

INTERNAL RULES European Union of the Deaf (Final version - 2001)

Preamble

The European Union of the Deaf (hereinafter referred to as EUD) is an European non-governmental and non-profit making organisation.

EUD's mission is to represent the interests of Deaf Europeans at the European Union level. Its aim was and is to establish and maintain a dialogue at EU level with the European Parliament, European Commission and the Council of Ministers in consultation and co-operation with the National Deaf Associations within the European Union.

EUD co-operates with the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) in global affairs.

EUD cannot replace National Deaf Associations representing national or specific interests in relation to their respective constituent groups, but rather it focuses on common actions, initiatives and issues which may transcend all members.

Article 1. Organisation

The name can be changed only at an Ordinary General Assembly.

Article 2: Aims and objectives

The internal rules underline the aims and objectives of the EUD.

The guiding principles of EUD include commitment to the following:

- the implementation of the UN Standard Rules and EU legislative instruments on equalisation of opportunities and non-discrimination for people with disabilities, notably the Treaty on the European Union;
- the promotion of equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, age, disability and sexual orientation;
- recognition of the right to use sign language, the right of access to information through sign language for all Deaf people
- political independence;
- consultation, transparency;
- democratic structures and links with organisations *of* Deaf people.

EUD has a responsibility to defend the interests of its member organisations, and their members, when called upon by them to do so.

Article 3: Membership

There are six membership categories:

- a) Full Members (See Article 3 § 2 of the Statutes);
- b) Affiliated Members (See Article 3 § 3 of the Statutes);
- c) Associate Members (See Article 3 § 4 of the Statutes);
- d) Sponsoring Members (See Article 3 § 5 of the Statutes);
- e) Honorary Members (See Article 3 § 6 of the Statutes);
- f) Individual Members (See Article 3 § 7 of the Statutes).

National Deaf Associations, other deaf organisations and individuals wishing to apply for membership of EUD should complete and sign the appropriate application form (see ANNEXES 1-2-3-4-5) and send this, together with the signed declaration (attached to the application form – see ANNEXES 6-7-8) and other supporting documentation (minutes of the meeting which show the decision to apply for EUD membership) and a copy of their constitution in English, to the Secretariat of EUD.

The application shall be decided by the Board and ratified by the General Assembly. Should an application be rejected by the Board, there will be a right of appeal to the General Assembly.

Only Full Members and Board Members can nominate persons for honorary membership. The nomination shall be accepted or rejected by the Board and ratified by the General Assembly.

An application for membership will be decided at the next meeting of the Board, as long as the application is received one month prior to the meeting.

In connection with this matter, the attached note titled “How to avoid ‘inappropriate’ members” (ANNEX 9) shall be taken into account.

Article 4: General Assembly

The General Assembly shall take place once a year in a Member State of the European Union.

The President shall issue invitations to the members at least three months prior to the meeting of the General Assembly. At the same time, s/he shall send members the draft agenda for the meeting;

The agenda of the General Assembly shall be drawn up by the President in consultation with the Board and the Director. Full Members may request that points be added to the agenda. In addition, Full Members may submit recommendations, proposals and motions to be included on the agenda for the General Assembly. Such requests must be sent in writing to the President at least two months prior to the opening of the meeting.

The final agenda and copies of other relevant documents (accounts, motions, etc.) shall be mailed out to all members at least 6 weeks prior to the opening of the meeting.

At the start of the meeting, the General Assembly shall be invited to adopt the agenda.

At least two months before the start of the General Assembly, the EUD secretariat shall invite Full members to nominate delegates for the General Assembly. Full members shall communicate the names of their delegates to the EUD secretariat at least one month before the start of the General Assembly. All delegates nominated must be Deaf (See Article 4 §1.1 of the Statutes)

Only Full Members can send delegates to the General Assembly and have full voting rights (See Article 4 § 1.1).

