected Presidium of the Saeima may extend the employment contract with the incumbent Secretary General for another term, which is again equal to the duration of the mandate of the Saeima plus 12 months. The limitation of the term of employment contract specified in paragraph 1 of Article 45 of the Labour Law shall not apply to this position.

*(As amended by the 16 December 1999 Law, the 18 January 2001 Law, the 16 May 2002 Law, the 24 October 2002 Law, the 11 December 2008 Law, the 10 December 2009 Law, the 9 June 2011 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

23<sup>1</sup>. Disputes regarding administrative documents and actual activity of the Saeima Administration and other organisational units of the Saeima can be brought before the Saeima Presidium. The decision of the Saeima Presidium can be appealed according to the procedure set by the Administrative Procedure Law.

*(As amended by the 13 December 2007 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

23<sup>2</sup>. An individual who wishes to visit the Saeima building must obtain a pass and observe the rules for visiting the Saeima building, regulations pertaining to security and public order, as well as rules of ethics and generally accepted norms of conduct; visitors must not endanger the democratic state system, infringe on the rights of other persons or disturb the work of the Saeima, the Saeima Administration or other organisational units of the Saeima. Persons who have the legal right to do so shall take the necessary measures to ensure that these requirements are observed.

*(As amended by the 10 December 2009 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

24. In cases of a secret ballot when the voting at a Saeima sitting takes place by using ballot papers and in other necessary cases, the votes are tallied by tellers elected from among the Members.

### **III. ELECTION, APPROVAL, APPOINTMENT, RESIGNATION OR DISMISSAL OF OFFICIALS, A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE OR NO CONFIDENCE**

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

25. Saeima Members shall submit in writing nominations for the positions of the members of the Saeima Presidium, the President and the Auditor General to the Presidium. The signature of the person submitting the nomination shall indicate that the nominee has given his/her consent to the nomination.

26. (1) Voting on the nominees for each position referred to in Article 25 shall be held simultaneously by using ballot papers.

(2) The nominee who has received the greatest number of votes shall be deemed elected; however, the number of votes should not be less than the absolute majority of votes of the Members present.

(3) The President shall be deemed elected with a majority of at least fifty-one votes (Article 36 of the Constitution).

(4) If during the first round of elections no one has received the necessary number of votes to be elected, then runoff elections take place in accordance with the procedure set forth in paragraph 1 of this Article. If during the runoff elections no one has been elected, runoff elections are repeated, excluding in each subsequent election the nominee who has received the least number of votes in the previous round. Runoff elections shall be repeated until one of the nominees receives the necessary number of votes to be elected.

(5) If during the last round of runoff elections no one receives the necessary number of votes to be elected, then a new election shall be held in accordance with the provisions of Article 25 and paragraphs 1–4 of this Article. Nominees not elected during the previous elections may be nominated for each new election.

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

27. (1) When the Cabinet of Ministers has been formed, the candidate to the office of Prime Minister invited by the President shall notify the Speaker thereof and shall submit a statement about the planned work of the Cabinet and the draft resolution to be adopted by the Saeima.

(2) Copies of the above documents shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(3) If no proposal has been made to call an extraordinary session or an extraordinary sitting of the Saeima, the Presidium shall put the said notification and the draft resolution as the first item on the agenda of the next regular sitting of the Saeima.

28. The draft resolution of the Saeima on a vote of confidence in a Deputy Prime Minister or a Minister invited or appointed by the Prime Minister later shall be submitted to the Speaker by the Prime Minister.

*(As amended by the 16 October 2014 Law)*

29. (1) The draft resolution of the Saeima on a vote of confidence in the Cabinet, the Prime Minister, a Deputy Prime Minister or a Minister may be submitted in accordance with the provisions of Article 130 or may be submitted as a separate draft resolution of the Saeima.

(2) The above draft resolution of the Saeima may be submitted by a Saeima committee or by at least 10 Members, and it shall not be regarded as an independent motion. Copies of the draft resolution shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(3) The above draft resolution of the Saeima shall be put on the agenda of a Saeima sitting not earlier than five days and not later than 10 days after its distribution to Members, but if such a draft resolution was submitted during the recess of the Saeima, it shall be put on the agenda not later than 10 days after the beginning of the regular session and shall be considered in one reading.

(4) The report on the above draft resolution shall be made by:

1) a rapporteur elected by the relevant Saeima committee if the draft resolution has been submitted by a Saeima committee;

2) the Member who has been the first to sign the draft resolution if the draft resolution has been submitted by 10 or more Members unless the submitters have agreed otherwise.

*(As amended by the 16 October 2014 Law)*

30. If the annual draft budget submitted by the Cabinet is rejected by the Saeima at the first or second reading, it shall be regarded as a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet.

*(As amended by the 17 October 1996 Law)*

30<sup>1</sup>. (1) The Prime Minister may submit to the Speaker a draft resolution of the Saeima on a repeated vote of confidence in the Cabinet or in the Prime Minister. Copies of the draft resolution shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(2) Unless a proposal or request to convene an extraordinary Saeima session or sitting has been submitted, the draft resolution of the Saeima on a repeated vote of confidence in the Cabinet or in the Prime Minister shall be put on the agenda of the Saeima sitting as prescribed by the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima.

(3) If the Prime Minister wishes to combine the vote of confidence in the Cabinet or in the Prime Minister with a vote on another matter considered at the Saeima sitting, he/she shall submit a relevant request to the Presidium in writing. The request must be submitted before the relevant vote and must indicate which voting result the Prime Minister shall regard as a vote of no confidence. Before voting, the person chairing the sitting shall read out the request submitted by the Prime Minister. If voting on the relevant matter results in a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet or in the Prime Minister, the person chairing the sitting shall announce it after the results of the relevant vote are read out.

*(As supplemented by the 15 May 2008 Law)*

31. (1) Election, approval, appointment, resignation or dismissal of judges, the Prosecutor General, the Director of the Constitution Protection Bureau and other officials not mentioned in Articles 25 and 32 shall be initiated in accordance with the procedure set by law. Upon receipt of such a proposal, the Presidium shall, without delay, refer it to the relevant committee of the Saeima, which shall consider this proposal within 15 days and shall prepare a draft resolution to be adopted by the Saeima.

(2) The draft resolution of the Saeima mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be regarded as an independent motion under the provisions of Articles 117 and 118. If the draft resolution to be adopted by the Saeima and prepared by a committee has been made available to Members at least five days before the relevant sitting, the Presidium shall put it on the agenda of the Saeima sitting. Upon the proposal of the relevant Saeima committee (Article 54), the Saeima may put on the agenda a draft resolution which has not been made available to Members in the specified period of time.

(3) A rapporteur elected by the relevant committee shall speak about the above draft resolution at a Saeima sitting.

(4) The officials mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be elected, approved or appointed to office by voting for each person separately. The same procedure shall apply to their resignation or dismissal from office.

(5) *(Deleted by the 19 January 2012 Law).*

(6) If the law provides that an official not mentioned in Articles 25 and 32 shall be elected or approved by the Saeima without stating who is entitled to nominate the candidates, the nomination shall be made by at least 10 Members who sign the nomination list. The election, approval or appointment shall take place in accordance with the procedure set by this Article.

(7) If the law provides that an official not mentioned in Articles 25 and 32 shall be elected, appointed or approved by the Saeima without prescribing the procedure for his/her resignation or dismissal, the Saeima, in compliance with the provisions of this Article, shall rule on the resignation or dismissal of the said official upon receiving his/her written request or upon a proposal made by at least 10 Members.

(8) If the number of nominees for certain posts exceeds the number of officials to be elected, the voting shall take place in accordance with the provisions of Article 26 of this Law.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 19 January 2012 Law)*

32. Nominees for Saeima committee members, tellers and the Central Election Commission members shall be submitted to the Presidium in accordance with the provisions of Article 25. The procedure by which these officials are to be elected shall be determined by the Saeima.

33. (1) A member of the Presidium or a vote counter may be recalled by a decision of the Saeima upon:

- 1) a written request from the said member of the Presidium or the said vote counter;
- 2) a proposal made by at least 10 Members.

(2) A member of a Saeima committee may be recalled by a decision of the Saeima upon:

- 1) a written request from a member of the said committee;
- 2) a proposal made by at least 10 Members;
- 3) a proposal made under Article 165 by the relevant committee.

(3) The Central Election Commission members elected by the Saeima shall be recalled in accordance with the procedure set by the Law on the Central Election Commission.



(4) *(Deleted by the 19 January 2012 Law).*

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

34. For the decisions mentioned in Articles 31, 32 and 33 to be made, it is necessary to have the absolute majority of votes of the Members present.

35. (1) The nomination of Saeima representatives to interparliamentary organisations shall be effected in accordance with the procedure set in Articles 117 and 118.

(2) *(Deleted by the 19 January 2012 Law).*

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

#### **IV. SAEIMA SESSIONS AND SITTINGS**

36. (1) The Saeima shall hold regular and extraordinary sessions. In the course of one year, three regular sessions – autumn, winter and spring sessions – shall be held.

(2) An extraordinary session may be convened at any time during the recess between regular sessions.

37. Regular sessions of the Saeima shall be convened by the Presidium. The Saeima shall decide on the opening and closing of regular sessions.

38. (1) An extraordinary session or sitting shall be convened by the Presidium at its own discretion, as well as upon the request of the President, the Prime Minister or at least one third of Saeima Members (Articles 19 and 20 of the Constitution). The proposed agenda must be indicated in the request.

(2) Upon the receipt of such a request, the Presidium shall convene an extraordinary session or an extraordinary sitting on the day mentioned in the request, but if the day has not been indicated in the request, the extraordinary session shall be convened within 48 hours, but the extraordinary sitting within 24 hours after the receipt of the request.

(3) The convening of an extraordinary session or an extraordinary sitting shall be announced on the radio and television, and, if possible, each Member shall be notified individually.

(4) The agenda of an extraordinary session or sitting shall include only the items indicated in the proposal or a request on the convening of an extraordinary session or sitting, and after these items have been considered, the session or sitting shall be closed.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

39. (1) Draft laws and independent motions which have not been considered during the current session of the Saeima shall be considered during the next regular session of the Saeima.

(2) If consideration of a draft law has not been completed during the term of office of one Saeima, though it has been considered in one or two readings, the next Saeima, upon the recommendation of the President, the Cabinet of Ministers, a Saeima committee or at least five Members, shall decide during its first session whether to continue consideration of the said draft law. If the Saeima decides to continue consideration of the draft law, it shall appoint a responsible committee and set a deadline for submitting proposals. A draft law thus assigned to the responsible committee shall be regarded as passed at its first reading.

(3) Only the current Saeima may decide on continuing the consideration of a draft law submitted to the previous Saeima.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

40. The Presidium shall set the date and time of a sitting, except in cases when the Saeima itself has ruled (Article 54) otherwise or when the date of the sitting has been mentioned in the request on convening an extraordinary sitting.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

41. The sitting shall be opened and closed by the person chairing it. If possible, at the end of each sitting the person chairing the sitting shall announce the date and time of the next sitting. Upon the motion of the person chairing the sitting or of at least five Members, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) to prolong the sitting.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

42. (1) The agenda of a regular sitting shall be announced at least 48 hours before the opening of the sitting. A written announcement to this effect shall be placed in the Saeima building, and, if possible, it shall be disseminated by the media. The agenda of an extraordinary sitting may be announced by the Presidium upon opening the sitting.

(2) The Presidium shall determine the order in which the items are to be put on the agenda except in the case mentioned in paragraph 3 of Article 27.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

43. The Ministers in whose purview the agenda items fall shall also be notified about the sittings.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

44. Sittings shall be held if at least half of the Members are present.

45. Five minutes before the opening of a sitting, Members shall be summoned to the Plenary Chamber with the sounding of a bell.

46. If the required number of Members have not arrived half an hour after the time the sitting was due to be opened, the person chairing the sitting shall declare the sitting as not held.

47. During the sitting, the person chairing it may, at his/her own discretion or upon the proposal of five Members present, announce the registration of Members to verify the quorum.

48. (1) If it is established that there is no quorum, the person chairing the sitting may close or suspend the sitting at his/her own discretion. If there is still no quorum after the break, the sitting shall be closed.

(2) If during a vote it is established that there is no quorum, the vote shall be repeated. If there is still no quorum during the repeated vote, the procedure set forth in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be applied.

49. Except in the cases set in the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima (Articles 41, 48 and 76), a sitting may be suspended and closed only upon a decision made by the Saeima (Article 54). The suspending or closing of a sitting may be suggested by the person chairing the sitting or by at least five Members.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

## **V. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS**

### **1. General Provisions**

50. (1) Consideration of matters at the sittings of the Saeima and at its committee meetings shall be held in the official language.

