



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF NURSES ASSOCIATIONS (EFN)

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

Whereas in 1971 the Standing Committee of Nurses in association with the EEC was established in Bern in accordance with the constitution approved on the date of establishment;

Whereas in 1975, during a meeting which took place in Brussels, the Standing Committee of Nurses in association with the EEC adopted a new version of the constitution;

Whereas in 1981, during a meeting which took place in Athens, the Standing Committee of Nurses in association with the EEC approved an amendment of the constitution and a change in the name of the Committee; the Committee continued to exist under the name Standing Committee of Nurses of the EU;

Whereas in 1997, during a meeting which took place in Delphi, the Standing Committee of Nurses of the EU approved a change in the name of the Committee and a new version of the constitution, in order to better define the role and the function of the Committee and to better promote its objects;

Whereas in 2002, during a meeting which took place in Stockholm, the Standing Committee of Nurses of the EU decided that, in order to be in conformity with the Belgian law, governing the PCN, a revised and corrected constitution was adopted and published in the Belgian Government Gazette;

Whereas in 2004, during a meeting which took place in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, the Standing Committee of Nurses of the EU decided that, in order to be in conformity with the new Belgian laws on non-profit organisations and with the process of expansion of the EU, the name of the Committee was changed and a revised and corrected constitution was adopted and published in the Belgian Government Gazette;

IT IS DECIDED that the former Standing Committee of Nurses of the EU will continue to exist under the name European Federation of Nurses Associations, with the acronym EFN, under the conditions of the constitution and of the internal regulations.

Article 1 NAME

Fédération Européenne des Associations Infirmières (EFN)
European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN)

All other translations of the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) in the official languages of the full members and new members affiliating with the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) will be indicated in the annexes of the internal regulations.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) is governed by the Belgian law on international non-profit organisations and foundations of 27 June 1921, as amended by the law of 2 May 2002.

Article 2 LANGUAGE

The working languages of the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) shall be English and French.

Article 3 ROLE and PURPOSE

The European Federation of Nurses Associations has amongst others scientific and educational aims.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations shall strengthen the status and the practice of the nursing profession and promote the interests of nurses in the European Union and the wider Europe.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations will act as a liaison vis-à-vis the European Union, the Council of Europe and other institutions at European level.

The European Federation of Nurses Associations is autonomous and independent vis-à-vis any other international organisation. The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) will continue to work in close collaboration with the International Council of Nurses (ICN).

Article 4 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the European Federation of Nurses Associations are the following:

- a) To study and take action on issues relating to the health of the European population and to the nursing profession.
- b) To provide updated information on the nursing profession in the European Union and the wider Europe and to notify the European institutions and the national nurses associations of that information.
- c) To present its opinions and recommendations on all matters within its competence to institutions in the European Union and the wider Europe, and to take any actions it deems appropriate to ensure that these are duly considered.
- d) To communicate and co-operate with other organisations and bodies representing health care professions in Europe.
- e) To ensure that nurses and nursing are central in the formulation of Social and Health Policy and its implementation in the European Union and in the wider Europe.
- f) To support and facilitate equal access to high-quality health services in the European Union and in the wider Europe.
- g) To lobby to ensure appropriate ratios of competent nurses according to population need
- h) To increase its representation in the European Union and in the wider Europe and to develop its role as a bridging organisation between national nurses associations and the decision makers in Europe.

Article 5 HEADQUARTERS

The head office of the European Federation of Nurses Associations is established on the territory of a municipality of the Brussels Region. It is currently located at Clos du Parnasse, 11b, 1050 Brussels. The head office can be transferred to any other place in the Brussels region by simple decision of the European Federation of Nurses Associations published within one month after the decision was taken in the Annexes of the Belgian Government Gazette.

Article 6 MEMBERSHIP

The European Federation of Nurses Associations consists of the following categories of members:

1. Full membership:

- a) Full membership is automatically granted to NNAs from countries of the European Union.
- b) Full membership will be granted to NNAs, which are associate members, based on criteria outlined in the Internal Regulations.
- c) All full members of EFN need to be full member of International Council of Nurses (ICN).

2. Associate membership may be granted to:

- a) NNAs from countries in membership of the Council of Europe provided that the NNA is a member of ICN.
- b) Up to three representatives of the European specialist and generic interest groups for nurses, so long as they comply with terms, conditions and modalities defined in the internal regulations.

3. Observer Status is granted to:

International organisations, European institutions and organisations and any category of persons that is deemed suitable, as determined by the General Assembly.

