



STATUTES

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I. Organisation

Article 1 - Name

(1) This organisation is established as an international association and registered as a non-profit organisation under the name: “European Liberal Youth”, abbreviated as LYMEC.

(2) It is subject to the Belgian law of 27 June 1921, as modified by the Law of 2nd May 2002.

Article 2 - Origins

(1) LYMEC was established in 1976 under the name LYMEC, Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Community. At the Executive Committee in July 1994 in Gummersbach, Germany, the name of the organisation was changed to Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Union, as a consequence of the establishment of the European Union. Finally in 2002 at the extraordinary Congress in Andorra the name of the organisation was changed to LYMEC, European Liberal Youth.

Article 3 - Aims

(1) LYMEC is an independent youth organisation with a political aim, in which student and political liberal and radical-democratic youth organisations unite to promote, develop, and realise the ideas and values of liberalism and democracy within the European Union (EU), and Europe as a whole.

(2) The association seeks to:

- a) educate its members about liberal ideas and values, and increase political participation and interest in European affairs through a variety of means;
- b) stimulate co-operation and create opportunities for networking between its members on a European level;
- c) take positions in the general public debate on a European level, and organise Europe-wide campaigns on certain political themes; and,
- d) strengthen democracy in Europe at large, and support enlargement and integration of the European Union in accordance with liberal ideas and values, in close co-operation with other pan-European organisations.

Article 4 - Headquarters

(1) The office and the Secretariat of LYMEC shall be in Brussels, Belgium. It is currently located at Rue d'Idalie 11, 1050 Ixelles. Bruxelles headquarters belong to the judiciary district of Brussels (Ixelles).

(2) A decision to change the headquarters' location to any other place in Belgium shall be taken by a simple majority vote of the Bureau. This decision will be announced in the Annex to the Belgian State Gazette.

Article 5 - Co-operation

(1) In order to achieve its aims, LYMEC shall co-operate with the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party - abbreviated as ALDE Party - and the parliamentary Group of the ALDE Party in the European Parliament, as well as the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY), sub-regional liberal organisations and other organisations in fields where common interests exist.

Article 6 - Relationship with the ALDE Party

(1) LYMEC is the official youth organisation of the ALDE Party. LYMEC is independent from the ALDE Party in all decisions made and opinions held.

(2) The LYMEC delegation to the ALDE Party Council is appointed by the LYMEC Bureau.

(3) The LYMEC delegation to the ALDE Party Congress is elected by the LYMEC Congress, according to the Congress Rules. The elected delegates must confirm their participation at the ALDE Party Congress to the LYMEC Bureau at least eight weeks beforehand. If necessary, the Bureau will elect new delegates following an open call sent out to member organisations and individual members.

Article 7 - Relationship with the International Federation of Liberal Youth

(1) LYMEC is the official regional youth organisation of the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) in Europe. LYMEC is independent from IFLRY in all decisions made and opinions held.

(2) LYMEC is a member of IFLRY, and is represented in IFLRY statutory bodies along the lines defined in the IFLRY statutes. The LYMEC representative in the IFLRY Bureau will be elected by the Congress according to the procedure of and with the criteria by the election for President as defined in Article 26 (1) of the Congress Rules, and Article 22 of these Statutes.

Article 8 – European Liberal Students Network

(1) Member Organisations of LYMEC with a strong focus on student issues may choose to gather in an internal network named “European Liberal Students Network”, abbreviated as ELSN.

(2) ELSN defines its own internal rules and elects a network coordinator.

II. Membership

Article 9 - Types of membership

(1) The association consists of member organisations (MO) and individual members (IM). LYMEC has two types of member organisations: full members and associate members. LYMEC shall have a minimum of three full member organisations.

Article 10 - Full membership

(1) Delegates of full member organisations of LYMEC have the right to:

- 1) attend LYMEC events;
- 2) speak;
- 3) propose motions or resolutions;
- 4) propose amendments;
- 5) vote;
- 6) participate in a LYMEC working group;
- 7) put forward candidates for any election.

