

INTERNAL RULES

**As approved by the General Assembly
9th December 2024**

TITLE I – INTERNAL RULES

Article 1 – Purpose of the Internal Rules

1.1 These Internal Rules are supplementary and subordinate to the Statutes of the international non-profit association ‘Eurocarers’ (hereafter “the Association”). In case of a contradiction between the Internal Rules and the Statutes of the Association, the latter shall prevail.

Amendments to the Internal Rules shall be made in accordance with the Statutes. The Board has the authority to amend the Internal Rules, but any such changes must be communicated to the General Assembly, ensuring transparency and keeping members informed.

TITLE II – MEMBERS

Article 2 – Rights and obligations of Full Members

Rights:

2.1 Full members have complete membership in the Association. They set the policies, guidelines and priorities of the Association and contribute actively to its activities. A tiered Full Membership was introduced by the General Assembly in 2015 to encourage active member participation in the expanding work of the Association while allowing members to choose between different levels of engagement (see Annex 1).

2.2 Without prejudice to any additional right that may be laid down in the Statutes, Full Members enjoy the following rights:

- Each Full Member shall have one vote at the General Assembly in accordance with the Statutes.
- Each Full Member shall be informed and consulted on an ongoing basis about the activities of the Association.
- The Association, along with all its organisational structures and the Secretariat, shall ensure that the interests and positions of each Full Member are taken into account in all the activities of the Association.

- A Full Member may become an Associate Member at the end of the year for which it has paid its membership fees, provided it has given three months' prior notice to the Board by any means of communication set forth in the Internal Rules. During the notice period, the member retains its Full Membership rights. Membership fees are due and payable until the end of the year.

Obligations:

2.3 Without prejudice to any additional obligation that may be laid down in the Statutes, Full Members incur the following obligations:

- Each Full Member shall appoint a representative (who must be a natural person) to serve as the organisation's contact with the other members of the Association and with the Secretariat. Each representative acts as a link between the Secretariat and the member they represent; they are responsible for informing and consulting with their member organisation on a regular basis regarding the activities of the Association and the decisions made by its organisational structures.
- Each Full Member shall promptly inform the Association, by any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules, of the identity of the representative appointed in accordance with the aforementioned paragraph, and, as applicable, any changes to that identity. Each representative shall have the authority to bind the member they represent in dealings with the Association.
- Full members may participate in the Association's working groups of their choice. They undertake to actively contribute to the activities of these working groups, particularly by attending all relevant meetings and producing written contributions if required.
- Full members are required to pay an annual membership fee, the amount of which is determined by the General Assembly in accordance with the Statutes and the Internal Rules. If a Full Member does not pay its membership fees on time, i.e. within four months after the start of the Association's financial year, its voting rights at the General Assembly and Board of Directors, as well as the package of services provided by the Eurocarers network and Secretariat, shall be suspended until all amounts due are paid.

Article 3 – Rights and obligations of Associate Members

3.1 Interested organisations that do not meet the criteria to become Full Members may apply to become Associate Members.

Rights

3.2 Associate Members are kept informed about the activities of the Association and may be invited to participate in them on an occasional basis, should they express interest. They have more restricted rights and obligations compared to Full Members:

- Associate Members may be invited to attend meetings of the General Assembly as observers at their own expense, but they shall not be entitled to vote.
- At the invitation of the Board and in consultation with the relevant working groups, Associate Members may take part in one or more working groups of the Association. Should they choose to do so, they undertake to actively contribute to the activities of these working groups, particularly by attending all meetings and producing written contributions if required.
- Associate Members may attend seminars and conferences organised by the Association at their own expense.
- Associate Members receive updates from the Association as well as relevant information about its activities and relations with non-members.
- An Associate Member may request to become a Full Member by submitting an application to the Board. This application shall be processed in accordance with the procedures set out in the Statutes and Article 6 of these Internal Rules.

