

I n t e r n a l R u l e s o f t h e A s s o c i a t i o n F e m m e s d ' E u r o p e (a . i . s . b . l .) .

Article 1: Subject

These Internal Rules are enacted by the Administrative Council (AC) of the Association Femmes d'Europe a.i.s.b.l. They complete and make explicit the Belgian legal provisions and the Association's Statutes.

Article 2: Activities

The Association shall ensure, through publications and meetings, that its members are well informed about its life, its activities and the projects supported by the Association.

Activities and events In the name of the Association's may not be organised without prior consultation with the Vice-President of Events and the endorsement of the AC. Each event proposed must be supported by budget estimates. Sponsorship of gala events must be guaranteed prior to the event. All the profits from these events are to be transferred to the general funds of the Association.

Article 3: Languages

The working languages of the Association are French and English. In the case of a difference of opinion the interpretation rests with the French version of the Internal Rules.

Article 4: Funds

The general fund of the Association shall comprise:

- membership subscriptions,
- profits from activities and events organised by the Association and its members
- subsidies, gifts and legacies

It shall be used as a fund for financing the projects after setting aside:

- an operating fund to finance administrative and management expenses,
- a reserve fund,

Article 5: Accounts and Management of funds

The accounts of the Association shall be kept by the Treasurer, assisted by a Vice-Treasurer. They shall be submitted for audit, at the end of each financial year, to an outside agent or financial institution.

A provisional six-monthly balance shall be established by the Treasurer in January and in June. On this basis the AC will determine the amounts to be distributed as referred to in 5b.

The funds shall be managed in agreement with the Executive Bureau (EB).

All bank accounts in the name of the Association must be managed by the Treasurers. No account in the name of a group will be permitted.

Article 6: Selection of projects.

Aid to countries of the European Union is the priority of the Association

The choice of projects to be granted financial aid will take the following factors into account:

-Each project must be presented by a member of the Association who will take responsibility for it and ensure its follow up

- Aid is to be given to groups or organisations, in particular those working with women and children.
- Preference is to be given to projects with little or no public funding.

- The aid should be for a specific purpose, clearly defined.
 - A guarantee that the money will be used only in accordance with the project accepted.
- All projects must be presented to the Administrative Council and it alone will be responsible for approving them.

Article 6a: Project Committee

The Projects Committee, the composition of which must be approved each year by the Administrative Council, has as its objectives:

- to examine and select the all projects, except those chosen by the groups.
- to verify the annual project, chosen by each of the groups.

The Project Committee is chaired by the Vice-President in charge of projects.

Article 6b: Distribution of Funds

1. Projects of the first semester: group projects

All groups have the right to an equal amount. Each group chooses a project. Projects are submitted for approval to the Administrative Council after they have been verified by the Projects Committee. The Vice-president in charge of projects sets the terms, conditions timetable.

The money allocated to the group projects will be paid no later than June;

If the presented project is not accepted by the AC , the group must chose another project, proposed by the Projects Committee.

2. Projects of the second semester

During the second semester, priority will be given to projects to countries outside the European Union,

Projects are examined and selected by the Projects Committee and presented to the Administrative Council for approval.

The Vice-President for Projects will establish the terms, conditions and timetable.

The total amounts allocated to the projects of the second semester shall be paid no later than December.

3. Rapid Aid Fund

The amount granted to this Fund is budgeted bi-annually (January and June) and is voted by the Administrative Council. This Fund is intended to finance exceptional cases of extreme emergency. If necessary during the course of the semester, the amount of the Rapid Aid Fund may be reviewed.

The amounts allocated under this heading shall not exceed the average amount of the money allocated to each of the group projects.

The Projects Committee shall study the applications for Rapid Aid and present them to the Administrative Council as quickly as possible. If the latter is unable to meet in time to respond to the application, the Projects Committee, in agreement with the Treasurer and a member of the Executive Bureau, is authorised to release the required sum and make a report to the A C.

The unused part of the Rapid Aid Fund shall return to the general fund of the Association at the end of the financial year.

Article 7: Members

To become a member of the Association a woman must support its aims and must satisfy the conditions of article 6 of the Statutes.

Her application must be presented by two members of the Association, one being one of the representatives of the group she wishes to join. Her application must be ratified by the AC. The

member shall have a free choice of the group to which she may wish to belong, conforming to article 6 of the Statutes.

Article 8: Decisions

There shall be no appeal against the AC's decision relating to the granting or withdrawal of membership of the Association.

However, in the case of withdrawal the person concerned shall be informed in writing in advance of the pending decision and has a right to a hearing before the General Assembly before a final decision is taken.