(2) To become a full member of LYMEC, any organisation must comply with the following criteria:

- 1) The organisation must be a national youth organisation, or a sub-national youth organisation that is not part of a national organisation;
- 2) The organisation is not a member of any other pan-European political organisation that is not based on liberal, radical democratic ideas;
- 3) It must be run by and for young people;
- 4) It must be democratically organised;
- 5) It must be based in a European country;
- 6) It must agree with the aims of LYMEC as expressed in these Statutes and broadly agree with its Manifesto and Policy Book;
- 7) It must have been an associate member organisation of LYMEC.

(3) Furthermore, in order for an application to be considered by the Congress, the following requirements must have been fulfilled:

- The applicant organisation must provide a copy of its Statutes or Constitution in its original form and a copy in the working language of LYMEC;

- The applicant organisation must provide a copy of its Political Program, Manifesto or ideological standpoints in its original form and a copy in the working language of LYMEC;
- The applicant organisation must have been present at a minimum of four events, which shall include at least one statutory meeting, organised by LYMEC prior to the Congress where the application is considered;
- The applicant organisation must provide details of its membership figures. The applicant must also state how it defines membership;
- The applicant must declare any links (direct or indirect) with any other organisations and explain in full detail what form that link or dependence takes;
- The applicant organisation must provide information on its sources of finance, this must include details of any State funding, party funding, membership fees, annual turnover and the budget;
- At least one statutory event organised by the applicant organisation must be visited by a member of the LYMEC Bureau, the Secretary General, or the internal auditors.

(4) Applications for full membership by the applicant organisation, as well as a Bureau report on the fulfilment of the above stated requirements must be submitted in writing to the Secretariat at least eight weeks prior to the Congress. All written material must thus be provided by the said deadline, and must be sent out to all members at least four weeks prior to the Congress. The application must be announced in the agenda of the Congress.

(5) The Congress will decide upon the application by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

Article 11 - Associate Membership

(1) Representatives of associate member organisations of LYMEC have the right to:

- 1) attend LYMEC events;
- 2) speak;
- 3) propose amendments;
- 4) participate in a LYMEC working group.

(2) To become an associate member of LYMEC any organisation must comply with the following criteria:

- 1) The organisation must be a national youth organisation, or a sub-regional youth organisation that is not part of a national organisation;
- 2) The organisation is not a member of any other pan-European political organisation that is not based on liberal, radical democratic ideas;
- 3) It must be run by and for young people;
- 4) It must be based in a European country;
- 5) It must agree with the aims of LYMEC as expressed in these Statutes and broadly agree with its Manifesto and Policy Book.

(3) Furthermore, in order for an application to be considered by the Congress, the following requirements must have been fulfilled:

- The applicant organisation must provide a copy of its Statutes or Constitution in its original form and a copy in the working language of LYMEC;
- The applicant organisation must provide a copy of its Political Program, Manifesto or ideological standpoints in its original form and a copy in the working language of LYMEC;
- The applicant organisation must provide details of its membership figures. The applicant must also state how it defines membership;
- The applicant must declare any links (direct or indirect) with any other organisations and explain in full detail what form that link or dependence takes;

(4) Applications for associate membership by the applicant organisation, as well as a Bureau report on the fulfilment of the above stated requirements must be submitted in writing to the Secretariat at least eight weeks prior to the Congress. All written material must thus be provided by the said deadline, and must be sent out to all members at least four weeks prior to the Congress. The application must be announced in the agenda of the Congress.

(5) The Congress will decide upon the application by an absolute majority of those present and voting.

Article 12 - Duties of member organisations

(1) Any full or associate member organisation must comply with the following criteria:

- 1) Ensuring that the LYMEC Secretariat is always provided with a current copy of their statutory documents in their original form, as well as a full English translation, if applicable.
- 2) Ensuring that the LYMEC Secretariat is always provided with a current copy of their political programme, manifesto, or ideological standpoints in its original form, as well as a full English translation, if applicable.
- 3) If a full or associate member organisation has not attended any of five consecutive statutory meetings, it shall provide written explanation to the LYMEC Secretariat.
- 4) The organisation must notify the LYMEC Secretariat of any changes of links (direct or indirect) with any other organisation, and explain in full detail what form that link or dependence takes.
- 5) The organisation shall provide LYMEC with invitations to its Congress and, when relevant, other events.
- 6) Member organisations are obliged to notify the LYMEC secretariat of their current membership figures by 31 January of each year. LYMEC shall send out a request to submit membership figures to all member organisations at least four weeks in advance. If no notification has been received by the LYMEC Secretariat, the minimum amount of votes will be granted to the full member organisation in question.

