



**Égalité – LGBTIQ staff of the European Union
institutions, bodies, offices and agencies**

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

As approved by the Assembly on 20 March 2024

ARTICLE 1. ASSOCIATION

- 1.1. The association shall be set up within the European Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies as a non-profit-making association to be known as ‘Égalité – LGBTIQ staff of the European Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies’, denoted hereafter by the term ‘Association’.
- 1.2. The Association shall be set up for an unlimited period.
- 1.3. The headquarters of the Association shall be established at the premises of the European Commission – Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels, Belgium.
- 1.4. The Association’s financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December each year.

ARTICLE 2. AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. The Association, within all the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, shall aim to:
 - a. internally represent Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) staff and their families, as well as externally, if necessary;
 - b. combat any form of discrimination, in particular, based on sexual orientation and gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics;
 - c. promote an inclusive and diverse workplace and, within that context, promote the rights of LGBTIQ people ;
 - d. organise social, cultural and educational events and activities;
 - e. offer assistance to LGBTIQ staff.
- 2.2. To carry out these aims effectively, the Association shall empower the elected Board to contact Administrations of any EU institution, body, office and agency. The Board shall contact these Administrations proactively and shall be encouraged to initiate at least one yearly meeting with the relevant human resources departments or diversity and inclusion offices to discuss their contribution to the achievement of the Association's aims.
- 2.3. The Association also empowers the Board:
 - a. to seek the support of the Administrations of the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies in their activities; and
 - b. by the virtue of their activities, to positively influence the Administrations' priorities and their work concerning LGBTIQ matters, where the Administration can intervene.

- 2.4. In carrying out their duties, the Board shall pay particular attention to the staff stationed outside Brussels and Luxembourg, notably due to their geographical location, which might result in situations where LGBTIQ staff faces distinct challenges. The Board shall maintain contact with staff and their representatives stationed outside Brussels and Luxembourg and ensure the remote participation of staff in the events and activities whenever feasible. The Association encourages the Board to organise and promote at least one annual event accessible to all members, including staff stationed outside Brussels and Luxembourg.

ARTICLE 3. ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

- 3.1. The Association shall comprise ordinary individual members and honorary members. Legal persons may not become members of the Association.
- 3.2. Anyone who is or was employed for, by or at an EU institution, body, office, agency or European School, may become an ordinary individual member of the Association, as may the members of their household.
- 3.3. Any individual wishing to become an ordinary individual member shall submit a membership application via electronic means set up by the Board.
- 3.4. The Board shall examine every application for ordinary individual membership and verify the following:
- a. the applicant provided all the required information in their membership application;
 - b. the applicant satisfies the criteria set by Article 3.2;
 - c. the applicant declared their support for the aims of Egalite as set out in Article 2.1; and
 - d. the applicant granted their consent for the processing of their personal data.
- 3.5. If the Board considers that the applicant fulfils the conditions set out in article 3.4, then the individual will be included on the Association membership list and the Board will provide them with an invoice for payment of the membership fee, if applicable.
- 3.6. Should the Board have reasons to consider denial of the membership application, then these reasons shall be communicated to the applicant before the Board denies the membership. The applicant shall have the right to reply and provide clarifications within the period set by the Board, which shall be no less than five working days. Following the receipt of clarifications or expiration of the set period for reply, the Board shall decide to accept or

reject their application. If the Board decides to reject the application, the applicant may appeal this decision during a Meeting of the Assembly

- 3.7. The ordinary individual membership is set to last for five years as of the day of the membership application, with a possibility of extension upon the concerned member's explicit consent. This provision shall not apply to the ordinary individual members included on the Association membership list before the adoption of this version of the Articles of Association.
- 3.8. Honorary membership may be granted for life by the decision of the Board to any individual who has distinguished themselves in some way, and to any individual who was able to support the Association and help it achieve its aims. Each former president of the Association is granted honorary membership automatically.