Representatives from Affiliated Members, Associate Members and Sponsoring Members – represented in accordance with their Articles of Association but limited to a maximum of two representatives per Member – can attend the General Assembly as "observers" and, with permission from the President, may address the General Assembly but shall have no right to vote. Honorary Members and Individual Members can also attend the General Assembly as "observers" and, with permission from the President, may also address the General Assembly but have no right to vote. (See Article 4 § 2).

For practical reasons, anybody wishing to attend the General Assembly as observer must register with the EUD secretariat at least one month in advance.

All observers attending the General Assembly shall pay a small fee to cover expenses and will not receive any reimbursement for travel or accommodation expenses. The fee is set by the EUD Board every year.

Draft minutes of each General Assembly meeting shall be e-mailed to all Board Members and Full Members for review within one month after the end of the meeting. Full Members and Board members must send comments/additions/changes to the draft minutes to the EUD secretariat within one month upon receipt of the draft minutes. Then the amended draft minutes will be sent out again for review. If the EUD secretariat or the President receive no further comments from the Board Members and/or Full Members regarding the amended draft minutes within two months after receipt of the amended draft minutes, the minutes are considered adopted. The final (again amended, if applicable) version of the minutes will then be sent to all Members and ratified at the next General Assembly meeting.

Article 5: The Board

- **Election**

Election will take place every four years, commencing in 2001.

Three months prior to the end of a mandate, a call for applications must be sent to all Full Members stressing that the position should, if possible, alternate between a man and a woman. In addition, a geographical balance should be respected so that all regions of the European Union are represented on the Board.

Nominations must be made on forms submitted by the EUD (see ANNEXES 10-11-12). In addition, a short C.V. of each nominated candidate shall be attached to the nomination form. Nominations must be received by the EUD secretariat at least 45 days (= 1 ½ month) before the start of the General Assembly.

Election will take place in this order: President, Vice-President, 3 Board Members. Voting will be by secret ballot.

To be elected a candidate must have 50% + 1 of the votes casted. However, if there are 3 candidates for the same position, then the candidate with the greatest majority of votes wins. Should none of the candidates obtain a majority, a second vote will take place between the two candidates with the most votes. If there still is a tie, then the General Assembly will vote again, but this time the President will also cast a vote. (The President always has the right to cast a vote in the case of a tie: see Article 4 § 5.4).

A candidate nominated for a position, but not elected, will automatically be considered nominated for the next post, unless s/he does not want that

All candidates for the Board must be a delegate at the General Assembly during which the election of the Board takes place. The ballot papers will remind voters to bear in mind the need for gender and geographical balance.

- **Meetings**

At least two Board meetings shall be held every year. The Board meeting shall normally be held at the EUD office, but it can be organised in any of the EU Member States, if requested by the National Deaf Association of that Member State. In this case the hosting National Deaf Association may be asked to pay for the food expenses of the Board meeting. All other reasonable expenses (travel and accommodation) shall be covered by EUD.

The agenda of the Board meeting shall be drawn up by the President in consultation with the Board and the Director.

The President shall issue invitations to the Board Members at least two months prior to the Board meeting. At the same time, s/he shall send Board Members the draft agenda for the meeting. Relevant working documents should be sent one month in advance of the meeting.

The Board Members may request that points be included on the agenda. Such requests must be sent in writing to the President at least one month prior to the date of the meeting. The revised draft agenda shall then be sent out again to the Board.

At the start of the meeting, the Board shall formally adopt the agenda.

It is recalled that Board Members must represent the spectrum of the EUD membership, not individual interests. Therefore, Board Members serve as individuals and not as representatives of their organisations.

In the interests of continuity, a Board Member should attend all meetings. If a Board Member misses two consecutive meetings, then the President shall discuss this matter urgently with the Board Member in question. When appropriate and necessary, the President may request the Board Member in question to retire from his/her position. If this happens, then an election to fill this vacant position shall be held at the next General Assembly meeting, following the election procedure outlined above.