Obligations:

3.3 Without prejudice to any additional obligations that may be laid down in the Statutes, Associate Members incur the following obligations:

- Each Associate Member shall appoint a representative (who must be a natural person) to serve as the organisation's contact with the other members of the Association and with the Secretariat of the Association. Each representative provides the link between the Secretariat and the member organisation they represent; they must inform and consult the member organisation regularly regarding the activities of the Association and the decisions taken by its organisational structures.
- Each Associate Member shall promptly inform the Association, by any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules, of the identity of the representative appointed in accordance with the aforementioned paragraph, and, as applicable, any changes to that identity. Each representative shall have the authority to bind the member they represent in dealings with the Association.
- Associate Members are required to pay an annual membership fee, the amount of which is determined by the General Assembly in accordance with the Statutes and the Internal Rules. If an Associate Member does not pay its membership fees on time, i.e., within four months after the start of the Association's financial year, the package of services provided by the Eurocarers network and Secretariat shall be suspended until all amounts due are paid.

Article 4 - Rights and obligations of Observer Members

4.1 Interested natural persons can join the Eurocarers network as Observer Members.

Rights

4.2 Observer Members are kept informed about the activities of the Association and may be invited to participate in them on an occasional basis, should they express interest. They have more restricted rights and obligations compared to Full and Associate Members:

- Observer Members may be invited to attend meetings of the General Assembly as observers, but they shall not be entitled to vote.
- Observer Members, at the invitation of the Board and in consultation with the relevant working groups, may take part in one or more working groups of the Association. Should they choose to do so, they undertake to actively contribute to the activities of these working groups, particularly by attending all meetings and producing written contributions if required.
- Observer Members may be invited to attend seminars and conferences organised by the Association.
- Observer Members receive updates from the Association as well as relevant information about its activities and relations with non-members.

Obligations:

4.3 Without prejudice to any additional obligations that may be laid down in the Statutes, Observer Members incur the following obligations:

- Observer Members are required to pay an annual membership fee, the amount of which is determined by the General Assembly in accordance with the Statutes and the Internal Rules. If an Observer Member does not pay its membership fees on time, i.e., within four months after the start of the Association's financial year, the package of services provided by the Eurocarers network and Secretariat shall be suspended until all amounts due are paid.

Article 5 – Membership application procedure

5.1 Applications for admission as a member shall be addressed to the Board through any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules. The applicant must indicate in the application whether they wish to become a Full, Associate or Observer Member and must demonstrate compliance with all relevant membership criteria. Applications should be submitted using the official application form, along with all supporting documentation specified in that form.

5.2 The Board is entitled to request any additional information it deems necessary to evaluate an application for membership. If such additional information is requested, the application procedure shall be suspended until the applicant provides the required information. In making a decision regarding membership, the Board may rely on any information, including that obtained from third parties. The Board will inform the General

Assembly of the inclusion of new members in the network at its subsequent annual meeting.

5.3 If the Board approves an application for membership, the applicant is obliged to pay, for the remaining part of the year of its admission, a proportionate share of the annual membership fee based on the time remaining in that year.

5.4 In exceptional circumstances that render a member (of any category) unable to pay the appropriate membership fee in a given year, the member will have the opportunity to submit a formal request to the Board for a reduced membership fee or fee cancellation. The Board of Directors will make a decision based on the evaluation of the reasons supporting the request and the member's past history. The reduced membership fee or cancellation is limited to a period of one year and can only be requested once within any five-year period.

Article 6 – Membership resignation or expulsion

6.1 The term “year” referred to in the Statutes has to be interpreted as a “calendar year”.

6.2 If the Board believes that a member should be excluded from the Association in accordance with the Statutes, it shall advise the General Assembly accordingly, providing reasons for the proposed exclusion. This written recommendation must be adopted by a majority of the Board.

6.3 A copy of this written recommendation shall be attached to the invitation to the General Assembly, which will decide on the exclusion after hearing from the member concerned. The invitation to the General Assembly shall be issued in accordance with the Statutes. The General Assembly will make its decision as specified in the Statutes. The minutes of the General Assembly shall outline the reasons for the exclusion. The excluded member shall receive a copy of these minutes by any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules or, at the discretion of the Association, a written statement explaining the reasons for the decision. From the day the General Assembly approves the exclusion, the excluded member will lose all rights associated with membership in the Association. If the excluded member was a Full Member, the annual membership fee for the year of exclusion will remain payable in full. The excluded member shall continue to be liable for any amounts owed to the Association at the time of exclusion.

6.4 An excluded member may only submit a new application for membership after the expiration of two years following the General Assembly's decision to exclude them.