ARTICLE 4. MEMBERS' RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

- 4.1. Each member has the right:
 - a. to receive information about the Association's events and activities, including decisions taken by the Assembly and the Board;
 - b. to participate in all Assembly meetings, as well as in all activities and events organised by the Association;
 - c. to participate in the governance of the Association, including by nominating themselves for the Board, and express their views in setting the Association's aims and principles;
 - d. to contribute to the development and functioning of the Association by communicating their ideas to the Board;
 - e. to request the Board for guidance in addressing the relevant Administration as regards the aims of the Association and the priorities set by the Board;
 - f. to vote in the elections for the Board and during each Assembly meeting.
- 4.2. Each member shall:
 - a. abide by the rules set out in these Articles of Association;
 - b. refrain from any activity which goes against the spirit and the letter of the Articles of Association, in particular, Article 2;
 - c. pay the membership fee each year, unless the Assembly waives this obligation.

ARTICLE 5. THE ASSEMBLY

- 5.1. The Assembly is the sovereign body of the Association, composed of all its members.
- 5.2. In the first quarter of each financial year, the Board shall call for an Annual General Meeting of the Assembly, the agenda for which shall include, as a minimum, the following:
- a. presentation and approval of the annual activity report;
 - b. presentation of the Auditors' report and budget discharge for the financial year;
 - c. designation of two auditors for the financial year;
 - d. election of the Board;
 - e. setting the amount of the membership fee for the financial year;
 - f. exchange of views on the future work programme of the Association;
 - g. any other business proposed by the Board or endorsed by at least one-tenth of all Assembly members.
- 5.3. The Assembly shall convene for an Extraordinary Meeting:
- a. whenever the absolute majority of the Board deems so necessary; or
 - b. whenever at least one-tenth of the Assembly submit a reasoned request to the Secretary-General for the Extraordinary Meeting to be held.
- 5.4. Any Assembly meeting shall be chaired by the President, or by a Vice-President, or by another Board member nominated by the Assembly for that purpose.
- 5.5. An invitation to an Assembly Meeting shall be sent via email to the members at least ten days before the scheduled meeting day. The invitation shall be accompanied by the meeting agenda and by all supporting documents.
- 5.6. The Assembly shall be empowered to decide if more than half of the total number of the members with voting rights are present or represented ('quorum').
- 5.7. If the quorum is not reached, the Assembly shall not decide on the agenda, and a follow-up Assembly meeting with the same agenda shall be called for. No quorum shall be required at the follow-up Assembly meeting to be able to take decisions. In that respect,
- a. if less than one-quarter of all members attended the Assembly meeting during which the quorum was not reached, a follow-up Assembly meeting with the same agenda shall be called for under the process set by Article 5.5.

- b. if more than one-quarter of all members attended the Assembly meeting during which the quorum was not reached, a follow-up Assembly meeting with the same agenda shall be convened immediately.
- 5.8. The Assembly shall decide by a simple majority on any matter, except in the cases listed under Article 5.9.
- 5.9. The Assembly shall decide by a two-thirds majority in the following cases:
- a. amendment of the Articles of Association;
 - b. exclusion of a member;
 - c. removal of the Board or a Board member from office;
 - d. dissolution of the Association.
- 5.10. Each ordinary individual member and each honorary member shall have one vote. Members who are unable to attend a meeting of the Assembly may arrange to be represented by a written proxy. The written proxy shall be sent to the Secretary-General at the latest one working day before the Assembly meeting. Each member present at the Assembly meeting may represent only one absent member.
- 5.11. The Secretary-General shall record a report of each Assembly meeting, which will then be signed by the President. The report shall include information on the proceedings of the Assembly meeting and the decisions taken therein. The report shall be made available to the members.
- 5.12. Non-profit organisations or LGBTIQ networks aiming to cooperate with the Association and wishing to participate in the Assembly meetings shall submit a written request to the President or the Secretary-General. The Board may invite such organisations or networks to send their representatives to participate in the Assembly meetings without any voting rights. The Board shall ultimately decide whether to accept the representatives of such organisations or networks at the Assembly meetings.

ARTICLE 6. THE BOARD

- 6.1. The Board shall act as the executive body of the Association. It shall carry out the activities related to the aims of the Association and implement all decisions of the Assembly.
- 6.2. The Board shall consist of a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 20 members elected by the Assembly.

