



Statutes of the International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE)

1. Name and Registered Office

1.1. – The «Fédération Internationale des Communautés Educatives» (FICE) (English: International Federation of Educative Communities; German: Internationale Gesellschaft für Erzieherische Hilfen), is an association established in accordance with Article 60 et seq. of the Swiss Civil Code and with legal seat in 9043 Trogen, Switzerland.

1.2. – FICE was founded under the auspices of UNESCO in 1948, in the Pestalozzi Children's Village in Trogen, Switzerland.

2. Mission and Vision

2.1. – In accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, FICE supports all endeavours which further the global realization and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as defined by the United Nations. FICE focuses on such living conditions of young people and their families which prevent or are detrimental to the positive development of young people:

- Children, who cannot live with their families
- Children with special needs
- Children who live in out-of-home care
- Children at risk

2.2. – FICE promotes the rights of young people and their families particularly in the context of child and youth care. FICE promotes the development of different shapes of stationary and ambulant care and education and contributes to their quality development.

FICE also focuses on those who are not in care, and who live at home and are at risk, and on young people with special needs.

2.3 – FICE observes strict political and religious neutrality. It rejects all forms of discrimination. It accepts within its Membership all ideological, religious and cultural orientations as long as these are in line with the objectives defined in the present statutes.

2.4 – To realize these objectives, FICE organizes training courses, meetings, seminars, international Congresses symposia and projects. It establishes work groups which promote the exchange of experience and the further education of experts in the childcare field. It involves children and young adults in this process and cooperates with other international institutions with similar goals and objectives. It encourages and carries out scientific studies, research and promote the edition of professional publications.

2.5 – FICE influences the public opinion with a focus on enhancing the importance of educative assistance and to bring the situation of looked after children and professionals to the mind of the public. Therefore, FICE informs the experts in the field and political decision-makers of its work and its findings.

2.6 – In the spirit of international understanding and global solidarity FICE supports within its means meetings and exchanges of professionals as well as children and young adults.

2.7 – In exceptional cases and situations of war or disaster, FICE can take part in temporary relief operations. FICE coordinates together with the members their activities and particularly provides help for children, who do not have a family, or whose family cannot, or can only partly, take care for them in social, sanitary or educational matters.

2.8 – FICE operates exclusively for the common good and does not pursue any profit or self-help purposes. Its bodies work on a voluntary basis.

3. Membership

3.1 – FICE recognizes the following forms of Membership:

3.1.1 – National Section: The status of National Section is open to non-governmental organizations of national standing which are engaged in practical and theoretical work in the field of socio-pedagogical assistance for children and youths. They must select their executive bodies and representatives in free democratic elections. National Sections must themselves be open to accept as members private individuals, and/or educational and training institutions, universities and colleges, public authorities and other associations engaged in childcare. When voting at the General Assembly, each national section has 100 votes. As a rule, only one National Section per country is admitted. If there are good reasons for the membership of several organizations from one and the same country, the Members' Assembly can admit two National sections from one country upon written request. In this case they have 50 votes each in the Members' Assembly. The National Section pays a higher annual fee than other membership categories. Supranational bodies can also be admitted as National Sections.

The National Sections can form Regional Networks approved by the Members' Assembly. Regional Networks are Associations with their own Statutes.

3.1.2 – Organization Member: This type of membership is open to NGOs, child and youth welfare care organizations, training centres, universities, and other institutions that are professionally engaged in either practical or theoretical work for young people at risk, or are otherwise involved in the field of child and youth welfare. Each member of this category has 10 votes in the Members' Assembly. Their annual membership fees are determined by the Coordinating Body on the recommendation of the Treasurer.

3.1.3 – Individual Associate Membership: This type of membership is open to anyone interested in childcare issues, regardless of whether or not there is a National Section in their country Individual Associate Members are informed about FICE activities in the same way as other Members and receive invitations to the FICE events. Individual Associate Members have one (1) vote in the Members' Assembly. There is no limitation on number of Individual Associate Members from one country. Their annual fees are determined by the Coordinating Body on the recommendation of the Treasurer.

