



ASSOCIATION FOR EUROPEAN PAEDIATRIC AND CONGENITAL CARDIOLOGY
ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE DE CARDIOLOGIE PEDIATRIQUE ET CONGENITALE

Constitution of the Association for Paediatric and Congenital Cardiology Including amendments accepted by AEPC members at Business Meeting 2013

Article 1

An international Society to be known as the Association of European Paediatric Cardiologists was founded in Lyon on June 30th 1963. The name of the Association was changed to the Association for European Paediatric and Congenital Cardiology””Association Europeene de Cardiologie Pediatrique et Congenitale” on May 19, 2011.

The registered office of the Association is: Secretariat, Section of Paediatric Cardiology, Gasthuisberg University Hospital, Herestraat 49, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium

Article 2

Objectives

1. To promote knowledge of the normal and abnormal heart and circulation during growth and development, from fetal to adult life
2. To ensure a high standard of professional practice in paediatric cardiology in Europe

These objectives shall be achieved by

- a) Holding an Annual Meeting which shall include
 1. A business Meeting
 2. A scientific Meeting
- b) Promoting and supporting collaboration among members for the specific purpose of scientific research and professional development
- c) Representing the interests of European Paediatric *and Congenital Cardiology*
- d) Communicating and collaborating with other groups and organisations with similar interests in Europe and around the world
- e) Any other means that the Association may consider necessary

Article 3

Language of the Association

At its meetings, the official language of the Association shall be English and French but English shall be the preferred language.

Article 4

Membership categories

The Association shall consist of Ordinary, Junior, Senior and Honorary members

Ordinary membership shall be conferred upon those medical and other scientific graduates who are committed to the practice and advancement of Paediatric and Congenital Cardiology and closely related fields

Junior membership shall be conferred upon graduates, who are less than 38 years of age and in addition, are officially in a training programme in Paediatric Cardiology or related fields in Europe or around the world

Senior membership shall be conferred upon an Ordinary member who informs the Association that he/she has retired from practice

Honorary membership shall be conferred from time to time upon those members who have made important contributions to the development of Paediatric and Congenital Cardiology and related fields. The Council shall decide who will be elected as Honorary Member. Ordinary Members may submit nominations for Honorary Membership to the Council. When a member becomes an Honorary Member he/she retains the rights of his/her original membership.

Application for membership

Two Ordinary or Senior members should support applications for Ordinary and Junior Membership. Completed application forms must be submitted to the Secretary-General who will obtain approval from the respective National Delegate. The Secretary-General will evaluate all membership applications, which will be discussed for approval by the Council prior to the next Annual Meeting.

Article 5

Annual subscription

Members shall pay an annual subscription, which will be determined at the Annual Business Meeting. Subscriptions shall be paid to the Association on election and by January 31st each succeeding year. After this date, the members shall pay a penalty (the amount will be determined at the Business Meeting).

Annual subscriptions shall not be required from Honorary and Senior Members. However, Senior Members shall pay a full registration fee when they attend an Annual General Meeting.

Any member wishing to resign shall notify the Secretary-General in writing before January 31st.

Any member whose subscription is more than two years in arrears and who has received two requests for payment, shall be considered to have resigned and his/her name shall be removed from the membership list.

Members leaving the Association forfeit all rights to its assets.

Article 6

The Council

The Association shall be governed by a Council, which shall consist of the President, the Secretary-General, the Scientific Secretary, the Treasurer and four Councillors *including* a Junior Member.

When applicable during the year preceding their tenure, the President-Elect and the Secretary-General Elect shall be members of the Council. Upon relinquishing his/her post the immediate past President shall remain a member of the Council for a further year.

The Council shall normally have only one and never more than two members from the same country at any one time.

Only Ordinary Members are eligible for election to the Council with the exception of the representative of the Junior Members who shall be elected by the Junior Members.

At the time of being elected and whilst serving on the Council the Council Officers should be working in an European country.

A Chairman-elect shall be appointed each year by the Council to preside as the local Chairman of the Scientific Sessions of the Annual Meeting the following year. He/she shall be responsible to the Council for the organization of this meeting. The Chairman-elect shall become an ex-officio member of the Council and take over from his/her predecessor at the beginning of the Scientific Sessions of the Annual Meeting.

When deemed appropriate by the AEPC Council the Council will have the right by majority vote to co-opt additional members on to the Council to represent specific subspecialty groups (not already represented on to the Council) for a maximum period of 3 years

Role of the Council

The Council shall be assisted by the

- Scientific Advisory Committee
- Board of National Delegates
- Educational Committee

The creation of Working Groups *and Task Forces* may be proposed by *Council and* members interested in particular subjects and shall be considered for approval at an Annual Business Meeting.

Each country shall nominate a member of the Association to be its representative at the Board of National Delegates

The Committees, the Board of National Delegates and the Working Groups and *Task Forces* shall be governed by the by-laws approved at a Business Meeting

Article 7

Elections

The proposed candidates for offices should be working in a European country. Ordinary, Honorary and Junior members may vote at the elections. The Council will determine the electoral procedure.

Election of the President

The Council will begin the process of election of the President-elect by inviting nominations from Ordinary Members.

Ten Ordinary Members from three or more countries must sign the proposals for nominations. The nominations must be received in writing at least 3 months before the Annual Meeting. The Council may also announce its own nomination at least 3 months before the Annual Meeting. The process of voting shall start 2 months before and be completed 2 weeks prior to the Business Meeting.

Votes received will be counted at the Council Meeting immediately before the Annual Meeting and the results will be announced at the Business Meeting. The President-elect will then become a Council member until he/she takes office as President at the Annual Meeting the following year.