- 6.3. The Board shall be elected by the members by online secret ballot, which shall open at the latest two weeks before the General Meeting and close at the end of the day of the respective Assembly Meeting. The ballot shall be sent only to those members who have their voting rights on the day elections are opened.
- 6.4. Each member shall have up to 20 votes to cast for candidates for the Board, and the Board shall consist of the candidates with the most votes.
- 6.5. Should there be a tie between the candidates for the 20th place, then they shall all be considered to be elected. In that case, the maximum number of the Board members could exceed the limit set by Article 6.2.
- 6.6. The Secretary-General shall inform all members of the result of the election and circulate the results from the online secret ballot to all members as soon as possible, but no later than within one week of the election.
- 6.7. The mandate of each Board shall be one year as of the date of the General Assembly decision. Members of the Board may be re-elected.
- 6.8. The network of LGBTIQ trainees of the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, following their rules and procedures, is entitled to nominate one representative to the Board. The representative shall act as an Observer and have voting rights on any matters that directly concern trainees. The Observer shall not count towards the limit of Board members set in Article 6.2.
- 6.9. Following its election, the Board shall convene within two weeks to develop a work programme and to nominate among its members the following Office Bearers for the duration of its mandate:
 - a. a President - the Board member acting as a legal representative of the Association within the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies as well as with the third parties, who is also responsible for chairing the Assembly and Board meetings;
 - b. at least two Vice-Presidents - the Board members who, by acting together, can represent the Association within the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, and replace the President in their absence;
 - c. a Secretary-General - the Board member serving as the main contact point between the members and the Board, who is also responsible for record-keeping and maintaining the Association's membership list;

- d. a Treasurer - the Board member in charge of the Association's budget, its expenditure and bookkeeping;
 - e. a Communication Officer - the Board member in charge of facilitating internal and external communication.
- 6.10. Depending on the priorities set in the work programme for the duration of the Board mandate, the Board shall have the right to nominate other Office Bearers, who will be responsible for specific priority areas of the work programme.
- 6.11. If the priorities set under the work programme so require, the Board shall have the right to delegate specific functions and nominate as ambassadors of the Association in the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies to one or several of the Association members. Any delegation and nomination given by the Board shall be specific and limited in time.
- 6.12. The Board shall inform the Association members about the priorities set in the work programme for the year, as well as about any nominations and delegations. Any changes occurring during the Board's mandate shall be communicated to the Association members without undue delay.
- 6.13. The Board shall meet as often as required to carry out their duties. Its meetings shall be called by the President, any of the Vice-Presidents or the Secretary-General.
- 6.14. The Board may deliberate if at least half of the Board members are present. If less than half of the Board members are present, the Board shall not decide on the agenda, and a follow-up Board meeting with the same agenda shall be convened. In that follow-up Board meeting, the Board may legitimately deliberate if the following two conditions are met:
- a. at least one-third of the Board members are present; and
 - b. one of the following Office Bearers is present - President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Secretary-General.
- 6.15. The Board shall decide by a simple majority on any matter. In the event of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote.
- 6.16. The Secretary-General, or the Board member nominated in their absence, shall prepare the minutes of each Board meeting. The minutes shall include information on the proceedings of the Board meeting and the decisions taken therein. The minutes shall be made available to all Board members within two calendar weeks of the Board meeting.
- 6.17. Association members may attend Board meetings taking into account the agenda and provided that the Board agrees. Only Board members shall have a voting right at the Board

meetings. Observers, nominated by the network of LGBTIQ trainees of the EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, shall have voting rights at the Board meetings in accordance with Article 6.3.

