



European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation

ENPSIT

CONSTITUTION

Article 1 – Name

The name of the not-for-profit association is the “European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation, abbreviated as “ENPSIT”, hereafter “ENPSIT”.

ENPSIT is governed by this Constitution and by title II of the Belgian Law of June 27, 1921 granting legal personality to not-for-profit associations, international not-for-profit associations and foundations.

All documents of the Association issued to third parties, shall include the name of the Association and the words “Vereniging zonder Winstoogmerk”, abbreviated as “VZW”, and “Association Sans But Lucratif”, abbreviated as “ASBL”, and “Not-for-profit Association”, and the address of its registered office.

Article 2 – Registered office

The registered office of ENPSIT is:

Havenlaan 86c, bus 212, 1000 Brussel, België

Avenue du Port 86c, boîte 212, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgique

The registered office of ENPSIT may be transferred to any other place in Belgium by the decision of the General Assembly which shall be published in the Annexes to Het Belgisch Staatsblad/le Moniteur Belge.

Article 3 – Objectives

ENPSIT takes within its scope the domain of interpreting and translation for public services in their broadest sense, which it takes to include interpreting and translation, involving spoken, written or sign languages, in settings or sectors of *inter alia* social services, health care, the judiciary, police, education, welfare, child and youth care, asylum and refugee procedures, and victim support services. ENPSIT supports the democratic right of equal access to public services.

3.1. ENPSIT is committed to the advancement of Public Service Interpreting and Translation.

3.2. ENPSIT fulfils its mandate by:

- Promoting the establishment of standards that guide the practice of PSIT;
- Encouraging and sharing research in the field of PSIT;
- Advancing educational and training provisions and requirements for PSIT;
- Gaining the support of the European Commission for the provision of funding of PSIT and PSIT related activities including training, accreditation and working conditions;
- Advocating the provision of professional interpreting and translation services in PSIT settings;
- Liaising with organizations and service providers on issues of relevance to PSIT;
- Encouraging the development of local, regional, national, European and international networks of PS interpreters, translators, providers, trainers, testers and researchers, and their organizations or associations.

3.3. ENPSIT organizes to influence EU and national policy. In this vein ENPSIT recommends:

- Recognition of PSIT as necessary tools for an EU integration policy that stands for equal rights and treatments, equal opportunities and diversity.
- Guaranteeing the right to qualitative language assistance in a social context, including public service provision, in all EU member states. This right must evolve from a right in principle to a legally enforceable right.
- Implementation of a quality standard for PSIT in the EU.
- Recognition and funding of PSIT services by EU institutions, EU member states, regional and local authorities and public service institutions.

- Support of consultation and partnership structures at various levels: International, EU, national and regional.

3.4. ENPSIT can support any initiative dedicated to PSIT, to the dissemination of relevant research results or of good practices in PSIT including training, accreditation and working conditions, and to the cross-fertilization of PSIT with any other relevant domain.

Article 4 – Duration

ENPSIT is established for an unlimited period of time.

Article 5 – Membership

5.1. All organisations and persons satisfying the regulations described below and meeting the criteria of membership and that so request in writing or by electronic mail addressed to the President, may be admitted as members of ENPSIT. Admitted members must scrupulously comply with this Constitution and pay their annual dues. The membership fee is set by the General Assembly.

The **maximum** membership fee is €500.

The procedure for applying for membership is determined by the Board.

5.2. There are two categories of membership: Full and Associate members.

5.3. The following may be admitted as **full members** of ENPSIT during the time for which dues are paid, provided that they support the objectives set out in Article 3 and that they are established in EU member states:

1° organisations of PSIT interpreters and translators within the EU and whose members are admitted on the basis of attested, or certified, or accredited training and who abide by a code of ethics and guidelines of professional practice. Attestation, certification, or accreditation should be procured on the basis of extensive specialist training in interpreting and/or translation. This training will be subject to national certification and/or accreditation and reflect existing codes of ethics and guidelines of professional practice. In the case of translators and interpreters who have not undergone such training, attested and extensive professional experience might satisfy conditions for admission;

