

STATUTE OF THE ASSOCIATION "WOMEN"
(Women of Mediterranean, east and south European
Network)

INTRODUCTION

On the 26th of March 1999 the cooperation protocol for the realisation of a network of the women of the Mediterranean and the Balkans was underwritten in Forlì with the combined commitment of institutions and associations active in the area. The objective is to spread the principles of equal opportunities between men and women and the culture of gender, to contribute to enhance the culture of women and cultural differences, to achieve exchanges and projects within the decentralized cooperation. Since then "Women" has supported, developed and financed numerous activities and projects in Algeria, Afghanistan, Scutari in Albania, Kosovo, Palestine, in the Saharawi camps, Tangier, Tunis, that represent the basis of relations and experiences on which the development of the network is based.

Article 1 CONSTITUTION, OFFICES AND LOGO

A non-profit Association called "Women-Women of Mediterranean east and south European Network" is been constituted. This Association is the natural evolution of the agreement signed in Forlì on March 26th, 1999, for the creation of a network for exchange, solidarity and cooperation between the women of the Mediterranean and the Balkans.

Its registered office is in the City of Forlì. The variation of the registered office in the same city doesn't imply any changes in this statute.

The logo of the Association is the distinctive sign of the network that may be borne by its members and it is represented in the enclosure with this statute.

The duration of the Association is unlimited.

Article 2 PRINCIPLES

The Association "Women", also in the spirit of contributing to reinforcing European-Mediterranean bonds, has the following goals:

- a) the diffusion of the principles of equal opportunities between men and women and the enhancement of sexual differences,
- b) the promotion of gender culture,
- c) the valorisation of cultural differences,

It also operates to reach these goals even within the policy of public aid and cooperation for the development.

Particularly, with reference to:

-The Convention on the Elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) adopted by the UN in 1979, to which reference is made.

-The strategy and priorities that emerged from the World Conference on Women promoted by the UN in Beijing in 1995, which final document is referenced.

-The Millennium Development Goals fixed in the UN Millennium Declaration on September 2000, to which reference is made.

-The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security adopted on October 2000, to which reference is made.

Women works to promote:

- a) the acquisition of powers of responsibility for women enhancing their professionalism and competence,
- b) a culture that enhances the differences of gender,
- c) The adoption of the point of view of gender in the government policies at all territorial levels and particularly in the adoption of policies promoting women's employment, the protection of reproductive health, the reconciliation between work and family life, the fight against any kind of violence and exploitation against women and the assistance for the victims,
- d) The enhancement of the autonomous experiences of women and their associations with respect to native and migrants of the different areas and countries that are part of it, and of the different countries and areas in which it operates.
- e) The enhancement of autonomous experiences of men and men's and mixed forms of association that assumes the principles a), b) and c) of Article 2, and the purpose of Article 3 of this Statute and that are close to the experiences and practices of women mentioned in this Statute.

Article 3

AIM AND PURPOSES

The Association "Women" has the purpose of creating a network of communication and initiative between women representing local institutions and bodies, women's associations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), Universities, Research Centres particularly active in the European-Mediterranean, Balkans and East European areas which are identified in the principles and aims of this statute.

Considering the principles and aims of the Association, the members choose a woman as their representative and the presidency will be assumed by women.

Among the principle aims, the following ones are emphasised:

- a) promoting relations and exchanges between women of different countries for mutual knowledge and common actions that give voice to the experiences and projects for the change of which they are bearers, participating and providing support for women's networks in every field of activity,
- b) promoting actions that develop the sensitivity towards cultural differences and the different cultures of women in all the institutional and associative contexts,
- c) consolidating and promoting the role of women in the government processes at every level to contribute to the adoption of policies that will increase the number and quality, support and develop the administrative capacity of the local institutions with respect to the gender policies from a mainstreaming point of view,
- d) favouring the consolidation of civil society enhancing the participative dimension in its many different forms, providing women and their associations with the means for the autonomous creation and promotion of initiatives and enhancing women's autonomous institutions and their experiences,
- e) planning and implementing interventions in favour of women and initiatives in order to promote the social-political and economic empowerment for them,

- f) supporting and developing the experiences, at a national and international level, by women's and feminist associations, women's networks, Non-Governmental Organisations or other organisations, enhancing the negotiation skills in conflicts,
- g) correlatively with the above aims, organising experience exchanges and educational activities.