- 6.18. Should a Board member resign during their mandate, the Board shall have the right to nominate an acting Board member.
- 6.19. An acting Board member shall be nominated, if possible, among the candidates who stood in the last Board elections. The Board shall offer the nomination first to the candidate who received the highest number of votes but was not elected (“runner-up”). If the runner-up declines, the Board may invite the next candidate. If there is no runner-up or all candidates decline, the Board may invite any other person to stand as an acting Board Member. Alternatively, the Board may decide not to nominate an acting Board member.
- 6.20. The Board shall, without undue delay, communicate to the Association members any nomination of an acting Board member, specifying the duration of their mandate.
- 6.21. Should the majority of the elected members of the Board resign or be excluded, an Extraordinary Assembly Meeting shall be convened without undue delay to elect a new Board.
- 6.22. The Board in its entirety or individual Board members may be removed from office by the Assembly at an Extraordinary Assembly Meeting.

ARTICLE 7. THE AUDITORS

- 7.1. The Auditors shall be responsible for verifying the financial accounts of the Association.
- 7.2. The Assembly shall designate at least two Auditors for a one-year term. During that term, a designated Auditor may not hold any office on the Board.
- 7.3. The treasurer shall be required to submit all the supporting documents to the Auditors for verification, at least four weeks before the Annual General Meeting of the Assembly. The documents shall include a detailed statement of the Association’s finances for the past financial year.
- 7.4. The Auditors shall prepare a report and accompany it with a proposal for, or against, a budget discharge. The prepared report and the proposal shall be transmitted to the Secretary-General at the latest 12 days before the scheduled Annual General Meeting of the Assembly.

ARTICLE 8. RESIGNATION AND EXCLUSION

- 8.1. A member's affiliation to the Association shall cease if they resign voluntarily, or are excluded by a decision to that effect.
- 8.2. Any member may resign from the Association at any point in time by submitting a written resignation request to the Secretary-General. The resignation shall be effective on the following day.
- 8.3. If a member resigns or is excluded, their membership fee shall not be reimbursed and is retained by the Association.
- 8.4. The Assembly may exclude a member from the Association following a proposal from the Board based on one of the following:
 - a. they have not paid the membership fee for the calendar year;
 - b. they have not complied with decisions taken by the Assembly or by the Board;
 - c. they have not fulfilled their obligations, which has caused damage to the Association;
 - d. they have actively hampered the achievement of the Association's aims set out in Article 2.
- 8.5. If the exclusion of a member is under consideration, the Board shall inform the member concerned at least five working days before the day of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Assembly during which the exclusion is to be decided upon. The member concerned shall be allowed to express their views following the presentation of the exclusion proposal by the Board.
- 8.6. If the Assembly decides to exclude a member in its absence, it shall notify the excluded member in writing, stating the reasons for said exclusion.

ARTICLE 9. MEMBERSHIP FEE

- 9.1. The membership fee is due annually by each ordinary individual member.
- 9.2. The amount of the membership fee, or the absence thereof, shall be set by the Assembly following the proposal from the Board. The Board proposal shall specify, at minimum, the following:
 - a. whether the membership fee is to be introduced for the financial year, and if so - its amount;

- b. if the membership fee is introduced for a financial year, the deadline for ordinary individual members to pay the membership fee; and
 - c. if the membership fee is introduced for a financial year, the period to be given to all new ordinary individual members to pay the membership fee.
- 9.3. The annual membership fee shall be paid in full, irrespective of the date on which each new ordinary individual member joins the Association. The members who do not pay their membership fee shall have no voting rights during Assembly meetings, nor should be counted towards quorum. The voting rights shall be restored when the Treasurer confirms the receipt of the membership fee.
- 9.4. Trainees of any EU institution, body, office or agency shall be exempted from paying the Membership fees during the financial year of their traineeship.

ARTICLE 10. THE RESOURCES

- 10.1. The Association's resources shall comprise:
- a. membership fees;
 - b. donations of any nature.
- 10.2. The Association's income shall be used for the sole purpose of achieving the Association's aims.

ARTICLE 11. LIABILITY OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 11.1. All members taking part in the events and activities or using the facilities of the Association shall be liable for their actions. Under no circumstances shall the Association be held responsible by any party for the actions of its members.

ARTICLE 12. DISSOLUTION

- 12.1. The dissolution of the Association may be pronounced only by an Extraordinary Meeting of the Assembly on the proposal from the Board, or, in the absence thereof, one-third of the Association members.