3.1.4 – Honorary Membership can be awarded to individuals or institutions who have been actively engaged in the work of FICE over many years. Honorary Members are informed about FICE activities and invited to all events. They have no voting rights, are ineligible for election, and do not pay a membership fee.

3.2 – Admission process

Acceptance into Full Membership is generally preceded by a limited period of Associate Membership. Associate Membership shall be for a period of one to two years. In exceptional situations, the Federal Council can extend Associate Membership for one additional period. Every new member is attributed a mentor who will be a full member. The mentor guides the new member until it reaches the status of full member. New members have to send to the Secretary General their legal statutes. In the next members' General Assembly

meeting, they can apply for full membership. The mentor's recommendation to the Members' Assembly should have an important weight in the decision of the Members' Assembly.

Associate Members are invited to all events open to Full Members. They have no voting rights but can submit motions. Associate members do not pay fees until they get their full membership status.

Full Organization Members that have applied to become National Sections retain their voting rights and continue paying their membership fees as Organization Members until they have been admitted as National Sections.

Associate Members can use the name FICE and the FICE logo only together with a reference to their Associate Membership. Organization Members can only use the name FICE and the FICE logo together with a reference to their membership as organization.

In exceptional cases, the Members' Assembly can, at a General Assembly Meeting, accept immediately an Associate Member and attribute it the status of Full Member.

3.3 – Inclusion and collaboration

With mutual support of all members and using new electronic collaboration and translation technologies, FICE promotes the full inclusion and collaboration of members in FICE independent of their geographical location and language. FICE provides its documentation primarily in English and, where applicable, welcomes support from members for translation into further languages.

3.4 – Membership expires:

- In the case of individuals by resignation, exclusion or death.
- In the case of legal entities by resignation, exclusion or dissolution of the legal entity.

Cancellation of Membership must be in writing, with six months' notice, and is effective at the end of a calendar year. Full, Associate, and Individual Members who cancel their Membership lose the right to use the FICE logo or the designation FICE in any manner whatsoever. For the current, partially completed year, the full membership fee must still be paid.

A member can be excluded from FICE at any time due to the violation of the statutes. The Coordinating Body decides the exclusion; the member can appeal against the exclusion decision to the next General Assembly Meeting. Until the final decision, the member's rights are suspended.

Members who for two consecutive years fail to meet their financial obligations, even after being reminded, are automatically excluded. The Coordinating Body shall inform the Members' Assembly of such cases.

4. Constituent Bodies

4.1 – The constituent bodies of FICE are:

- the Members' Assembly
- Coordinating Body,
- the General Secretariat and
- the Audit Committee.

The currently valid organizational model, approved by the members and including detailed role descriptions, is outlined in the regulations document titled "The FICE International Organization Model and its Roles".

4.1.1 – Members' Assembly

4.1.1.1 – The Members' Assembly is the highest body in FICE. It is composed of the representatives of all Full, Associate, Individual and Honorary Members.

An ordinary members' General Assembly Meeting takes place annually. The adoption of resolutions by means of an electronic voting platform or, in justified exceptional cases, by written means is permitted and is subject to the same statutory requirements as a physical meeting. The President calls and presides over each session.

The Coordinating Body, or a fifth (1/5) of the Full Members can request an extraordinary General Assembly Meeting.

The Members' Assembly has the following non-transferable tasks and powers:

- a) Approval of the minutes from the last General Assembly
- b) Approval of the annual report from the Coordinating Body
- c) Receipt of the audit report and approval of the annual accounts
- d) Discharge of the Coordinating Body
- e) Election of the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary General as well as the auditors. Election of additional committees.
- f) Determination of membership fees.
- g) Approval of the annual budget.
- h) Decision-making on the activity program.
- i) Approval of the organization model of FICE
- j) Decision-making on proposals from the Coordinating Body and members.
- k) Amendment of the statutes.
- l) Approval and amendment of any further regulations.
- m) Decision on the admittance and exclusion of members; decision on appeals against exclusions of members.
- n) Granting of honorary memberships.
- o) Decision of entering into treaties, conventions and contracts with other international organizations which pursue similar aims
- p) Decision-making on the dissolution of the association and the use of liquidation proceeds.

