



CANONICAL STATUTES

UNION OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCES OF MAJOR SUPERIORS (UCESM)

I. DENOMINATION AND NATURE

1. The Union of the European Conferences of Major Superiors (UCESM) is erected as an ecclesiastical juridical person by Decree of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (DICLSAL) № AG 5-4/81 on 25.12.1983. UCESM is a non-profit-making association. UCESM may have an unlimited number of members, within the framework of European countries. The Secretariat shall have its seat in Brussels, unless, with the unanimous vote of the Executive Committee, it is decided otherwise.

II. PURPOSE

2. The purpose of UCESM (cf. Can 708) is:
 - a. to promote, coordinate and animate the common initiatives and services of the national Conferences of Major Superiors of Europe and possibly with other international organizations
 - b. to foster initiatives of common interest
 - c. to represent the members of UCESM whenever the presence of a representative of the religious of Europe and of the members of societies of apostolic life is desired or requested
 - d. to gather the members in General Assemblies.

III. MEMBERS

3. §1. UCESM is open to all canonically established Conferences of Major Superiors from the various nations of Europe.
§2. Membership can be asked by a written request to the Executive Committee.
§3. It may be terminated by giving written notification to the Executive Committee.
4. §1. Membership of UCESM leaves the full autonomy of the member Conferences of Major Superiors intact.
§2. However, it involves:
 - a. rights: to participate, through their representatives, in the General Assembly with a voice and a vote, according to the rules established in these Statutes; to participate in the activities of UCESM
 - b. duties: to support UCESM in the services established by the General Assemblies, in active collaboration, by taking into account the possibilities that UCESM has at its disposal; to contribute to the finances by paying a yearly subscription.

IV. STRUCTURE

5. UCESM comprises the following bodies:
 - a. the General Assembly

- b. the Executive Committee
- c. the General Secretariat.

IV a. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

6. The General Assembly is the supreme organ of UCESM.
7. The ordinary General Assembly shall meet (preferably in presence) at least once every two years. An extraordinary General Assembly will be convened either by the Executive Committee or at the written request of at least one third of the member Conferences.
8. The General Assembly must be convened by the President six months in advance, in writing. It can validly deliberate only if a simple majority (half plus one) of the national Conferences is present.
9. §1. The participants of the General Assembly are the Presidents, the Vice-Presidents of the unified Conferences (men and women) and the General Secretaries of all the UCESM member Conferences.
§2. The Presidents of the Conferences have the (active and passive) voting rights, as well as the Vice-Presidents when the respective Presidents are not present.
§3. If the President and Vice-President are unable to attend, the President may appoint from among the members of the Executive Committee (with written authorization) a delegate with active and passive voting rights. A proxy to participate only with active voice may be given to the Secretary General even if he/she is not a member of the Executive Committee of the national Conference.
10. For every General Assembly the Apostolic Nuncio of the place where the General Assembly is held and a representative of DICLSAL must be invited. The following may also be invited as guests:
 - a. a representative of CCEE (Council of Bishops' Conferences of Europe) and of COMECE (Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union)
 - b. delegates of the Conferences of Major Superiors who are not members of UCESM
 - c. representatives of countries which do not have canonically established Conferences
 - d. other guests, at the initiative of the Executive Committee.
11. The agenda must be approved by the General Assembly and includes:
 - a. report on the functioning of UCESM; election of the members of the Executive Committee; approval of the financial results for the previous year, the proposed budget and the amount of the membership fee, and choice of the members who will audit the accounts
 - b. other possible topics: general overview of the situation in Europe, in particular at the ecclesial and religious level; reflection on this situation and study of the proposed action; possible drafting of documents relating to consecrated life and its mission in Europe; creation or suppression of study commissions; any other relevant matter.
12. If the General Assembly decides to publish a declaration or document, or to take an initiative that may have a significant influence on the life of the Church in Europe, or that has any relation to faith or consecrated life, it will take care to do so in coordination with CCEE, COMECE and DICLSAL.
13. Except for the cases provided for in Art. 16 §5, 25 and 26.b, all decisions of the General Assembly are taken by an absolute majority of the votes of the participants with voting rights who are present.

