

STATUTES OF THE EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM FOR MULTILINGUALISM*

*The contents of this document have been approved by the members of the ECSPM
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TITLE 1: NAME, PLACE, DURATION, AND LEGAL STATUS

- 1.1. An international non-profit association is established. The name of the association is: "The European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism" or "ECSPM" in its abbreviated form.
- 1.2. This association will carry on the work of the Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism which was launched by the European Commission (E.C.), with the support of the Directorate of Education and Culture in 2009, and re-launched in 2012, involving 29 European networks and/or organisations that were mandated to work together to develop: (a) coherent plans to raise Europeans' awareness regarding the value and the opportunities that Europe's linguistic diversity provides, (b) effective strategies which might make it possible for Europeans to learn at least two languages in addition to their mother tongue, starting from an early age, and (c) proposals with which to facilitate the mainstreaming of multilingualism in relevant EU programmes and policies.
- 1.3. The association's registered office is established in Denmark: Lyngbyvej 32D, 2.t.h., DK-2100 Copenhagen. Therefore, the procedures, responsibilities and rules of the European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism (henceforth ECSPM) shall be interpreted under Danish Law. If the ECSPM office is transferred to another address in Denmark, the members are notified and the new address is announced on the ECSPM website. If it is relocated to another jurisdiction, ECSPM procedures must be reviewed and made amenable to the law in the new jurisdiction.
- 1.4. The ECSPM is an independent international, non-governmental, non-profit association, which is registered according to Danish Law: Registration No. CVR 37116866.

TITLE 2: MISSION STATEMENT

The ECSPM:

- is an alliance for languages and multilingualism in Europe, and makes possible the cooperation between European, national, and international networks, organisations and associations viewing multilingualism as an asset for European economic, social, cultural development, and as a facilitator for intellectual growth, social, and personal development
- aspires to develop into an even stronger voice of Europe's civil society promoting language policies for multilingualism in all aspects of social life by way of focusing on people – their ability to use at least two languages in addition to their mother tongue, to access culture, to participate as active citizens in the EU, shaping its making, to benefit from better communication, wider employment and business opportunities
- intends to assist raise further awareness about the EU's linguistic resources, and get underway intercultural dialogue
- will continue drafting policy documents with which to advise the E.C. and member states of the EU and provide council on how to implement relevant policies effectively
- intends to ensure that the right of all students to learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue is respected, and that Europe's rich linguistic and cultural resources are maintained, as they are viewed as crucial for the future of Europe, its economic development, and its political integration.

TITLE 3: AIMS, OBJECTIVES, ROLES, ACTIVITIES

- 3.1. Understanding multilingualism as a means to cultural development, a product of quality education, a route to social cohesion, a facilitator to the mobility and employability of European citizens and an instrument for prosperity, the ECSPM sets out to be actively involved in project work having to do with multilingualism in the fields represented by its member organisations: linguistics and language (education) policy; translation, language teaching, testing and assessment; terminology and information-computer technology; the arts, culture, media and publishing.
- 3.2. It is envisaged mainly as an *electronic* platform, functioning as an on- and off-line forum for: the exchange of views, discussion of issues, drafting of language and language education policy documents, developing proposals and executing project work in groups composed of people with shared interests and expertise, proposed by the members. The ECSPM is also a structure for fostering popular and civic ownership of the concept of multi- and plurilingualism.
- 3.3. Having functioned in the past in an advisory capacity to the European Commission, and especially to the Directorate General of Education and Culture, it will continue to offer its advice to DG EAC, but will also be in communication with the DG of Translation, DG for Communication Networks, Content & Technology, DG for Informatics, DG of Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, as well as with the DG Research and Innovation, to ensure that Europe's linguistic and cultural wealth is viewed and treated as an asset for Europe, that research in related fields is funded and that education for plurilingual and intercultural competences is available for everyone.
- 3.4 The ECSPM is open to all European and international organisations actively working to: (a) advocate a more inclusive language policy in the EU, act in favour of, and suggest ways of managing linguistic diversity across the EU and within member states; (b) promote multilingualism and a plurilingual ethos of communication in educational and other social institutions, as well as in the public space, the arts and the media; (c) support translation and publishing in and from all EU languages; (d) encourage bi-, tri- and multilingual lexicographic and terminology projects; e) embrace translation and ICT as imminently important to the sustenance of Europe's linguistic wealth.
- 3.5. The association sets out to:
 - Enter into dialogue with European Institutions, including the Commission, the Parliament, the European Council, etc. in order to ensure that the principles of multilingualism and the interest in the work carried out by its members are taken into account.
 - Promote exchanges, meetings and discussions between the association's members, and encourage joint projects.
 - Provide association members with information relating to their area of interest and activity, but also provide federations, institutions, networks, organisations, and social groups with information and news about the activities of the association as a whole and of its individual members.
 - Organise or go into partnership with one conference, seminar, or symposium annually on key thematic topics that are of interest to the association's active members. It is at this event that the annual General Assembly will be held (as described in Title 7 below).
 - Oversee the promotion of good practices identified in various European countries.
 - Ensure that the dimension of linguistic diversity and intercultural communication is taken into account in the building of a Europe that is decisively more democratic, civic and social and shows greater solidarity and comradeship.

