

**STATUTES OF THE I.A.A.E**  
**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION AUTISM-EUROPE**  
**Approved at the Extraordinary General Assembly**  
**on 6 May 2012**

## **I NAME HEADQUARTERS, DURATION**

### **ARTICLE 1: CONSTITUTION**

- 1.1 The Association shall be known as the “Association Internationale Autisme-Europe”.
- 1.2 The Association shall be governed by (i) the provisions of Title III of the Belgian Law of 27<sup>th</sup> June 1921 and any subsequent amendments, (ii) these statutes, and (iii) the internal rules of the Association
- 1.3 The Association, which is non profit making, was created by founder members, associations acting as legal entities and created in accordance with the laws and customs of their respective countries of origin. They have agreed to abide by the articles of Association. These articles have been signed by their respective qualified representatives.
- 1.4 Its headquarters shall be located in Belgium. Its present address is Rue Montoyer 39 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium. The headquarters may be transferred elsewhere in Belgium by ordinary resolution of the Council, notice of which shall be given within one month in the Moniteur Belge.
- 1.5 The duration of the Association is unlimited. It may be dissolved anytime according to Article 11 of these Statutes.

## **II AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **ARTICLE 2: AIMS**

- 2.1 The main aim of the Association is to improve the life of all those existence is affected by autism.
- 2.2 Autism is understood in accordance with the definitions formulated in the DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder) and the ICD 10 (International Classification of Diseases).
- 2.3 It is recognized that autism is the consequence of a brain disorder.
- 2.4 To realize its aim, the International Association shall:
  - 2.4.1 promote for the benefit of persons suffering from autism broadly based and multi-disciplinary actions by parents and professionals.
  - 2.4.2 promote the dignity and the rights of those concerned in the spirit of the Charter for People with Autism presented in The Hague in 1992, and of international declarations and conventions.

- 2.4.3. represent those concerned to all international institutions and liaise with other Non-Governmental Organizations sharing similar aims and objectives.
- 2.4.4. promote within Europe the improvement of legislation regarding the living conditions of those concerned.
- 2.4.5. remain vigilant as to prevent any act of negligence or abuse towards people with autism.
- 2.4.6. compare and promote experiences acquired in the care of those concerned.
- 2.4.7. promote in an appropriate way the care, education, counseling, training and well-being of all children, adolescents and adults with autism.
- 2.4.8. establish and promote exchange of information, experience and persons in order to improve the situation of people with autism.
- 2.4.9. promote research, particularly in the field of detection and early diagnosis.
- 2.4.10. disseminate and develop information on autism.
- 2.4.11. raise the funds that are necessary to support the activities of Autism-Europe

### III MEMBERS

#### ARTICLE 3: MEMBERS

- 3.1 The Association shall comprise the following categories of members:
  - 3.1.1 **Full members**, comprising national associations composed of a majority of persons with autism or parents\* of persons with autism and whose Board is composed of a majority of persons with autism or parents of persons with autism, including the founder members of the International Association Autism-Europe.
  - 3.1.2 **Affiliated members**, comprising regional organizations composed of a majority of persons with autism or parents of persons with autism and whose Board is composed of a majority of persons with autism or parents of persons with autism.
  - 3.1.3 **Associated members**, comprising other organizations.  
\* The term “parents” includes parents, siblings and close relatives of person with an autism spectrum disorder
  - 3.1.4 **Non-European members**, comprising national or regional organizations from countries that are not European.
  - 3.1.5 **Individual members**
  - 3.1.6 **Honorary members**, comprising organizations, corporations or individuals wishing to show their support for the action of Autism-Europe.
  - 3.1.7 **Provisional members**, comprising any organization wishing to join Autism-Europe as a full or affiliated member, while waiting for ratification by the General Assembly of its application.
- 3.2 Applications for membership of Autism-Europe for the categories of Full, Affiliated, Associated or non-European Membership shall be supported by at least two existing Full

or Affiliated Members whose membership has not lapsed. All such applications shall be accompanied by a copy of:

- (i) the constitution/statutes of the applicant, showing, in particular, their aims and grades of membership
- (ii) their most recent statutory accounts
- (iii) a brief account of what they have been able to achieve for autistic people to date and what they hope to achieve in the future

3.3 Applicants for all categories are required to confirm their adherence to the statutes of Autism-Europe particularly to the definition of autism and the aim of the association. All applications shall be considered first by the Council and then submitted to the General Assembly for ratification.