IV b. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

14. The Executive Committee consists of the President, the Vice-President and two Councillors. It meets at least once a year.
15. §1. The role of the Executive Committee is:
 - a. to keep in touch with developments in consecrated life, mainly in Europe, at all levels, particularly in matters of theological research and apostolic mission
 - b. to take responsibility for organizing the General Assemblies and make the necessary preparations for the same
 - c. to implement the General Assembly's decisions
 - d. to administer the funds of UCESM and to supervise the management of the budget of UCESM
 - e. to inform DICLSAL and CCEE/COMECE in good time on the agenda and theme of the General Assembly, and to send them the minutes
 - f. to take all the necessary steps to fill vacancies within it, taking account of the result of the previous elections held at the General Assembly.
- §2. With regard to any public declaration which the Executive Committee might deem useful or necessary, it must take into account what has been stated in Art. 12 of the present Statutes.
16. Election of the Executive Committee:
 - §1. The President and the Vice-President must be a current President of their national Conference.
 - §2. The Vice-President shall be a woman religious if the President is a male religious, and vice-versa.
 - §3. The Councillors must be President or Vice-President or members of the Executive Committee of their national Conference at the time of the election.
 - §4. The election procedure will be determined by the Executive Committee and circulated before the General Assembly.
 - §5. All the members of the Executive Committee are to be elected by a two-thirds majority of the valid secret votes. If this majority is not attained in the first two ballots, a third ballot is required, in which an absolute majority suffices. If this majority is not achieved, in a fourth and final ballot the candidate who, among the first two in the third ballot, obtained the highest number of votes is elected.
17. Mandate:
 - §1. Members of the Executive Committee are elected for a period of four years, even if they cease to be members of the national Conference of Major Superiors in the meantime.
 - §2. They may be re-elected for a second period of four years (but not for a third in the same function) provided that, at the time of the election, they fulfil the conditions laid down in Art. 16 §1, 2 and 3.
 - §3. In case of the resignation of the President, the Vice-President shall take over his/her duties until the next General Assembly. If the Vice-President resigns, this function shall remain vacant until the next General Assembly.
 - §4. In case of the resignation of both, the Executive Committee shall convene an extraordinary General Assembly.
 - §5. In case of the resignation of a Councillor, the Executive Committee shall appoint a new councillor as a substitute until the end of the term of office.

18. The President:
 - a. represents UCESM
 - b. convenes and chairs the meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.
19. The Vice-President shall replace the President in case of vacancy or absence.

IV c. THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

20. The General Secretary is appointed by the Executive Committee for renewable four-year terms.
21. He/She receives his/her mandate from and reports to the Executive Committee.
22. The General Secretary is responsible for:
 - a. the preparation of the meetings of the Executive Committee, the drafting of the minutes and the execution of its decisions
 - b. reporting on the work of the Secretariat to the General Assembly
 - c. ensuring the regular communication of documents between the Conferences
 - d. maintaining the website and other means of communication
 - e. managing the archives.

V. THE TREASURER

23. The Treasurer is appointed by the Executive Committee for renewable four-year terms.
24. The Treasurer is responsible for:
 - a. managing the budget
 - b. presenting the biennial budget to the Executive Committee before submitting it to the General Assembly for approval, in accordance with Art. 25
 - c. reporting on its management to the Executive Committee once a year
 - d. accounting for his/her management before the General Assembly, submitting the financial report for approval
 - e. ensuring that the accounts are audited on an annual basis.
25. For the approval of the biennial budget by the General Assembly, a two thirds majority of the members present is required.

VI. AMENDMENT OF THE STATUTES

26. The following requirements must be fulfilled for the approval or amendment of these Statutes:
 - a. a proposal for amendment must be submitted in writing by an absolute majority of the members of the Executive Committee or by 20% of the members of the General Assembly
 - b. the approval of the amendment must be taken by the General Assembly by a two-thirds majority of the votes of the members present
 - c. the amendment comes into force after approval by DICLSAL.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

27. UCESM is dissolved by a decision of the General Assembly, taken in the manner provided for in Art. 26. It requires that at least two thirds of the total number of members or their delegates be present at a meeting that decides on the dissolution of UCESM.

28. The dissolution of UCESM does not take effect until DICLSAL has given its approval to this dissolution and the manner of its execution, in accordance with Can 709 of the Code of Canon Law.
29. In the case of a decision to dissolve UCESM, the liquidation of assets should be supervised by the Executive Committee.
30. Any credit balance remaining after liquidation shall be allocated to a purpose related to the mission of UCESM.
31. For any other provision not provided for in these Statutes, reference is made to the general law of the Church and the decisions of the General Assembly.

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