Article 4 METHOD OF ACTION

To reach the aims indicated in article 3 of this statute, the Association "Women" identifies the following instruments, for the purpose of favouring the links between the partners:

- promotion of common initiatives for the realisation of the aims of this statute, also in the field of cooperation in the development with particular attention to decentralized cooperation,
- organisation of periodic and thematic workshops,
- creation of a multilingual Internet web site to provide information on the legislation and the experiences related to equal opportunities between men and women, cooperation in development, non-violent solutions for conflicts, conducted by women's associations and bodies in different countries and as a place for virtual discussions and exchange between the partners, with links with similar databases structured at European level,
- creation of a newsletter for the updated divulgation of the Association activities for its members and other users.

The Association has an eminently political character and each member has the right to assess their own adhesion and economic participation in the single supported projects. Each member elected as a representative of the European public bodies who participates in financing single projects, pays the network their own part of the quota in advance.

Article 5 DISCIPLINE OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association "Women" is regulated by the present statute in the respect and limits of the general principles of the legal system of the members that contribute to the assertion of the principles in accordance with article 2, with particular reference to the general principles of the European legal system.

The internal regulations, proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the General Assembly, in harmony with this statute, discipline the other aspects concerning to the organization and activities of the Association.

Article 6 MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association "Women" consists of:

- founding members,

- ordinary members,
- supporting members
- individual members.

The founding members are: the Region of Emilia Romagna, the City of Forlì, the City of Ravenna, the City of Venice, the Province of Parma, the Province of Forlì-Cesena, the Province of Ferrara, the Province of Ravenna, the Association Orlando, the Association RACHDA (Algiers), the Independent Forum for Albanian Women (FIDA), the Palestinian Working Women Society for Development (PWWSD), AIDOS, COSPE and GVC which have guaranteed continuity in the work of the network over the years.

The ordinary members are all those whose request to join the association has been approved in accordance with the methods in the following article 7 of this statute.

In the transitional phase for the implementation of the activity of the Association, in departure from what is established in article 7, all those who have previously signed the "Document of intention for the setting up of a network of Mediterranean, east European and Balkans women" who confirm their wish to join the association within 60 days of the communication of the transformation of the Association, and who have subscribed to the membership fee within the envisaged terms are considered members to all effects.

Supporting members are those who provide financial aid and donations to support the activity of the Association. The supporting members have the same rights as the ordinary members.

Individual members have less weight in terms of votes, compared to the founding, ordinary and supporter members. The vote weight of each member category will be specified in the appropriate regulations.

Article 7 METHOD OF JOINING

Institutions and Local Bodies, Associations, and Non-governmental Organizations of native and migrant women, and of women and men that recognize themselves in the a), b) and c) principles of Article 2 and the aims in Article 3 of this Statute, and Universities and Research centres that recognize themselves in the principles and aims in article 2 and 3 and act for that purpose may join the Association "Women". After they make the membership request to the Association, a deliberating or membership act takes place by the competent bodies that concomitantly approve the statute of the Association.

In addition to the mentioned institutions and associations, even individual people who recognize themselves in the Article 2 and 3 principles of this statute and act for that purpose, can belong to the association.

The Executive of the association, once the requests are evaluated, expresses its judgement on it .

If the registration will be in order just if the membership fees are paid within 60 days from the communication of the acceptance ordered by the Executive Committee.

The Association membership is indefinite, without prejudice to the right of withdrawal, as well as the exclusion in the cases and in the ways envisaged in the following articles.

Article 8
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

The members of the Association must pay an annual membership fee of:

12.500,00 euro for the Regions,
1.000,00 euro for the Local Bodies with more than 100,000 inhabitants,
500,00 euro for Local Bodies with less than 100,000 inhabitants,
150,00 euro for associations and NGOs
150,00 euro for Universities and the Research Centres,
50,00 euros for individual people.