A list of full members, associate members and observers is provided in the annexes of the internal regulations.

The full members, associate members and observers are individuals or legal entities established in accordance with the laws and customs of their country of origin.

Article 7 REPRESENTATION OF THE MEMBERS

1. Full Member's Delegates and Substitutes

Each full member of the European Federation of Nurses Associations appoints a delegate and a substitute delegate. These persons must be nurses and members of the association they represent.

The delegate has the right to vote on behalf of the association he/she represents. The substitute delegate has the right to attend meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. Should the appointed delegate be absent, its substitute will be vested with the same rights as the appointed delegate.

2. Associate Member's Delegates and Substitutes

- Each NNA associate member of EFN appoints one delegate, who will represent it, and a substitute delegate. These persons must be nurses and active members of the association they represent.

The delegate of the NNA has the right to vote on behalf of the association he/she represents. The substitute delegate has the right to attend meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. In case of a delegate's absence, the substitute will execute voting rights.

- The specialist and/or generic interest grouping appoints up to three delegates, who will represent them, and three substitute delegates ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd. These persons must be nurses and active members of the specialist groups and/or the generic interest grouping they represent.

The delegates of the grouping have the right to vote on behalf of the specialist and generic interest grouping they represent. The substitute delegates have the right to attend meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. In case of a delegate's absence, the substitute in attendance, who has the highest rank, will execute voting rights.

3. Observer representatives

Each observer appoints one representative.

Article 8 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

I. RIGHTS

1. Full Members

The full members are entitled to attend the meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. They have the right to deliberate and to vote on all issues.

2. Associate Members

Associate members are entitled to attend the meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. They have the right to speak on all issues. They also have the right to vote on any issues, which do not relate to the constitution, the internal regulations, the dissolution of the European Federation of Nurses Associations, membership fees, budgets, accounts and election for office holders and members of the Executive Committee.

3. Observers

The observers are authorised to attend the meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. They have the right to participate in the deliberations upon invitation of the president. They have no right to vote.

II. OBLIGATIONS

The full members, associate members and observers pay annual fees, as determined by the General Assembly.

Article 9 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the EUROPEAN FEDERATION of NURSES ASSOCIATIONS

The General Assembly is the governing body of the European Federation of Nurses Associations.

1. Composition

The General Assembly consists of the full members, associate members and observers, all represented as described in article 6, with voting rights as described in article 7.

2. Meetings

The General Assembly will be convened at least twice a year for its ordinary meetings.

An extraordinary General Assembly can be convened upon decision by the Executive Committee.

An extraordinary General Assembly shall also be convened upon the request of at least six full members. The requests must be in writing, must indicate the reasons and must be sent to the Executive Committee.

3. Quorum-majority

The presence of minimum 50% of all full members is required to make decisions.

Decisions are taken by a simple majority of the delegates or substitute delegates being present and voting, except decisions to amend the constitution.

In case of a tie, the president has a casting vote.

4. Powers

Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution, all powers rest with the General Assembly, including approving the accounts and the budget.

5. The minutes from the meetings are sent to all members entitled to attend the meetings no later than six weeks after the meeting.

Article 10 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The Executive Committee consist of the president, the vice-president, the treasurer and four delegates elected by and from the full members.
2. The Executive Committee meets once between each General Assembly. Extraordinary meeting shall be convened upon decision by the president or any two other members of the Executive Committee. Minutes of the meetings will be sent to the members before the General Assembly following the meeting of the Executive Committee.
3. The presence of five members of the Executive Committee is required to make decisions.
4. The decisions are taken by simple majority of the votes of Executive Committee members being present. In case of a tie, the president has a casting vote.
5. The powers of the Executive Committee are the following:
 - preparation of issues to be discussed in the General Assembly;
 - follow-up of decisions taken by the General Assembly;
 - representing the European Federation of Nurses Associations in meetings with the Commission of the European Union and other organisations;
 - representing the European Federation of Nurses Associations in legal proceedings;
 - preparation of the balance sheet of the previous year and the following year for approval by the General Assembly;
 - appointing the General Secretary and other staff and define the job description for those positions.

Article 11 THE PRESIDENT

The president is elected by and from the full members. His/her term of office is two years and can be renewed for two consecutive terms. Therefore, the total term of office of the president cannot exceed six years.