Draft minutes of each Board meeting shall be e-mailed to all Board Members for review within one month after the end of the meeting. Board members must send comments/additions/changes to the draft minutes to the EUD secretariat within one month upon receipt of the draft minutes. Then the amended draft minutes will be sent out again for review. If the EUD secretariat or the President receive no further comments from the Board Members within one month after receipt of the amended draft minutes, the minutes are considered adopted. The final (amended, if applicable) version of the minutes will then be sent again to all Board Members, as well as to all Full Members for their information.

- **Duties of the President**

In external policy and political matters the EUD is represented by the President, or in his/her absence, by the Vice-President, or where this is not possible, by the Director. Before taking any public decision on behalf of the EUD, the President shall consult the Board.

If necessary, the President can delegate his/her right to represent the EUD in the aforementioned matters to a Board Member or to the Director for a clearly defined task. The President shall, however, be responsible for any decision or action taken by the mandatory on his/her behalf.

Article 6: The Secretariat

The Secretariat's role is to implement the broad policy decisions made by the governing bodies.

The Board is responsible for the recruitment procedure.

Performance criteria defined by the Board and agreed by the General Assembly should be laid down for staff employed by the EUD.

The Director should report directly to the Board, and shall attend their meetings.

The Director and staff should be recruited in accordance with equal opportunities procedures.

A pro-active approach should be adopted with regard to the recruitment of Deaf people.

The task description for each staff member is attached in annex (see ANNEX 13).

Article 7: Communication

Sign Language and English are the official working language of the EUD.

In case there is no sign language interpretation available at meetings of the General Assembly and/or Board, “international sign” shall be used as mode of communication.

Wherever possible, within financial and time constraints, provision should be made in all European Unionsign languages, to promote the fullest possible participation of all Deaf people.

Article 8: Finances

- ***Membership fees***

The level of the membership fees shall be proposed by the Board and **approved by the General Assembly at their next meeting. See ANNEX 14 for the current membership fees.**

- ***Authorisation of payments of expenses and authority to sign cheques***

For the management of the Secretariat, the Board shall give a mandate to the Director to oversee the normal operational costs of the Secretariat.

In addition, the President can give a mandate to the Director to make payments as budgeted, for amounts under 1.000 € and from the President for amounts over 1.000 €.

The Director may pay expenses as budgeted by electronically transferring money from the EUD current account. If normal bank charges are incurred when transferring money to other bank accounts to pay expenses or reimburse costs, these costs are for EUD.

The Director is allowed to hold a credit card in the name of EUD to cover small expenses related to out-of-office meetings. All these expenses must be reasonable and only those expenses that are necessary related to the functioning of the EUD secretariat are allowed. All these expenses must be noted in the accounts.

The President and one appointed Board Member shall both have authority to sign cheques. For all payments above 2.000 € both signatures shall be necessary.

For expenses exceeding 1.000 € not foreseen in the budget, the President, upon request of the Director, shall ask for prior approval of the Board.

- ***Payment of fees***

The fees or salaries (whichever is applicable) to be paid to the Director and Secretariat staff for their work shall be clearly set out in contracts in which the payment conditions will be specified. These contracts will be signed by the President and will be executed automatically under supervision of the President.

- ***Payments of external experts and consultants***

Consultants fees will not be paid until the work they have undertaken has been completed and approved by the Board.

Payments of expenses of external experts will be part of a contract, approved by the Board. The payment conditions will be specified in this contract.

- ***Accounts & Financial statements***

The Director must provide the President and the Board with a three-monthly financial statement. The President, assisted by the Director, is responsible for keeping the books.

Once a year, the annual accounts shall be submitted to the Board for approval before being submitted to the General Assembly for final approval. The Director keeps these documents at the members' disposal for consultation at any time.

In compliance with EU rules, the EUD accounts shall be audited every year by an external auditor.

The accounting year runs from 1 January to 31 December (See Article 6 § 2 of the statutes).