- Engage in activities which serve the purposes of the ECSPM, conveying its viewpoints to the EU and its member-state institutions, organisations and associations.

TITLE 4: MEMBERS

- 4.1 The association is made up of networks and organisations which have been full or associate members of the initially EC launched ECSPM, but they are members in name only. These and additional federations, networks, organisations and associations which may join later do not have an active role in the electronic Platform, unless they pay their annual fees which will be used exclusively to develop and maintain the association's website and the forum therein.
- 4.2 The association is open to cultural, non formal and informal education organisations interested in issues connected to multilingualism (e.g. networks, federations, foundations, professional organisations, etc.), as well as to the media with a trans-national or European-wide dimension, regrouping entities in several countries. In order to avoid duplication and have workable forms of highly committed organisations, whenever an organisation is part of a bigger structure representing its interests at the European level, it is in principle the European structures alone that take part, channelling contributions up and down the line.
- 4.3 The association is intended for non-governmental organisations of civil society only and the media. Public authorities, whether national, regional or local, are not invited to participate. Furthermore, members must meet the following criteria:
- be made up of organisations from several European countries and not of natural persons
 - be networks, organisations, etc., which constitute separate legal entities
 - carry out non-profit-making activities
 - be structured according to the principles of democratic governance
 - be engaged in furthering the public interest, contributing to process of a multilingual ethos of communication in the arts, cultural life and/or the public sphere; contributing to furthering the cause of multilingualism and language learning in formal and informal education; to the development of intercultural and plurilingual competences, as well as in facilitating the process of conveying the needs of the population, and taking these needs into consideration.
- 4.2. Rights and obligations of active members:
- 4.2.1 They may determine the ECSPM's priorities and courses of action, while they may also contribute towards its activities on a permanent basis.
- 4.2.2 They must nominate a representative, a natural person, who shall be the "contact" point with the leadership and the other members of the association, and it is this representative's responsibility to keep his/her organisation informed about the work of the ECSPM. Where applicable, any change in representative must also be brought to the attention of the Secretariat as soon as possible.
- 4.2.3 They shall be informed on a regular basis of the activities underway and be invited to take part in working groups and activities of interest to them.
- 4.2.4 When they take part in the activities, the outcomes of their participation shall be evaluated by other members.
- 4.3. Resignation—Exclusion of a member
Any member may decide to withdraw from the association with immediate effect provided that the Secretariat has been notified of the resignation by one of the means of communication laid down by the Internal Rules of Procedure. Any member that contravenes or is no longer consistent with the provisions of the statutes or Internal Rules of Procedure or

that acts in such a way that is detrimental to the association or its members may be excluded from the association on the basis of a two thirds majority vote upon the recommendation of the President and the Secretariat.

4.4. Membership fees

The amount of the annual contribution made by active members is estimated on the basis of the cost for the further development and maintenance of the ECSPM website, starting in 2016 with a flat fee of 200 euro.

TITLE 5: PARTNERS

- 5.1 The members may decide with a two thirds majority vote to sign a partnership agreement with European, national or international organisations which are not members of the ECSPM, in exceptional cases. The motion comes forth by the President and must be seconded by two members. The partnership agreement must specify the aim, objectives and duration of the partnership according to the procedure laid down by the ECSPM's Internal Rules of Procedure.
- 5.2 The partnership agreement may be either a temporary or permanent partnership and it may be signed with an organisation which is concerned with language issues and the promotion of multilingualism but these are not their principal field of activity. This organisation must share the basic aims and objectives of the ECSPM and demonstrate its commitment to the association. The partnership agreement may be signed for a specified period, not exceeding two years, after which the partnership shall automatically lapse and the organisation may apply to become a member again. Alternatively, it may be signed as a permanent partnership, announced on the ECSPM website. In either case, the members may decide with a two thirds majority vote to terminate a permanent or temporary partnership agreement if they consider that the agreement is not being respected by the partner. If the partnership is terminated, the partner organisation shall receive notification in writing and will have the right of reply.

