

International Federation for the Economy for the Common Good

1. Name, Registered Office, Language, Financial Year

- (a) The name of the federation shall be the “International Federation for the Economy for the Common Good”, hereinafter referred to as the “Federation”.
- (b) The Federation’s registered office is in Hamburg and is to be registered in the Register of Associations. From the point of registration, the Federation’s name shall have “e. V.” [registered association] affixed to the end.
- (c) The Federation will conduct its business in English. Translations are to be made by the respective member organisation at its own expense.
- (d) The financial year is the calendar year.

2. Objectives and Tasks of the Federation

- (a) The Economy for the Common Good (ECG) aims to establish an ethical and equitable economic system worldwide. The constitutional values of human dignity, freedom and democracy, solidarity, social equality and ecological sustainability, as well as a focus on the good of all humans, living things and the environment should be the basis of all actions in commerce and civil society. Regional, national and international cooperation and cohabitation by all should be carried out on an equal footing with mutual respect and appreciation.

The Federation is an umbrella organisation integrating bodies to promote the economy for the common good. Individual persons or groups should not stand out or be in the foreground either internally or externally. All participants are to be seen as equally important.

The aim of the ECG Federation is, in addition to the objectives stated below, to promote the cooperation of its member organisations, thereby building a platform and structures which enable synergies and the better use of potential. In doing so, it is important that the economy for the common good is established in a participative manner locally, as is fitting for the people in consideration of respective regional circumstances.

It is important that the ECG is allowed and encouraged to participatively emerge, taking into account the needs of its people and their regional circumstances.

- (b) The primary objectives of the Federation are as follows:
 - I. The general promotion of the democratic state within the scope of the German Tax Code (AO); this does not include endeavours which only follow certain individual civic interests or are restricted to the level of local governance.
 - II. The promotion of civic involvement for the benefit of charitable purposes.
 - III. The promotion of education, adult education and vocational training.
 - IV. The promotion of science and research.
 - V. The promotion of an international ethos, of tolerance for all areas of culture and the idea of international understanding.
 - VI. The promotion of consumer advice and consumer protection.
 - VII. The objective of the Federation is also to raise funds in order to realise these tax-exempt purposes through other non-profit bodies or public law corporations.

- (c) The objectives of the Articles of Association shall be realised primarily by way of:
- I. Generally promoting the democratic state, for example by organising events, seminars and projects which support increased citizen participation in the democratic system.
 - II. Promoting civic involvement, such as through workshops and projects, campaigns, conferences and trade fairs as well as workshops and programmes for sustainable organisation.
 - III. Organising educational events, education weeks and projects that teach and disseminate the ideology of the economy for the common good.
 - IV. Taking over existing or implementing own research projects, workshops, discussions or conferences, also in cooperation with other organisations, to study and further develop the concept of the economy for the common good and its applicability, as well as topics which serve the common good.
 - V. Promoting consumer advice and consumer protection, for example by organising and implementing informational events and discussion meetings on the topic of sustainable consumption.
 - VI. The organisation supports people being able to live and work as equals regardless of their place of birth, gender, skin colour, religion, sexual orientation or convictions, independent of their specific needs. This shall be achieved by supporting cooperation between bodies geared towards charitable/public interests or through own projects, campaigns, workshops and conferences or by providing networking platforms, inter alia.
- (d) The Federation is also a charitable body [Förderstiftung] within the meaning of section 58 (2) German Tax Code.
- I. It procures funding for the promotion of the objectives listed above.
 - II. Furthermore, it also transfers its own or procured funding to other tax-exempt bodies and bodies under public law.
- (e) The Federation shall act internationally.
- (f) The Federation is at liberty to realise only part of the stated measures in order to fulfil the objective of the Federation/to have the objectives fulfilled by its member organisations or in cooperation with these.
- (g) The Federation is politically neutral; it does not pursue any purpose in terms of promoting political parties and their agendas.
- (h) The Federation shall solely and directly pursue non-profit objectives within the meaning of the Chapter “Tax-Exempt Objectives” of the German Tax Code. The Federation shall act altruistically. It shall not primarily pursue its own economic goals. No person may benefit from expenses which do not correspond to the objectives of the Federation or result from disproportionately high remuneration.
- (i) The Federation’s funds may only be used for objectives defined in the Articles of Association. Members do not receive any gifts from the Federation’s funds. Granting appropriate remuneration on the grounds of special contracts shall remain unaffected by the foregoing.