The President-elect must obtain a minimum of 50 per cent of the votes. When there are more than two candidates the method of a single transferable vote shall be used. The ballot documents shall contain the names of all candidates followed by a box for the voters to place numbers in order of preference. If no candidate receives 50 per cent of the votes marked with preference 1, the election will be decided between the two candidates with the highest number of votes marked with this preference. Votes for these candidates marked with preference 1 will then be added to the remaining votes naming them with preference 2. If the total still does not reach 50 per cent, subsequent preferences will be similarly counted. Each vote can only be counted once.

If there is only one candidate he/she will be considered elected unopposed.

Election of other Officers

The Council will begin the process of election of the Secretary-General, Scientific Secretary, Treasurer and Councillors by inviting nominations from the Ordinary Members. Nominations for these officers must be signed by at least five Ordinary members from two or more countries and received in writing at least 3 months before the Annual Meeting. The Council may also announce its own nomination at least 3 months before the Annual Meeting.

The process of election of these officers is the same as for the President-elect.

Article 8

Terms of Office

The elected officers shall become members of the Council after the Annual Meeting.

The **President** shall normally serve a term of office for a period of three years. The President will not be eligible for re-election to the same office. However, he/she shall remain a member of the Council for a period of one year as past-President.

The **Secretary-General, Scientific Secretary and Treasurer** shall each serve a term of office of five years and will not be eligible for re-election for the same office. In exceptional circumstances the Council, with the subsequent approval of the Members may extend the term of office of a Council Officer by no more than one year.

The **Councillors** shall normally serve a period of three years. Their term should be completed such that where possible, at least one Councillor shall retire each year. Councillors shall not be eligible for re-election for the same office.

The **Junior Member** in the Council shall be elected during an Annual Meeting by the Junior Members for a period of 3 years; only Junior Members may vote for this election.

If an office becomes vacant prematurely the Council shall fill the vacancy until the next Annual Meeting.

Article 9

Duties of the Officers

Each officer should receive a job description on election.

The **President** shall preside over the affairs of the Association, the Council and the Annual Business Meeting and shall represent the Association or delegate this representation.

The **Secretary-General** shall be responsible for the day-to-day business of the Association, summon all meetings, circulate programmes to members at least one month before meetings, keep records of the proceedings and transactions of the association and share responsibilities with the President to represent the Council in legal matters.

The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the Association, collect subscriptions, keep accounts and present a statement of the accounts each year at the Annual Business Meeting. He/she will be authorised to carry out the daily financial transactions on behalf of the Council.

The **Scientific Secretary** shall be responsible for the scientific part of the Annual Meeting. He/she will organize the abstract collection and selection for annual meeting. He/she should promote scientific publications and Continuous Medical Education accreditation.

Article 10

Council Business Affairs

A quorum for the Council meetings shall consist of more than half of the Council members, at least 3 of whom should be officers.

Voting in the Council shall be by a simple majority of the members present. In case of a tied vote the President shall have a casting vote. In the absence of the President, the Council shall elect a Chairman. The Council shall be responsible for the administration and management of the affairs for the Association. The President, and the Secretary-General or two Council members and the Secretary-General shall sign legal documents.

The Treasurer together with the President shall sign those documents relating to the treasury such as contracts with banks, professional congress organisers, publishers and credit card companies.

Under exceptional circumstances the Council may need to proceed to remove an Officer from the Council in which case it may need a temporary replacement for that Officer. This decision will need to be ratified by the Members at the subsequent Annual Business Meeting.

Article 11

Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the Association shall be held each year. All Members may attend and participate in the discussions but only Ordinary, Honorary and Junior Members in good standing are eligible to vote.

The Annual Business Meeting shall decide upon:

- a) Election or removal of Ordinary, Junior and Honorary Members
- b) Election or removal of the Officers
- c) Amendments to the Constitution
- d) Financial matters

An extraordinary meeting may be convened at the request of the Council or if requested by at least 30 Ordinary Members from three or more countries. Six weeks notice of such a meeting shall be given to all members together with a complete agenda to be discussed.

Article 12

Voting at the Business Meeting

Seventy Ordinary and/or Honorary and/or Junior Members shall constitute a quorum. Voting shall be by a show of hands. If appropriate a secret ballot may be arranged at the Business Meeting.

Decisions will be based on a simple majority of Ordinary and/or Honorary and/or Junior members present for:

- a) The ratification of new Ordinary, Junior and Honorary Members
- b) All items other than those specified in the Constitution

A two-thirds majority of a quorum is required when voting on:

- a) Amendments to the constitution on the condition that the amendment has been proposed by the Council or by five voting members from two or more countries and that the amendment has been circulated at least one month before the Business Meeting
- b) Removal of a member or an Officer
- c) Dissolution of the Association

Article 13

Minutes of the meetings

A written record of the minutes of the Council and Annual Business Meetings shall be maintained by the Secretary-General and shall be signed by at least two members of the Council. The minutes shall be available at the registered office of the Association.

Article 14

Dissolution of the Association

In the event of dissolution of the Association, two liquidators shall be appointed to terminate its affairs, settle all debts and distribute all remaining funds in a manner that is in keeping with the objectives of the Association

By-laws: Journal of the Association

Following a postal questionnaire prior to and a vote at the Annual Business Meeting of the Association held in Munich in 2004, "Cardiology in the Young" was accepted as the official Journal of the Association with effect from 2005.

Accepted by the AEPC members at the Business Meeting in London May 23, 2103