

NEW Statute of the European Rural Community Alliance (ERCA)

1. General

- 1.1. The European Rural Community Alliance, henceforth called ERCA, is a non-profit making, non-governmental organisation. It is a co-operative body for non-governmental organisations and networks, at European, national and regional levels, that implement integrated, cross-sectoral, place-based and local rural development.
- 1.2. ERCA is registered in Sweden, Stockholm.
- 1.3. The financial year is January 1 to December 31 of each year.
- 1.4. In order to support its activities ERCA may receive donations, apply for grants and project funding.

2. Objectives

The objectives of ERCA are:

- 2.1. To promote integrated, cross-sectoral, place-based and local rural development at the European level
- 2.2. To enable informed debate on the future of rural areas and rural development and to influence rural policy, both in the European Union and in the European states.
- 2.3. To build on the collective strengths of the national and regional rural movements and empower them at regional, national and international levels, and to support the formation of national and regional rural movements in areas where these do not exist.
- 2.4. To provide a link between the European level rural networks which are supportive of Objective 2.1
- 2.5. To enable exchange of knowledge and mutual support between the member organisations

3. Members

- 3.1. The Ordinary Members of ERCA are European, national and, in federal states and autonomous regions, regional non-governmental organisations and networks, who are adherent to the objectives of ERCA and have been approved by the Board. Ordinary members have full voting rights.
- 3.2. Associate Members are individuals, organisations and groups, not eligible under 3.1. who have been approved by the Board. Associate members may participate in and contribute to the activities of ERCA, but do not have voting rights.
- 3.3. Ordinary and Associate Members are required to submit an application for membership, for approval by the Board.

- 3.4. The Board will recommend the membership fees, for approval by the Annual General Assembly.
- 3.5. Members are free to renounce membership at any time, in a written form addressed to the Board.
- 3.6. The exclusion of a member, by the decision of the Board, may take place if a member has caused notable damage to ERCA, or if the member no longer meets the membership provisions set forth by the law or the rules of ERCA.

4. The General Assembly

- 4.1. The General Assembly is the highest institution of ERCA.
- 4.2. The General Assembly meets at least once a year in the Annual General Assembly.
- 4.3. The General Assembly may be called at any time by the Board on its initiative, or on the initiative of one-fifth of the Members.
- 4.4. The Board invites the Members to the General Assembly by letter and/ or e-mail, with at least 40 calendar days notice. The invitation must include the agenda of the General Assembly and the documents on the topics to be discussed. Additional documentation may be sent up until 15 calendar days before the meeting.
- 4.5. If a member of ERCA wishes the General Assembly to discuss an issue, they must give notification in writing to the Board at least 30 calendar days in advance of the General Assembly so that the issue can be included in the invitation to the General Assembly.
- 4.6. The business of the Annual General Assembly includes:
 1. Declaring the General Assembly lawfully convened and quorate
 2. Selecting the chairperson and secretary for the General Assembly, two scrutinizers of the minutes and two tellers when necessary
 3. Approving the agenda and the minutes of the previous General Assembly
 4. Presenting the annual report, financial statements and statement of auditors
 5. Confirming the financial statements and discharging the Board and other parties from liability for the accounts
 6. Confirming the plans and budget for the coming year
 7. Setting the membership fees for the coming year
 8. Electing the President, Vice President and other members of the Board
 9. Electing the Auditor for the coming year
 10. Discussing any other competent business, as identified in the invitation to the General Assembly.

- 4.7 The Ordinary Members of ERCA are represented at the General Assembly by persons authorized in writing to the Board by the Member.
- 4.8 Every Ordinary Member has one vote. Ballots will be resolved by simple majority of votes. When the votes are tied, the vote of the Chairperson will be decisive; however, in case of elections, the winner will be drawn by lots.
- 4.9 The General Assembly may select a Nomination Committee to nominate prospective Board Members, with a responsibility to identify appropriately skilled nominees, with balanced geographical and gender representation.
- 4.10 An Extraordinary General Assembly will be held when the Annual General Assembly decides, when the Board deems necessary, or when at least one fifth (1/5) of Members request a meeting in writing. The Extraordinary General Assembly must be held within 40 days of the demand for a meeting being given to the Board.

5. The Board and the Management

- 5.1. The Board of ERCA is constituted by 5-11 individuals nominated by the Ordinary Members, including the President and Vice-President.
- 5.2. Board Members are elected by the General Assembly for a period of two years.
- 5.3. Each Board Member may be elected for a total of two consecutive periods of two years, with one-half of the Board elected each year, to ensure continuity.
- 5.4. The President and Vice-President are elected by the General Assembly for a period of one year, and may be re-elected for a total of four consecutive years.
- 5.5. The Manager, Treasurer and Secretary are selected by the Board, but do not necessarily have to be Board Members.
- 5.6. The Board will approve new Members of ERCA by majority vote.
- 5.7. The Board will agree the signatories on official documents and financial transactions. Two approved signatories will be required for all financial transactions, at least one of whom must be a Board Member.
- 5.8. The quorum for Board meeting is one-half + 1 of the total number of Board Members.
- 5.9. Board Members may participate in Board meetings by telephone, internet or other means of distance communication.
- 5.10. The day-to-day management and implementation of Board decisions and work programs of ERCA may be delegated to a Manager. The functions of the Manager may include: execution of the decisions of the Board, financial management, contract management, staff or contractor management, office management, correspondence and communications.
- 5.11. The Board may delegate tasks to individual Board Members, Members or appoint committees with specified tasks, who will act on behalf of ERCA in

executing the tasks.

6. Supervision

- 6.1. The book-keeping and the decisions of the Board of ERCA are audited by the appointed Auditor at least once a year. Auditing will be carried out according to the legal requirements of the country of registration.

7. Dissolution

- 7.1. A decision regarding a revision of the statutes or dissolution of ERCA must be approved by a minimum of three-quarters (3/4) of the votes cast in a General Assembly of ERCA. The summons to the General Assembly must include the proposals for revising the statutes or dissolving ERCA.
- 7.2. In case of dissolution, the General Assembly nominates liquidators and defines their competence. The General Assembly also decides about the provisions of the net capital of ERCA.

8. Supporting documentation

- 8.1. Detailed information e.g. on membership, organisation, networks, finance, etc. are outlined in a supporting document "Rules and Regulations".