3.4 Membership of Autism Europe shall be terminated if:

- a) a Member resigns (A Member shall be considered as having resigned only when i) formal letter to that effect has been received by the President or the secretariat, and ii) all outstanding fees have been paid) Note: When a representative of a Member resigns, it is up to the Member to find a replacement .
- b) the death of an Individual or Honorary Member
- c) The dissolution of Autism-Europe or of the organization of the Member
- d) failure to pay the required membership fee within six months of the due date
- e) exclusion by a vote of the General Assembly for grave reasons, such exclusion being pronounced after those concerned have been interviewed and the General Assembly has ratified the decision by a majority of two thirds of the members present or represented

3.5 A Member whose membership has been terminated as above, shall have no claim on the assets of the Association.

3.6 Each Member is required to pay an annual membership fee as set by the General Assembly for their category of membership

## **IV STRUCTURE**

### **ARTICLE 4: GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

4.1 An ordinary General Assembly shall be held annually, notice of such meeting to be given by the President or in default by a Vice-President to be advertised three months in advance, by post or email, giving notice of the agenda, date, time and place.

4.2 Voting for each member, according to the college, for each round of voting:

4.2.1 Full members shall have 500 votes each (voting in person or by proxy).

- 4.2.2 Affiliated members shall have 50 votes each (voting in person or by proxy)
- 4.2.3 Associated members shall have 20 votes each (voting in person or by proxy).
- 4.2.4 Non-European members shall have 5 votes each (voting in person or by proxy).
- 4.2.5 Individual and Honorary members shall have one vote each (voting in person or by proxy).
- 4.2.6 Provisional members waiting for the ratification of their membership shall have no vote.
- 4.3 Proxy voting shall be permitted but no more than three proxy votes of others may be cast by any one individual.
- 4.4 A quorum of one half of the possible votes is required for any meeting involving a ballot
- 4.5 Resolutions shall be passed by absolute majority (half plus one) of the members present or represented. In the case of a tie the votes of full members shall prevail.
- 4.6 The decisions of the Assembly shall be recorded and retained by the Secretary. The record shall be available for inspection by members.
- 4.7 The Assembly shall have full powers to implement the objects of the Association . Deliberations at any meeting shall be confined to matters on the agreed agenda.
- 4.8 Decisions regarding matters relevant to the European Economic Area (EEA) shall be taken by those members who are from a member state of the EEA.
- 4.9 The Assembly shall examine the policies and activities of the Association on the basis of reports submitted to it by the Council.  
It has the power to:
  - 4.9.1 Approve the budgets and accounts
  - 4.9.2 elect and dismiss members of the Council
  - 4.9.3 make honorary awards
  - 4.9.4 approve the regulations
  - 4.9.5 agree property transactions and borrowing monies in excess of a million Euros.
- 4.10 An Extraordinary General Assembly may be convened by the President or in default by a Vice President or at the request of 2/3 of the membership.
- 4.11 Its proceedings and constitution shall be as for an Ordinary Assembly. As it is the sole body able to alter the articles of association or dissolve the Association, any decision must be by 2/3 majority of the members present or represented.

- 4.12 The decisions shall be recorded in a minute signed by a member of the Council, Executive Committee respectively and kept by the General Secretary at the disposal of the members of the Association.