6.5 An excluded member may appeal the decision of the General Assembly within 30 days of receiving the written statement or minutes outlining the reasons for their exclusion. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Board, clearly detailing the grounds for the appeal.

Upon receiving the appeal, the Board will establish a panel of three independent individuals to review the exclusion decision. One nominee will be proposed by the Association and one by the member organisation, with each nominee endorsed by the other party as a credible independent player. These two nominees will then collaboratively select a third independent individual to lead the process.

Once the panel is formed, it will review the process and substance of the exclusion decision by examining evidence from both parties and issuing its findings. The panel will ensure that both sides have an opportunity to present their case to the Board and the General Assembly and it will aim to provide a fair and impartial assessment of the situation.

The findings of the panel will be communicated to both parties. If the panel finds in favour of the excluded member, appropriate measures will be taken to reinstate their membership. If the panel upholds the exclusion, the decision shall stand.

TITLE III – ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

A. GENERAL

Article 7 – Organisational structures and Secretariat

7.1 As outlined in the Statutes, the organisational structures of the Association comprise:

- The General Assembly;
- The Board.

These structures are supported in their operations by the Secretariat.

B. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 8 – Extraordinary General Assembly

8.1 The Board is required to convene an Extraordinary General Assembly at the request of one third of the Full Members. This invitation must be sent to the members, using any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules, within 14 calendar days following receipt of the request.

Article 9 – Agenda and Invitation

9.1 Any item submitted to the Board by at least one Full Member will be reviewed and, if deemed relevant, added to the agenda of the General Assembly. Requests to include additional items on the agenda must reach the Board at least six weeks before the General Assembly. The Secretariat will inform all members of any additional items approved by the Board at least three weeks prior to the General Assembly, using any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules.

9.2 Invitations to the General Assembly, as referred to in the Statutes, shall be sent to the members via the Secretariat at least 30 days in advance.

9.3 The dates for the Annual General Assembly will be determined by the Board at least six months in advance, following extensive consultation with the Full Membership.

Article 10 – Proceedings at meetings and decisions

10.1 The Chairperson or, in their absence, the Vice-Chairperson present at the General Assembly, shall preside over the meeting. If neither the Chairperson nor the Vice-Chairperson is present, a delegate from a Full Member, designated by the General Assembly, will preside.

10.2 The person presiding over the General Assembly shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting, read the agenda, direct discussions, ensure compliance with the rules, grant the right to speak and announce the decisions made. Abstentions from voting will not be counted when calculating the majority as per the Statutes and Internal Rules.

10.3 A Full Member whose voting rights have been suspended under Article 2 of the Internal Rules will be considered neither present nor represented when calculating quorum and majority.

10.4 Decisions regarding membership fees shall be made by the General Assembly upon proposal from the Board.

10.5 The process for electing the Board is as follows:

- Full Members will be invited, via any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules, to nominate candidates according to a timetable established by the Board. This timetable will allow for nominations to be circulated to all Full Members at least two weeks prior to the General Assembly where the election will take place. Board members must be elected from candidates nominated by the Full Members following this

- procedure. The Board will appoint the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson(s), Treasurer and other members, and inform the General Assembly of its decision.
- Elections will occur by secret ballot at the General Assembly, provided there are more nominations than vacancies (see Article 15.2 below). Each Full Member is entitled to cast one vote.
 - The Secretariat will keep the minutes of the General Assembly, which will be available to members at the Association's registered office.

C. BOARD OF DIRECTORS - "THE BOARD"

Article 11 – Composition

11.1 The Board shall consist of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson(s), the Treasurer and other Directors elected by the General Assembly. Board members are required to act independently and in the best interests of the broader cause of informal care, rather than solely representing the interests of their original associations or organisations.

11.2 If a member of the Board is absent from three consecutive Board meetings without good cause, they shall be deemed to have resigned.

11.3 A member of the Board appointed to replace a Director whose term of office, as indicated in the Statutes, was not completed shall be deemed to be filling that term of office, unless the General Assembly decides otherwise.

11.4 An individual who has served a maximum of six consecutive years on the Board, which equates to two mandates of three years each, is ineligible for re-nomination until a hiatus of at least three years has passed since the conclusion of their last term. This policy promotes the regular rotation of Board members and encourages the introduction of new perspectives within the Association. Furthermore, no Board member may hold two mandates simultaneously.