(2) Draft laws, independent motions and other draft resolutions, inquiries, questions and proposals, as well as the documents attached to them, shall be submitted in the official language.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

51. (1) After a sitting has been declared open, the person chairing it shall read out the announced agenda, and changes may be made in it by the Saeima upon the proposal of the President, the Prime Minister, a Saeima committee, a parliamentary group or at least five Members. The matters shall be considered in the order they appear on the agenda; however, upon the request of the President, the Prime Minister, a Saeima committee, a parliamentary group or at least five Members the Saeima may rule (Article 54) in the course of the sitting to alter the approved order.

(2) If at the previous sitting consideration of a matter has been started but has not been completed, the agenda of the current sitting shall be announced after the matter has been considered.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 7 October 1998 Law)*

52. Before consideration of one matter is completed, consideration of another matter must not be started unless a Saeima committee or at least 20 Members request that the debate on the matter in question be suspended and the debate on another matter be started, and the Saeima agrees to this (Article 54).

53. In order to comment (speak) on the items of the agenda, the consent of the Saeima is required except for the cases referred to in the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima (Articles 49, 51, 52, 66 and 67).

54. (1) In the cases prescribed in Article 8 and paragraph 2 of Article 31; Articles 40, 41, 49, 51, 52, 65, 77, 82, 84, 90, 92, 93, 98, 104, 117, 127, 133, 135, 136, 140 and 142, only two Members shall be given the floor before a vote – one Member in support of the proposal and the other against it – for not longer than five minutes for each speaker.

(2) If the submitter of the proposal defends his/her proposal, he/she shall be deemed as the speaker in support of the proposal.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law and the 15 May 2008 Law)*

55. The person chairing the sitting shall not participate in a debate. If he/she wishes to participate in the debate, he/she shall pass the chairing to his/her Deputy.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

56. (1) Permission to speak from the rostrum at a Saeima sitting shall be given by the person chairing the sitting upon receipt of a request to do so. Requests to speak may be

made in writing or by using the electronic voting system.

(2) Any written requests submitted before the consideration of the relevant matter shall be prioritized except the cases mentioned in Article 58.

(3) The following persons shall be allowed to speak without a written request:

- 1) the rapporteur;
- 2) speakers taking the floor under the provisions of Article 54;
- 3) speakers participating in a debate on a draft law or a draft resolution;
- 4) those who provide an answer to an inquiry.

(4) A Member who is Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister or Minister shall indicate in his/her request to speak whether he/she will speak in the capacity of a Member or Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister or Minister. Otherwise, he/she shall be given the floor as a Member.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

57. (1) The President, Members, the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries of Ministries shall have the right to take the floor at Saeima sittings.

(2) The Presidium may also give the floor at a Saeima sitting to officials of foreign or international organisations.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

58. (1) During a debate, the rapporteur, the Prime Minister or a Cabinet representative for the matter under discussion shall be given the floor out of turn.

(2) The Cabinet may authorise a Deputy Prime Minister, a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary of a Ministry to represent the Cabinet regarding the matter under discussion. The Presidium shall be notified thereof in writing. The Cabinet may appoint one representative for each matter under discussion.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

59. (1) In cases when several speakers have signed up for a debate, the floor shall be given in the order in which they have signed up. If the order of signing up for a debate cannot be established, the person chairing the sitting shall determine the order of speakers.

(2) If, before opening a debate, parliamentary groups have appointed speakers to express the view of the respective parliamentary group, the floor shall be given first to the appointed speakers (one speaker from each parliamentary group) in the order they have signed up.

(3) During the second or the third reading of a draft law, the floor shall be given first to the speakers who have submitted written requests to this effect.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

60. Speakers who have signed up for a debate, may, upon mutual consent, change the order in which they will speak. The person chairing the sitting must be informed about this in advance.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

61. If a speaker who has signed up for a debate is not in the Plenary Chamber when his/her turn to speak has come, he/she shall be given the floor only after all those who have signed up for the debate have had the floor.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

62. (1) No speaker except the rapporteur, the Prime Minister or a Cabinet representative for the matter under discussion shall be given the floor more than twice to speak on the same matter.

(2) This provision does not apply to the consideration of a draft law in its second or third reading when each Member shall be entitled to speak not more than twice about each item put to a vote: a paragraph or a subparagraph of an article, an article as a whole, or a group of articles.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

63. When all the Members who have signed up for a debate have taken the floor, the person chairing the sitting shall declare the debate closed by rapping the gavel. After this has been done, only the rapporteur shall be entitled to speak if he/she chooses to do so.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

64. (1) The speaking time for the rapporteur, the Prime Minister or a Cabinet representative for the matter under discussion shall be limited to one hour for his/her first presentation, fifteen minutes for the second presentation and five minutes for each

subsequent presentation.

(2) The speaking time for all other speakers on amendments to the Constitution (Satversme), draft resolutions on a vote of confidence or no confidence, draft laws and independent motions considered in the first reading or inquiries, shall not exceed fifteen minutes for the first presentation and five minutes for the second presentation; during the debate on the annual report on the performance and planned future activities in foreign policy submitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the speaking time shall not exceed ten minutes for the first presentation and five minutes for the second presentation; in all other cases speakers shall have five minutes for the first presentation and two minutes for the second presentation.

(3) The Saeima, without any debate, may rule on extending the speaking time if the speaker so requests.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law and the 19 January 2012 Law)*

65. (1) Upon the proposal of at least 10 Members, the Saeima may rule (Article 54):

- 1) to reduce the speaking time;
- 2) to close the list of speakers.

(2) The speaking time must not be reduced for the rapporteur, the Prime Minister or a Cabinet representative for the matter under discussion.

(3) If the Saeima has reduced speaking time to less than five minutes, the second presentation by the same speaker may not exceed one minute unless the Saeima has decided otherwise.

(4) When the list of speakers has been closed, every speaker on the list may make only one presentation unless the speaker has already signed up for a second presentation before the list was closed. Only the rapporteur, the Prime Minister or a Cabinet representative for the matter under discussion may be given the floor to speak in addition to those who have already been entered on the list of speakers.

(5) Upon the proposal of at least 20 Members, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) to close a debate. After that the floor may be given only to:

- 1) the speakers who have signed up under paragraph 2 of Article 59;
- 2) the rapporteur, the Prime Minister or a Cabinet representative for the matter under discussion.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 7 October 1998 Law)*

66. The floor may be given out of turn to those who comment on:

- 1) non-compliance with or breach of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima;
- 2) the procedure by which the matter under discussion shall be processed further.

67. (1) A speaker wishing to make an urgent announcement not on the agenda shall indicate the subject of the announcement in his/her written request. The person chairing the sitting shall decide whether to give the floor for an urgent announcement.

(2) If two or more speakers have applied to make urgent announcements, the person chairing the sitting shall decide the order in which these speakers shall be given the floor.

(3) The speaking time for an urgent announcement shall not exceed three minutes.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

68. An exchange of opinions on urgent announcements (Article 67) shall not be permitted.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

69. (1) The speakers shall speak from the rostrum unless a physical disability prevents a person from reaching the rostrum.

(2) Upon a written request or by raising his/her hand, a Member has the right to speak from his/her seat in the Plenary Chamber on the following issues:

- 1) non-compliance with or breach of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima;
- 2) the procedure for subsequent processing of the matter;
- 3) deadlines for submitting proposals;
- 4) the date for the second reading of an urgent draft law;
- 5) when requesting a vote on a proposal being discussed at a Saeima sitting.

(3) In case of disagreement, the sequence of speakers shall be determined by the person chairing the sitting.

(4) The speaking time from a Member's seat in the Plenary Chamber must not exceed one minute.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 5 April 2001 Law)*

70. The speaker must not digress from the topic under discussion.

71. Interjections shall be permitted; however, discussions between the speaker on the rostrum and Members in the Plenary Chamber shall not be permitted.

72. The sitting shall be chaired by the Speaker or a Deputy Speaker (Article 21). Remarks or exchange of opinions concerning the chairing of the sitting shall not be permitted except in the cases referred to in Article 66.

73. The person chairing the sitting may interrupt a speaker (Articles 69, 70, 71, 72 and 74) and call him/her to order.

74. If a speaker or any other participant of a sitting disregards the reproof of the person chairing the sitting or utters insulting or disrespectful remarks unbecoming a Saeima Member or disturbs the order of the sitting, the person chairing the sitting shall call him/her to order or shall forbid him/her to speak or, in the case of flagrant disobedience, shall propose that the Saeima exclude him/her from one to six sittings.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

75. (1) After hearing the explanations provided by the person to be excluded or by a representative of his/her parliamentary group, the Saeima shall, without any debate, rule on the proposal referred to in Article 74.

(2) *(Deleted by the 19 January 2012 Law).*

(3) The excluded person shall not be permitted to be present in the Plenary Chamber.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 19 January 2012 Law)*

76. (1) If noise or disorder arises at a sitting, the person chairing the sitting may call the Members to order by pounding the gavel.

(2) If the person chairing the sitting fails to restore order, he/she shall leave the room, and thus the sitting shall be deemed suspended for half an hour. If the noise and disorder continue after the sitting has been resumed, the person chairing the sitting shall close it.

*(As amended by the 11 June 2009 Law)*

77. (1) The Saeima sittings shall be public. Upon a request submitted by 10 Members, the President, the Prime Minister, a Deputy Prime Minister or a Minister, the Saeima with a majority vote of at least two-thirds of the Members present may rule (Article 54) to hold a closed sitting (Article 22 of the Constitution). The participants of a closed sitting must not divulge information about the proceedings of the sitting.

(2) Public sittings and answers to Members' questions shall be transmitted on national radio (Article 120).

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 7 October 1998 Law)*

78. Visitors shall be prohibited from expressing approval or disapproval or otherwise disturbing order at a sitting. If they violate this prohibition, the person chairing the sitting may insist that particular individuals or all the visitors leave the Plenary Chamber.

78<sup>1</sup>. It is not allowed to affix any signature to a document after it has been submitted to the Saeima. If a signature affixed to a document submitted to the Saeima has been recalled, the Presidium shall notify the first signer of the document.

*(As supplemented by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

## **2. Legislative Procedure**

79. (1) Draft laws may be submitted to the Saeima by 1) the President, 2) the Cabinet, 3) Saeima committees, 4) at least five Members, or 5) one-tenth of the electorate (Article 65 of the Constitution). Legislative initiatives must be drawn up in the form of draft laws.

(2) The President shall be entitled to submit legislative initiatives which do not have to be in the form of draft laws.

(3) The Cabinet shall prepare an explanatory note to the draft law and shall submit the text of the draft law and of the explanatory note in electronic form.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 18 January 2001 Law)*

80. (1) Each draft law must be signed by the persons submitting it.

(2) If a draft law concerns the ratification of an international instrument, it shall be accompanied by the official text of the international instrument and its Latvian translation unless the official text of the instrument is in Latvian.

(3) If the submitter has disregarded the requirements of this Article, the Presidium shall be entitled to return the draft law to the submitter.

81. A draft law submitted to the Saeima in accordance with the procedure set forth by the Law on National Referendums and Legislative Initiatives shall be put to a referendum, provided that the Saeima has rejected its forwarding to Saeima committees, has rejected it *in corpore*, or has adopted it with alterations of its contents.

82. (1) The Presidium shall report to the Saeima on the draft laws received and on its opinion regarding their further processing. The Saeima shall rule (Article 54) whether to

forward the draft law to the committees and to appoint a responsible committee or to reject it.

(2) Before a vote is taken on the opinion of the Presidium, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) to amend it as follows:

- 1) to forward the draft law for consideration also to a Saeima committee not referred to in the opinion;
- 2) not to forward the draft law for consideration to a committee referred to in the opinion;
- 3) to appoint another responsible committee.

(3) The amendments mentioned in paragraph 2 of this Article may be submitted by a Saeima committee or a Member in writing or verbally. Written amendments shall be considered before verbal amendments. Representatives of committees requesting the floor to propose the said amendments shall be given the floor in the order they have signed up but before other speakers who wish to speak on the said draft law.

(4) The submitted draft laws shall be made available to Members at least seven days before the Presidium reports on them to the Saeima. If necessary, the Presidium may shorten this term.

(5) All the submitted draft laws, alternative draft laws prepared for the first reading (Article 85), draft laws prepared for second and third readings, as well as the opinions of the Presidium and committees concerning these draft laws, shall be forwarded to the President and the Prime Minister.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 16 December 1999 Law)*

83. *(Deleted by the 13 December 2007 Law).*

84. Upon forwarding the same draft law to two or more committees, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) on the deadline by which the committees must consider the draft law and submit proposals to the responsible committee or the Presidium.

85. (1) The committees to which the Saeima has forwarded a draft law may prepare their alternative draft law to be considered in the first reading.