Article 13 - Individual membership

(1) Citizens or residents of a European country, aged between 18 and 35 years, who broadly agree with its Manifesto and Policy Book, can become individual members of LYMEC. The Individual Members' Section (IMS), as the aggregate of all individual members, will be regulated by internal rules, drafted by the IMS, and ratified and supervised by the Bureau.

(2) Individual members have the right to:

- 1) attend LYMEC events;
- 2) speak;
- 3) participate in a LYMEC working group;
- 4) propose motions or resolutions;
- 5) propose amendments;
- 6) propose themselves as candidates for any election.

(3) The Bureau shall decide upon the acceptance of individual members.

(4) If an individual member or a full member organisation does not accept the Bureau's decision, the application will be forwarded to the Congress. The Congress will decide upon the application by a two-thirds majority. The applicant must provide details of its current and former membership of political organisations with the application.

Article 14 - Individual member Congress delegates

(1) The individual members shall elect individual member delegates to the Congress. These delegates have the right to vote at the Congress.

(2) Elections take place electronically. Elections and requests for candidacy shall be announced to all individual members at least eight weeks before the spring congress. The elections will last three days and will end at least four weeks before the Spring Congress starts.

(3) Delegates must themselves be individual members, with their term expiring at the start of the first Congress of the subsequent year. Their duties towards LYMEC and the individual members shall be properly specified by internal rules of the Individual Members' Section; the LYMEC Bureau shall guarantee the existence of such rules and oversee their correct application.

(4) Delegation of votes from one or more delegates to other individual member delegates must be justified in written form to the Bureau and Secretariat. Delegation of votes to member organisations is strictly forbidden. During the first two-thirds of the mandate, if for compelling reason a delegate cannot fulfil his mandate, a by-election shall be organised.

(5) An individual members' delegate cannot simultaneously be either a member of the Bureau, or an internal auditor.

Article 15 – Change of membership status

(1) Member organisations and individual members of the association can leave the association by choosing to resign of their own accord.

(2) Individual membership expires automatically on the 36th birthday or upon the death of the individual member.

(3) Full or associate membership of an organisation automatically ends by declaration of the Bureau, providing evidence to the Congress that the organisation ceased to exist, and no clear successor organisation could be identified.

(4) Member organisations and individual members may be expelled or suspended. Expulsion or suspension may be proposed either by the Bureau, three full member organisations, or at least three individual members. The proposing group must provide due explanation of the grounds for expulsion or suspension, and any such proposal must be included in the agenda.

Member organisations or individual members who leave the organisation through any of the ways stipulated in this article are no longer part of the association have no rights to its financial assets.

(5) The LYMEC Bureau may propose to change an organisation's membership status from a full to an associate member. In this case, it shall provide due explanation of the grounds for the proposed status change.

Article 16 - Changes in member organisations

(1) If a full member or associate member organisation merges with a non-member organisation, its membership in LYMEC must be confirmed by an absolute majority of those present and voting at the next Autumn Congress.

The new member organisation must comply with the criteria as set out in Article 10 of these Statues, except for the third point in Article 10 (3). All the necessary requirements must be transmitted in writing to the Bureau at least eight weeks prior to the Congress.

Article 17 - Membership fee

(1) The yearly membership fees to be paid by full member and associate member organisations shall be decided by the Autumn Congress by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting. Membership fees must be paid at latest at the opening of the Spring Congress. The Secretariat must send out an invoice at least eight weeks prior to that Congress.

(2) Without prejudice to any other measures which may be decided upon by the Congress, those members whose fees remain outstanding will have their voting rights at Congress automatically suspended.

