

FERPA CONSTITUTION



ferpa

EUROPEAN FEDERATION
OF RETIRED AND ELDERLY PEOPLE

CONSTITUTION

Approved by the 9th Congress – April 2023

Preamble

1. FERPA is the European Federation of Retired and Elderly Persons recognized as such by the European Trade Union Confederation in its Constitution (article 26) as the federation of independent and democratic trade unions of and for retired and elderly persons.
2. As a federation of independent and democratic trade unions of and for retired and elderly persons FERPA campaigns on their behalf for a free, democratic and peaceful society based on interpersonal and intergenerational solidarity.
3. FERPA defends the interests of all retired and elderly persons on behalf of the trade union organizations belonging to the ETUC framework. FERPA itself is part of the ETUC structure.
4. FERPA demands more specifically:
 - safe and sustainable public pension systems anchored in solidarity between generations, guaranteeing a decent standard of living for the present and future pensioners;
 - public health care systems enabling all inhabitants to receive adequate, respectful and affordable treatment;
 - full social participation of elderly persons at all levels of society;
 - full participation of elderly persons in life-long learning initiatives;
 - guaranteed dignified care for dependent elderly persons in long term care and also for those residing at home;
 - full access to social services and services of general interest for elderly persons;
 - adequate housing facilities for elderly persons and their entourage, where necessary adapted to the special needs of the elderly.
5. FERPA defends the interests of retired and elderly persons towards international institutions, and more specifically towards European institutions such as the European Commission, the European Council of Ministers, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Council and other European institutions that may be established, as well as to broader European organizations as the Council of Europe, the European Free Trade Association and comparable institutions.

6. FERPA is committed to respect the basic principles of Human Rights, equal opportunities and equal representation of men and women, the eradication of all forms of discrimination and the promotion of solidarity amongst its members. These principles shall also be reflected in the internal organization and structures of FERPA.
7. FERPA campaigns to give retired and elderly persons a voice and an active role to play in the policy shaping processes at European level. FERPA also supports activities of its member organizations voicing their opinion and their demands at national and international level about issues of major importance.
8. FERPA works together with organizations which are sharing its aims and values, with a view to develop and initiate common actions and activities in the interests of retired and elderly persons in Europe.

Article I

Membership

I.1

Organizations assembling retired and elderly persons and which are associated with member organizations of the ETUC and thus sharing the aims and values of the ETUC can be eligible to be a member organization of FERPA.

I.2

To be allowed to affiliate member organizations shall be independent and democratic, share the values and aims of FERPA and shall pay their contributions on times set.

I.3

All FERPA members are entitled to fully participate in the discussions in the FERPA bodies, but only those members that are up-to-date with payment of their contributions can take part in the decision making processes within FERPA.

I.4

Organizations of retired and elderly persons not yet member of FERPA can apply for observer status and participate in FERPA deliberations without voting rights.

I.5

Applications for membership and observer status shall be submitted to the FERPA General Secretary and ratified by the FERPA Executive Committee.

I.6

Member organizations or organizations with observer status acting in contradiction with the values and aims of FERPA and thus contrary to the interests of retired and elderly persons in Europe can be suspended or expelled from the FERPA organization.

I.7

Further details about application of membership and observer status and of suspension, expulsion and readmission of membership and observer status are laid down in the Rules of Procedure of FERPA.

Article II

FERPA bodies

II.1

The governing bodies of FERPA are the Congress and the Executive Committee.

II.2

Further permanent bodies within FERPA are the Steering Committee and the Women's Committee.

A. CONGRESS

II.3

Congress is the supreme authority of FERPA. It shall assemble every four years. An Extraordinary Congress will be convened by the Executive Committee on its own initiative or on the written request of one third of the member organizations.

II.4

Time and place of an ordinary congress will be decided by the Executive Committee and shall be convened at least four months in advance. An Extraordinary Congress must take place no later than four months after the initiative taken by the Executive Committee or the receipt of the submission of a request.

II.5

Congress shall elect its President at the opening of the meeting.