3. Obtaining Membership

- (a) The Federation may only accept associations as members (hereinafter referred to as “Members”) if the following criteria are met:
 - I. They are registered in a public Register of Associations or satisfactorily provide evidence of legal and factual independence comparable to a Register of Associations.
 - II. They are active in the entire sphere of influence of the country in which they have their registered office. Only one association per country may be a Member of the Federation.
 - III. They represent the values and principles of the economy for the common good and promote and strive towards the objectives of the economy for the common good.
- (b) Other legal and natural persons may be accepted by the Federation as supporting members (hereinafter referred to as “Supporting Members”) if they support the Federation’s objectives.
- (c) Each legal person must be represented by exactly one natural person.

4. Rights and Obligations of Members and Supporting Members

- (a) Members have the right to submit proposals to the Federation Members Council.
- (b) Each Member has the right to vote. The number of votes is determined by the number of members in the member organisation. Each member organisation with up to 20 members is allotted one (1) vote, up to 70 members in total, two (2) votes, up to 170 members in total, three (3) votes, and from 171 members in total, four (4) votes. The number of members in the member organisation will be counted as of the last six months (30.06/31.12).
- (c) The right to vote may only be personally exercised in the Federation Members Council.
- (d) Supporting Members have the right to participate in the Federation Members Council. Supporting Members do not have the right to submit proposals to the Federation Members Council. Supporting Members do not have the right to vote.

5. Commencement and Cessation of Membership

- (a) Membership applications must be made in writing to the Federation Management Team. The Federation Management Team decides whether to accept new Members. Newly accepted Members will be announced at the next Federation Members Council.
- (b) Decision concerning membership applications may be reversed at the next Federation Members Council. The Federation Members Council makes the final decision as whether to accept new Members.
- (c) Membership commences upon acceptance and upon payment of the membership fee for the current financial year.
- (d) Members are deemed to have acknowledged the Federation’s Articles of Association upon acceptance.
- (e) Membership shall cease upon voluntary exit, expulsion, loss of the association’s/body’s legal capacity or if regular payment of membership fees is discontinued.
- (f) Written notice must be submitted to the Federation Management Team to voluntarily leave the Federation adhering to a notice period of three months (3 months) to the end of the financial year.

- (g) A Member may be expelled from the Federation by the Federation Members Council, if:
 - I. It behaves in an illegal manner or a manner detrimental to the Federation;
 - II. It infringes upon the interests of the Federation;
 - III. It has not paid its membership fee within the grace period set despite a second written warning or;
 - IV. For any other important reason.
- (h) Before a resolution is passed to expel a Member, this Member is given the opportunity to explain themselves to the Federation Members Council in person or in writing within a reasonable time limit set by the Federation. Written statements from the Member concerned shall be read aloud at the Federation Members Council before a resolution is passed. The resolution to expel a Member must state the reasons for this and the member must be notified of these in writing.
- (i) During the expulsion process, the Member's membership rights are suspended.
- (j) Upon cessation of membership, regardless of the reason, all claims arising from the member relationship shall lapse. Membership fees, donations and other support payments shall not be refunded. Claims of the Federation for overdue membership fees and other receivables shall remain unaffected by the foregoing. The same shall apply to Supporting Members.

6. Membership Fees

- (a) An annual fee shall be charged for membership.
- (b) The amount and due date of the annual fee shall be determined by the Federation Members Council.

7. Constitutive Bodies of the Federation

The constitutive bodies of the Federation are:

- (a) The Federation Members Council
- (b) The Federation Management Team
- (c) The Governance Board
- (d) The cash auditor

8. The Federation Members Council

- (a) The highest constitutive body is the Federation Members Council.
- (b) The Federation Members Council is made up of representatives of the Members.
- (c) The Federation Members Council may be held by resolution even without the Federation Management Team. In this case the chair of the meeting will be appointed at the Federation Members Council.
- (d) The Federation Members Council's tasks shall, in particular, include:
 - I. Appointing and removing the members of the Federation Management Team.
 - II. Passing resolutions to accept Members in the circumstances described in Article 5b of these Articles of Association and expelling Members.
 - III. Passing resolutions determining the Federation Management Team's remuneration.