Article 12 – Invitation

12.1 The Board shall be convened by the Chairperson, through the Secretariat, whenever the interests of the Association require or upon the request of one third of the Board members, but at least four times a year, using any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules.

Article 13 – Procedures

13.1 The Chairperson or, in their absence, a Vice-Chairperson, shall preside over Board meetings. If neither is present, the attending Directors may elect one of themselves to chair the meeting.

13.2 The presiding Board member will declare the opening and closing of each meeting, read the agenda, direct discussions, ensure adherence to the rules, grant speaking rights and announce decisions taken.

13.3 The Board will be validly constituted if a majority of its members are present.

13.4 A meeting of the Board is validly constituted even if all or some members are not physically present or represented, provided they participate in the deliberations via telecommunications that allow members to hear and speak to one another directly, such as telephone or video conference. In this case, members will be considered present.

13.5 Abstentions from voting will not be counted when calculating the majority. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have a second and casting vote.

13.6 The Secretariat will keep the minutes of Board meetings, which will be available to Association members at the registered office.

13.7 In exceptional circumstances, when urgency demands, the Board may make decisions by written procedure. In such cases, the Chairperson, with the assistance of the Secretariat, will send the proposed decisions to all Board members via any means of communication specified in the Internal Rules. Proposed decisions will be considered adopted if, within 5 calendar days of sending, the number of duly completed responses returned to the Secretariat meets the quorum and voting requirements set forth in the Statutes and Internal Rules.

Article 14 – Board of Directors representation

Board representation shall be organised as follows:

14.1 Each member organisation is entitled to nominate one person to serve on the Board. Board membership will be organised into three panels: Directors nominated by Tier 1 members, Directors nominated by Tier 2 members and a third panel of co-opted Board members. Eurocarers' tiered membership system is depicted in Annex 1 of this document.

14.2 Tier 1 members – The number of vacancies on the Tier 1 panel will be equivalent to one-third of the number of organisations that have paid the appropriate Tier 1 membership fee by the required date, rounded up to the nearest whole number. If there are more

nominations than vacancies, an election will be held for this panel, with the votes of all Full Members counted equally. If there are fewer nominations than vacancies, all nominees will be deemed elected and the Board will have the right to fill any remaining vacancies by co-option. Such co-opted individuals do not need to be members of a Tier 1 organisation;

14.3 Tier 2 members – The number of vacancies on the Tier 2 panel will be equivalent to one-tenth of the organisations that have paid the appropriate Tier 2 membership fee by the required date, rounded up to the nearest whole number. If there are more nominations than vacancies, an election will take place for this panel, with votes from both Tier 1 and Tier 2 Full Members counted. If there are fewer nominations than vacancies, all nominees will be deemed elected and the Board of Directors will have the right to fill any vacancies by co-option. Such co-options do not need to be members of a Tier 2 organisation;

14.4 Co-opted Board members - The Board may co-opt up to three additional individuals as Directors to enhance its management and technical expertise or to ensure that the diverse membership of Eurocarers is adequately represented on the Board. These co-opted members can be appointed from both within and outside the Eurocarers network, depending on the specific competencies or qualities sought by the Board.

Co-opted Board members are appointed for a term of one year, which may be renewed for up to two additional one-year terms. They hold full voting rights within the Board. The total number of co-opted Board members must never exceed the number of elected Board members.

D. CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSON(S) and TREASURER

Article 15 – The Chairperson

15.1 The Chairperson shall be accountable to the membership of the Association. In addition to any other powers or responsibilities outlined in the Statutes or these Internal Rules, the Chairperson shall have the following duties:

- ✓ Chair meetings of the General Assembly and the Board;
- ✓ Monitor the Association's representation at external meetings and events on behalf of the Board, in collaboration with the Secretariat;
- ✓ Oversee the activities of the Secretariat on behalf of the Board.

15.2 If the Chairperson takes urgent action as permitted by the Statutes, they must report this action at the next Board meeting. The Chairperson shall always act in the best interests of the Association and in accordance with its policies.