II.6

The agenda for each Ordinary Congress will be prepared by the Executive Committee and shall include at least the following items:

- a) to determine the strategy and general policy of FERPA;
- b) to adopt resolutions and other policy proposals submitted to the Congress;
- c) to decide on the Activity Reports and Financial Reports;
- d) to decide on any motions proposed to the Congress;
- e) to decide on any proposed amendments to change the Constitution;
- f) to ratify the appointment of the members of the Executive Committee;
- g) to elect the General Secretary of FERPA;
- h) to grant discharge for the mandates that are fulfilled.

II.7

The agenda of an Extraordinary Congress shall be determined by the proposals presented by the initiators of the Extraordinary Congress and the response of the Executive Committee on these proposals.

II.8

The number of Congress delegates to which member organizations are entitled shall be as follows:

Paid-up membership delegates:

Up to 10,000:	>	1 delegate
Up to 50,000:	>	2 delegates
Up to 100,000:	>	3 delegates
Up to 200,000:	>	4 delegates
Up to 350,000:	>	5 delegates
Up to 500,000:	>	6 delegates
Up to 700,000:	>	7 delegates
Up to 1,000,000:	>	8 delegates
Up to 1,350,000:	>	9 delegates
Up to 1,750,000:	>	10 delegates
Up to 2,400,000:	>	11 delegates
Up to 3,100,000:	>	12 delegates

Plus 1 additional delegate for every extra 1,000,000 paid-up membership.

The president and the general Secretary are ex-officio members of the Congress.

I.9

Each organization may designate extra deputy delegates, without the right to vote, whose number shall not exceed one third of that of their full delegates.

II.10

Each delegate has one vote.

A member organization may nominate the delegation of another member organization to act on its behalf at Congress, provided written notification of its action is given to the General Secretary, if possible at least four weeks before the beginning of Congress. But no delegation may represent more than two member organizations in addition to its own.

II.11

Except for items under II.6 e), proposed amendments to change the Constitution, all decisions will be taken by a simple majority of votes. Items under II.6 e) shall be decided upon with a two-thirds majority vote.

B. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

II.12

The Executive Committee is the decision making body between congresses. It shall at least meet twice a year. Other meetings of the Executive Committee can be organized on the initiative of the Steering Committee. It shall be convened by the General Secretary and chaired by the President.

At the start of each meeting, the President shall ascertain that the quorum of at least half of the delegates of the member organizations or their alternates is present, to be able to conduct its business.

II.13

As the decision-making body between Congresses the Executive Committee shall:

- a) implement policies decided on by the Congress;
- b) decide on actions and measures to be taken in support of demands that have been agreed on;
- c) elect the president of FERPA
- d) elect the Steering Committee and its nine members;
- e) elect the Deputy General Secretary out of the members of the Steering Committee;

- f) elect the Treasurer out of the members of the Steering Committee;
- g) assess the activities of the Steering Committee;
- h) approve the draft budget and annual balance sheet, and fix the level of contributions;
- i) take decisions on applications for affiliation, suspension, expulsion and readmission of member organizations and the granting of observer status or suspension of it;
- j) decide on any proposed amendments to change the Rules of Procedure;
- k) if necessary take measures to act on vacancies in the position of the President.

II.14

The number of delegates to the Executive Committee to which member organizations are entitled shall be as follows:

Paid-up membership delegates

Up to 100,000	>	1 delegate
Up to 300.000	>	2 delegates
Up to 1,000,000	>	3 delegates
More than 1,000,000	>	4 delegates

A substitute member shall be appointed for each full member.

Additional members with full voting rights are: the Chair of the Women's Committee, the President and the General Secretary.

II.15

The President of FERPA shall chair the meetings of the Executive Committee. If the President is absent or for any reason ceases to hold office, the Executive Committee shall appoint an Acting President or a successor.

II.16

The Treasurer of FERPA shall compose and present the yearly budget of FERPA and the accounts to the Executive Committee.

II.17

The Executive Committee shall take decisions by simple majority.

II.18

Organizations with observer status shall be entitled to appoint an observer with the right to speak.

C. Steering Committee

II.19

The Steering Committee shall give follow up on decisions made by the Congress and the Executive Committee and examine issues of relevance, steps to be taken and decide on interim and urgent actions. The Steering Committee shall meet at least four times a year. The Steering Committee will be chaired by the President and convened by the General Secretary.