(2) If a committee has received a draft on amendments to a law for which the respective committee as the responsible committee has already received another draft on amendments, the committee may:

- 1) combine the drafts and make one alternative draft law and submit it for the first reading;
- 2) incorporate the draft law submitted later into the draft law submitted earlier as proposals for the second or third reading;
- 3) submit each of the said draft laws for separate consideration.

(3) Subparagraphs 1 and 2 of paragraph 2 of this Article shall not apply to draft laws which contain amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia.

(4) If the responsible committee, guided by the provisions of subparagraph 2, paragraph 2 of this Article, decides to incorporate a draft law submitted later into a draft law submitted earlier, the status of a proposal shall also be accorded to those articles (paragraphs) of the incorporated draft law which the responsible committee has rejected or proposed to change.

(5) When a draft law is submitted by the President, a Saeima committee or at least five Members, the responsible committee shall prepare an explanatory note as prescribed by the Saeima Presidium and shall include in it the submitter's answers to the following questions:

- 1) What is the purpose of the law?
- 2) What will be the potential impact of the law on the development of society and the economy of the country?
- 3) What will be the potential impact of the law on state and municipal budgets?
- 4) What will be the potential impact of the law on the system of legal norms in force?
- 5) How does the law conform to the international obligations assumed by Latvia?
- 6) What experts have been consulted during the preparation of the draft law?
- 7) How will the law be enforced?

(6) *(Deleted by the 18 January 2001 Law).*

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, 7 October 1998 Law and the 18 January 2001 Law)*

86. (1) No draft law shall be put on the agenda and considered at a Saeima sitting before it has been considered by the responsible Committee. The responsible committee shall submit to the Saeima Presidium its opinion and an explanatory note concerning the draft law. The opinion and the explanatory note shall be immediately distributed to Members.

(2) The Presidium, pursuant to the provisions of subparagraph 1 of Article 87, shall put the draft law supported by the responsible committee on the agenda of the next regular sitting of the Saeima unless proposals have been received about putting the draft law on the agenda of another Saeima sitting.

(3) If a committee appointed by the Saeima as the responsible committee has developed

a draft law and submitted it in accordance with the provisions of Article 79, the first reading of the said draft law shall take place without repeated consideration by the responsible committee unless it has also been referred to other committees.

(4) The Saeima in its sittings shall also consider the draft laws rejected by the responsible committee if:

- 1) the draft law has been submitted by the Cabinet;
- 2) the draft law has been submitted under Article 78 of the Constitution;
- 3) the submitter insists on considering the draft law.

(5) Under the provisions of subparagraph 1 of Article 87 of these Rules of Procedure of the Saeima, the Presidium may put on the agenda of the next regular sitting any draft law submitted by the Cabinet or submitted under Article 78 of the Constitution and rejected by the responsible committee unless a proposal has been submitted that this draft law be put on the agenda of another Saeima sitting.

(6) A draft law which has not been submitted by the Cabinet or under Article 78 of the Constitution and which has been rejected by the responsible committee shall be deemed rejected unless within 10 days from the day when the opinion of the responsible committee was made available to Members and sent to the President the submitter has made a written request to the Presidium to consider this draft law at a Saeima sitting. The rejected draft law may be resubmitted for consideration at the same session only if it has been signed by at least 51 Members or if it has been amended. If a committee has made a draft law alternative to the rejected draft law, the first reading of the alternative draft law shall be held without submitting it in accordance with the provisions of Article 79.

(7) A draft law submitted by the President, a Saeima committee or at least five Members may be recalled before a vote on the draft law at its first reading by notifying the Presidium or the responsible Committee in writing or verbally at a meeting of the responsible committee or at a Saeima sitting. An entry about a verbal notification shall be made in the minutes of the committee meeting or the Saeima sitting.

(8) When the responsible committee has been notified of the recalling of a draft law, the committee shall notify the Saeima Administration of this to enable the Chancellery to make a corresponding entry in the Register of Draft Laws.

(9) A draft law submitted by at least five Members shall be regarded as recalled if the number of submitters still supporting it is less than five.

(10) If a draft law has not been recalled at a Saeima sitting, Members shall be notified of this in writing.

(11) If a draft law for which a committee has drafted an alternative draft law has been recalled, the first reading of the alternative draft law shall be held without submitting it in accordance with the provisions of Article 79.

(12) The draft laws submitted by the Cabinet shall not be recalled without consulting the responsible committee and obtaining the consent of the Saeima.

(13) If the responsible committee has concluded that a draft law submitted by the Cabinet needs revision, the Saeima, upon the recommendation of the committee, may return the draft law to the Cabinet and set a deadline for submitting the revised draft to the Saeima.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, 7 October 1998 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

87. No first reading of a draft law shall be held unless:

1) the draft law, the responsible committee's opinion on it and an explanatory note concerning this draft law have been made available to Members at least seven days before the first reading;

2) the comments of the Minister of Finance have been attached to it if the draft law requires additional budgetary expenditure or changes in the budget revenues. This provision does not apply to draft laws submitted by the Cabinet and to cases when the Minister of Finance has failed to provide his/her comment by the deadline set by law.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, 17 October 1996 Law and 7 October 1998 Law)*

87<sup>1</sup>. (1) If a package of draft budget laws containing a draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto, or a draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto (hereinafter – the draft budget law), as well as draft laws setting forth or amending the state budget or medium-term budget framework (hereinafter – budget-related draft laws), has been submitted to the Saeima, the first reading of the package of draft budget laws shall be held in the following sequence:

- 1) budget-related draft laws,
- 2) the draft budget law.

(1<sup>1</sup>) If the package of draft budget laws contains the draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto, or the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto, priority consideration shall be given to the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto, and the draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto shall be considered afterwards.

(2) During the first reading, it is allowed to hold a debate on the whole package of draft budget laws, but a vote shall be taken separately on each draft law.

*(As supplemented by the 1 October 1997 Law, and amended by the 16 October 2014)*

*Law)*

88. The first reading of a draft law shall begin with a report by the rapporteur appointed by the responsible committee (Article 177). Debate on the provisions of the draft law shall begin after the report.

89. (1) When the debate is closed, the Saeima shall decide on the adoption of the draft law at its first reading.

(2) If several versions of a draft law have been submitted and if the debate on all the versions is closed, the Saeima shall decide on the version to be adopted in the first reading. All the versions which have not been recalled until the vote starts shall be put to a vote in the order in which they have been submitted.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

90. (1) If a draft law has been adopted in the first reading, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on the deadline by which proposals may be submitted. If a draft law on the state budget has been adopted in the first reading and if a Saeima draft resolution on the procedure (form) for submitting proposals for such a draft budget law (package of draft budget laws) has been submitted under Article 90<sup>1</sup>, then the deadline for submitting such proposals for the second reading shall be set by the Saeima only after it has considered the above resolution.

(2) The time limit for submitting proposals shall not be shorter than five days except in cases when the draft law is recognized as urgent.

(3) *(Deleted by the 13 December 2007 Law).*

(4) Upon recommendation of a Saeima committee or at least 10 Members, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) on extending the time limit within which proposals may be submitted.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 17 October 1996 Law, the 1 October 1997 Law and the 13 December 2007 Law)*

90<sup>1</sup>. (1) A draft resolution of the Saeima concerning the procedure (form) for submitting proposals for a draft budget law (package of draft budget laws) may be submitted by the responsible committee. Such a draft resolution shall be submitted together with the respective opinion and shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(1<sup>1</sup>) If the package of the draft budget laws contains both the draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto and the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto, the draft resolution of the Saeima referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article may set forth a procedure for submitting proposals concerning both the draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto and the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto.

(2) The draft resolution of the Saeima concerning the procedure (form) for submitting proposals for a draft budget law (package of draft budget laws) shall not be regarded as an independent motion and shall be considered in one reading.

(3) *(Deleted by the 16 October 2014 Law).*

(4) *(Deleted by the 16 October 2014 Law).*

(5) *(Deleted by the 16 October 2014 Law).*

(6) A draft resolution of the Saeima on amendments to the resolution of the Saeima concerning the procedure (form) for submitting proposals for a draft budget law (package of draft budget laws) may be submitted by the responsible committee.

*(As supplemented by the 17 October 1996 Law, and amended by the 1 October 1997 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

91. (1) If a draft law has not been adopted in the first reading, it shall be deemed rejected, and it may be resubmitted for consideration during the same session only if it has been signed by at least 51 Members or if it has been amended.

(2) If the Saeima has adopted an alternative draft law made by the responsible committee in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph 1, paragraph 2 of Article 85, the draft laws incorporated in the alternative draft law shall not be regarded as rejected.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

92. (1) Draft laws which, upon a recommendation by the responsible committee or by 10 Members, have been recognized as urgent by a Saeima decision shall be considered in only two readings. The Saeima may rule (Article 54) on urgency:

1) before debate on a draft law in its first reading;

2) *(Deleted by the 13 December 2007 Law);*

3) after a decision to continue consideration (Article 39) of the draft law.

(2) If a proposal has been submitted to recognize any of the alternative draft laws as urgent, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on urgency before voting on the draft law at its first reading.

(3) If a draft law which has been recognized as urgent has been adopted in the first reading, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) when to hold the second reading. If none of the Members entitled to submit proposals under Article 95 object, a deadline for submitting proposals may not be set, and the second reading of the urgent draft law shall take place



immediately after its adoption in the first reading.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law and the 13 December 2007 Law)*

93. Upon a recommendation of the responsible committee or of 10 Members, the Saeima may repeal, by an absolute majority vote of the Members present, the decision by which the draft law was recognized (Article 54) as urgent. Immediately after the recommendation on repealing the recognition of the draft law as urgent has been approved, the responsible committee or 10 Members may propose to extend the term for submission of proposals for the second reading.

*(As amended by the 16 December 1999 Law and the 28 October 2004 Law)*

94. The draft law shall be prepared for the second reading by the responsible committee, together with the Saeima legal service and experts in the official language. The committee shall provide its opinion concerning the submitted proposals and, if necessary, add its own proposals.

95. (1) Proposals for amendments to a draft law or a draft resolution of the Saeima may be submitted by:

- 1) the President;
- 2) a Saeima committee;
- 3) a parliamentary group or a political bloc of the Saeima;
- 4) a Member;
- 5) the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister;
- 6) the Parliamentary Secretary of a Ministry who has been duly authorised by the Minister;
- 7) the Saeima legal service if the proposals are related to the legislative technique and codification;
- 8) the ombudsman.

(2) Proposals shall be submitted in writing to the responsible committee or to the Saeima Administration, which shall immediately forward them to the responsible committee. If the procedure (form) for submitting proposals for a draft budget law has been set pursuant to Article 90<sup>1</sup> of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima, the proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the relevant resolution.

*(As amended by the 15 October 2015 Law)*

*(3) (Deleted by the 7 October 1998 Law).*

(4) The committee which is responsible for the draft budget law and budget-related draft laws shall compile the submitted proposals and immediately send them to the Cabinet; at the same time, it shall inform the Cabinet when the proposals will be considered by the committee.

(5) Proposals which are alternative to the proposals referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article may be submitted by the Cabinet before the date when the responsible committee takes a decision to submit the relevant draft law for the second reading.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 17 October 1996 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law, the 15 May 2008 Law, the 14 May 2009 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

95<sup>1</sup>. (1) A proposal submitted in accordance with the provisions of Article 95 may be recalled by the submitter before it is put to a vote at a Saeima sitting. A proposal submitted by a Parliamentary Secretary of a Ministry may be recalled by the respective Minister.

(2) A proposal supported by the responsible committee may be recalled only if the responsible committee agrees to this.

(3) A proposal shall be recalled by notifying the Presidium or the responsible committee in writing or verbally at a meeting of the responsible committee or at a Saeima sitting. If a proposal has been recalled verbally at a meeting of the responsible committee, an entry to this effect shall be made in the minutes of the meeting.

*(As supplemented by the 6 May 1996 Law, and amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

95<sup>2</sup>. (1) The opinion of the Cabinet concerning proposals for a draft budget law or budget-related draft laws may be submitted in writing:

- 1) by the date when the responsible committee has started to prepare the draft budget law for consideration at a Saeima sitting if the proposal has been submitted in accordance with provisions of Article 95;
  - 2) within five days after the meeting of the responsible committee if the proposal has been put forward by the responsible committee.
- (2) If the Cabinet has not submitted its opinion on the proposals for a draft budget law or budget-related draft laws within the time limits referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, it

shall be regarded that the Cabinet has supported the proposals.

*(As supplemented by the 1 October 1997 Law)*

96. (1) No draft law shall be put on the agenda for the second reading unless:

1) all the proposals submitted in accordance with the established procedure and by the set deadline (Articles 90, 92 and 95) are attached to it except the proposals recalled by their submitters;

2) the draft law prepared for its second reading and all the proposals submitted in accordance with the established procedure and by the set deadline have been made available to Members at least five days in advance. This provision shall not apply to draft laws recognized as urgent.

