

Suggested amendments to WSCF-E By-Laws

ERA 2019

From SCM Norway

Suggestion 1:

Where:

Article IV Membership fees

Existing text:

Member movements, whether affiliated or associated members, shall pay an annual membership fee to WSCF at a rate determined at the GA. This fee, set at 1% of an SCM's annual budget, should be paid according to a timeframe agreed between WSCF-E and each individual SCM. If an SCM is unable to meet this monetary obligation alternative arrangements can be made.

Suggested amendment:

Member movements, whether affiliated or associated members, shall pay an annual membership fee to WSCF at a rate determined at the GA, and at a timeframe agreed between WSCF/WSCF-E and each individual movement. If a movement is unable to meet this monetary obligation alternative arrangements can be made.

Reasoning:

It is unnecessary and potentially confusing to both have a fee set in the by-laws and at the same time say it is to be "determined at the GA". As far as we have noticed, it is the WSCF – not the WSCF-E – that collects the fee.

Suggestion 2:

Where:

Article V – Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

Suggested amendment:

New point 1:

The ERA is the highest decision making body of the WSCF-E. All other decision making bodies of the WSCF-E must act in accordance with what is decided on the ERA. The ERA is only restricted by the WSCF constitution and by-laws, decisions made on the WSCF General Assembly, and the WSCF-E by-laws.

Reasoning:

A clarification of the basic democratic principle that the assembly, where the member organisations meet, is the highest decision making body of the region.

Suggestion 3:

Where:

Article V – Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

1 Composition

Existing text:

[The composition of the ERA shall be as follows:]

1. Up to two delegates from each affiliated movement with the right to vote, speak, present recommendations and provide candidates for election to the European Regional Committee (ERC).

Suggested amendment (3A):

Add the following text:

Delegates must be chosen by the affiliated movement.

Where:

Article V – Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

3 Frequency of meetings

Existing text:

The ERA shall, as a rule, meet every two years. Meetings will normally take place immediately following thematic conferences. All participants attending the thematic conference from affiliated and associated movements shall be expected to attend the ERA.

Suggested amendment (3B):

Change the text to:

The ERA shall, as a rule, meet every two years. Meetings will normally take place immediately following thematic conferences. For practical and financial reasons, member movements are encouraged to have the elected ERA delegates attend the thematic conference.

Reasoning:

To ensure the basic democratic principle that the member movements themselves are to elect who will be representing them in the highest decision making body of the federation.

Suggestion 4:

Where:

Article V – Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

1. Composition

Existing text:

[The composition of the ERA shall be as follows:]

c. The elected members of the ERC with the right to vote, speak and present recommendations as a committee.

Suggested amendment (4A):

Remove the following text:

“vote,”.

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

3. Frequency of Meetings

Existing text:

c. An extraordinary ERA shall be held upon request of two-thirds of the voting members of the next ERA (affiliated member movements two votes, associated member movements one vote, ERC members one vote). The ERC shall be responsible for calling and organising this extraordinary ERA so as to enable the participation of all affiliated and associated movements.

Suggested amendment (4B):

Remove the text “ERC members one vote”.

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

4. Voting procedures

Existing text:

c. Any ERC member also standing as a delegate for a national SCM needs to decide what body they will represent with their one vote.

Suggested amendment (4C):

Remove the whole text.

Reasoning: The elected members of the ERC already have a major influence on the ERA before it comes to voting. This influence comes from preparing the meeting and the cases to be discussed, and from the social credibility their position will grant them during debates. With the added power of being a large voting block, the ERA will in reality be controlled by the ERC. This proposition takes into consideration the basic democratic principle that the ERA should be in control of the ERC, and not the other way around. This is in line with the rules around the GA of SCM Norway, and it works like a charm.

Suggestion 5:

Where:

Article V – Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

1. Composition

Existing text:

[The composition of the ERA shall be as follows:]

c. The elected members of the ERC with the right to vote, speak and present recommendations as a committee.

Suggested amendment:

Remove the following text: “as a committee”.

Reasoning:

The elected members of the ERC are elected as individual members, and should be allowed to express their individual opinions. It will also be beneficial to the ERA if eventual disagreements can reach the ERA to be discussed there.

Suggestion 6:

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

1. Composition

Existing text:

[The composition of the ERA shall be as follows:]

e. Resource Persons to be invited as needed with the right to speak.

Suggested amendment:

Change the text to “*The ERA can vote to give Resource Persons the right to speak when needed*”.

Reasoning:

A clarifying of the basic democratic principle that as the highest decision making body of the WSCF-E, democratically composed of the member movements, the ERA are the only ones who should decide who they want to influence the ERA.

Suggestion 7:

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

1. Composition

Existing text:

[The composition of the ERA shall be as follows:]

f. Non-voting observers with the right to speak.

Suggested amendment:

Change the text to: “*As a general rule, the ERA is open for observers. The ERA may vote to close the meeting for observers when needed in specific cases. Observers may not speak or vote.*”

Reasoning:

A clarifying of the basic democratic principle that as the highest decision making body of the WSCF-E, democratically composed of the member movements, the ERA are the only ones who should decide who they want to influence the ERA. Observers are supposed to be just that: observers. If any observers have important things to share with the ERA, this will be cared for by the suggested article 1 f.

Suggestion 8:

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

2. Functions

Existing text:

[The functions of the ERA shall be as follows:]

a. To formulate policy: to make recommendations to the ERC on the programmes and campaigns of WSCF-E;

Suggested amendment:

Change “recommendations” to “*decisions*”

Reasoning: To clarify the basic democratic principle that the ERA is the highest decision making body of the WSCF-E, and thus are in control of the ERC – not the other way around.

Suggestion 9:

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)
2. Functions

Existing text:

[The functions of the ERA shall be as follows:]

c. To make recommendations on the practical management of the region, including governance, movement building, communications and fundraising;

Suggested amendment:

Change “recommendations” to “*decisions*”

Reasoning:

To clarify the basic democratic principle that the ERA is the highest decision making body of the WSCF-E, and thus are in control of the ERC – not the other way around.

Suggestion 10:

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

3. Frequency of Meetings

Suggested amendment:

New point 3 c.: *The ERC shall distribute a proposed agenda and case papers with all necessary background information, and suggested decisions, to all delegates and affiliated and associated movements at least two weeks beforehand.*

Reasoning:

To ease proceedings at the ERA and to make it possible for delegates to discuss important issues and standpoints with their movement before the ERA.

Suggestion 11:

Where:

Article V, Composition and Function of the European Regional Assembly (ERA)

4. Voting procedures

Suggested amendment:

New point: *No proxy votes are allowed.*

Reasoning:

To make sure voting at the ERA are as transparent, clear and open as possible, and to ensure no “cheating” with votes is possible. To participate in the voting, you have to be present at the ERA with the possibility to hear all debates and explain why you voted as you did.

Suggestion 12:

Where:

Article VI Officers, Committees and Staff

2. Committees

Existing text:

[The ERC shall have the following composition:]

g. Other staff and volunteers (no vote[s])

h. The ERC has the right to co-opt up to two resource persons and/or movement representatives (no vote). Co-opted members may be from a country where there are no affiliated or associated movements (see Appendix).

Suggested amendment:

Change the text to “g. *The ERC may invite staff or volunteers to attend meetings (no vote[s]) in specific cases when necessary.*”

Reasoning:

The ERC are to be elected by the ERA. Even without voting rights, it is an undemocratic principle if the ERC can appoint their own “full time” members.