(3) Individual members shall pay a membership fee valid for a period of one year upon payment. Its amount will be agreed upon by a two-third majority of those present and voting at the Congress.

Article 18 - Reduced membership fee and payment arrangement

(1) Full member organisations may apply for a reduced membership fee, which must be more than zero EUR, or a payment arrangement. Any such application needs to be received in written form by the LYMEC Secretariat at least four weeks prior to the first Congress of the calendar year.

(2) Any such reduction or payment arrangement must be approved by the Congress by an absolute majority on a proposal by the Bureau, and based on the following considerations:

- Whether an organisation has a permanent office and its size;
- Whether an organisation has permanent staff and its number;
- Whether an organisation has state funding;
- The number of paying members of the organisation;
- The level of service provided for international work;
- The financial situation and the ability to pay;
- The state of the banking system in the country of registration of the member organisation.

III. Institutional Provisions

Article 19 - Statutory Bodies

(1) The statutory bodies of the association are as follows (in ranking order):

- A) The Congress
- B) The Bureau
- C) The Internal Auditors
- D) The Committee of Discipline and Arbitrage

(2) These bodies will be assisted by the Secretary General.

Article 20 - Congress

(1) The Congress is the highest decisionmaking body of LYMEC, and has absolute authority in furthering the aims of the association. The Congress consists of delegates and meets at least twice a year. The votes at the Congress are distributed by a formula set out in the Congress Rules.

(2) The Congress has the right to put in question a Bureau member, the Secretary General, an internal auditor or one of their substitutes, a LYMEC delegate to the ALDE Party Congress or one of their substitutes, and to replace that person through a constructive vote of no-confidence with an absolute majority of those present and voting at the Congress.

(3) The Congress can further decide on all matters, which it recognises as falling within its competence by a two-thirds majority vote of all possible votes at the Congress. The Congress can deliberate on all proposals submitted to it by a member organisation or an individual member delegate.

(4) The Congress is further described in the Congress Rules.

Article 21 - Bureau

(1) The Bureau determines and implements LYMEC policy and activities within the framework of guidelines adopted by the Congress. Specifically, the Bureau:

- a) executes the day-to-day work of the organisation;
- b) implements the decisions of the Congress;
- c) represents LYMEC to other institutions and organisations;
- d) makes recommendations to the Congress concerning the acceptance and exclusion of member organisations and individual members;
- e) is accountable to the Congress for all its activities;
- f) may propose motions or resolutions.

(2) The Bureau may delegate its responsibilities as it desires, and may employ staff.

(3) The Bureau shall meet at least five times per year. Decisions are taken by simple majority of those present. The Bureau may take decisions only when a quorum of four out of seven of its members is reached. The minutes of Bureau meetings shall be made available to members within four weeks after the meeting.

(4) Except in the case of special mandates, the President, Vice President, or Treasurer, who will not have to justify the powers conferred for this purpose to third parties, shall sign all deeds that bind the association. All legal actions, be it as plaintiff, claimant or a defendant, shall be taken, continued and expedited by the Bureau, represented by the President. Alternatively, a member of the Bureau or the Secretary General can be appointed for this purpose by the Bureau.

(5) The Bureau is responsible to the Congress for all financial matters. The approval of the budget and the annual accounts is the exclusive power of the Congress.

(6) The Bureau will report on its activities to the Congress by publishing an annual report at least four weeks prior to the Spring Congress, and to the Autumn Congress through a bureau report containing reports of each individual bureau member. The annual report describes to what extent the tasks and goals as described in the Program of Action have

been fulfilled. In between statutory meetings the Bureau shall also regularly report to members on its activities through appropriate means.

(7) In case of vacancy or resignation of the Secretary General, the Bureau has the right to fill this vacancy until the next Congress providing a minimum two-week notice has been given of the vacancy.

Article 22 - Composition and election of the Bureau

(1) The Bureau consists of:

- The President
- The Vice President
- The Treasurer
- Four other Bureau members

(2) Candidates for the Bureau may be put forward by full member organisations or an individual member. All members of full member organisations and individual members of LYMEC can be put forward as a candidate for the Bureau.