(2) The proposals shall be arranged as much as possible in the order prescribed by Article 101.

(3) If the responsible committee, guided by the provisions of subparagraph 2, paragraph 2 of Article 85, has incorporated a draft law submitted later into a draft law submitted earlier as proposals for the second reading the draft law shall be put on the agenda of a Saeima sitting for the second reading with an indication of which draft laws have been incorporated as proposals.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

96<sup>1</sup>. (1) No second reading of a draft budget law shall be held unless:

1) the following documents have been attached to it:

a) all the proposals submitted by the set deadline (Articles 90 and 92) and in accordance with the established procedure (Articles 90<sup>1</sup> and 95), as well as the alternative proposals submitted by the Cabinet, except the proposals recalled by their submitters;

b) the opinion of the responsible committee concerning the proposals, including alternative proposals;

c) proposals of the responsible committee;

d) all the opinions given by the Cabinet concerning the proposals and submitted by the set deadline and in accordance with the established procedure;

2) the documents mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article have been made available to Members at least five days in advance. This provision shall not apply to draft laws recognized as urgent.

3) the budget-related draft laws have been adopted.

(1<sup>1</sup>) If a package of draft budget laws contains both the draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto and the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto, the draft law of the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto shall be considered in the second reading after the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto have been adopted.

(2) The order of arranging proposals for the draft budget law shall be set by the responsible committee.

*(As supplemented by the 17 October 1996 Law, and amended by the 1 October 1997 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

97. The second reading of a draft law shall begin with a report by the rapporteur (Article 177). Consideration of the draft law, article by article, shall follow the report.

98. (1) During the second reading, debate only on a specific article or a part of it shall be permitted.

(2) An appendix to a draft law shall be considered in the same manner as a separate article. Upon the recommendation of the responsible committee or at least five Members, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) whether the appendix should be considered before or after the relevant article of the draft law or after all the articles of the draft law have been considered.

(3) During consideration of a draft budget law, debate may be held on several articles (paragraphs) simultaneously if so required by the submitted proposal.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 17 October 1996 Law)*

99. (1) During the second reading, a vote may be taken on each subparagraph, paragraph, an entire article or a group of articles.

(2) If no proposals have been submitted in relation to an article, no separate vote shall be taken on it.

(3) When considering a draft budget law, a vote shall be taken on the entire proposal, amending several articles simultaneously, if necessary. If the proposal has been adopted or rejected, it shall be deemed adopted or rejected with regard to all the articles concerned.

(4) When presenting a proposal regarding the draft law on the annual state budget or draft amendments thereto that is the same as the proposal regarding the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto concerning the relevant period (year), the rapporteur shall inform the Members on the draft resolution of the Saeima concerning the proposal regarding the draft medium-term budget framework or draft amendments thereto

which it has already considered.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, the 17 October 1996 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

100. In the second reading only the proposals of the responsible committee, as well as the proposals submitted by the set deadline (Articles 90 and 92) to the responsible committee or to the Saeima Administration and not recalled before voting, shall be put to a vote.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

101. (1) The submitted proposals shall be put to a vote in the following order:

- 1) proposals on the deletion of an article or part of an article from the draft law;
- 2) proposals differing most from the proposals of the responsible committee;
- 3) proposals differing least from the proposals of the responsible committee;
- 4) proposals of the responsible committee.

(2) If the order for voting cannot be established according to the sequence mentioned above, the person chairing the sitting shall determine the order himself/herself.

(3) The order in which the proposals for a draft budget law are put to a vote shall be determined by the Saeima upon the recommendation of the responsible committee.

*(As amended by the 17 October 1996 Law)*

102. A proposal shall be deemed adopted if it has received an absolute majority of votes of the Members present.

103. The simultaneous consideration of separate parts of the same draft law shall not be permitted during the second and third readings.

104. (1) After all the proposals have been considered, the person chairing the sitting shall put the draft law to a vote in its entirety, together with the adopted proposals.

(2) If the Saeima has passed a draft law in accordance with the above procedure, the draft law shall be returned to the responsible committee to be prepared for its third reading. After the draft law has been passed at its second reading, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on the deadline by which proposals may be submitted. The time limit shall be at least five days.

(3) If the Saeima does not adopt a draft law at its second reading, the draft law shall be returned to the responsible committee, and it may be resubmitted for the second reading in compliance with the requirements set forth in Articles 94 and 96.

105. If, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 104, the Saeima votes in favour of an urgent draft law in its entirety, that law shall be deemed adopted.

106. (1) A draft law shall be prepared for the third reading by the responsible committee, together with the Saeima legal service and experts in the official language. The committee shall provide its opinion concerning the submitted proposals and, if necessary, add its own proposals.

107. After the second reading of a draft law, proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the provisions of Article 95. Proposals which were rejected when put to a vote separately during the second reading or which are rejected due to the Members' support of the opinion of the responsible committee cannot be resubmitted after the second reading. The responsible committee shall not consider such proposals and shall not attach them to the draft law when submitting it for the third reading.

*(As amended by the 2 March 2006 Law)*

108. (1) No draft law shall be put on the agenda for the third reading unless:

1) all the proposals submitted in accordance with the established procedure and by the set deadline (Articles 104 and 95) are attached to it except the proposals recalled by their submitters;

2) the draft law prepared for the third reading and all the proposals submitted in accordance with the established procedure and by the set deadline have been made available to Members at least five days in advance.

(2) The proposals shall be arranged as much as possible in the order prescribed by Article 101.

(3) If the responsible committee, guided by the provisions of subparagraph 2, paragraph 2 of Article 85, has incorporated a draft law submitted later into a draft law submitted earlier as proposals for the third reading, the draft law shall be put on the agenda of a Saeima sitting for the third reading with an indication of which draft laws have been incorporated as proposals.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

109. The third reading of a draft law shall begin with a report by the rapporteur (Article 177). Only those articles for which proposals have been submitted after the second reading shall be considered and put to a vote.

110. During the third reading only the proposals of the responsible committee (including proposals on transitional provisions), as well as those which have been submitted to the responsible committee or to the Saeima Administration by the set deadline (Article 104)

and have not been recalled before voting, shall be put to a vote.

*(As amended by the 16 May 2002 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

111. (1) If necessary, the procedure by which a law is to be applied shall be formulated as transitional provisions, and the government and local governments shall be assigned specific tasks necessary to enforce the law.

(2) If, upon passing a draft law, contradictions arise between this law and the laws already in force, the Saeima shall rule that the new law or its separate parts take effect simultaneously with the amendments to the laws already in force.

112. After all the proposals have been considered, the person chairing the sitting shall put the draft law to a vote in its entirety together with the adopted proposals.

113. If the Saeima does not adopt a draft law in the third reading, the draft law shall be returned to the responsible committee, and it may be resubmitted for the third reading in compliance with the requirements set forth in Articles 107 and 108.

114. (1) A draft law shall be deemed adopted and shall become a law if it has been considered in three readings or, in the cases mentioned in paragraph 2 of this Article, in two readings, and, if having been put to a vote in its entirety, it has received an absolute majority of votes of the Members present.

(2) Only two readings are required for adopting:

- 1) draft laws deemed urgent;
- 2) a draft budget law and amendments thereto, the draft medium-term budget framework and amendments thereto;
- 3) draft laws on the ratification of international agreements.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

115. (1) If the President, in accordance with the provisions of Article 71 of the Constitution, has requested that a law be reconsidered, the Saeima at its next sitting, without holding a debate, shall forward the President's reasoned objections to the responsible committee and to other committees and shall set the deadline by which proposals may be submitted and the law reconsidered.

(2) When the law is being reconsidered, the provisions for considering a draft law in the third reading shall apply, and only the objections raised by the President and the proposals related to these objections shall be considered.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

116. The Presidium shall forward the laws adopted by the Saeima to the President for proclamation. The date and the year on which the law was adopted shall be indicated at the end of the text as follows: "The Law was adopted by the Saeima on (*date*)".

### **3. Independent motions**

*(As amended by 7 October 1998 Law)*

117. (1) An independent motion shall be submitted in the form of a draft resolution of the Saeima and may be submitted by:

- 1) at least 10 Members;
- 2) a Saeima committee.

(2) An independent motion shall be submitted in writing to the Saeima Administration, which shall distribute the copies of the motion to Members without delay.

(3) Except in cases prescribed by law, normative clauses must not be included in an independent motion.

(4) If the submitted independent motions have been made available to Members at least 72 hours before the relevant Saeima sitting, the Presidium shall report on them immediately after reporting on the submitted draft laws. Upon the recommendation of at least five Members, the Saeima may rule (Article 54) that the Presidium shall also report on those submitted independent motions which have not been made available to Members at least 72 hours before the relevant Saeima sitting.

(5) When an independent motion is announced the submitter of the independent motion and the title of the relevant Saeima draft resolution shall be specified. The person chairing the sitting shall ascertain whether there are any objections to putting the independent motion on the agenda of the current sitting except in the case referred to in paragraph 12 of this Article.

(6) If no objections are raised, the independent motion shall be deemed as put on the agenda of the current sitting as the last item.

(7) If an objection is raised by the Prime Minister or by at least one Member, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on putting this independent motion on the agenda of the next regular Saeima sitting.

(8) If the Saeima does not put the independent motion on the agenda of the next regular Saeima sitting and if no proposal has been submitted to forward it to a Saeima committee, the independent motion shall be deemed rejected.

(9) The Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on the proposals to forward independent motions to a committee in the order these proposals have been submitted. If the Saeima has forwarded an independent motion to more than one committee, it shall appoint the responsible committee.

(10) If the Saeima rules not to forward an independent motion to a committee, the independent motion shall be deemed rejected.

(11) If an independent motion has been forwarded to a committee for consideration, any amendments to it shall be submitted within five days unless the Saeima has ruled (Article 54) otherwise.

(12) If an independent motion on granting Latvian citizenship for special meritorious services for the benefit of Latvia has been submitted by someone other than the Citizenship, Migration and Social Cohesion Committee, this independent motion shall be deemed as forwarded to this Committee after the Presidium has reported on it.

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law, and the 16 October 2014 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

118. (1) If an independent motion has not been forwarded to any committee, the first submitter of this motion shall report on it at a Saeima sitting unless the submitters have agreed otherwise. In this case, the independent motion shall be considered in one reading, and any proposals on amendments to it shall not be considered.

(2) If an independent motion has been forwarded to a committee, the committee shall give its opinion on the independent motion, but in cases when proposals to amend the independent motion have been submitted, the committee shall give its opinion also on these proposals and, if necessary, shall add its own proposals.

(3) The committee to which the independent motion has been forwarded may submit an alternative independent motion. In this case the provisions of paragraphs 4–11 of Article 117 shall not apply.

(4) An independent motion which has been forwarded to a committee may be considered at a Saeima sitting only if the following have been made available to Members:

- 1) the opinion of the committee on the independent motion;
  - 2) all proposals on amendments to the independent motion submitted by the set deadline and in accordance with the prescribed procedure, as well as the opinion of the committee on these proposals;
  - 3) comments of the Minister of Finance if the independent motion involves unforeseen budget expenditure.
- (5) At a Saeima sitting, a rapporteur appointed by the relevant committee shall report on the independent motion forwarded to the committee for initial consideration.

(6) If there are no proposals to amend the independent motion, it shall be considered in one reading.

(7) If a committee to which an independent motion has been forwarded has submitted an alternative independent motion, the Saeima, having debated both independent motions, shall decide by voting which of the independent motions to adopt.

(8) If proposals have been submitted to amend an independent motion, it shall be considered in two readings. During the first reading, the rapporteur shall report on the general principles of the independent motion, a debate shall be held on them and the Saeima shall rule whether to adopt it in the first reading. If the Saeima does not adopt the independent motion in the first reading, it shall be deemed rejected.

(9) The second reading of an independent motion shall immediately follow the first reading unless the Saeima has decided otherwise. In this case, the rules for considering draft laws in the second reading shall apply.

(10) The Saeima committee which has submitted an independent motion or any Saeima Member who has signed it may withdraw support for the motion. This withdrawal shall be allowed before the motion is put to a vote in its first reading.

(11) The committee to which the independent motion has been forwarded may continue to support the withdrawn motion.

(12) If an independent motion for which the relevant committee has made an alternative independent motion has been withdrawn, the alternative independent motion shall be considered in compliance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article.

(13) An independent motion which has been rejected by the responsible committee shall be deemed rejected unless within 10 days from the day when the opinion of the responsible committee was made available to Members, the submitter of the motion has requested the Presidium in writing to consider the said independent motion at a Saeima sitting.

(14) Draft resolutions which are to be considered by the Saeima as prescribed in the Budget and Financial Management Law and the Law on Representation of Latvia on the Board of Governors and the Board of Directors of the European Stability Mechanism shall not be regarded as independent motions and shall be considered in one reading.