The Members' Assembly can establish work groups. The tasks, composition, duration and competencies are to be defined in writing.

The Members' Assembly can adopt rules of procedure and financial rules which regulate the points above and other matters.

4.1.1.2 – Invitation to the General Assembly require two months' notice and must be accompanied by an agenda. Motions to amend the Statutes require that the proposed amendments be distributed with the invitation. Invitations sent by email are valid.

4.1.1.3 – Every Full Member has a number of votes at the General Assembly according to its membership category. The President votes only in the case of ties and has the casting vote in such cases. Should the President be incapacitated, the casting vote in case of a tie falls to the Vice President. Otherwise, the Vice President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer have no vote. They can propose motions to all items on the agenda.

4.1.1.4 – The members pass resolutions by a simple majority of the votes cast. Amendments of the statutes require the approval of two-thirds of the full members present and voting.

4.1.1.5 – The Coordinating Body or 1/5 of the members can at any time request the convening of an extraordinary General Assembly, specifying the purpose. The meeting must be held no later than three months after the request is received.

4.1.1.6 – Every duly convened General Assembly is quorate and capable of making decisions, regardless of the number of members present. The members make decisions by a simple majority of the votes cast. In the event of a tie, the president casts the deciding vote. At a minimum, the minutes must record all decisions made.

4.1.2 – Federal Council and Live Forum

Between General Assemblies, the Members' Assembly –meets in person in Federal Council Meetings, respectively online in Live Forums and resolves all questions concerning FICE which are not exclusively the domain of another body. The Federal Council/Live Forum is composed of representatives of all Full and Associate Members. Full and Associate Members will normally be represented by their President and/or one other Member of their executive bodies. Honorary Members of FICE International can also attend Federal Council/Live Forum meetings. Individual members can attend the meetings but have no vote. The Federal Council/Live Forum meets in ordinary session two to four times per year. The President calls and presides over each session.

4.1.2.1 – The functions of the Federal Council and Live Forum include:

- the preparation and evaluation of activities in the execution of the work plan of FICE.
- ensuring the implementation of the work programme by collaborating actively.
- developing the organization model of FICE.
- working out joint policy statements on current professional topics.
- approval of the Chairperson proposed by the Editorial Board.

4.1.2.2 – Invitations to the Federal Council and Live Forum meetings require six weeks notice and must be accompanied by an agenda.

4.1.2.3 – Every National Section has ten votes at the Federal Council and Live Forum meetings. Every organization member has one vote.

4.1.2.4 – The President votes only in the case of ties and has the casting vote in such cases. Should the President be incapacitated, the casting vote in case of a tie falls to the Vice President. Otherwise, the Vice President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer have no vote. They can propose motions to all items on the agenda.

4.1.3 – The Coordinating Body

The Coordinating Body consists of at least 4 persons, including the President, the Vice President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer.

The President, the Vice President, the Secretary General and the Treasurer are elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms of office. The maximum period a President and a Vice President can remain in office is limited to six years. No maximum is set for the periods in office of the Secretary General and the Treasurer. In the event of a resignation or ongoing inability to act of one of the Coordinating Body members during a three year term, the Members' Assembly shall select a replacement for the remaining duration of the current term.

Additionally, each Regional Network holds a seat in the Coordinating Body. Each Regional Network selects their own representative, normally their president or co-presidents.

The Coordinating Body prepares the work of the General Assembly, the Federal Council and the Live Forum meetings, drafts motions, carries out decisions and generally ensures the running of FICE. Members of the Coordinating Body are normally the official representatives of FICE.