TITLE 6: ADMINISTRATIVE BODY

- 6.1. The association's administrative body is called the "Executive Committee" and this body is in charge of the daily administration of the association, implementing the decisions made by the General Assembly and representing it in all administrative, judicial and extra judicial acts. It is equipped with all of the powers that do not fall within the sphere of competence of the General Assembly.
- 6.2. The Executive Committee is made up of a minimum of five (5) "administrators" elected by the General Assembly for a two-year term. They occupy the positions of President, Executive Committee member and General Secretary who is also in charge of the association's finances. If funding become available through project work, donations, etc., and there is a need for the position of Treasurer, the General Assembly decides whether (a) to select a member of the Executive Committee to take on this role, or (b) to elect or hire a new administrator. It is noted that administrator functions are terminated upon death, resignation, civil disability or dismissal. Dismissal is decided upon by the Executive Committee or upon a proposal by the General Assembly under the conditions laid down by the Internal Rules of Procedure.
- 6.3. The President, a de facto member of the Executive Committee, and the rest of the members are elected by the General Assembly with a two-thirds majority vote through the procedure described in the Internal Rules of Procedure.

- 6.4. The Executive Committee must meet at least three times a year and, while no proxies may be issued, it may validly deliberate if the President and half of the administrators are present.
- 6.5. Decisions are made by a two-thirds majority. Abstentions will not be taken into account. If a member of the Committee is absent from three consecutive meetings without good reason, he or she shall be considered to have resigned. In the event of a vacancy, the Committee shall be entitled to appoint a provisional replacement until the next General Assembly.
- 6.6. Meetings of the Executive Committee are convened by the President, through the Secretariat each time the interests of the association render a committee meeting necessary or at the request of one third of the Executive Committee members. In the event of the latter, the invitation must go out within three weeks from the receipt of the request. Invitations to meetings of the Executive Committee must be sent out, by any means of communication mentioned in the Internal Rules of Procedure, at least two weeks in advance. The invitation must mention the agenda, where the meeting will be held, and the date and time of the Executive Committee meeting, which may be held either as a face-to-face meeting, as a conference call or a video conference. In this case, the details of the conference call or videoconference will be provided a week in advance.
- 6.7. The minutes of Executive Committee meetings must be retained by the Secretariat and they are made available, upon official request to active members, if there is 'justified personal interest'.
- 6.8. The powers and duties of the administrators are described in the Internal Rules of Procedure. If necessary, if called for by the urgency of the matter, the President shall have the power to carry out all appropriate actions following consultation of the members of the Executive Committee.
- 6.9. Representation of the association with regard to third parties and in legal proceedings:
 - 6.9.1 All acts which commit the association, except where special powers have been granted, are signed by two administrators or by the President who will not have to justify to third parties the powers conferred upon them for this purpose.
 - 6.9.2 The association shall be represented legally either as an applicant or a defendant by two administrators or by the President alone, or by a single administrator who has been specifically appointed for this purpose by the Executive Committee.

TITLE 7: THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 7.1. The general management body of the association is called "the General Assembly". This is the highest level of authority within the association, and it has all the powers necessary for achieving the association's objectives. The General Assembly consists of all the active members of the association in good standing, and they all have one vote.
- 7.2. The General Assembly cannot delegate the following:
 - Approve the Internal Regulation (bylaws) and ratify its amendments
 - Amend the statutes
 - Elect and remove executive members
 - Discharge duties to the executive members
 - Approve budgets and accounts
 - Set the annual fee to be paid by the members
 - Ratify or exclude members
 - Dissolve the association