*(As amended by the 9 June 2011 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

### 31. Reports of the members of the Cabinet of Ministers

*(As adopted by the 15 May 2008 Law)*

118<sup>1</sup>. (1) Not later than by 1 March, the Prime Minister shall submit to the Saeima the written annual report on the government's performance and its planned future activities. Copies of the report shall be distributed to Members without delay. If by the deadline for submitting the report the Prime Minister has been in office less than 6 months, he/she shall submit the report not later than 9 months after he/she has assumed the office of Prime Minister.

(2) Unless a proposal or request to convene an extraordinary Saeima session or sitting has been submitted, the Presidium shall put the annual report on the government's performance and its planned future activities on the agenda of a Saeima sitting scheduled not earlier than 10 days and not later than 20 days after the receipt of the annual report.

(3) When the annual report on the government's performance and its planned future activities is being examined at the Saeima sitting, first the Prime Minister shall be given the floor, and then a debate shall be opened. After the debate, only the Prime Minister shall be given the floor if he/she so wishes.

118<sup>2</sup>. (1) If the Prime Minister submits at a Saeima sitting a request to give the floor to him/her or any of the ministers to report on a specific topic, the relevant report shall be submitted in writing together with the request. The request shall indicate which minister or ministers shall report on the given matter. Copies of the report shall be distributed to Members and forwarded to the relevant Saeima committee without delay.

(2) Unless a proposal or request to convene an extraordinary Saeima session or sitting has been submitted, the Presidium shall put the request of the Prime Minister on the agenda of the next regular Saeima sitting, and the Saeima shall decide whether to include the report on the specific topic in the agenda of the next regular Saeima sitting.

(3) After the report of the Prime Minister or any minister on the specific topic, a debate shall be opened at the Saeima sitting. After the debate, only the Prime Minister or the minister who has presented the report shall be given the floor if they so wish.

(4) The Saeima shall vote on approving the report of the Prime Minister or the relevant minister.

118<sup>3</sup>. (1) Not later than by 16 January, the Minister for Foreign Affairs shall submit to the Saeima the annual report on the performance and planned future activities in foreign policy which contains information on the performance and planned future activities regarding European Union issues and which has been approved by the Prime Minister. Copies of the report shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(2) If there is no proposal or request to convene an extraordinary session or sitting of the Saeima, the Presidium shall include the annual report of the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the agenda of the regular Saeima sitting scheduled as close as possible to the date of international (*de jure*) recognition of the Republic of Latvia.

(3) When the above-mentioned report is being examined at the Saeima sitting, first the Minister for Foreign Affairs shall be given the floor, and then a debate shall be opened. After the debate, only the Minister for Foreign Affairs shall be given the floor if he/she so wishes.

*(As supplemented by the 28 October 2010 Law)*

### 4. Questions

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

119. (1) At least five Members may submit questions in writing to the Prime Minister, a Deputy Prime Minister, a Minister or the Governor of the Bank of Latvia concerning matters which fall within the competence of these officials.

(2) Questions shall be so formulated that short and precise answers may be given. Questions must not contain any evaluation.

(3) If Members regard the question as urgent, it shall be marked "urgent", and its urgency shall be justified.

(4) Questions shall be submitted to the Saeima Administration which shall register them in the Questions Register in accordance with the procedure set by the Presidium and shall notify the official to whom the question is addressed.

(5) Unless a submitted question is marked "urgent", a notice about the question shall be posted in the Saeima building in accordance with the procedure set by the Presidium. Copies of urgent questions shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(6) During a regular sitting of the Saeima, the Presidium shall report on the submitted questions indicating the names of the submitters and the names of officials to whom the questions are addressed.

(7) After the Presidium has reported on the submitted questions, the first or any other signer of the question, upon their mutual agreement, may take the floor in order to substantiate the question if they have so requested when submitting the question. The speaking time in this case must not exceed one minute.

*(As amended by the 16 October 2014 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

120. (1) During each regular Saeima session, the Presidium shall set a time for answering questions. The question period should not exceed one hour.

(2) When the agenda of a regular Saeima sitting is announced, the Presidium shall also announce the list of questions which will be answered at the set time. The list of answers shall be drawn up in accordance with the sequence the questions have been registered in the Questions Register and shall include answers to the questions submitted not later than six days before the sitting.

(3) The list of questions should include the full text of each question, its registration number in the Questions Register, the names of the submitters and the names of the officials to whom the questions are addressed.

*(As amended by the 16 December 1999 Law and the 28 October 2004 Law)*

121. (1) A question shall be answered by the officials to whom it is addressed except for the following cases:

1) the answer to a question addressed to the Prime Minister, upon his/her authorisation, may be given by a Deputy Prime Minister or a Minister;

2) the answer to a question addressed to a Deputy Prime Minister, upon his/her authorisation, may be given by a Minister;

3) *(Deleted by the 16 October 2014 Law).*

4) the answer to a question addressed to the Governor of the Bank of Latvia, upon his/her authorisation, may be given by a Deputy Governor of the Bank of Latvia;

(2) An answer to a question which is not urgent shall be submitted in writing to the Saeima Administration by the relevant official not later than one day before the deadline set for answering the submitted questions, or a verbal answer may be given.

(3) Answers to urgent questions shall be given if the questions have been submitted not later than 48 hours before the relevant Saeima sitting.

(4) Questions and verbal answers shall be audio-recorded, and a transcript shall be prepared from the recording. This transcript and the written answers shall be published in the official publication *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

(5) If the submitters of a question are satisfied with the submitted written answer, time for answering the question orally shall not be allocated.

*(As amended by the 16 December 1999 Law, the 28 October 2004 Law, and the 16 October 2014 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

122. (1) The question period shall be conducted by the Speaker or one of the Deputy Speakers, who, upon the request of the submitters of the questions or the providers of answers, may make only the following changes in the announced procedure for providing answers:

1) change the sequence of answers;

2) include answers to urgent questions;

3) postpone answering until the question time after the next regular sitting of the Saeima because of the justified absence of the official to whom the question was addressed;

4) exclude from the list a question that does not conform to the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 119 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima.

(2) If it is not possible to answer an urgent question, an answer to such question shall be provided within term set by the Presidium.

(3) A verbal answer shall be given if at least one of the submitters of the question is present. The time limit for answering a question must not exceed five minutes or two minutes if a written answer has been given.

(4) After the answer has been given, the submitters may, if they wish, ask two follow-up questions. The floor shall be given to the first signer of the question unless the submitters have agreed otherwise. The time limit for asking a follow-up question must not exceed one minute.

(5) When answers have been given to the follow-up questions asked by the submitters, the other Members present may also ask follow-up questions, but not more than three questions. If several Members want to ask follow-up questions, they may be given the floor in the sequence in which they have applied.

(6) If the person chairing the sitting regards that a follow-up question is irrelevant, he/she shall reject it. It is permissible to ask another follow-up question instead of the one which has been rejected.

(7) The time limit for answering each follow-up question must not exceed two minutes.

*(As amended by the 28 October 2004 Law)*

123. (1) The questions not answered during the question period because of the lack of time or because none of the submitters of the question was present shall be answered in writing (Article 121, paragraph 3) within 48 hours after the relevant Saeima sitting.

(2) If an answer is not provided because of the justified absence of the relevant official and if a written answer has not been given or if the answer does not satisfy the submitters of the question, they may request that an answer to the respective question be given later.

(3) If answers to questions have not been given during the particular session of the Saeima, they should be provided in writing within 48 hours after the closing of the session. Answers to questions shall not be postponed until the next session of the Saeima.

*(As amended by the 28 October 2004 Law)*

## 5. Inquiries

*(As amended by the 5 October 1998 Law)*

124. (1) At least 10 Members may submit in writing inquiries to members of the Cabinet.

(2) During a Saeima sitting, inquiries should be submitted to the Presidium, and during the inter-sitting period to the Saeima Administration; inquiries should be distributed to Members without delay.

*(As amended by the 15 October 2015 Law)*

125. (1) At a Saeima sitting the Presidium shall report on the submitted inquiries, indicating who has submitted the inquiry and to whom it is addressed.

(2) After the Presidium has reported on the submitted inquiries, the first signer of an inquiry or any other signer (Article 124), upon their mutual agreement, may take the floor in order to substantiate the inquiry if so requested when submitting the inquiry. In this case, the speaking time must not exceed three minutes.

126. (1) An inquiry not regarded as urgent by the submitters shall be forwarded to the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee (Article 149).

(2) Within two weeks, the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee shall examine the inquiry and give its opinion to the Presidium. The opinion should contain the motivation for the committee's decision and the result of the voting.

(3) The Parliamentary Inquiry Committee may recognize that the inquiry is:

- 1) acceptable,
- 2) partly acceptable,
- 3) unacceptable.

(4) If the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee has recognized an inquiry as partly acceptable, it shall formulate accordingly the part of the inquiry it has deemed acceptable.

(5) If the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee has recognized an inquiry as unacceptable, it may propose that the inquiry be formulated as a question.

(6) The Saeima shall rule whether to accept or reject an inquiry.

(7) If the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee has recognized an inquiry as partly acceptable, the Saeima shall first vote on the inquiry submitted by the Members, but if it is rejected, the Saeima shall vote on the inquiry which was formulated by the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee.

(8) If the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee regards an inquiry as unacceptable and has proposed that it be formulated as a question, but the submitters have not agreed to this, the Saeima shall vote on the inquiry as it was submitted by Members.

*(As amended by the 28 October 2004 Law)*

127. (1) The Saeima shall rule (Article 54) whether an inquiry should be recognized as urgent if the submitters have deemed it urgent and if it has been submitted to the Saeima Administration by 12:00 on the day before the Saeima sitting and has been made available to the parliamentary groups and Members by 14:00 of the same day.

(2) If the Saeima has recognized an inquiry as urgent, it shall immediately start the debate on its substance and shall vote whether to accept it or not. If the inquiry has not been recognized as urgent, it should be forwarded to the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee (Article 149).

*(As amended by the 15 October 2015 Law)*

128. The person chairing the sitting shall immediately forward copies of the accepted inquiry and the attached documents to the Prime Minister, to the head of the respective department and to the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee.

129. (1) Members of the Cabinet shall provide written answers to an inquiry within seven days from the day the inquiry was received. The answers shall be distributed to Members and shall be put on the agenda of the next Saeima sitting; then the debate on the inquiry shall take place.

(2) An answer to an inquiry should not be postponed until the next session if the decision on urgency of the inquiry has been made at least three days before the closing of the Saeima session.

130. (1) At least 10 Members or the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee may submit a draft resolution in connection with an inquiry, including a draft resolution on a vote of confidence in the Cabinet, a Deputy Prime Minister or a Minister. In this case, the provisions of Article 117 on the postponement of the debate on a draft resolution until the next sitting or on forwarding it to committees shall not apply.

(2) If necessary, the Saeima may set a deadline for submitting proposals.



131. *(Deleted by the 6 October 1996 Law).*

*(As amended by the 16 October 2014 Law)*

## **5<sup>1</sup>. Reports of the Ombudsman**

*(As adopted by the 15 May 2008 Law)*

131<sup>1</sup>. (1) The ombudsman shall submit to the Saeima the annual report in writing on the work of the Ombudsman's Office. Copies of the report shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(2) Unless a proposal or request to convene an extraordinary Saeima session or sitting has been submitted, the Presidium shall put the annual report on the work of the Ombudsman's Office on the agenda of a Saeima sitting scheduled not earlier than 10 days and not later than 20 days after the receipt of the annual report.

(3) During the consideration of the annual report on the work of the Ombudsman's Office at the Saeima sitting, the ombudsman shall be given the floor, and then a debate shall be opened. After the debate, only the ombudsman shall be given the floor if he/she so wishes.

## **5<sup>2</sup>. Referring a Member to undergo an evaluation of his/her official language skills**

*(As adopted by the 9 June 2011 Law)*

131<sup>2</sup>. (1) If at least 20 Members doubt a Member's command of the official language at the level necessary for performing his/her professional duties, they have the right to submit a draft resolution to refer the Member in question to undergo an evaluation of his/her official language skills. The draft resolution shall be supplemented with a description of the relevant circumstances.

(2) The Presidium shall give notice of the received draft resolution at a Saeima sitting, and the Saeima shall forward it to the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee without any debate.

(3) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall evaluate the draft resolution to refer the Member to undergo an evaluation of his/her official language skills within one month in a closed meeting and shall submit its opinion to the Saeima. The Member in question and a representative of the State Language Centre shall be invited to the meeting of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee.

(4) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall state in its opinion whether the Member in question has attended committee meetings and shall provide any other necessary information.