## **ARTICLE 5: COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SECRETARIAT**

### **5.1 COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION**

- There shall be a Council of at least 32 and at most 43 persons half of which be elected every two years. The Council shall meet twice each year, notice of such meeting to be given by the President or in default by a Vice-President to be advertised three months in advance, by post or email, giving notice of the venue, agenda, date, and time. Members of the Council shall be elected for a four year term and allowed to be re-elected
- 5.1 .1 Each country member of the European Economic Area (EEA) has the right to one representative of a Full or an Affiliated member on the Council of Administration. At least half plus one Members sitting on the Council shall be representatives of Full or Affiliated members.
- 5.1.2 Within the Council there shall be one seat reserved for a National representative from each country member of EEA, two seats reserved for Associated Members, seven seats for Individual Members, two of which reserved for people on the autistic spectrum. The remaining seats, including any unfilled National seats, shall be open to all Members to apply for.
- All candidates must notify the office of the Association at least one month in advance of the GA of their intention to stand as candidate.
  - All candidates shall put forward a brief statement setting out what they have previously achieved towards the aims of Autism-Europe and what they will attempt to do should they be elected.
- 5.1.3 Member of AE who are located in a single Country should present a single candidate for the election as the “National Representative” of that country at the AE council. Should the Members from that country fail to make a decision on who shall be the single candidate, then the decision shall be taken at the General Assembly by a vote involving all Members present and represented.
- 5.1.4 To ensure the European representativeness of Autism Europe, no country of the European Economic Area can have more than five (5) members per country within the Council. If the nationals of the same country cannot decide on the choice of those who will be candidates to be members of the Council, the decision shall be taken at the General Assembly by a vote involving all Members present and represented. No more than two (2) seats can be occupied by representatives of Non-European members in the Council.
- 5.1.5 A “country” is defined by its recognition as an independent state by the United Nations Organization.
- 5.1.6 The responsibility of the members of the Council shall be restricted to the terms of their mandate.

- 5.1.7 While representatives are members of the Council, they are expected to act in the best interests of all people throughout Europe who are affected by autism and to play a full part in the deliberations of the Council.
- 5.1.8 In the event of vacancy a Council member may be co-opted. His/her continuation to the post is subject to ratification by the next General Assembly.
- 5.1.9 A quorum of the Council shall be one third of its members present or represented.
- 5.1.10 The Council shall elect from the representatives elected to the Council of Administration, a President who shall hold office for a period of four years. The President cannot be re-elected more than once. The President shall present his/her Executive Committee for the approval of the Council of Administration. After approval of their nomination by the Council of Administration, the President and the members of the Executive Committee remain members of the Council of Autism Europe until the end of their mandate.
- 5.1.11 In its regulations, the Council shall agree on the structure and level of fees that will be proposed to the general Assembly for approval. The council shall agree as well on the practical aspects regarding the operation of the association and verify eligibility criterion of Council members.
- 5.1.12 The Council shall have vested initial management and administrative powers other than those reserved to the General Assembly. The decisions of the Council shall be recorded in a minute signed by a member of the Committee and kept by the Secretary at the disposal of the members of the Association. The Secretary General submits an activity report to the General Assembly. The Treasurer submits a financial report to the General Assembly.
- 5.1.13 Observers which may exclusively be recognized experts on autism or future members of the Council may attend the General Assembly and meetings of the Council at the request of the Executive Committee, and then at the discretion of the Council and Assembly, provided that the competences of the invited observers are relevant regarding the subjects to be dealt with during the meeting.