Elections will be held during the last meeting of years with odd numbers. The president chairs meetings of the European Federation of Nurses Associations and ensures its representation within the framework of the constitution, the internal regulations and any other regulations.

The president is authorised to sign documents and contracts on behalf of the European Federation of Nurses Associations.

Article 12 THE VICE-PRESIDENT

The vice-president is elected by and from the full members.

His/her term of office is two years and can be renewed for two consecutive terms. Therefore, the total term of office of the vice-president cannot exceed six years.

Elections will be held during the last meeting of years with even numbers.

The vice-president acts on behalf of the president during his/her absence, on account of illness or any other reason.

Article 13 THE TREASURER

The treasurer is elected by and from the full members.

The term of office of the treasurer is two years and can be renewed for two consecutive terms. Therefore, the total term of office of the treasurer cannot exceed six years.

Elections will be held during the last meeting of years with odd numbers.

Article 14 DELEGATES ELECTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Four delegates are elected by and from the full members. Their term of office is two years and can be renewed for two consecutive terms. Therefore, the total term of office of the delegates cannot exceed six years.

Two delegates to the Executive Committee will be elected during the years with odd numbers and the two other delegates will be elected during the years with even numbers.

Article 15 VACANCIES

In the event that any member of the Executive Committee is unable to complete her/his term of office, another member will be elected by and from the full members. This member will complete the term of office of his/her predecessor. This term of office can be renewed under the conditions applicable to the specific position. The completion of a term of office by a member, who is elected to fill a vacancy, will not be taken into consideration as far as total term of office is concerned.

Article 16 ELECTIONS

The conditions for election of the Executive Committee are detailed in the internal regulations.

Article 17 FUNDING

The funding of the European Federation of Nurses Associations shall be provided by payment of annual fees by the members, as well as by any other funding sources, such as subsidies and donations.

All funds are to be used exclusively to promote the objectives of the European Federation of Nurses Associations.

The General Assembly will determine the amount of fees to be paid by each category of members.

Article 18 EXCLUSION AND WITHDRAWAL from MEMBERSHIP

1. Exclusion

Membership will be automatically discontinued in the event that a member does not fulfil anymore the criteria for membership. The President will notify the member of its exclusion in writing.

The non-payment of annual fees or non-compliance with the Constitution may lead to the exclusion of a member, as detailed in the Internal Regulations.

The association that faces possible exclusion will have the possibility to submit its defence in writing or during the ordinary or extraordinary meeting where the issue will be discussed.

During the deliberations, the General Assembly will take into consideration the justification put forward by the member. If the General Assembly does not accept the justification, the member concerned immediately loses its membership. The president notifies the member of its exclusion in writing.

A decision on exclusion has to be made by at least 2/3 majority of full members being present and voting.

2. Withdrawal

Each member can notify its withdrawal from the European Federation of Nurses Associations, by means of a letter sent to the president. The withdrawal takes effect by the end of the year, provided that the notification was sent no later than 30 June the same year.

Article 19 AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

A proposal to amend the constitution may be made at the formal request of five full members.

All requests for amendments of the constitution must be received by the Executive Committee no later than three months before the date of the ordinary meeting during which the requests will be discussed. The Executive Committee notifies the full members of the request no later than two months prior to the date of the meeting.

The associate members and observers are not entitled to propose amendments of the constitution, nor to vote on a proposed amendment.

Decisions relating to the constitution of the European Federation of Nurses Associations require a three quarters majority of full members being present and voting. The presence of three quarters of all full members is required to constitute a quorum.

Article 20 INTERPRETATION

Any disputes relating to the interpretation of the constitution or the internal regulations will be settled by the full members by a simple majority of votes, providing a minimum of 50% of all full members are present.

Article 21 DISSOLUTION

At least ten full members can propose the dissolution of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. The proposal must be put forward in writing to the Executive Committee. The proposal as well as an explanatory note will be sent to all full members no later than three months prior to the

date of the meeting during which the proposal will be discussed. Each full member will at the same time receive a voting paper.

The voting paper must be signed by the delegate and the president of the member association and must be received by the Executive Committee at the latest four weeks after the general assembly where the discussion on the dissolution took place. The decision to dissolve the European Federation of Nurses Associations must be taken by at least two thirds of all full members.

Associate members and observers cannot propose the dissolution of the European Federation of Nurses Associations. Neither are they entitled to vote on a dissolution proposal.

In case of dissolution of the European Federation of Nurses Associations, the General Assembly decides on the use of the available capital. It must in any case be used for a charitable purpose.