- ***Project funding***

In case of project funding, the expenses and incomes, as specified in the contract(s) with the European Commission, shall be strictly adhered to. Where changes to the budget must be made or have been made, this must be communicated to the European Commission in writing, after consultation with the Board. When appropriate or in case it is specified in the contract, the Board shall appoint or recruit a project co-ordinator for each project. This person will report to the Director and to the Board regarding the implementation of the project, both practically and financially.

- ***Time-frame for reimbursements***

Claims and supporting documents should be submitted no later than 1 month after a meeting has taken place.

When financially possible, reimbursement of expenses related to Board meetings will be made within 4 months after receipt of the duly completed, eligible claim form.

Reimbursement of expenses related to meetings of standing committees or commissions will be made within 4 months after receipt of the duly completed, eligible claim form. Individuals not supported by an organisation will be reimbursed within 1 month after receipt of the duly completed, eligible claim form.

Reimbursement of travel expenses of delegates for the General Assembly will be made after receipt of the final part of the grant for the contract year.

In principle, payments of expenses or reimbursements are always made to the National Deaf Association, never to the individual person who has incurred the expenses, except in the case the individual does not belong to an organisation and/or was invited by EUD to attend a meeting (experts, speakers, etc). Upon receipt of payment, the National Deaf Association is obliged to transfer the amount received from EUD to the individual person.

- ***Claim & reimbursement forms***

All claims should be made on the EUD claim forms (see ANNEX 15 - available from the EUD secretariat) and must in principle be submitted by the National Deaf Organisation. All necessary information should be filled in clearly and legibly, with full details of the account number, bank name and address, and SWIFT code or sort code. Expenses should be noted in the currency in which they were incurred and should also be noted in the Euro (€) currency. According to strict European Commission rules, the original air tickets, boarding cards, train tickets and copies of travel agency receipts must be attached to the claim form. No expenses can be reimbursed without the original receipt. Missing documentation will result in a delay in reimbursement or non-reimbursement.

- ***Expenses relating to travel, hotel and meals***

- ❖ **TRAVEL**

In general, EUD shall reimburse the travel expenses for 1 or 2 delegates (depending on the event and the budget) per Full Member of EUD.

For the EUD General Assembly, EUD shall only reimburse the travel expenses of 1 delegate per Full Member, and only when this has been provided for in the coordination budget.

Members and staff shall take the cheapest possible form of transport.

- ❑ by air: air fares will not be reimbursed unless the original used ticket and the boarding cards are submitted with the claim. Where possible members are asked to buy APEX, PEX or EXCURSION tickets, which normally require an overnight stay on Saturday night.
- ❑ by rail: as a general rule, the shortest possible route should be taken. Members are requested to travel in second class.

Where relevant, proof of the costs of reservations, fast train supplements and overnight berths, should be supplied. The latter may only be claimed if the journey lasts at least 6 hours and takes place between 22.00 and 07.00

- use of own car: In general, use of one's own car can only be authorised when there is no public transport at all or when there is only public transport for part of the journey, when there would be a considerable loss of time by not using one's own car, when there is a large amount of equipment or documentation to be transported and when it is not possible to use another means of transport such as the combination of a train and taxi that would be cheaper than the costs of using one's own car.

Reimbursement will take the form of an allowance of 0,25 € per kilometer. Costs relating to motorway charges, parking and ferry crossings may also be reimbursed on presentation of receipts.

- Taxis: as a general rule, the cost of a taxi is not reimbursed. However, if a receipt is produced, taxis can be reimbursed in the following circumstances:
 - in Brussels and Luxembourg – when the flight leaves before 08.30 h or returns after 22.00 h, up to the value of 20 €, or when the train leaves before 08.00 h or returns after 23.00 h, up to the value of 7 €
 - at the place of the meeting – when the flight leaves before 08.00 or arrives after 21.00 or when the train leaves before 08.00 or arrives after 22.00
 In this case, you must clearly state these facts on your claim form or in an accompanying letter.