Article 9: List of Members

The list of members as well as the Association's component bodies shall be published and sent to the members annually.

The list is for personal use only and must never be used for commercial or political purposes.

Article 10: Membership fees

Membership fees shall be due each year on the 30st of January. Members who have not paid their membership fee by this date will lose in the current year :

- their right to vote at the AGM
- the inclusion of their name in the membership list.

If the membership fee is changed, the new amount shall not be levied until the next financial year.

In case of loss of membership, the annual membership for the current year remains the property of the Association.

Payment of the membership fee entitles members to the Association's periodical publications.

Each member shall advise the Association's Secretariat of any change of address.

Article 11a: Categories and formation of Groupes

Members organize themselves into groups.

a) Categories of existing groups:

- 1) 15 national groups each representing one member state of the European Union;
- 2) the EFTA group considered as one entity
- 3) the adherent members group considered as one entity

b) Formation of a new national group:

In order to form a national group, different from the existing groups, the new member countries of the EU should in principle have (seven, nine, fifteen,.....?) members of the same nationality

Countries of the enlargement who do not yet have a national group may present a project for the second semester directly to the project committee

N.B. Each member of the Association is always free to choose the group to which she would like to belong.

Following a democratic procedure, each group submits for ratification by the AGM the names of three representatives to the administrative council. Any two of these representatives attend the administrative council.

Article 11b: Luxembourg group (the group based in Luxembourg – corresponding members)

The Luxembourg group was founded by a member of the AC

The group shall have a maximum number of **50 members**

However the **conditions** required for the functioning of the group are

- 1) The term of office for the head of the group is two years. This term is renewable twice.
- 2) She may attend meetings of the AC, where she has a consultative voice
- 3) The head of the Luxembourg group in Brussels is the liaison between this group and the AC. She has equal responsibility for the activities of the group.
An authorisation either by the president or the vice-president in charge of events is required for all public events.
- 4) Funds raised by the group must be transferred to the general bank account of the Association in Brussels no later than one month after each event.
- 5) The head of the group must send of the planned activities to the Executive Bureau as well as the annual account
- 6) In the event of one of these conditions not being met, this group would be abolished by the AC with immediate effect.
- 7) Any money credited to their account would be transferred to the general bank account of the Association in Brussels

Article 11c: Dissolution of a Group

Any group consisting of less than (five, seven, nine.....) effective members should be abolished.

Article 12: Groups: Meetings

Groups meet individually at least three times a year on the initiative of the head of the group or on the demand of one tenth of their members.

They should meet particularly to discuss in good time the humanitarian projects, proposed by the group to the AC, as well as the events which they plan to organise.

Article 13: Groups: Procedure

Decisions at a group meeting are taken by a simple majority of raised hands except in the matter of an election or on questions touching a member personally: the vote is then secret. One of the elected representatives of the group chairs the meeting

Article 14: Groups: Notification

Members of a group are notified of meetings at least two weeks in advance. It is advisable to send the minutes of the meeting to all members of the group

Within the spirit and the limitations of the Statutes and the current Internal Rules, each group contributes to the activities of the Association, viz:

- By participating in the events of other groups, as well as in the Christmas Bazaar, the Gala evenings, the General Assembly, the ceremony of the Presentation of the Projects etc.
- By organizing, as a group, for the purpose of fundraising, cultural, sportive or other events, open to members of the Association and their invited guests.
- By proposing worthy humanitarian projects to which the Association can make a financial contribution.

Article 16: Groups: Role of the representatives, nominated by the group

Representatives are responsible for the good conduct of their group as well as the coordination of group activities with those of the Association. In addition they are charged especially with the integration of new members, with the administration of the group and with the relationship between the group and the AC and the EB. They report back to their members on AC meetings and on passed and future events.

Article 17: Annual General Meeting - Notification

The AGM shall be held within three months of the end of the financial year.

Notice of the meeting shall be sent out at least eight days in advance and shall be accompanied by the agenda, the annual accounts, the provisional budget, the list of candidates for the various offices and, where appropriate, proposals for changing the membership fees.

If the AGM has on its agenda an amendment to the Statutes or the dissolution of the Association, the notice shall contain, in the first case, the old and the new texts of the articles concerned and, in the second case, the reason for the dissolution, the accounts of the Association for the last financial year and also a concrete proposal for distribution of any residual assets.

Article 18: Annual General Meeting - Representation

An effective member wishing to be represented at the AGM shall provide her proxy with a signed and dated proxy form.

An effective member may represent up to six other voting members. She must produce on request before the AGM a proxy form from each member she is representing.

Voting by proxy is only permitted on items appearing on the agenda.