- IV. Appointing the Governance Board.
 - V. Appointing the cash auditor and if required a deputy.
 - VI. Approving the Federation Management Team's annual report.
 - VII. Passing resolutions regarding discharging the Federation Management Team.
 - VIII. Passing resolutions regarding submitted proposals.
 - IX. Approve the annual budget.
 - X. Determining the membership fee for the next financial year.
 - XI. Passing resolutions regarding changes to the Articles of Association and the dissolution of the Federation.
- (e) A general meeting of the Federation Members Council shall be called by the Federation Management Team of the Federation on request, but at least once per financial year. The date must be announced no later than 60 days before the meeting. Proposals must be submitted no later than 40 days before the meeting. Written notice shall be sent by email 30 days before the meeting stating the preliminary agenda to the Member's email address last known to the Federation.
- (f) An extraordinary meeting of the Federation Members Council shall take place if at least one tenth of members, though at least two members, request this in writing giving reasons. This must take place no later than two months after the request is received by the Federation Management Team.
- (g) Later proposals (including those submitted during the Federation Members Council) must be placed on the agenda if this is approved by Federation Members Council by a majority of the members present (emergency proposals). Changes to the Articles of Association and the objectives of the Federation may not be tabled as emergency proposals.
- (h) Members may also take part in the Federation Members Council via digital media (including video conferencing and teleconferencing), provided authentication takes place. Votes may likewise be cast digitally (e.g. by email) if authenticated. The types of digital media permitted by the Federation Management Team must be communicated in writing by the Federation Management Team in good time before the meeting. Before voting commences the chair of the meeting will make known which media may be used to vote and when the votes must be cast.

9. Passing Resolutions

- (a) Each Member shall exercise their rights in accordance with their number of votes as per Article 4.
- (b) The Federation Members Council is quorate regardless of the number of members present in person and remotely. Only Members present in person and remotely may exercise their right to vote.
- (c) Resolutions shall be passed by consensus where possible or, if this is not possible, using the systemic consensus principle, provided the Articles of Association or statute do not prescribe otherwise.
- (d) This is to be carried out by secret ballot if requested by at least one of the Members' representatives who are present in person.
- (e) A two-thirds majority of votes cast is required for changes to the Articles of Association and to the Federation's objectives.

10. Notarising Passed Resolutions

- (a) Minutes must be taken of resolutions passed by the Federation Members Council. These may be viewed by all Members.
- (b) The minutes must be signed by the chair of the meeting and the minute taker.

11. Federation Management Team

- (a) The Federation Management Team is generally made up of three (3) to five (5) members, however no less than three (3) members.
- (b) At least two members of the Federation Management Team are appointed to the Federation Management Team by the Federation Members Council pursuant to section 26 German Civil Code (BGB). Two members of the Federation Management Team are required to jointly represent the Federation externally.
- (c) The Federation Management Team is authorised to grant members of the Federation Management Team the authority to represent the Federation on their own for certain areas of activity or in certain situations.
- (d) The members of the Federation Management Team will receive adequate remuneration for their work.
- (e) The Federation Management Team has the right to take part in the Federation Members Council and to submit proposals to the Federation Members Council

12. Appointment and Term of Office of the Federation Management Team

- (a) The Federation Management Team is appointed by the Federation Members Council for a term of two (2) years and may be removed at any time by a resolution of the Federation Members Council.
- (b) Each member of the Federation Management Team is to be appointed individually.
- (c) When a member of the Federation Management Team is removed or expelled their duties will be taken on by another member of the Federation Management Team until the next Federation Members Council.
- (d) If a member of the Federation Management Team is not expected to be able to perform their duties for longer than six months, the remaining members of the Federation Management Team are authorised to assign these duties to another member of the Federation Management Team for this period of time, however for no longer than until the next Federation Members Council. The Federation Management Team shall inform the Members of this in writing.
- (e) If the members of the Federation Management Team are reduced in number to less than three (3), the Federation Management Team shall have the option of co-opting a member of the Federation Members Council to the Federation Management Team until the next Federation Members Council, or to call an extraordinary meeting of the Federation Members Council to appoint a new member of the Federation Management Team.
- (f) Members of the Federation Management Team may only resign by giving written notice to the remaining members of the Federation Management Team or to the Federation Members Council. If the Federation Management Team collectively gives written notice of their resignation to the Federation Members Council before their term of office has finished, the

Federation Management Team is obligated to call an extraordinary meeting of the Federation Members Council to appoint a new Federation Management Team.

- (g) The members of the Federation Management Team shall remain in office until a new Federation Management Team has been appointed. Members of the Federation Management Team may be appointed for a maximum of three (3) terms of office.