(5) The draft resolution to refer the Member in question to undergo an evaluation of his/her official language skills shall be put on the agenda of a Saeima sitting not later than 10 days after the submission of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee opinion to the Saeima. If the opinion is submitted during the recess of the Saeima, the draft resolution shall be put on the agenda of the next regular Saeima sitting unless the Saeima has ruled otherwise.

(6) A rapporteur elected by the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall report on the relevant draft resolution at the Saeima sitting. If the Saeima takes a decision to refer a Member to undergo an evaluation of his/her official language skills, the Member shall undergo this evaluation at the National Centre of Educational Content within five months from the date of the decision. The evaluation may be conducted not more than twice within this period. At least 10 Members may submit a draft resolution to extend the time limit for evaluating his/her official language skills.

(7) If the Member in question does not agree with the results of the evaluation, he/she may appeal the results within 10 days according to the procedure set by regulatory documents. A decision on the appealed evaluation results shall be taken within 15 days. The Member may, within 10 days, bring the decision of the National Centre of Educational Content regarding the appealed evaluation results before the Department of Administrative Cases of the Senate of the Supreme Court, where, as in the court of first instance, the case shall be reviewed by three judges within 30 days.

(8) If the Saeima has taken a decision to refer the Member in question to an evaluation of his/her official language skills and if, in the course of this evaluation, the Member's official language skills are found to not meet the level set by regulatory documents or if the Member has failed to undergo the evaluation within the set time limit, the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall, within 15 days, submit a draft resolution to the Saeima on the expulsion of the Member from the Saeima.

(9) If, in the course of the evaluation provided for in this Article, the National Centre of Educational Content finds that the Member's official language skills do not meet the level set by regulatory documents, it shall submit its opinion to the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee of the Saeima. The Committee shall forward this opinion to the Presidium, which shall give notice of it to the Saeima.

## **5<sup>3</sup>. Consideration of collective submissions**

*(As adopted by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

131<sup>3</sup>. (1) At least 10,000 citizens of Latvia who have reached the age of 16 on the day of filing a submission shall have a right to file a collective submission with the Saeima. The collective submission shall contain a request to the Saeima and a brief justification of the request, as well as specify the natural person authorised to represent the signatories of the collective submission, this person's address and contact information. Each signatory of the collective submission shall legibly indicate his/her name, surname and ID number. It shall also be possible to collect signatures electronically as long as the possibility to identify signatories and protection of personal data are ensured.

(2) A collective submission shall not contain a request which is clearly unacceptable in a democratic society or is plainly offensive; a collective submission shall not undermine values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities.

(3) When determining the number of individuals filing a collective submission, the withdrawal of signatures from the collective submission that has already been filed with the Saeima shall not be taken into consideration.

(4) A collective submission that is filed electronically shall be supplemented with technical information confirming the signing of the collective submission and ensuring the possibility to verify the number of signatories, their names, surnames and ID numbers.

131<sup>4</sup>. (1) Not later than 20 days after the receipt of a collective submission, the Presidium shall evaluate its compliance with Article 131<sup>3</sup> of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima; if necessary, forward it the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs for verification; and decide on forwarding the submission to the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee for initial evaluation. The natural person authorized to represent the signatories of the collective submission shall be invited to the meeting of the Presidium.

(2) If the Presidium ascertains that the submitted document does not comply with Article 131<sup>3</sup> of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima, a reply concerning the collective submission shall be provided pursuant to the Law on Submissions.

131<sup>5</sup>. (1) A meeting of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee during which the initial evaluation of the collective submission is conducted shall be held not later than a month after the collective submission has been filed with the Saeima, and the proceedings of the Committee meeting shall be audio recorded.

(2) The person authorized to represent the signatories of the collective submission, members of other committees of the Saeima, and representatives of institutions concerned with the request of the collective submission shall be invited to the meeting of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee.

(3) At the meeting of the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee, the person authorized to represent the signatories of the collective submission shall have the right to justify the collective submission and take part in the relevant debate in accordance with the procedure set by the Committee.

(4) Not later than three months after the collective submission has been filed, the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall draft a report on the evaluation of the collective submission by the Committee and prepare a draft resolution of the Saeima on further processing of the collective submission.

(5) The report drafted by the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall contain information on the initial evaluation of the collective submission by the Committee, in particular the requests made by the signatories and their justification, opinions expressed by invited persons, as well as other information which the Committee considers relevant. The draft resolution of the Saeima on further processing of the collective submission shall contain the following information on the collective submission:

- 1) number of submitters;
- 2) brief summary of the essence of the collective submission;

3) preferable further processing (for example, to form a special committee of the Saeima tasked with preparing a relevant draft law, to forward the collective submission to a relevant institution for further evaluation, to instruct the Cabinet of Ministers to prepare a relevant concept or draft law, to leave the collective submission without consideration or to turn it down).

(6) The draft resolution of the Saeima on further processing of the collective submission shall be considered in accordance with the procedure set forth in Article 117 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima.

(7) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall supervise the fulfilment of tasks set forth in the draft resolution of the Saeima on further processing of the collective submission and, if necessary, may prepare other draft resolutions of the Saeima that would ensure fulfilment of the given task.

#### **5<sup>4</sup>. Reports of the State Audit Office**

*(As adopted by the 16 October 2014 Law)*

131<sup>6</sup>. (1) Along with the annual financial statement of the State Audit Office supplemented with a report by a certified auditor (certified audit company), the Auditor General shall also

submit to the Saeima a written annual report on the functioning of the State Audit Office. Copies of the annual report shall be distributed to Members without delay.

(2) Provided that a proposal or request to hold an extraordinary Saeima session or sitting has not been expressed, the Presidium shall include the annual report on the functioning of the State Audit Office in the agenda of the Saeima sitting not earlier than 10 days and not later than 20 days after its submission.

(3) During the examination of the annual report on the functioning of the State Audit Office at the Saeima sitting, the Auditor General shall be given the floor, and then a debate shall be opened. After the debate, only the Auditor General shall be given the floor.

## 6. Voting

*(The number of this Chapter was changed by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

132. Prior to voting, the person chairing the sitting shall announce the voting procedure.

133. Any Member may request that a proposal be considered and put to a vote part by part (Article 54).

*(As amended by the 16 December 1999 Law)*

134. Proposals shall be put to a vote in accordance with the order set in Article 101 and before the vote on the article to which these proposals refer. Proposals which may supplement another proposal shall be put to a vote before voting on the original proposal. After the proposals and separate parts of an article have been put to a vote, a vote shall be taken on the entire article.

135. (1) A proposal stating that the substance of the matter is beyond the competence of the Saeima may be submitted by a committee or a Member of the Saeima. The proposal shall be made in writing and submitted to the Presidium.

(2) If the above proposal has been submitted before or during discussion of the announced agenda, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on it in accordance with the general procedure and before ruling on any proposal submitted under Article 51 concerning the relevant matter.

(3) If the above proposal has been submitted before consideration of the respective matter has begun, the Saeima shall rule on it immediately after the previous matter has been dealt with.

(4) If the above proposal has been submitted when debate on the respective matter has started, the Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on it immediately after the speaker who has already been given the floor has finished his/her speech.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

136. (1) A proposal that a matter should be postponed or referred back to a committee or that additional information be requested concerning the matter, etc., may be submitted by the President, a Saeima committee, a Member, the Prime Minister, or a representative of the Cabinet on the matter under discussion. The proposal shall be made in writing and submitted to the Presidium.

(2) Saeima shall rule (Article 54) on the above proposal before voting on the substance of the matter.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

137. When voting on deadlines, the latest deadlines shall be considered before the earliest deadlines. This rule shall not apply to proposals put to a vote in accordance with the provisions of Article 101.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

138. (1) Before voting on a draft law or a draft resolution in its entirety, the person chairing the sitting shall give an order to ring the bell.

(2) During voting no one shall be given the floor.

(3) After the results of the voting have been announced, it shall not be permitted to accept late votes or to change one's vote.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

139. Voting at Saeima sittings shall be open and shall be conducted by means of the electronic voting system or by using ballot papers. In cases and in accordance with the procedure set forth by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, voting shall be by secret ballot. The Members who have voted "for" or "against" or "abstained" shall be regarded as having participated in the vote.

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

140. (1) *(Deleted by the 19 January 2012 Law).*

(2) At least 10 Members may request that after the voting the vote of each Member be read out in the Plenary Chamber (Article 54).

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

141. (1) In case of a tied vote (the number of the Members who voted "for" is equal to the number of the Members who voted "against" and "abstained"), the voting shall be

repeated.

(2) If the repeated vote also ends in a tie, the proposal put to a vote shall be deemed rejected.

142. If within one hour at least five Members question the validity (Article 54) of the results of a vote, the voting should be repeated.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

143. Decisions shall be made by an absolute majority of the votes of the Members present except in the cases specifically provided for in the Constitution.

144. (1) Each Member of the Saeima, as well as a representative of a parliamentary group or a political bloc of the Saeima, shall have the right to make a statement explaining his/her vote. Such a statement shall be made in writing and submitted within 24 hours after the end of the relevant Saeima sitting.

(2) If the statement has been submitted before the vote and if it contains the submitter's request to read it out, he/she shall be given the floor immediately after the results of the voting have been announced. The speaking time for such a statement shall not exceed five minutes.

(3) Any written statements mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article which have not been read out at a Saeima sitting shall be attached to the transcript of the sitting.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

## 7. Transcripts

*(The number of this Chapter was changed by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

145. The proceedings of the Saeima sittings shall be audio-recorded for a transcript to be made. The Head of the Records Department shall be responsible for making sure that the transcripts correspond to the audio-recording. The audio-recording shall be preserved. Language experts shall correct mistakes in the transcripts and verify the spelling of the names of persons, foreign words, geographical names; and verify the names of enterprises, offices and organisations, the titles of laws, resolutions and international agreements.

146. The following shall be attached to a transcript:

- 1) the minutes of a Saeima sitting which contain the agenda considered during the sitting, the decisions adopted, and the results of the voting. The minutes of the Saeima sitting shall be prepared by the Records Department and signed by the person chairing the sitting – the Speaker or a Deputy Speaker and the Saeima Secretary or his/her Deputy;
- 2) the table of contents of the transcript;
- 3) the data fixed by the electronic voting system;
- 4) written answers to questions posed by Saeima Members;
- 5) the statements of the Members explaining the reasons for their voting that have not been read out at the Saeima sitting.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

147. (1) Transcripts of open sittings and the attached written answers to questions, as well as statements of Members explaining the reasons for their voting, shall be published in the official publication *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

(2) Excerpts from and copies of the transcripts of open sittings shall be issued to Members upon their request.

(3) The procedure by which Members may get access to the transcripts of closed sittings shall be set by the Presidium.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

148. Persons who have participated in the preparation of the transcripts of closed sittings of the Saeima shall confirm by their signatures that they will not disclose the contents of the transcript.

## VI. SAEIMA STANDING COMMITTEES

149. (1) The following standing committees shall function in the Saeima:

- 1) Foreign Affairs Committee;
- 2) Budget and Finance (Taxation) Committee;
- 3) Legal Affairs Committee;
- 4) Human Rights and Public Affairs Committee;
- 5) Education, Culture and Science Committee;
- 6) Defence, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Committee;

- 7) Public Administration and Local Government Committee;
- 8) Economic, Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Policy Committee;
- 9) Social and Employment Matters Committee;
- 10) Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee;
- 11) Parliamentary Inquiry Committee;
- 12) Public Expenditure and Audit Committee;
- 13) *(Deleted by the 19 January 2012 Law)*;
- 14) National Security Committee;
- 15) Citizenship, Migration and Social Cohesion Committee;
- 16) European Affairs Committee;
- 17) Sustainable Development Committee.

(2) The number of members in each committee and the principles for establishing a committee shall be determined by the Saeima.

(3) A committee shall coordinate with the Saeima Presidium the budget appropriations needed for foreign policy activities.

(4) The Citizenship, Migration and Social Cohesion Committee shall also ensure parliamentary scrutiny over the implementation of the Citizenship Law.

*(As amended by the 2 November 1995 Law, the 7 October 1998 Law, the 16 December 1999 Law, the 24 October 2002 Law, the 2 March 2006 Law, the 9 November 2006 Law, the 11 December 2008 Law, the 19 January 2012 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

150. The Saeima may form *ad hoc* committees to undertake specific legislative assignments. In specific cases the Saeima shall appoint a parliamentary investigative committee if so requested by at least one third of Members (Article 26 of the Constitution). Proposals on forming such a committee shall be considered at the next regular sitting of the Saeima.

151. The Saeima Secretary shall convene and chair the first meeting of a committee until the committee chairperson is elected. Subsequent committee meetings shall be convened and chaired by the committee chairperson.

152. Each committee shall elect from its members a chairperson and a secretary, and, if necessary, a deputy chairperson. The Presidium shall be notified about the results of the elections.