II.20

The Steering Committee shall prepare and debate policy issues relevant for FERPA and in particular:

- a) act on the policy guidelines and decisions of the Executive Committee;
- b) examine issues of current relevance;
- c) steps to be taken and decide on interim and urgent actions;

- d) draw up the budget and keep it under review;
- e) prepare the agenda of and recommendations to be submitted to the Executive Committee.

II.21

The Steering Committee will be composed of the nine members elected by the Executive Committee and of the President, the General Secretary and the Chair of FERPA's Women's Committee. In its composition the Steering Committee should reflect balance in gender and region while aiming at continuity. Members of the Steering Committee are nominated for a full ordinary Congress period.

II.22

The Steering Committee shall take decisions by simple majority.

D. WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

II.23

The Women's Committee shall advocate especially for the rights and opportunities of retired and elder women in Europe. It submits proposals to the other FERPA bodies with the right to speak and vote in these bodies. The Women's Committee shall meet at least two times a year and be convened and chaired by the Chair of the Women's Committee.

II.24

The Women's Committee shall exchange experiences and knowledge on activities to be carried out in favour of elderly women at national and international level and

- a) monitor the implementation of FERPA's gender policy;
- b) draw up proposals for FERPA on policies for equality of opportunity and the improvement of the status of older women in Europe;
- c) propose topics for discussion by the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee.
- d) elect the Chair of the Women's Committee;
- e) decide on the composition of the Coordinating Committee of the Women's Committee
- f) work as a trade union network, and establish specific working groups.

II.25

The Women's Committee shall be composed of the women members of the Executive Committee. Each member organization must nominate at least one full representative and one alternate to the Women's Committee.

II.26

The Women's Committee will set up a Coordinating Committee during the first meeting of the Executive Committee after an ordinary meeting of Congress. This Coordinating Committee shall be composed of the president of the Women's Committee and five other members of the Women's Committee. Every member organization can propose candidates for this Coordination Committee out of their Women's Committee members.

II.27

The Chair of the Women's Committee shall hold office for the period between two ordinary Congresses. The Chair shall be a full member of the FERPA Steering Committee and the FERPA Executive Committee.

II.28

The Women's Committee shall take decisions by simple majority.

Article III

Gender representation

III.1

Delegations of members to the governing bodies of FERPA shall be composed of a balanced representation of men and women. In case of a multiple delegation either sex shall at least have a 40% share of the total number of delegates.

III.2

In case of a singular delegation to the Congress the nominating member organization might nominate a deputy member of the other sex. In case of a singular delegation to the Executive Committee the nominating member organization might either include a deputy from the other sex in the delegation or send alternately yearly a male and female delegate to the meetings during the session period.

Article IV

Voting procedures

IV.1

Discussions in the bodies and institutions of FERPA shall be conducted with the aim to reach consensus.

In case of persistent differences of opinion on policy issues and issues of a non-personal kind a voting procedure by showing of hands will be executed. On the request of one-third of the delegates present a block vote shall be held.

In cases of a personal kind a secret ballot will be arranged.

IV.2

On issues of general policy and normal business a simple majority of votes i.e. 50% + 1 of the delegates present will be decisive.

On specific issues, mentioned in the relevant articles in this Constitution and in the Rules of Procedure a qualified majority might be necessary.

IV.3

When in case of a voting procedure for candidates for FERPA positions more than two candidates are presented and no candidate receives a simple majority of the votes in the first round, the two candidates with the highest number of votes are referred to a second voting round in which the simple majority rule will be applied again.

IV.4

Only member organizations that have paid their full membership fees in the previous years are entitled to vote.

Article V

Rules of Procedure

V.1

To further detail and precise the rulings and regulations of the FERPA constitution and its bodies Rules of Procedure are formulated and laid down in a separate document that forms part of the set of regulations and procedures of FERPA. The Rules of Procedure, as well as any modifications that may be made, must be approved by the Executive Committee.

Article VI

Amendments to the Constitution

VI.1

Amendments to and changes of the constitution can only be approved by Congress with a two thirds majority vote.

FERPA

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