During a AGM one or more amendments on points under debate may be proposed for a vote by a member present, provided that this member obtains the support of two members present and of different nationalities.

Article 19: Administrative Council: Representatives

Representatives of groups shall be elected for a term of office of two years, renewable twice consecutively. If no candidate presents herself, the AC can request the incumbent to continue for one more year.

Their names shall be communicated in writing to the President at the latest one month before the AGM.

Article 20: Administrative Council: Executive Bureau

The members of the EB shall be elected, in accordance with article 27 of the Statuts from present or former members of the AC with the exception of the Treasurer and Vice-Treasurer who may be chosen from the whole effective membership.

One of the Vice-Presidents may be chosen from the whole effective membership on condition that she has held an important responsibility within the Association. (organisation of a gala, member of the Project Committee, chief editor of the Newsletter, etc.)

The members of the EB must have a fluent knowledge of either English or French with a good understanding of the other language. A fair representation of both languages in the EB is preferable.

Election : Each candidate shall be supported by effective members from at least three groups. The names of the candidates should be presented in writing to the President by the 15th January.

Term of Office: The term of office in each function shall be two years, renewable twice consecutively. If no candidate presents herself for the post of Treasurer or Vice-Treasurer the AC can request the incumbent to continue for a further year.

Duties: At the first meeting of the EB following the AGM the President and the Vice-Presidents will apportion their tasks. The President has the final say.

Article 21: Administrative Council: Publication

Members shall be informed of the composition of the AC and EB in the next edition of the Newsletter of the Association.

Article 22: Administrative Council: Liability

Except in cases of serious or deliberate error, members of the Association shall not be personally liable for actions carried out in the name or in the interest of the Association. No steps involving the Association can be made without the permission of the President and without the signatures of the Vice-President in charge and the head of the group or the member who has taken the initiative.

Article 23: Administrative Council: Resignation

Except in cases of unforeseen circumstances, the resignation of a member from the AC must be addressed in writing to the President of the Association at least one month before the elections.

Article 24: Administrative Council: Dismissal

The AC may propose to the AGM the dismissal of a member of the AC only after granting a hearing to the person concerned, if the latter so requests.

Article 25: Administrative Council: Representation of the Executive Bureau

In case of temporary absence, the President, will be replaced by the Secretary General or if she is not present by one of the Vice-Presidents .

The Treasurer may be replaced by the Vice-Treasurer if she is unable to attend.

The President of the meeting shall have the deciding vote.

Article 26: Administrative Council: Replacement

If a representative of a group vacates her position during the term of office the group is authorised to appoint a replacement.

If the Presidency falls vacant the AC shall elect one of the Vice-Presidents to this office.

If the Treasurer resigns during her term of office, she shall be replaced by the Vice-Treasurer.

The other members of the EB will not be replaced.

Any replacement shall last only until the next AGM, at which a new Bureau executif will be elected.

Article 27: Administrative Council: Meetings

AC meetings shall be governed by Art.22 of the Statutes.

Decisions taken by the AC shall be recorded in the minutes, which shall be signed by both the President of the meeting and by the Secretary General and then sent to members of the AC and the heads of the working groups.

The minutes shall be approved by the AC at its next meeting.

Article 28: Administrative Council: Voting procedure

In the AC voting shall be by show of hands, except for decisions concerning a member or a delicate matter. In those cases the vote must be secret. A secret ballot may also be required by the President or by at least four members for any other decision.

Subject to the provisions of article 30 of the Internal Rules, decisions shall be taken by simple majority.

In the EB decisions shall be taken by simple majority, the President having the deciding vote.

Article 29: Special Committees

The EB with the agreement of the AC, may set up specialised working committees to carry out defined tasks either on a permanent or a temporary basis.

These committees may include any member of the Association and may, in agreement with the AC, consult external experts.

They shall be chaired by an effectif member and placed under the authority of the AC, which shall lay down their terms of reference and to which they shall be accountable. In other respects, they shall be free to organise their work.

The chairman of a special committee is invited to the discussions of the AC. Members are notified of the existence of special committees and their membership in the Newsletters of the Association

The existing special committees are listed (alphabetical order:) Bazaar, Bridge, Events, Newsletter, Press and Publicity, Projects.

Article 30: Amendments

Amendments to the present Internal Rules must be presented to the AC. They will be voted at the following meeting. The new text must be approved by two-thirds of the members of the AC (present or represented). After its approval members are notified in the Association's newsletter.

Article 31: These Internal Rules shall enter into force on They shall be published and made available to the members for consultation at the Association's office.

Article 32: All matters not provided for by the present IR shall be decided by the Executive Bureau. The Administrative Council shall be informed at the following meeting.