The Coordinating Body meets online or in person as often as business requires. Any Coordinating Body member can request a meeting to be convened, stating the reasons.

Unless a Coordinating Body member requests oral deliberation, decisions made via circular resolution (including email) are valid.

Meetings are called by the Secretary General on behalf of the President and chaired by the President.

The Coordinating Body has all powers that are not assigned to another body by law or according to these statutes. The functions of the Coordinating Body include especially:

- the preparation and execution of all decisions of the General Assembly, Federal Council and Live Forums.
- the establishment, overarching steering, and/or coordination of working groups.
- the official representation of FICE and the regulation of representation to international organizations.
- the preparation and submission of recommendations for the acceptance and exclusion of Members.
- the management of FICE Funds.

The Coordinating Body can hire or commission individuals for appropriate compensation (in accordance with labor law) to achieve FICE's goals.

The Coordinating Body generally operates on a voluntary and unpaid basis, but its members are entitled to reimbursement of actual expenses. For special services provided by individual Coordinating Body members, appropriate compensation can be granted. In both cases, previous written application to the Coordinating Body and agreement by the members (upon recommendation from the treasurer) are required.

The Coordinating Body establishes its signing authority collectively by two persons.

4.1.4 – General Secretariat

4.1.4.1 – The General Secretariat is the primary contact point to all Members and to all international organizations. It is run by the Secretary General.

4.1.4.2 – The General Secretariat is responsible for the timely preparation and distribution of documentation to all Members. It processes Membership applications in line with the statutes and rules of procedure.

4.1.4.3 – The General Secretariat maintains a list of Members. In cases of doubt the Executive Committee decides on the inclusion of addresses on the list.

4.1.5 – Audit Committee

4.1.5.1 – The General Assembly elects three auditors or a legal entity to review the accounting and annual financial statements, as well as to verify the correct use of FICE's funds. They must conduct at least one random audit per year.

4.1.5.2 – The Audit Committee reports to the Coordinating Body for the attention of the General Assembly every year. The term of office is three years. Re-election is permitted.

5. Finances

5.1 – To pursue its purpose, FICE has the following means at its disposal:

- membership fees from Members from the different categories,
- subsidies and contributions of third parties,
- proceeds from events and the sale of publications, and
- donations and contributions as well as legacies.

5.2 – The membership fees are determined annually by the General Assembly. Honorary members are exempt from the fee.

5.3 – FICE is liable for its obligations exclusively with its assets. Recourse to the assets of its Members is excluded.

5.4 – The financial year corresponds to the calendar year.

6. Data Protection

FICE collects from its members only the personal data necessary to fulfil FICE's purpose. The Coordinating Body ensures that data security is appropriate to the level of risk.

The members' data, namely name, address, telephone number, and email address, are made known to all members of FICE.

The aforementioned member data is published on FICE's website. Beyond this, disclosure of the data to third parties will only occur as part of legally permissible data processing or when legally required or ordered by authorities.

The processing of member data is otherwise in accordance with the provisions of Swiss data protection law and the privacy policy on the association's website.

7. Dissolution of the Association

The dissolution of FICE requires the support of two-thirds of those present and voting at the General Assembly, representing at least half of all Members. In the event of the dissolution of FICE, all its assets shall, as determined by the Members' Assembly in a General Assembly Meeting, be transferred to a tax-exempt organization with seat in Switzerland that pursues the same or a similar purpose. The distribution of the association's assets among the members is excluded.

8. Commencement of these Statutes

These statutes were adopted at the General Assembly of FICE International on 22 October 2024 in Split, Croatia, and have come into effect as of this date. They replace all previous versions. The original of the FICE statutes is in the English language. In case of dispute, the English text shall prevail.

22 October 2024, Split, Croatia

Dr. phil. Anna Katharina Schmid
President

Patrick Reason
Secretary General