Subjects located in countries outside the EU are exempt from the payment of the membership fee and the annual fee. The Executive Committee can take other exemptions into consideration.

The amount of the annual membership fee is not subject to modifications with the exception of the variations established by the Executive Committee to bring these fees into line with the National Statistical Institute indexation.

The Executive Committee will occur every two years the membership fee for each kind of member within the indicated ranges.

The annual membership fee must be paid within the month of May each year.

Article 9
EXCLUSION AND WITHDRAWAL

The membership status would be revoked because of:

- voluntary withdrawal when it will be communicated to the Executive Committee of the Association by a registered letter. For the purposes of the annual contribution the withdrawal has effect when this is communicated at least three months before the approval of the budget.
- arrears in the payment of the annual membership fee after two months from any reminder for payment. In this case the Presidency, if the continuation of the delay is verified, will exclude the member with a communication to the same and to the Executive Committee in the first available meeting.
- exclusion when there are serious reasons that make the relations of the associates incompatible. The Executive Committee decides on the exclusion after written notice of the charges, envisaging the right to reply.

The members who have withdrawn or have been excluded lose any rights over the social assets and have no right to claim the reimbursement of the membership fees paid.

Article 10
BODIES AND INSTRUMENTS

The following are Bodies of the Association:

- The General Assembly of the members,
- The Executive Committee,
- The Presidency,

- The Control and Audit Body.

The following are instruments of the Association:

- The organizational secretariat
- The web site and the its implementation
- The newsletter.

Article 11 GENERALASSEMBLY

The General Assembly consists of all the founding, ordinary and supporting members and the Region of Emilia Romagna.

As a rule it meets once a year in one of the countries represented in the same.

The Assembly is called by letter, sent at least 20 days before the date established for the Assembly, with the agenda , as well as the date, time and place of the meeting. The second meeting can also be called on the same day as the first.

Any subject member has the right to vote on the pertinent questions of the Assembly. The Assembly is the governing body of the Association.

The Assembly meets for:

- a) the approval and modification of the statute and the regulations,
- b) the election of the presidency,
- c) the nomination of the members of the Executive with exception of the members by right,
- d) the nomination of the Board of Auditors,
- e) the budget and final balance,
- f) policies for the annual work of the Association.
- g) Adjustment of the membership fees and evaluation of any exemptions.

The General Assembly also meets by request of the majority of the components of the Executive Committee or one fifth of the members.

The first convocation of the Assembly is valid with the presence of half of the members present or represented by proxy plus one. Each member can act as proxy for only two members at the most. The second meeting of the assembly is valid whatever the number of members actually present or represented by proxy.

The resolutions are made, as a rule, by unsealed ballot with vote in favour of the motion of the absolute majority of the members present. Resolutions on the persons are made by secret ballot.

The resolutions approved are registered in the minutes signed by the Presidents.

The resolutions for modifying the statute are valid if two-thirds of the members vote in favour of the resolution.

The vote in favour of at least three-quarters of the members is required for the dissolution of the Association and the transfer of the property.

The assembly can also revoke the mandate of the Executive Committee with the vote in favour of the resolution of half of the members plus one.

The execution of the functions is rendered without consideration.

Article 12

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee with executive functions is elected by the Assembly with a secret ballot on the basis of the candidature presented by at least 5 members.

The necessary territorial plurality will be taken into consideration. The founding members and the Region of Emilia Romagna are permanent guests without the right to vote in the case they were not elected as effective members.

The Executive Committee is elected for a term of three years and consists of a 5 members according to the Regional Law n. 14/2010. The Executive Committee is composed of 3 representatives of the Regions and the Local Bodies, and 2 NGOs, 1 of which is preferably foreign.

The decisions taken are by majority.

The Executive Committee has the following functions:

- a) management of every aspect of the Association in accordance with the policies of the Assembly;
- b) management of the resolutions of the assembly and specific powers for realising the goals in article 3;
- c) establishing the functions of the organizational secretariat;
- d) making decisions relevant to the requests for admission of new members to the Association;
- e) making decisions relevant to the exclusion of members;
- f) drawing up the annual budget and final balance;
- g) deciding on the revision of the envisaged membership fees and quotas.