2° organisations of PSIT providers or agencies within the EU, whose members are admitted on the basis of maintaining explicit and appropriate quality care and assurance protocols and working with or evolving towards working with attested, or certified, or accredited PSIT interpreters and translators which answer to the criteria for ENPSIT membership as outlined in paragraph 1 above, as well as PSIT providers or agencies within the EU who conform to these criteria;

3° organisations of PSIT trainers, testers, and researchers, as well as PSIT training, testing, accreditation and/or research institutions within the EU, provided they maintain explicit and appropriate quality care and assurance protocols.

Applications for full membership are made in writing or by electronic mail addressed to the President, and will be examined and decided on by the Board.

Full members having paid their dues can be represented on the Board, have voting rights, and are entitled to full access to the website and all materials posted on it and to all ENPSIT events and activities.

5.4. **Associate members** share the interests and objectives of ENPSIT.

Associate members can be from within or outside the EU.

5.4.1. They can be organisations of PSIT interpreters, translators, providers or agencies, trainers, testers and researchers or training, testing, accreditation and/or research institutes within the EU and which as yet do not meet the criteria for full membership as described above in § 5.3.

5.4.2. They can be non-EU organisations of PSIT interpreters, translators, providers or agencies, trainers, testers and researchers or training, testing, accreditation and/or research institutes.

5.4.3. They can be individual EU and non-EU PSIT interpreters, translators, trainers, testers and researchers or training, testing, accreditation and/or research institutes.

5.4.4. They can be third parties with an interest in ENPSIT and PSIT, such as individuals, students, other language interpreting and/or translation associations, associations of or individual social or public services in the broad sense and policy makers.

The above list is not exhaustive.

All associate members must demonstrate that they support the objectives of ENPSIT and are willing to share in the exchange of best practices.

Applications for associate membership are submitted in writing or by electronic mail to the President, and will be examined and decided on by the Board.

Associate members, having paid their dues, are entitled to the information resources on the website and to participate in all the events and activities organized by ENPSIT. They have no voting rights.

Further rights and categories of membership can be developed by the Board and submitted to the General Assembly for approval.

5.5. It shall be the duty of all members to promote the cause of ENPSIT and its objectives to the best of their ability and to refrain from any action liable to compromise the reputation of

the association or running counter to its objectives. They shall abide by the Constitution and the decisions of the governing bodies of ENPSIT.

Article 6 – Termination of membership

6.1. Resignation

Any member may resign from ENPSIT by sending notification in a letter addressed to the President, without prejudice to the right of ENPSIT to recover overdue membership fees.

The position of membership is not transferable.

6.2. Failure to pay membership fees

If a member has not paid the dues by ninety days past the renewal date in any fiscal year, that membership is deemed to have lapsed for that year.

6.3. Exclusion

Any fundamental breach by any member of the obligations imposed by this Constitution may be grounds for the exclusion of such a member, by decision of two thirds of the Board. However, no member can be excluded from membership without having first been heard or invited to present a defence in writing to the Board within one month of the member's receipt of notification sent by the Secretary, via registered mail. Final appeal against the decision lies with the General Assembly.

6.4. Other provisions

ENPSIT will not refund any dues already paid.

Members who voluntarily ended their membership, or whose membership had elapsed, may rejoin ENPSIT without going through the membership application procedures again, provided they still meet the membership criteria as laid down in Article 5 and pay the dues for the year in which they would like to rejoin.

Article 7 - Organization

The bodies of ENPSIT are: the General Assembly and the Board.

Article 8 - General Assembly

The General Assembly is the sovereign body of ENPSIT.

8.1. Meetings

The General Assembly meets at least every year at a place and time set by the Board. The General Assembly is to convene within six months following the end of the fiscal year, hence before 30 June of each year.

Notice of meetings must be sent by post or electronic mail at least three weeks before the date of the meeting of the General Assembly, with the agenda set by the Board.

All members of ENPSIT may attend and speak at the meetings of the General Assembly.