(3) Candidates to the Bureau must be between 18 and 33 years of age on the date of the election. A mailing, introducing all candidates that supplied the secretariat with the necessary material at least four weeks prior to the Congress, shall be sent out maximum 2 weeks before the Congress.

(4) Members of the Bureau are elected by secret ballot for a regular Bureau period of two years according to the procedure specified in the Congress Rules. Bureau members elected in a by-election serve until the end of the regular period. The introduction of all candidates shall be arranged by the Chair during the Congress.

(5) Bureau members who have not attended at least half of the meetings in the twelve months following their election will be subject to a vote of confidence by the next Congress.

(6) The Secretary General shall be permanently invited to the meetings of the Bureau with no voting rights and acting as secretary of the meeting.

Article 23 - The President and Vice-President

(1) The President:

- 1) exercises the highest political, executive and representative role in the organisation.
- 2) represents LYMEC externally.
- 3) reports on the Bureau's activities to the Congress
- 4) may assign organisational and political tasks among bureau members at his/her own discretion.

If the President shall for any reason step down during the term of office, the Vice President shall take over the duties of the President until the next Congress, where a new president will be elected.

(2) The Vice-President:

- 1) deputises the President during their absence, or upon their delegation of tasks;
- 2) supervises the role of the Secretary General in the administration and personnel management of the organisation.

Article 24 - The Treasurer

(1) The Treasurer:

- 1) in consultation with the Bureau, establishes the annual budget (including membership fees) and the annual financial report and submits these to the Congress for approval;
- 2) controls the execution of the budget, both as regards fundraising and expenses;
- 3) is responsible for the correct administration and use of the budget, under the control of internal and external auditors;

(2) The Treasurer must be consulted on all main financial transactions that affect the association.

Article 25 – Other Bureau members

(1) LYMEC has four other Bureau members. The Bureau can assign them both organisational and political tasks. Those fields of responsibility will be communicated to members following their assignation.

Article 26 - The Secretary General

(1) The Bureau shall delegate the daily management of the LYMEC Secretariat to the Secretary General. The Bureau defines the scope and financial limitations of the daily management powers of the Secretary General.

(2) The Secretary General shall be remunerated, according to decisions of the Bureau.

(3) The Secretary General is appointed for a two-year mandate, approved by the Congress taking place immediately after the Congress that has elected the Bureau, according to the procedure specified in the Congress Rules.

(4) The Bureau may propose to renew the mandate of the Secretary General for one term of two years by making a recommendation to the Congress.

(5) All members of full member organisations and individual members of LYMEC can be put forward as candidate for the Secretary General post.

(6) Candidates to the Secretary General post must be between 18 and 33 years of age at the date of the approval by the Congress.

Article 27 – Internal Auditors

(1) The Congress shall elect two Internal Auditors to examine the accounts and the general management of the association and to give a report thereon to the Congress.

(2) Two substitutes shall be elected. Their purpose is to replace them if necessary. Internal Auditors cannot be members of the Bureau. Former Bureau members are not allowed to be candidates for internal auditor. Auditors will be elected for the same period as the Bureau. The electoral rules are fixed in the Congress Rules.

(3) The Internal Auditors shall receive all the information needed to execute their task from the Treasurer upon simple demand. Without request they will receive an update on the finances at each quarter of a year. Internal Auditors shall receive the Annual Financial report of the Association at least four weeks prior to the Spring Congress. Internal Auditors shall send their report thereon to the Congress at least two weeks before it convenes. The Internal Auditors must attend the annual Spring Congress.

(4) The Internal Auditors shall administer the elections and conduct the ballots during the Congress. In case an internal auditor stands for election themselves, a substitute or an appointee by the Congress will replace them.

Article 28 - Committee of discipline and arbitration

(1) The discipline and arbitration committee shall be composed of five members selected by the Bureau and approved by the Congress for a two-year mandate.

(2) The chairperson of the committee shall be elected by its members. The Committee will decide its own rules of procedure.

(3) The discipline and arbitration committee shall be competent for any disciplinary issue not falling within the scope of Article 12 of the Statutes, for any dispute between two member organisations, and for any dispute between the Bureau and a member of LYMEC.