Article 16 – The Vice-Chairperson(s)

16.1 The Association may have one or two Vice-Chairperson(s).

In addition to any other powers or responsibilities outlined in the Statutes or these Internal Rules, the Vice-Chairperson(s) shall:

- ✓ Assume the duties of the Chairperson in their absence or if they are unable to act;
- ✓ Assist the Chairperson in fulfilling their responsibilities.

Article 17 – The Treasurer

17.1 In addition to any other powers or responsibilities outlined in the Statutes or these Internal Rules, the Treasurer shall:

- ✓ Oversee the Secretariat's financial operations;
- ✓ Present necessary financial reports to the Board and the General Assembly;
- ✓ Review and supervise the financial statements submitted to potential public or private funding agents.

The Treasurer may also contribute to meetings with funders and sponsors of the association.

E. SECRETARIAT

Article 18 – Secretariat

18.1 The Secretariat's role, as outlined in Article 21 of the Statutes, is to:

- Manage the resources of the Association to achieve its strategic and annual business objectives; and
- Conduct the day-to-day operations of the Association.

18.2 The Executive Director is responsible for providing leadership and oversight to the Secretariat to ensure these objectives are met. The Executive Director holds sole responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Secretariat's staff, who are accountable to them. The Executive Director reports to the Board through the Chairperson and has the right to participate in all meetings of the Association's governing bodies.

18.3 In addition to any other tasks or powers outlined in the Statutes or these Internal Rules, the Secretariat shall:

- ✓ Perform day-to-day administrative tasks;
- ✓ Coordinate and implement the annual work plan of the Association;
- ✓ Execute the decisions made by the Board;
- ✓ Provide assistance to the Board, particularly to the Chairperson;
- ✓ Organise meetings for the Association;

- ✓ Represent the organisation in tasks for which it is mandated;
- ✓ Be accountable to the Board; and
- ✓ Coordinate fundraising efforts.

18.4 The Executive Director of the Secretariat shall have full operational and administrative responsibility, managing the staff within the defined mandate. They shall also assist in the meetings of the Board and the General Assembly.

TITLE IV – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Article 19 – Budget, accounts and auditing

19.1 The Association's income shall comprise membership fees, donations, grants, subsidies and legacies awarded to support its general aims or specific goals that align with the Association's objectives.

19.2 The accounts of the Association shall be subject to an external audit.

TITLE V – MISCELLANEOUS

Article 20 – Advisers

20.1 The Board may appoint one or more advisers for a fixed and renewable term. This decision will include a clear definition of the adviser's specific tasks or areas of expertise, which will be communicated to the membership immediately.

Article 21 - Notices

21.1 Whenever the Statutes or Internal Rules refer to "any means of communication as set forth in the Internal Rules," this shall encompass the following forms of written communication:

- Letter;
- Email.

21.2 Any of these means of written communication may also be used when the Statutes or Internal Rules do not specify the method by which notices, invitations, letters, documents or announcements should be communicated.

Annex 1 - Eurocarers Membership strategy

	Turnover (Direct expenditure on carers' issues)	Fee	Board place (nomination) ¹	AGM Vote	AGM delegate funding	Access to funded work	Access to funded Capacity Building	Staff networks (Research/Policy/Practice)	Newsletter/resource materials
Full Member (Tier I)	>1.5m	3,500	01:03	X1	1	Priority	Peer review/staff trainer costs	Two (of three) funded	+
	750k-1.5m	2,750	01:03	X1	1	Priority	Peer review/staff trainer costs	Two (of three) funded	+
	<750k	2,000	01:03	X1	1	Priority	Peer review/staff trainer costs	Two (of three) funded	+
Full Member (Tier II)	>700k	1,250	01:10	X1	1	Limited	Funded training Seminars	One (of three) funded	+
	250k-700k	750	01:10	X1	1	Limited	Funded training Seminars	One (of three) funded	+
	<250k	500	01:10	X1	1	Limited	Funded training Seminars	One (of three) funded	+
Associate 1		250			By invitation	By invitation	Mentoring programme	By invitation	+
Associate 2 ²		100							Newsletter only
Observer ³		50							Newsletter only
+ Co-opted Board members									

¹ A majority of the Board will be made of carer-led organisations, in accordance with our statutes.

² Only organisations (i.e. not individuals) can join as Associates

³ Only individuals can join as Observers