During a meeting of the General Assembly, the Board must report on the activities of the association during the period since the last General Assembly and on the current state of affairs of ENPSIT, including its financial state.

The election of the members of the Board must also take place at a General Assembly meeting.

Any other business may be discussed at the meeting of the General Assembly provided a request to do so has been sent to the Board at least two weeks in advance.

An extraordinary General Assembly can only be called by two thirds of the full members, notifying the Board of their request for an extraordinary General Assembly. It is then the responsibility of the Board to organize such a meeting within six weeks.

Half plus one of the full members present or represented at the General Assembly shall constitute the quorum. When amendments to the Constitution are tabled the quorum is set at two thirds of the full members. If the quorum was not met, the General Assembly can be reconvened at least 15 days following the initial meeting, at which event valid decisions can be made regardless of the number of full members present or represented.

Amendments to the Constitution are accepted if they have been approved by two thirds of the votes by the full members present or represented. When the amendment pertains to the objectives of the association, a four fifth majority of the votes by the full members present or represented is required.

Minutes of the meeting must be recorded by the Secretary and must be made available to the membership on the association's website within sixty days of the meeting.

8.2. Powers of the General Assembly

The General Assembly can deliberate and vote only on matters and resolutions listed on the agenda.

The General Assembly:

- approves amendments to the Constitution (including the transfer of the registered office and changes to the objectives of ENPSIT)
- approves the Internal Regulations of the Association
- approves the work of the Board
- approves the accounts and the budget
- discharges the Board members
- elects and removes from office the members of the Board

- elects and removes from office the President, Vice-President(s), Treasurer, and Secretary
- decides on the exclusion of members
- appoints and dismisses the external auditor, and sets their remuneration
- decides on appeals made against decisions of the Board
- decides on the dissolution of ENPSIT

8.3. Voting in the General Assembly

Decisions of and proposals to the General Assembly shall be adopted by a simple majority of votes, except for amendments to the Constitution, which require a two thirds majority of votes.

Every full member shall have one vote in the General Assembly.

Voting shall be by show of hands unless one-third of those present or represented with the right to vote request a secret ballot.

Voting may be in person or by proxy. Each full member is entitled to hold one proxy. An additional postal or electronic vote may be conducted by the Secretary on decisions of and proposals to the General Assembly with notification to the membership on the website or via electronic mail at least thirty days in advance of the voting. Voting can be carried out up to five days before the meeting.

Decisions regarding the adoption of this Constitution, as well as any subsequent amendments to the Constitution or the objectives or the dissolution of ENPSIT shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Associate members have a right to speak but have no voting rights.

Article 9 - Board

The Board is the body responsible for the management of the Association and carries out the decisions taken by the General Assembly.

9.1. Composition of the Board

The Board is composed of a minimum of seven members, including at least the President, one or two Vice-President(s), the Secretary and the Treasurer. The members of the Board are elected by the General Assembly, from among its full members.

9.2. Powers of the Board

The Board:

- conducts ENPSIT's day-to-day operations, including emergency actions, which it thereafter must report to the General Assembly

- manages the financial affairs of the Association
- proposes amendments to the Constitution for approval by the General Assembly
- prepares the Internal Regulations of ENPSIT, for approval by the General Assembly
- decides on applications for membership
- designates representatives of ENPSIT vis-à-vis European or international institutions and organisations
- decides on the formation, internal regulations and dissolution of committees and working groups useful to the development of ENPSIT
- decides the city where the General Assembly, meetings and conferences are to be held after examining all proposals submitted to it
- Board meetings are called by the President by post or electronic mail at least once a year and conducted in person or electronically. Notification must be sent by the Secretary at least two months in advance.

The quorum required for valid meetings and decisions of the Board is five of its members. Decisions are taken by a simple majority vote of the members who are present or represented. In case of a tied vote the President has the casting vote. A member of the Board may give a written proxy to another member, but only for a specified meeting and no member may hold more than one proxy. At least three members of the Board have to be present in person.