7.3. Convening and agenda

- 7.3.1 The General Assembly is held at least once a year, in conjunction with a conference, symposium etc., which is of interest to the members of the association (see article 3.5 #4 above). The Assembly may be held in person or by means of virtual participation, in writing.
- 7.3.2 The purpose of the annual General Assembly is to discuss issues that have been of concern to the members as outlined by the Executive Committee. Other important purposes of the General Assembly are: (a) members voting for the approval of the annual accounts and discharging the Committee as well as the Auditors, if applicable, over the past year, (b) members voting on the approval of the budget as prepared by the Executive Committee, (c) performing elections for roles mentioned in the Statutes.
- 7.3.3 Extraordinary General Assemblies can take place at the initiative of the Executive Committee members, or the President.
- 7.3.4 In the event where the General Assembly is held in person, the convocation will be sent by the Secretariat at least two months before the date of the General Assembly. This notification will be sent to the active members by e-mail or any other electronic means, and the notice will indicate the date, place and the agenda of the General Assembly proposed.
- 7.3.5 The people who may attend the General Assembly are the association's active members; i.e., those who are up to date with their membership fees for the year in question. It is these members who have the right to vote.
- 7.3.6 Each full member organisation must nominate a representative, who is a natural person, in order to participate in the General Assembly (with funding for travel and accommodation from his/her organisation) and be able to vote on the organisation's behalf. Each full member must inform the association, by any of the means of communication mentioned in the Internal Rules of Procedure, at least two weeks before the General Assembly meeting, of the identity of the representative who has been appointed for this meeting.
- 7.3.7 The General Assembly members may vote on the items of the agenda of the day by raising their hand or by using a ballot which has already been prepared (with instructions that must be followed to properly vote in writing). When a member complies with the formalities for a vote in writing, s/he will be accounted for in the attendance quorum as well as in the voting quorum. To qualify, members must communicate their intention to participate in the General Assembly at least four days before.
- 7.3.8 When the General Assembly is in writing the motions for resolutions will be sent by the Secretariat to all members electronically (via email).
- 7.3.9 An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly can be called on the request of the Executive Committee and this as many times as is deemed necessary; such a meeting must be organised when one fifth of the members introduces a written request, indicating the item(s) to be put on the agenda.
- 7.3.10 Letters of notification for the General Assembly, including the agenda, must be sent to each member at least thirty days before the meeting. Letters of notification will be transmitted by email. The General Assembly can only discuss items on the agenda, items introduced by the Executive Committee during the meeting because of their urgency, or items requested by one fifth of the members present or represented.
- 7.3.11 The President or, in the President's absence, a presiding officer selected by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote, shall chair the General Assembly. The person chairing the General Assembly shall declare the sessions open and closed, outline the agenda, lead the discussions, ensure that the rules are respected, give the floor to speakers and announce any decisions that have been made.

- 7.3.12 With the exception of an amendment to the statutes and/or to the objectives and the dissolution of the association, all decisions of the General Assembly are taken by simple majority of the valid votes of the members present or represented (50%+1). Each member is entitled to cast one vote plus maximum two proxies. Members can be represented at the General Assembly by any other member of their choice belonging to the same size of membership (individual or institutional membership as reflected by the amount of membership fee paid). A member cannot hold more than two proxies.
- 7.3.13 The General Assembly can only discuss or decide validly on amendments of the statutes if those are on the agenda and mentioned in the message of notification. Each proposal to amend the statutes must proceed from the Executive Committee or from one fifth of the members who have paid their membership fee.
- 7.3.14 Meeting quorum: The total number of members present or represented must cover at least two thirds of all members having a right to vote at the decision-making moment. Voting quorum: Decisions to amend the statutes can only be taken by a two-third majority of the votes of the members present or represented.
- 7.3.15 The General Assembly can only discuss or decide validly on amendments of the objectives or dissolution of the Association if those are on the agenda and mentioned in the letter of notification. Each proposal to amend the objectives or dissolution of the association must be initiated by the Executive Committee or from one fifth of the members who have paid their membership fee. The Executive Committee must notify members of the association at least three months before the date at which the General Assembly will have to decide upon the proposal(s) concerned.
- 7.3.16 The minutes of the General Assembly must be retained by the Secretariat and made available to active members by email.
- 7.3.17 Decisions concerning the elections of the President and Secretary shall be carried out according to the procedure laid down by the Internal Rules of Procedure.

TITLE 7: THE FINANCIAL YEAR

The association's financial year runs from the first of January to the thirty first of December each year.

TITLE 8: AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES

Any amendments to the statutes, including the decision to dissolve the association, must be made at the association's Annual General Assembly, by a two thirds majority and if the Assembly has the two thirds quorum of members present or represented.

TITLE 9: DISSOLUTION

If the association is dissolved, the General Assembly must nominate two liquidators, full members or otherwise, and determine their powers. The General Assembly must determine the end to which the association's assets must be used. This must correspond with the objectives set by the association.

TITLE 10: GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 10.1. The Statutes and registered office of the association, which is registered according to Danish Law (Registration number CVR 37116866), shall be published on the ECSPM website.
- 10.3. The Internal Rules of Procedure adopted by the General Assembly shall provide clarification, if necessary, on the various articles in these Statutes.