Statutes of the European Rural Community Alliance (ERCA)

Revised 25 February 2021

1. General

1.1. The European Rural Community Alliance (ERCA) is an organisation of national and regional rural community/ village movements in Europe.

1.2. ERCA is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation registered in Sweden.

2. Objectives

The objectives of ERCA are:

2.1. To gather national and regional rural community/ village movements into a pan-European movement supporting strong rural communities.

2.2. To support existing national and regional rural community/ village movements and the creation of new ones.

2.3. To enable exchange of knowledge and mutual support between member organisations.

2.4. To raise the voice of rural people and influence public opinion.

2.5. To influence rural policy in the European Union and the European countries.

2.6. To promote integrated, cross-sectorial, place-based rural development at the European, national, regional and local levels.

2.7. (As being the initiator) to arrange the European Rural Parliament (ERP) in equal cooperation with partners who share ERCAs values and in this to ensure the position of therural community movements.

3. Members

3.1. The Ordinary Members of ERCA are national and, in federal states and autonomous regions, regional non-governmental organisations and networks, who are adherent to the objectives of ERCA and have been approved by the Board.

3.2. Associate Members are individuals, organisations and groups, not eligible under 3.1. who have been approved by the Board. Associate members may participate in and contribute to the activities of ERCA, but do not have voting rights.

3.3. Ordinary and Associate Members are required to submit an application for membership, for approval by the Board.

3.4. Members may renounce membership at any time, in a written form addressed to the Board.

3.5. The exclusion of a member, by decision of the Board, may take place if a member has caused notable damage to ERCA, or if the member no longer meets the membership provisions.

4. The General Assembly

4.1. The General Assembly is the highest institution of ERCA.

4.2. The General Assembly meets at least once a year in the Annual General Assembly. The financial year is January 1 to December 31 of each year.

4.3. The General Assembly may be called at any time by the Board on its initiative, or on the initiative of one-fifth of the Members.

4.4. The Board invites the Members to the General Assembly by letter and/ or e-mail, withat least 30 calendar days notice. The invitation must include the agenda of the General Assembly. Documents on the topics to be discussed must be sent at least 14 calendar days before the meeting.

4.5. If a member of ERCA wishes the General Assembly to discuss an issue, they must give notification in writing to the Board at least 21 calendar days in advance of the General Assembly so that the issue can be included in the documents to the General Assembly.

4.6. The business of the Annual General Assembly includes:

1. Declaring the General Assembly lawfully convened and quorate
2. Selecting the chairperson and secretary for the General Assembly, two scrutinizers of the minutes and two tellers when necessary
3. Approving the agenda for the General Assembly
4. Presenting the annual report, financial statements and statement of auditors
5. Confirming the annual report, financial statements and statement of auditors
6. Discharging the Board from liability for the accounts and activities
7. Confirming the plans and budget for the coming year
8. Setting the membership fees for the coming year
9. Electing the President and other members of the Board
10. Electing the Auditor for the coming year
11. Discussing any other competent business, as identified by the board in the documents to the General Assembly.

4.7 The Ordinary Members of ERCA are represented at the General Assembly by persons authorized by the Member.

4.8 Every Ordinary Member has one vote. Ballots will be resolved by simple majority of votes. When the votes are tied, the vote of the Chairperson will be decisive; however,in case of elections, the winner will be drawn by lots.

4.9 The General Assembly may select a Nomination Committee to nominate prospective

Board Members, with a responsibility to identify appropriately skilled nominees, with balanced geographical and gender representation.

4.10 An Extraordinary General Assembly will be held when the Annual General Assembly decides, when the Board deems necessary, or when at least one fifth (1/5) of Members request a meeting in writing. The Extraordinary General Assembly must be held within 30 days of the demand for a meeting being given to the Board.

5. The Board and the Management

5.1. The Board of ERCA is constituted by 5-11 individuals nominated by the Ordinary Members, including the President.

5.2. Board Members are elected by the General Assembly for a period of two years, with one-half of the Board elected each year, to ensure continuity.

5.3. The President is elected by the General Assembly for a period of one year.

5.4. The Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary are selected by the Board, the Treasurer and Secretary do not necessarilyhave to be Board Members.

5.5. The Board will approve new Members of ERCA by majority vote.

5.6. The Board will agree the signatories on official documents and financial transactions. Two approved signatories will be required for all financial transactions, at least one of whom must be a Board Member.

5.7. The quorum for Board meeting is one-half + 1 of the total number of Board Members.

5.8. Board Members may participate in Board meetings by telephone, internet or other means of distance communication.

5.9. The Board may delegate tasks as day-to-day management and implementation of Board decisions and work programs to committees and individuals.

5.10. The Board may invite anyone of its choice to participate in Board work in an advisory capacity.

6. Supervision

6.1. The book-keeping and the decisions of the Board of ERCA are audited by the appointed Auditor at least once a year. Auditing will be carried out according to the requirements of the country of registration.

7. Dissolution

7.1. A decision regarding a revision of the statutes or dissolution of ERCA must be approved by a minimum of three-quarters (3/4) of the votes cast in a General Assembly of ERCA. The summons to the General Assembly must include the proposals for revising the statutes or dissolving ERCA.

7.2. In case of dissolution, the General Assembly nominates liquidators and defines their competence. The General Assembly also decides about the provisions of the net capital of ERCA.