As a rule the Executive meets 3 times a year in an ordinary meeting and also in extraordinary meeting by request of at least one third of the members.

The Executive meeting is called by written notice sent to the members at least 15 days before the date of the meeting.

The first convocation is valid with the presence of half of the members present or represented by proxy plus one. Each member can act as proxy for only two members at the most. The second convocation is valid whatever the number of members actually present or represented by proxy.

The decisions are taken with an absolute majority vote of the members present and entered in the relevant minutes drawn up by the organizational secretariat.

The remote members of the Executive Committee who couldn't participate at the meeting can express their opinion and make their own decisions also using a computer link. In this case the decisions will be taken on the basis of the majority of the members of the Executive Committee.

The execution of the functions is rendered without consideration.

Article 13 PRESIDENCY

The Presidency is elected with a secret ballot by the annual Assembly of the members. It is a collective body formed by two Presidents, one elected from the representatives of the Institutions and the other elected from the representatives of the Associations. The President elected from the Institutions is the legal representative.

The Presidents are elected for a term of three years, at the end of which they may be re-elected for another term. They automatically forfeit their post as a consequence in the case of withdrawal from the Association of the Body represented.

The Assembly can revoke the mandate with the vote of half of the members plus one.

The Presidency has the following obligations:

- to represent the Association officially at a national and international level,
- call the meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Committee,
- supervise the implementation of the resolutions of the Executive and the general progress of the Association
- make sure the statute and regulations are respected;
- chair the Assembly and the Executive meetings and sign the minutes.

The Presidents supervise the drafting of the projects of the Association on the basis of the indications of the Assembly and the Executive Committee.

The presidency has the organizational secretariat to help in the course of its activity and for the implementation of the decisions made by the competent bodies.

The execution of the functions related to the presidency is rendered without consideration.

Article 14

ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETARIAT

In order to fulfil the aims in article 3 the Association has an organizational secretariat.

This secretariat has its offices on the premises of one of the founding Public Bodies. The body playing host to the organizational secretariat will provide the premises and equipment required. The other operational charges will be paid from the available funds of the association.

Article 15

PROVISIONAL CLAUSE

For the first five-year period of activity of the Association the responsibilities of the organizational secretariat will be assumed by the City of Forlì.

Article 16

CONTROL AND AUDIT BODY

The Association is provided with a control and audit body nominated by the Assembly and it is composed by members and non-members chosen among those registered in the register of auditors constituted at the Ministry of Justice.

The Control and Audit Body can be identified on the basis of the decision of the Assembly, in a monocratic or in a collective way. In that last case it will consist of three effective members, one of which has Presidential functions.

The Control and Audit Body is obliged to guarantee the following functions:

- a) providing the own opinion on the budget,

- b) verifying the regular maintenance of the Association accounts,
- c) preparing the final budget report of the Association.

The annual pay of the auditors is established by the Assembly at the nomination for the entire term in office.

Article 17 ASSETS

The assets of the Association consists of:

- a) movables and immovables that have become the property of the Association in any way (donations, contributions, etc..) from single persons or bodies or directly purchased,
- b) any reserve funds from the budget surplus.

Article 18 INCOME

For the realisation of its aims the Association has the following income:

- annual membership fees,
- income from activities or from participation on projects;
- contributions of public and private bodies;
- any refunds from conventions;
- any other income that increments the assets of the Association.

Article 19 THE FINAL BALANCE AND BUDGET

The financial year of the Association starts on the 1st of January and ends on the 31st of December of each year.

By February of each year the Executive Committee of the Association must be called for preparing the budget and final balance to put before the Assembly within the month of March each year.

Article 20 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

In the case of dissolution of the Association for any reason, the assets will be transferred to other with the same end.

Article 21 LEGAL MATTERS

Anything that is not envisaged in this statute will be resolved in accordance with the laws and regulations in force, as well as the general principles of the legal system.