153. (1) A Member may be the chairperson of only one standing committee at a time.

(2) A Member may be a member of not more than two standing committees and three subcommittees at a time.

*(As amended by the 19 February 2009 Law and the 19 January 2012 Law)*

154. In the absence of the chairperson and the deputy chairperson, the committee secretary shall open and chair a committee meeting.

155. To fulfil specific tasks or to perform preparatory work, a committee may elect from its members not more than two subcommittees. Saeima Members who do not belong to the relevant committee may be included in its subcommittee if they consent to it.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 19 February 2009 Law)*

156. The committee secretary shall convene and chair the first meeting of a subcommittee until the subcommittee chairperson is elected. Subsequent subcommittee meetings shall be convened and chaired by the subcommittee chairperson.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

157. A subcommittee shall elect the chairperson and the secretary from its members. The Presidium shall be notified about the results of the elections.

158. A subcommittee shall submit its proposals and decisions to the committee meeting.

159. Committee meetings shall be open to the public. However, a closed meeting may be held upon the decision of the Saeima or the committee.

160. Committee meetings shall have full powers if at least half of the committee members are present.

161. Committee members must arrive at a committee meeting on time, and they may not leave the meeting without the consent of the chairperson of the meeting.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 23 December 2010 Law)*

162. The committee members present shall confirm their participation in a committee meeting by their signatures.

163. (1) Minutes shall be taken at committee meetings. The minutes shall be signed by the person chairing the meeting and the secretary. If the meeting is chaired by the secretary or if the secretary is not present at the meeting, the minutes shall be signed by the person chairing the meeting and by one of the committee members as instructed by the chairperson of the meeting. The minutes shall be made available to committee

members not later than three days after the committee meeting.

(2) The minutes of a committee meeting shall include the following information:

- 1) the time of the opening and closing of the meeting;
- 2) the names of committee members participating in the meeting;
- 3) the names of other persons participating in the meeting;
- 4) the name of the chairperson;
- 5) the name of the person taking the minutes;
- 6) the type of committee meeting (open or closed);
- 7) the discussed agenda items;
- 8) the decisions adopted and the results of the voting.

(3) Audio recordings of the meetings of the committees referred to in subparagraphs 1 to 10 of paragraph 1 of Article 149 shall be made.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law, and the 28 October 2010 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

164. Each committee member shall have the right to attach his/her own opinion to the minutes not later than at the next meeting.

165. If a committee member misses three successive meetings without a valid excuse, the committee chairperson shall notify the parliamentary group or the political bloc to which the committee member belongs. If the committee member continues not to attend the meetings, then, upon the proposal of the committee and in accordance with the provisions of Article 34, the Saeima may recall the committee member and elect another member to replace him/her.

166. Upon the decision of the Saeima, committees shall consider draft laws, proposals and submissions. Any committee may submit such documents, provided they pertain to the objectives of the committee.

167. (1) Upon expiry of the term of office of the current Saeima, committee documents must be deposited in the Saeima archives.

(2) If a committee is dissolved or if its activities have ended, the committee documents must be handed over to the Presidium, which, in turn, shall either forward them to another committee or deposit them in the Saeima archives.

168. Information on closed committee meetings may be made public only with the joint consent of the committee chairperson, the deputy chairperson (if any) and the secretary.

169. (1) Presidium members and one of the Saeima Members who have signed a particular draft law or some other submission may participate in a committee meeting in an advisory capacity. The same applies to a rapporteur on the draft law in question who has been appointed by another committee. A committee has the right to invite experts, either on a permanent or temporary basis, who may act as advisors.

(2) Other Saeima Members may also be present at a committee meeting, but they shall enjoy the rights of advisors only upon a special decision of the committee.

(3) Authorized persons from parliamentary groups or political blocs and assistants of Saeima Members may be present at open committee meetings.

170. Rapporteurs on a particular draft law who have been appointed by other committees shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the committee responsible for the respective draft law.

171. The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, as well as state officials duly authorised by them, may also participate in committee meetings in an advisory capacity.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

172. (1) A committee shall have the right, without the Presidium's mediation, to directly request the information and explanations necessary for its work from the respective Minister and the institutions subordinated to or supervised by him/her, as well as from local governments. The committee itself may summon the appropriate officials to provide the required comments.

(2) Subcommittees shall communicate with ministries and other institutions independently.

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

173. (1) In compliance with the assignment given by the Saeima, a parliamentary investigative committee (Article 150) shall have the right to invite and question also private persons and, if necessary, in cooperation with experts to audit government, local government and private establishments and enterprises, provided that the private establishments and enterprises directly or indirectly receive state subsidies, loans, government contracts or participate in the privatization of government or local government property.

(2) If the persons, establishments or enterprises referred to in this Article do not fulfil the requirements of a parliamentary investigative committee with regard to their questioning or auditing, the police, upon the request of the committee, shall take coercive measures to ensure the fulfilment of the above requirements.

174. (1) Draft laws shall be considered by the responsible committee before every reading.

(2) If necessary, a draft law may be forwarded to a subcommittee, if any, for preliminary preparation.

(3) Prior to the consideration of a draft law, the committee shall appoint one of its members to report on the draft law at a committee meeting.

175. A committee decision shall be regarded as adopted if an absolute majority of the committee members present have voted in favour of it.

176. Committee opinions that are to be approved by the Saeima must be formulated, if necessary, as draft resolutions of the Saeima. Reference materials may be attached to the committee's opinion.

177. After a matter has been considered, the committee shall elect a rapporteur from its members to make a presentation on the matter at a Saeima sitting.

178. Committees may convene joint meetings. Decisions shall be adopted by each committee separately, except decisions concerning the agenda and procedure of a joint meeting. The committee chairpersons shall agree upon the chairing of the joint meeting.

179. (1) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall:

1) draw up the Saeima report on confirming or terminating a Member's mandate;

2) prepare a draft resolution of the Saeima in connection with a request by the Prosecutor General's Office to grant permission to start criminal prosecution of a Saeima Member, to arrest, detain, or search him/her, or to otherwise restrict his/her personal freedom;

*(As amended by the 14 June 2016 Law)*

3) supervise observance of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima and consider cases concerning violations of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima;

4) prepare for the Saeima a monthly report on submissions received by the Saeima Public Relations Department and on consideration of these submissions by the Presidium, the Saeima parliamentary groups, committees and other Saeima organisational units.

5) once in every session, provide a report at a plenary sitting on the Members who have received administrative fines during the previous session or during the recess of the Saeima. The report shall contain information about the administrative violation committed by the Member with a reference to the provision stipulating administrative liability for the relevant offence, the institution which took the decision on levying the administrative fine, the amount of the fine, the date on which the decision to levy the fine took effect.

*(As amended by the 14 June 2016 Law)*

(2) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall consist of two members elected from each parliamentary group. Members of the Committee shall refrain from activities which can be deemed as an unjustified maligning of political opponents or as an unjustified defence of the behaviour of another Member on the basis of his/her political affiliation.

(3) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall bring an action concerning a violation of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima not later than one week after a Member, a group of Members or a parliamentary group has filed a written submission which:

1) states the nature of the particular case;

2) explains the specific violation of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima;

3) may contain evidence, if there is any, at the disposal of the submitter;

4) may include other facts that can be important for examining the case.

(4) If the submission lacks substantiation, it is immediately returned to the submitter to make it more concrete and complete.

(5) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall start to examine the case on a violation of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima not later than one week after its initiation. After initiation of the case, the Committee should send without delay a copy of the initiating document and the submission to the Saeima Member whose action is the basis for initiating the case on the violation of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima.

(6) The Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall examine the case on the violation of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima in a public meeting not later than two weeks after the initiation of the case. A two-thirds majority is required to have a closed meeting instead of a public meeting. Holding a closed meeting can be proposed by any member of the Committee.

(7) After determining that a violation of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima has occurred, the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall take one of the following justified actions:

1) give an oral warning to the Member which is recorded in the minutes of the Committee meeting;

2) issue a written warning to the Member;

3) issue a written warning to the Member, announce it at a Saeima sitting, and publish the decision of the Committee in the official publication *Latvijas Vēstnesis*;

4) propose that the Saeima withdraw the member's right to take the floor during a Saeima sitting and prepare a relevant draft resolution of the Saeima;

5) propose that the Saeima excludes the Member from one to six Saeima sittings and prepare a relevant draft resolution of the Saeima.

(8) A draft resolution of the Saeima submitted pursuant to subparagraphs 4 and 5 of paragraph 7 of this Article shall not be considered an independent motion, and therefore it shall not be subject to provisions of Article 117 and 118 of this Law.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law, the 2 March 2006 Law, the 11 December 2008 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

(9) In order to compile the report described in subparagraph 5 of paragraph 1 of this Article, the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee has the right to request information from the Penalty Register according to the procedure stipulated by law.

*(As amended by the 14 June 2016 Law)*

179<sup>1</sup>. Upon receiving a written request, the Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee shall evaluate whether a Saeima Member's intended action in a difficult situation would violate the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima. When such a request is received, a Committee meeting is scheduled as soon as is convenient for the submitter and the Committee.

*(As supplemented by the 2 March 2006 Law)*

179<sup>2</sup>. The Legal Affairs Committee shall prepare a draft resolution of the Saeima on approving the initiating of a criminal prosecution against a judge or ombudsman or a draft resolution on his/her arrest, as well as draw up proposals concerning requests to impose an administrative sanction on the ombudsman.

*(As supplemented by the 11 December 2008 Law)*

180. *(Deleted by the 23 December 2010 Law).*

181. Not later than on the fifth day of each month a committee shall submit to the Saeima Administration a list of committee meetings held in the previous month and shall indicate how many meetings each committee member attended.

*(As amended by the 15 October 2015 Law)*

182. Employment relations with committee staff members shall be established and terminated by the Secretary General of the Saeima Administration upon the proposal of the committee chairperson and in conformity with the provisions of the Labour Law.

*(As amended by the 28 October 2004 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

183. (1) The general provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be applied by analogy to any committee activity not mentioned in this Chapter.

(2) The provisions concerning committee activities shall be applicable also to the activities of subcommittees.

## **VII. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE SAEIMA**

*(The title of this Division was amended by the 16 December 1999 Law)*

183<sup>1</sup>. (1) The Saeima is financially independent.

(2) The Saeima budget request shall be drafted by the Saeima Administration. The Secretary General of the Saeima Administration shall submit the draft budget request to the Presidium for approval. After the Saeima budget request has been approved by the Presidium, it shall be submitted to the Minister of Finance, who shall incorporate it without any amendments into the draft of the State Budget Law.

(3) Until submission of the draft of the State Budget Law to the Saeima, the Saeima budget request shall not be subject to amendments without consent of the Presidium.

*(As supplemented by the 16 December 1999 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

184. Issues related to the financial management of the Saeima shall be decided by the Presidium. Finances shall be managed by the Presidium or a Saeima official appointed by the Presidium.

*(As amended by the 19 January 2012 Law)*

185. (1) Bookkeeping records, the legitimacy and usefulness of expenditures, as well as the annual report of the Saeima, shall be audited by the Public Expenditure and Audit Committee.

(2) During the reporting year, the Public Expenditure and Audit Committee shall plan and carry out an audit of selected items of the Saeima's financial management. After accomplishing the selective audits, the Public Expenditure and Audit Committee shall submit its opinion to the Presidium of the Saeima. The annual report shall be audited at



the end of each reporting year. Within six months after the end of the reporting year, the Public Expenditure and Audit Committee shall submit to the Saeima Presidium its opinion on the audit of the annual report.

*(As amended by the 24 October 2002 Law)*

#### **VII<sup>1</sup>. Participation of the Saeima in EU AFFAIRS**

*(This Division was adopted by the 18 January 2001 Law)*

185<sup>1</sup>. (1) The Saeima shall participate in EU affairs through the European Affairs Committee unless the Saeima has ruled otherwise.

(2) The European Affairs Committee sets forth the rights of the Members of the European Parliament elected from Latvia to participate in the work of the Committee.

*(As amended by the 28 October 2004 Law)*

185<sup>2</sup>. The European Affairs Committee shall be composed of at least one Member from each parliamentary group in the Saeima. The composition of the Committee should be a proportionate reflection of the parliamentary groups represented in the Saeima.

185<sup>3</sup>. The European Affairs Committee shall examine the official positions of the Republic of Latvia prepared in accordance with the procedure set by the Cabinet of Ministers and shall rule on them before they are communicated to European Union institutions.

185<sup>4</sup>. The European Affairs Committee may send the official positions of the Republic of Latvia, as well as legislative proposals of the European Union and documents of other EU institutions, to other Saeima committees for them to consider and hand down decisions.