The Board may temporarily avail itself of anyone whom it deems useful to prepare or assist in its work.

Article 10 – Auditors

The accounts and the budget must be reviewed annually by one or more internal auditors.

The internal auditor(s) need(s) to be full members of the Association but cannot be members of the Board.

Their reports will be presented at each General Assembly.

When legally required or deemed necessary, an external auditor, member of the Belgian Institute of Auditors, has to examine the financial status and annual accounts of ENPSIT.

Article 11 - Officers of ENSPIT

11.1. Duties

The President of ENSPIT is in charge of the overall operation of the association. The President presides over the meetings of the Board and the General Assembly. The President is an ex officio member of all committees and working-groups. The President represents ENPSIT, including before courts of law.

The Vice-Presidents assist the President in this function, carry out specific duties as required by the Board and in the event of the President being unavailable, exercise the President's function.

The Treasurer is in charge of ENPSIT finances and must report to the Auditors and to the General Assembly on the financial state of ENPSIT once every year.

The Secretary prepares the minutes of ENPSIT meetings, maintains a list of all current members and is in charge of all ENPSIT communications.

The Board decides on the delegation of any other responsibilities and duties among its members.

11.2. Elections

The members of the Board are elected by the General Assembly according to the election procedures laid down in the Internal Regulations of ENPSIT.

Notice of proposed names of candidates must be sent to the Board by postal or electronic mail two months before the date of the meeting of the General Assembly.

Members of the Board are elected for a term of three years, and they may be re-elected. Their term in office starts and ends at an annual meeting of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly can decide by a two-thirds vote, before the expiration of a term, that the number of consecutive terms can be limited.

The first President and first members of the Board are elected by all members at the April 2nd 2014 ENPSIT meeting in Alcalá (Madrid), Spain.

Board members may be replaced by the General Assembly by a two-thirds vote before their term expires if they fail to carry out their duties. Any Board member can also hand in their resignation by postal or electronic mail to the President. A Board member who voluntarily resigns must fulfil their duties until, within reason, steps have been taken to appoint a successor.

11.3. Terms of office

Terms of office run for three years.

Terms of office begin at the General Assembly at which one is elected.

If for some reason a Board member cannot serve, the Board may appoint a replacement to serve out that person's term.

Any term of office of an Executive Committee a Board member may be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly.

Article 12 - Finances

ENPSIT is a not-for-profit association.

The fiscal year begins January 1 and ends December 31 of each year.

ENPSIT is officially and legally bound by the signature of the President.

Every year the Treasurer informs the General Assembly of the state of the accounts for the past year and the budget and submits the accounts to the Auditor(s).

The Treasurer is responsible for the day-to-day financial management of the Association.

The Treasurer may open and close bank accounts in the name of ENPSIT, requiring the signature of the Treasurer and one other member of the Board.

The Board proposes the membership dues to be decided at the General Assembly.

Article 13 – Constitution’s languages

This Constitution and the Internal Regulations shall exist at least in English, Dutch and French. In the event of any difference in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Article 14 – Proposal of Resolutions

Any full member may propose to the President that ENPSIT adopt a resolution on any issue concerning the objectives, purposes and goals of ENPSIT. Notification to the members and voting on the proposed resolution must follow the provisions laid down in the Internal Regulations.

Article 15 - Dissolution

An extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly must be called at six months’ notice to decide on the dissolution of ENPSIT.

The meeting must be convened on the basis of a report to the General Assembly stating the reasons for the dissolution.

The extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly shall decide on the dissolution by a majority vote of four fifths of the full members present or represented.

Any assets shall be transferred to a European non-profit association dedicated to public

service interpreting and translation.

Article 16 – Final provision

Any aspect which is not covered by the present Constitution and Internal Regulations shall be governed by Belgian law, in particular title III of the Belgian Law of June 27, 1921 giving legal status to not-for-profit associations, international not-for-profit associations and foundations and, as far as the rules for deliberations are concerned, by the ordinary rules of the deliberating bodies.