13. Responsibilities of the Federation Management Team

- (a) The Federation Management Team is responsible for all of the Federation's affairs unless the matter is assigned to another constitutive body of the Federation by these Articles of Association.
- (b) In particular, the Federation Management Team has the following tasks:
- I. Managing the business of the Federation;
 - II. Preparing, calling and chairing the Federation Members Council;
 - III. Drafting the agenda;
 - IV. Implementing the resolutions passed by the Federation Members Council;
 - V. Preparing the budgets and doing the accounting;
 - VI. Drawing up the annual report;
 - VII. Passing resolutions regarding accepting Members;
- (c) When required, the Federation Management Team may pay third parties to carry out tasks either on the basis of a service contract/contract for mixed works and services [Werkvertrag] in return for reasonable payment, or for payment of reasonable expenses.
- (d) Procurement decisions are to be made transparent by the Federation Management Team to the Federation Members Council. Any potential conflicts of interest have to be indicated.

14. Meetings and Resolutions of the Federation Management Team

- (a) The Federation Management Team is quorate if at least half of the members of the Federation Management Team are present.
- (b) Resolutions shall be passed by consensus where possible or, if this is not possible, using the systemic consensus principle, provided the Articles of Association or statute do not prescribe otherwise.
- (c) Minutes shall be taken of the meetings of the Federation Management Team.
- (d) Resolutions may be passed by way of written circular if no member of the Federation Management Team objects.
- (e) Members of the Federation Management Team may also take part in meetings of the Federation Management Team via digital media (including video conferencing and teleconferencing), provided all the members of the Federation Management Team are in agreement. Votes may likewise be cast digitally (e.g. by email) if authenticated. The types of digital media permitted by the Federation Management Team must be communicated in writing by the Federation Management Team in good time before the meeting. Before voting commences a member of the Federation Management Team will make known which media may be used to vote and when the votes must be cast.

15. Governance Board

- (a) The Governance Board will be established by the General Assembly no later than one year after the founding of the Federation if enough people volunteer.
- (b) The Governance Board will consist of at least three (3) members who are appointed for a term of two (2) years and may not act as a representative of an association in the Federation Members Council or as a member of the Federation Management Team in this time. The members of the Governance Board work on a voluntary basis.
- (c) The Governance Board will supervise, support and monitor the Federation Management Team. The Governance Board is responsible for the Federation adhering to the principles of the economy for the common good and to the interests of the individual members of the member organizations.
- (d) The Federation Management Team will regularly inform the Governance Board of its activities.
- (e) The Governance Board will meet at least once per year; the provisions of Article 14 shall apply accordingly.
- (f) The Governance Board has the right to call an extraordinary meeting of the Federation Members Council setting out the agenda and to submit applications.

16. Cash auditor

- (a) A cash auditor shall be appointed from the Federation Members Council for a term of two years. A deputy may be appointed.
- (b) The cash auditor is tasked with monitoring whether funds have been used in accordance with the objectives of the Federal and resolutions that have been passed.
- (c) The Federation's accounting is audited by a tax consultant/accountant appointed by the Federation Management Team.
- (d) The cash auditor and the tax consultant/accountant will present their reports to the Federation Members Council.
- (e) The cash auditor and the tax consultant/accountant may not be a member of the Federation Management Team.

17. Liability

- (a) The assets of the Federation are to be used to cover liabilities. Personal liability of the Members is hereby excluded.
- (b) The members of the Federation's constitutive bodies shall only be liable towards the Federation and its Members for losses caused in the exercise of their duties as members of the constitutive bodies of the Federation in the event of an intentional act or omission and gross negligence.
- (c) If the members of the constitutive bodies of the Federation are obligated to compensate a third party for losses caused in the exercise of their duties as members of the constitutive bodies of the Federation they may request that the Federation release them from their obligation. This does not apply if the losses were caused by an intentional act or omission, or as the result of gross negligence.

- (d) The Federation Management Team is authorised by the Federation Members Council in consultation with the Governance Board to take out adequate liability insurance to be borne by the Federation in order to restrict liability.

18. Changing the Articles of Association and the Dissolution of the Federation

- (a) Changes or supplements to the Articles of Association prescribed by the responsible registration authority or the tax office shall be implemented by the Federation Management Team and do not require a resolution to be passed by the Federation Members Council. The members shall be informed of these changes/supplements no later than the next invitation to a meeting of the Federation Members Council.
- (b) In the event of the dissolution or abolition of the Federation or the loss of tax-exempt status, the assets shall be transferred to the “Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie Deutschland e. V., Berlin” [ECG Germany, Berlin], subject to the requirement that the funds are used directly and exclusively for non-profit objectives or charitable purposes within the meaning of these Articles of Association.
- (c) Until the Federation is registered in the official register, no resolutions regarding tasks may be passed except the one resolution to register the Federation.

The above content of the Articles of the Association was passed at the inaugural meeting on 29.09.2018.

The articles have been changed at membership assembly of 31.08.2019.

The articles again have been changed at membership assembly of 18.06.2022.