*(As amended by the 28 October 2004 Law)*

185<sup>5</sup>. *(Deleted by the 28 October 2010 Law).*

#### **VIII. PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS, POLITICAL BLOCS AND THE COUNCIL OF PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS**

186. At least five Members of the same candidate list may form a parliamentary group. Members elected from the same candidate list may form only one parliamentary group and may not join another parliamentary group.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 11 June 2009 Law)*

187. (1) The staff of a parliamentary group shall be hired and dismissed by the Secretary General of the Saeima Administration upon the recommendation of the parliamentary group's chairperson and in conformity with the provisions of the Labour Law.

(2) The employment contract is concluded for one of the following terms:

1) for the term of office of the parliamentary group during the relevant convocation of the Saeima;

2) for a specified term not shorter than six months with the possibility to extend the term. If a parliamentary group ceases to function before the end of the employment contract term, the employment contracts with parliamentary group staff members terminate on the day the parliamentary group ceases to function.

*(As amended by the 2 November 2006 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

188. Parliamentary groups may form political blocs.

*(As amended by the 6 May 1996 Law and the 28 October 2010 Law)*

189. The Presidium shall be immediately notified of the membership of parliamentary groups and political blocs and of any changes therein.

190. The Presidium, parliamentary groups and political blocs shall form the Council of Parliamentary Groups. The Council of Parliamentary Groups shall specify and coordinate the activities and strategies of parliamentary groups and political blocs within the Saeima and its committees and, together with the Presidium, shall settle the matters referred to in paragraph 4 of Article 23.

191. Each parliamentary group or political bloc shall delegate one representative to the Council of Parliamentary Groups.

192. Decisions of the Council of Parliamentary Groups shall be of an advisory nature, and they shall not be binding upon parliamentary groups or political blocs. However, those parliamentary groups or political blocs that do not agree with the opinion voiced by their representative at a meeting of the Council of Parliamentary Groups must inform the Presidium of this by the beginning of the next Saeima sitting.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

193. (1) The agenda of the meetings of the Council of Parliamentary Groups shall be determined, and the meetings convened by the Presidium. These meetings shall be chaired by the Speaker or a Deputy Speaker of the Saeima.

(2) The agenda of a meeting of the Council of Parliamentary Groups may be amended if so requested by at least one-fifth of the members of the Council of Parliamentary Groups.

(3) Meetings of the Council of Parliamentary Groups shall be convened if so requested by the Council members who represent at least one-fifth of the Saeima Members.

194. Upon expiry of the term of office of the current Saeima, the documents of the parliamentary groups, political blocs and the Council of Parliamentary Groups shall be deposited in the Saeima archives.

### **VIII<sup>1</sup>. OTHER GROUPS OF SAEIMA MEMBERS**

*(This Division was adopted by the 6 May 1996 Law)*

194<sup>1</sup>. At least three Members may form a group of Saeima Members for promoting cooperation with parliaments of other countries or for expressing some other interests related to their work in the Saeima.

194<sup>2</sup>. The members of such a group shall notify the Presidium in writing about establishing the group, as well as about any changes in its membership.

194<sup>3</sup>. The head of a group of Saeima Members shall be elected from its members.

194<sup>4</sup>. No special funding shall be allocated for such other groups of Saeima Members.

### **IX. MEMBERS' ASSISTANTS**

195. (1) Each Saeima Member shall be entitled to have not more than two assistants. Salaries for the assistants shall be paid from the state budget; however, the total amount of remuneration for both assistants shall not exceed the amount allocated for the salary of one assistant.

(2) The duties of a Member's assistant shall be to settle all organisational, technical, consultative and other matters related to the work of a Member.

196. The obligations of a Member's assistant shall be the following:

- 1) to facilitate the Member's work in the Saeima and its committees;
- 2) to accept proposals and complaints from the electorate and to consider their submissions;
- 3) together with the heads of local governments, enterprises and organisations, to arrange appointments for the electorate to meet the Member;
- 4) to organise meetings of the Member with the electorate;
- 5) to provide the Member with the necessary information and reference materials;
- 6) to receive the electorate outside the Member's regular reception hours and, upon the Member's request, to discuss proposed issues together with the relevant officials or establishments;
- 7) to ascertain the electorate's opinion about the performance of the Saeima and its Members;
- 8) upon the Member's instructions, to provide the electorate with relevant information;
- 9) to settle administrative and technical issues related to the Member's work;
- 10) to do all paperwork for the Member.

197. Member's assistant shall have the right to be present at open meetings of the Saeima committees on behalf of the Member.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law)*

198. (1) A Member's assistant shall be hired and dismissed by the Secretary General of the Saeima Administration upon the Member's recommendation and in conformity with the provisions of the Labour Law.

(2) The employment contract is concluded for one of the following terms:

- 1) for the Member's term of office;
- 2) for a specified term not shorter than six months with the possibility to extend the term. If a Member's mandate ends before the end of the employment contract term, the employment contract with the Member's assistant terminates on the day the Member's mandate ends.

*(As amended by the 2 November 2006 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

199. A Member has the right to use the amount of money (or part of it) intended for the remuneration of the work of an assistant in order to pay for work completed under contract.

200. The Saeima Administration shall issue a Member's assistant a standard identification card.

*(As amended by the 7 October 1998 Law and the 15 October 2015 Law)*

## Transitional Provisions

*(As adopted by the 11 December 2008 Law)*

1. From 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2008, in accordance with the provisions of the second sentence of paragraph 1 of Article 12; paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of Article 12; as well as paragraph 2 of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima, the average salary in the country's public sector in 2006 as published in the official report of the Central Statistical Bureau shall be used as the reference amount, and a coefficient of 1.1 shall be applied.

*(As amended by the 11 December 2008 Law)*

2. From 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2009, in accordance with the provisions of the second sentence of paragraph 1 of Article 12; paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of Article 12; as well as paragraph 2 of Article 14, the average salary in the country's public sector in 2007 as published in the official report of the Central Statistical Bureau shall be used as the reference amount, and a coefficient of 0.812 shall be applied.

*(As amended by the 11 December 2008 Law)*

3. Until the Saeima Public Relations Department becomes operative, the Saeima Submissions Bureau shall provide the Saeima Mandate, Ethics and Submissions Committee with the information on submissions received by the Bureau and on consideration of these submissions by the Saeima parliamentary groups and committees.

*(As amended by the 11 December 2008 Law)*

4. From 1 July to 31 December 2009, a Member's salary set forth in accordance with the provisions of the third sentence, paragraph 1 of Article 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be decreased by 20%.

*(As supplemented by the 18 June 2009 Law)*

5. From 1 July to 31 December 2009, the lump-sum payment set forth in paragraph 3 of Article 13 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be paid in the amount of one average monthly salary.

*(As supplemented by the 11 June 2009 Law)*

6. From 1 July to 31 December 2009, the reimbursement sum set forth in subparagraph 2, paragraph 2 of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be decreased by 20%, and the reimbursement sum set forth in paragraph 3 of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be decreased by 30%.

*(As supplemented by the 11 June 2009 Law)*

7. From 1 July to 31 December 2009, the reimbursement sum set forth in subparagraph 1, paragraph 2 of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be decreased by 20%.

*(As supplemented by the 11 June 2009 Law)*

8. The new wording of Article 186 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall enter into force with the convocation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Saeima.

*(As supplemented by the 11 June 2009 Law)*

9. From 1 July to 31 December 2009, remuneration for participation in the work of the Saeima standing committees as set forth in paragraph 3 of Article 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima shall be decreased by 20%.

*(As supplemented by the 18 June 2009 Law)*

10. If in 2009 the number of Saeima staff members is reduced, preference for retaining a staff member will be given to the person who works more effectively and has a higher qualification. If work effectiveness and qualifications do not differ, preference will be given to the staff member who has no other regular source of income. If the staff member has no other regular source of income, the provisions of the Labour Law apply.

For the purpose of interpreting this point, the following are deemed as regular sources of income:

- 1) salary or wages received from another employer which are equal to or exceed the minimum monthly salary, and the employment period set forth in the work order or work contract is longer than three months;
- 2) old-age pension or service pension if the person has the legal right to receive such a pension, regardless of whether or not he/she actually receives the pension.

*(As supplemented by the 16 July 2009 Law)*

11. In 2009, a Saeima staff member who according to Article 112 of the Labour Law has the right to receive severance pay shall receive the severance pay in the following amount:

- 1) in the amount of one average monthly salary if the length of employment has been less than 10 years;
- 2) in the amount of one and a half monthly salaries if the length of employment has been 10 or more years.

*(As supplemented by the 16 July 2009 Law)*

12. From 1 January to 31 December 2010, in applying the provisions of the first and second sentences of paragraph 1, as well as paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of Article 12; paragraph 3 of Article 13; and paragraph 2 of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima, the sum to be paid shall be calculated by using the same guidelines which were in force on 31 December 2009.

*(As supplemented by the 10 December 2009 Law)*

13. The amendments to paragraph 1 of Article 149 regarding the number and names of the standing committees, the amendments supplementing paragraph 4 of Article 149, as well as the amendments to Article 184 regarding the deletion of the words "on the basis of the proposals of the Administrative Committee", shall come into effect on 1 April 2012.

14. Chapter 5<sup>4</sup> of this Law shall come into force on the same day as the amendments to the State Audit Office Law setting forth the obligation of the State Audit Office to submit to the Saeima a written annual report on the functioning of the State Audit Office and to present such a report at a Saeima sitting.

*(As supplemented by the 19 January 2012 Law and the 16 October 2014 Law)*

This Law shall take effect as of 1 September 1994.

The Law was adopted by the Saeima on 28 July 1994.

President G. ULMANIS

Riga, 18 August 1994

#### Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia

1. The aim of the Code of Ethics for Members of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – the Code of Ethics) is to establish high standards of behaviour and thereby increase society's trust in the work of the Saeima.

2. The Code of Ethics is equally binding on all Members of the Saeima.

3. The Code of Ethics is an integral part of the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima. It sets forth principles, rules and recommendations regarding the professional ethics that Members of Parliament must observe in their attitude towards work, their relations with other Members of Parliament, other institutions and society.

4. A Member of Parliament honestly abides by the solemn oath he/she took as a Member of the Saeima.

5. A Member of Parliament respects and always complies with the Constitution, the Rules of Procedure of the Saeima and other regulatory documents.

6. A Member of Parliament is morally responsible to society for his/her activities (speeches, voting, etc.).

A Member of Parliament does not use pressure by the government officials, parties or other persons as an excuse for voting against his/her conscience.

A Member of Parliament acknowledges his/her mistakes and tries to correct them.

7. A Member of Parliament avoids using words, gestures and other actions that can be insulting and does not use offensive or otherwise inappropriate statements that may dishonour the Saeima. A Member of Parliament bases his/her decisions on facts and their fair interpretation, as well as on logical argumentation.

8. A Member of Parliament does not use statements and does not support actions that may be regarded as incitement to illegal activity.

A Member of Parliament observes the principles of human rights and does not appeal to race, gender, skin colour, nationality, language, religious beliefs, social origin or state of health to justify his/her argumentation.

9. A Member of Parliament does not allow a conflict of personal or national interests and tries to avoid situations that may create the appearance that such a conflict exists.

A Member of Parliament refuses an invitation, does not participate in an event and tries to avoid any other situations that may give grounds for suspecting the presence of a conflict of interest or that may impair the prestige of the Saeima.

10. A Member of Parliament refrains from participating in a Saeima parliamentary investigative committee if his/her activity is related to the matter or period under investigation.

11. A Member of Parliament does not use his/her influence to illegally achieve favourable decision by a public administrative institution.

12. A Member of Parliament refrains from using for personal benefit or the benefit of

persons associated with him/her confidential information acquired by virtue of his/her office.

13. A Member of Parliament uses the property and resources given to him/her as frugally as possible.

14. In the buildings of the Saeima, a Member of Parliament is properly attired and groomed. A Member of Parliament does not frequent public places if he/she is under the influence of alcohol or psychoactive substances or presents a grossly indecorous appearance.

15. A Member of Parliament complies with the lawful requests made by law enforcements officers.

16. A Member of Parliament is polite to employees of the Saeima and of other public or municipal institutions, as well as to every member of society.

17. A Member of Parliament keeps learning and acquires knowledge about democratic and political culture in his/her own country and other countries.

18. A Member of Parliament perfects his/her rhetoric knowledge and use of the Latvian language.

19. A Member of Parliament refrains from showing off on the Saeima rostrum.

20. In his/her private life, a Member of Parliament does not discredit the prestige of the Saeima or raise doubts about his/her ability to honestly fulfil the duties as a Member of Parliament.

21. A Member of Parliament regularly keeps open ties with society.

22. A Member of Parliament is responsive to society and the mass media.

23. A Member of Parliament does not avoid answering questions unless the questions pertain to confidential information or information related to his/her private life.

*(Adopted on 2 March 2006)*

*Last amended on 14 June 2016*

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