(4) In order to legitimately deliberate about a case, the disciplinary and arbitration committee must be called upon by the Bureau, by a member organisation or by an individual member.

(5) The committee may impose sanctions others than expulsion at its own initiative on members of member organisations or on individual members of LYMEC, and may

arbitrate any conflict submitted to its competence provided that the two parties concerned agree on the arbitration procedure proposed by the committee.

(6) Members of the committee cannot be members of the Bureau, internal auditors, or the Secretary General.

IV - General Provisions

Article 29 - Budgets and Accounts

(1) The Bureau in its entity is responsible to the Congress for the finances of LYMEC. The financial year begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of every year.

(2) All member organisations and individual members pay a membership fee on a yearly basis. Membership fees for Member Organisations shall not exceed 2000 EUR per organisation per year. Membership fees for Individual Members shall not exceed 100 EUR per individual per year.

(3) Internal Auditors carry out an internal audit after every budgetary year and report to the Bureau and the annual Spring Congress. An external audit must also be performed each year. The external auditor shall be approved by the Congress after a proposal by the Bureau at least four weeks prior to the Congress. The external auditor is appointed for a three-year term. The Bureau's annual financial report together with the report of the external auditors, containing an itemised account of expenditure for administration and activities, must be transmitted in writing to the Secretariat at least four weeks prior to the annual Spring Congress.

(4) The budget for the following budgetary year must be transmitted in writing to the Secretariat four weeks prior to the Autumn Congress.

(5) In the Annual Financial Report, the Treasurer shall present an itemised list notably stating the following to the Congress:

- a) the amount of membership fees that should have been received from all member organisations;
- b) the amount of membership fees that has been effectively received from all member organisations;
- c) the total number of individual members and the number and the amount of individual membership fees received.

(6) Any donations worth more than 1000 EUR (in any financial year) are only permitted under conditions of transparency. LYMEC fundraising activities and their results shall be made public in the Annual Financial report published by the Treasurer of LYMEC. Donations of more than 100 EUR as described above must be approved by a formal decision of the LYMEC Bureau.

Article 30 - Working language

(1) The working language of LYMEC shall be English.

Article 31 - Interpretation of the Statutes

(1) The Congress shall rule on the interpretation of these Statutes. The Congress will decide on all matters not stipulated by these statutes or the Congress Rules

(2) If required, the auditors shall rule on the interpretation of these Statutes between Congresses. Auditors must report to the Congress the reason for such interpretation and are fully accountable to the Congress.

Article 32 - Statutory changes

(1) Every proposal that aims to change these Statutes or adopt new Statutes must be made either by the Bureau or by member organisations and individual members.

(2) Such a proposal must be received by the LYMEC Secretariat at least eight weeks prior to the Congress. The Secretariat shall forward the proposal within one week after that deadline to all members.

(3) A majority of two-thirds of those present and voting is needed to pass such a motion. The Congress can arrange further matters in Congress Rules, as long as these matters do not contradict with the Statutes.

Article 33 - Validity of the statutes

(1) These Statutes will be valid until the adoption of new Statutes or dissolution of the association. Statutory amendments take effect immediately after the Congress of their adoption.

(2) All that is not stipulated by these Statutes or by the Congress Rules, and the announcements which have to be made in the Belgian State Gazette, shall be arranged in accordance to the provisions of the law of 21 June 1921.

Article 34 - Dissolution

(1) A proposal that aims to dissolve LYMEC must describe clearly why LYMEC needs to be dissolved and it must be made either by the Bureau or by member organisations and individual member delegates holding at least three voting rights.

(2) Such a proposal must be received by the LYMEC Secretariat to all members at least eight weeks prior to the Congress.

(3) A majority of two-thirds of all possible votes at the Congress is required to dissolve LYMEC. In the event that fewer than two-thirds of all votes are present at this Congress, a new Congress shall be called under the aforesaid conditions where a two-third majority of those present and voting shall be required to pass the proposal.

(4) The Congress will determine in which manner the association is dissolved and settled. However, in such event, the patrimony of LYMEC can only be allocated to a non-lucrative cause.