## 5.2 THE EXECUTIVE

- 5.2.1 The Executive Committee shall be in post for four years. It shall have all powers and responsibilities entrusted to it by the Council of Administration. It shall include:
  - a President
  - one or more Vice Presidents
  - a Secretary
  - a Treasurer

*The President must be a member of the Council. The other Executive committee members should preferably be drawn from the members of Council but when this is not possible (for example because of lack of appropriate skills), the President may approach others AE members.*

- 5.2.2 Should a member of the Executive Committee step down during his/her tenure of office for any of the reasons set out in 3.4 above, the President shall be empowered to find a replacement

- 5.2.3 Half plus one members of the Executive Committee must be parents of persons with autism or self advocates with autism, including the President and the Vice-President(s). Apart from the President, all members of the Executive Committee must have different nationalities.
- 5.2.4 The Executive Committee shall meet on the initiative of the President or in default of a Vice President as often as needed.

### 5.3 OTHER POINTS

- 5.3.1 For the secretariat of the association, the Council is authorized to hire all necessary staff for the day to day management of the association. The staff will work under the responsibility of the President and the other members of the Executive Committee.
- 5.3.2 Both the Council and the Executive Committee may delegate their powers on a case by case basis to a member of the Council.
- 5.3.3 The Council and the Executive Committee shall endeavor to make decisions by consensus, in the absence of which decisions shall be on simple majority with each person attending, having a single vote. In the event of a tie the President shall have the casting vote.

## **ARTICLE 6: SCIENTIFIC ADVISERS AND COMMITTEES**

- 6.1 The Council shall appoint as scientific advisers specialists of various related disciplines.
- 6.2 The Council may set up Committees and Working Parties to carry out tasks of temporary or permanent nature which may require the assistance of different persons.

## **ARTICLE 7: BUDGETS AND ACCOUNTS**

- 7.1 Budgets and accounts shall be prepared annually and presented to the General Assembly for approval.
- 7.2 The accounts shall be presented each year to the General Assembly for its approval.
- 7.3 Yearly statements shall be prepared and circulated.
- 7.4 All the documents shall be submitted to two accountants appointed by the General Assembly.

## **ARTICLE 8 POWERS TO BIND THE ASSOCIATION**

- 8.1 Acts which bind the Association except in routine matters shall be signed, unless specifically authorized, by the President or in default by a Vice President or a member of the Council appointed to this effect.

## **ARTICLE 9: REPRESENTATION**

- 9.1 The Association shall be represented outside by the President.
- 9.2 Legal proceedings, whether as plaintiff or defendant, shall be in the name of the Council represented by its President or by any other member of the Executive Committee appointed by him or in default by a Vice President to this effect.

## **V FINANCES**

### **ARTICLE 10: FUNDS**

- 10.1 These shall consist of membership fees and sums properly payable as well as all gifts, donations, subventions and grants given in support of either the general aims or a specific aim of the association.

## **VI AMENDMENT OF THE ARTICLES AND DISSOLUTION**

### **ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENT OF THE ARTICLES AND DISSOLUTION**

- 11.1 Without prejudice to the provisions of articles 50 §3, 55 and 56 of the law of 27<sup>th</sup> June 1921 any resolution to amend the articles of Association or to dissolve the Association must be initiated by the Council or by a notice in writing signed by two thirds of the votes of the members.
- 11.2 The Council shall give 3 months notice of any such resolution and of the date of the Assembly at which it shall be discussed.
- 11.3 No resolution shall be valid unless passed by a two thirds majority of the members present or represented.
- 11.4 Amendments of these articles shall only become effective once the provisions set out in Articles 50 §3 and 51 §3 of the Laws of 27<sup>th</sup> June 1921 regarding notice have been fulfilled
- 11.5 Arrangements regarding the distribution of any remaining assets of the Association following dissolution and the liquidation of the Association shall be made by the General Assembly, to organizations with aims similar to that of the Association.

## **VI GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **ARTICLE 12**

- 12.1 All matters not provided for in these articles, particularly with regard to publications in the annexes to the Moniteur Belge, shall be dealt with in accordance with the law in force.
- 12.2 The French language text is the only authentic text.

### **ARTICLE 13: INTERPRETATION OF THE STATUTES**

- 13.1 In case of a dispute over the interpretation of the statutes, the Council of Administration shall decide.