❖ HOTEL

Normally EUD shall arrange hotel bookings. NAD delegates attending EUD meetings (General Assembly, conferences, or seminars) will usually share a twin room. If not, then reimbursement of a hotel night will not exceed 87 €. According to EU funding regulations, telephone costs, rent of videos, mini-bar etc. are ineligible for refund.

❖ MEALS

Normally EUD will arrange for breakfast, lunch and diner. If this is not the case, then reimbursement will not exceed the equivalent of 25 € per day for two meals. If a lunch has been provided at the EUD meeting, a maximum of 18 € will be reimbursed for dinner if the person has to stay for the night (e.g. Saturday night), but this will be decided on a case by case basis.

In case participants do not wish to join the common meal but wish to go elsewhere, these meal costs will not be reimbursed by EUD.

Extra meal costs, e.g. snacks, drinks at the bar or in cafés, aperifs, minibar drinks, etc. are not reimbursed by EUD.

- ***Sign language interpreters***

When explicitly provided for in the project budget, EUD shall cover the travel and hotel expenses for the first sign language interpreter of each Full Member. This is to be determined on a case by case basis, following the project contract budget. The Full Member shall normally pay the fees of the interpreter, unless otherwise specified in the project contract.

For the sign language interpreters, the same guidelines as outlined above regarding expenses for travel, hotel and meals, apply.

When Full Members wish to bring a second sign language interpreter, all expenses (travel, accommodation and fees) are to be paid by the NAD itself.

Article 9: Emergency decisions

In case of a real emergency (if it is necessary for the EUD to take position on an issue prior to the next Board meeting), the President can call an emergency meeting with the Director while consulting Board Members by mail/fax/electronic mail as appropriate. The deadline for response shall be two days prior to the meeting.

The Director shall take a decision on the basis of the comments expressed within the deadline and in writing by a majority of the Board Members. The President or the Director shall report back to the Board at its next meeting and request approval for the decision taken.

If the President is unable to meet the Director because of the deadline s/he shall consult the Board Members including the Director by mail/ fax/ electronic mail, giving as long a deadline as possible for reply. The President, in consultation with the Director, shall take a decision based on the comments expressed within the deadline and in writing by the majority of Board Members. The President shall report back to the Board at its next meeting and request Board approval for the decision taken.

Article 10: Standing Committees and Commissions

Standing Committees and Commissions can be set up to support EUD in pursuance of the aims and objectives as outlined in Article 2 of the EUD Statutes.

Standing Committees are permanent bodies to deal with on-going business like finance or membership.

Commissions are ad-hoc and set up to fulfil specific tasks linked to a priority work area in the work programme and will be dissolved on completion of designated tasks.

Formal mandate and terms of reference for each Standing Committee or Commission shall be developed and approved by the Board.

Standing Committees and Commissions do not have an independent status and are accountable to the Board.

They will not exceed 4 members, plus the Chair.

Only Full Members of EUD can nominate candidates to sit on Standing Committees and Commissions.

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As adopted by the General Assembly on 23-24.03.2001 and finalised by the EUD Board on 03-04.05.2001.

LIST OF ANNEXES TO EUD INTERNAL RULES:

- ANNEX 1: Application form for Full Membership
- ANNEX 2: Application form for Affiliated Membership
- ANNEX 3: Application form for Associate Membership
- ANNEX 4: Application form for Sponsoring Membership
- ANNEX 5: Application form for Individual Membership
- ANNEX 6: Declaration re Associate Membership
- ANNEX 7: Declaration re Sponsoring Membership
- ANNEX 8: Declaration re Individual Membership
- ANNEX 9: Note on "How to avoid 'inappropriate' members"
- ANNEX 10: Nomination form of candidate for EUD President
- ANNEX 11: Nomination form of candidate for EUD Vice President
- ANNEX 12: Nomination form of candidate for EUD Board Member
- ANNEX 13: EUD staff task description
- ANNEX 14: Overview of current fees per membership category
- ANNEX 15: EUD claim & reimbursement & form

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