

THE IRISH ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

CONSTITUTION (2007)

1. TITLE

The full title or name of the Association shall be "the Irish Association for Cultural, Economic and Social Relations". The Association may also be designated in its literature and correspondence by the abbreviated title "the Irish Association".

2. CHARACTER OF ASSOCIATION

The Association shall be non-party-political and non-sectarian and shall address issues relating to the promotion of cultural, economic and social relations in an all Ireland context, north and south.

3. MAIN OBJECTS

- (a) To foster through the initiative of its individual members more harmonious relations between those Irish people who differ from each other in particular in politics and religion.
- (b) To encourage respect for the convictions of others, to correct misrepresentation and to discourage intolerance and intimidation.
- (c) To stimulate business and commercial relations between people in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.
- (d) To work for fuller co-operation in matters of general economic and social interest.
- (e) To encourage a wider knowledge of the history, art, music and literature of Ireland.
- (f) To arrange meetings, lectures and conferences on subjects of common concern to people living in different parts of Ireland.
- (g) Generally to emphasise that any effort tending to eradicate misunderstanding, or to foster good will between Irish people is a definite contribution to domestic and international peace and security.

4. POWERS

The Association shall have the powers necessary for the proper and effective conduct of its affairs. It may operate bank accounts, borrow by means of overdrafts or loans, raise funds; hold investments and endowment funds.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all individuals and corporate bodies (but excluding any political party or a body directly connected with a political party) who accept the above Main Objects and who apply for membership of the Association in the terms of any application form approved by the Council.

6. THE COUNCIL

(a) The Council shall be the governing body of the Association and shall be composed as follows:-

I. The President.

II. The immediate past President.

III. The Vice President.

IV. Members of Council, not more than fifteen nor less than ten, (with not less than five members from each part of Ireland) being members of the Association, elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.

V. An Honorary Secretary appointed by the Council (who may be one of the parties mentioned in sub-clause IV above or a separate individual member appointed for such purpose).

VI. An Honorary Treasurer appointed by the Council.

VII. The Council may also co-opt such further person or persons as they shall think fit (up to a maximum of 5 persons, being members of the Association) to join the Council for a period up to the following Annual General Meeting.

(b) The Council may also invite such person or persons as they shall think fit to attend meetings of the Council as observers and the Council may also appoint such person or persons to hold executive office (whether full time or part time) and on terms as to remuneration and otherwise as the Council may think fit and any such person or persons so appointed shall be entitled to attend (but not to vote at) meetings of the Council.

(c) A quorum of not less than one third of the members of the Council for the time being shall be required for Council meetings.

7. SUB-COMMITTEES

(a) The Council may also appoint from time to time, from within the membership of the Association, such sub-committees as it may consider to be necessary, together with a chairperson and honorary secretary to serve on such sub-committees.

(b) The Council should seek to ensure that, in keeping with the underlying spirit of the Association, separate sub-committees are established in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland to organise events in each part of Ireland.

(c) Each sub-committee shall work under the authority of the Council and shall report to the Council at Council meetings.

(d) The records and any books of account of any such sub-committee shall be open to inspection by the Council and the Council may direct where and by whom same shall be kept and who shall be entitled to inspect same.

8. PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENTS

(a) The Council shall elect a President and a Vice President provided always that, in keeping with the stated character of the Association, it shall, in all the circumstances prevailing at any given period, be desirable, but not mandatory, that such officers shall be appointed successively from among members of the Association in each part of Ireland.

(b) The President shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Association but one (so that the President shall normally serve for a period of two years).

(c) At the end of the term of office of the President the Vice President shall be eligible for election as the succeeding President upon a vote in that behalf being carried at the relevant Annual Meeting of the Council but so that in the event of such a vote not being carried or such person not being willing to serve as President then the Council may elect another to act as President.

(d) The President for the time being shall preside at meetings of the Council and at the Annual General Meeting and other general meetings of the Association but, in the absence of the President, the Vice President shall preside at such meetings and so that if no such person is present the members present may choose one of their number to preside at the relevant meeting.

9. PROCEEDINGS AND MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council shall meet at least three times annually (of which one such meeting shall be the annual general meeting of the Council) and may also hold such other meetings as may be specially convened. The Council shall be entitled to make, rescind and vary Standing Orders for the conduct of the business of the Council.

10. PATRONS , HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS & HONORARY CORPORATE MEMBERS

(A) PATRONS

The Council may invite such one or more persons (whose activities have in the considered view of the Council given outstanding expression to objectives consistent with the Aims of the Association) as the Council may think fit to be Patrons of the Association.

(B) HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS & HONORARY CORPORATE MEMBERS.

The Council shall have power to elect as Honorary Life Members or as Honorary Corporate Members as the case may be such person or persons or such body which the Council may consider has or have rendered distinguished service or assistance to the cultural, economic and social life of Ireland or who has or have otherwise given expression to ideals consistent with the aims of the Association or whose work and activities have been of particular value to the Association.

11. ANNUAL AND OTHER GENERAL CONFERENCES

(i) The Association shall hold an Annual conference in each year at such time as the Council shall consider appropriate and the Council shall decide the business to be conducted at that Conference which shall include business at a General Meeting of members present to receive reports from the Council and also to receive and adopt (if approved) a statement of accounts and balance sheet in relation to the finances and liabilities of the Association.

(ii) The Association shall also hold such other general meetings as the Council may from time to time think fit.

(iii) In addition to the foregoing a general meeting of the Association shall be convened by the Honorary Secretary of the Council upon receiving a requisition in such behalf in writing signed by at least 30 members of the Association giving notice of the purpose of such meeting and any such meeting shall be convened by the Council at such time and at such place as shall be designated by the Council within six weeks from the receipt by the Honorary Secretary of such requisition.

12 ACCOUNTS

Annual audited accounts shall be kept and made available to the Revenue Commissioners on request.

13 SUBSCRIPTIONS

(a) The Council shall determine the amount of the annual subscription to be payable by members of the Association, which may be varied from time to time. The amount of subscription payable may be varied as between different groups of members (such as students and pensioners) as decided from time to time by the Council.

(b) Annual subscriptions shall be due for payment in advance in each year.

14 INCOME AND PROPERTY

The income and property of the Association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of its main object(s) as set forth in this Constitution. No portion of the Association's income and property shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the members of the Association. No officer shall be appointed to any office of the Association paid by salary or fees or receive any remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth from the Association. However, nothing shall prevent any payment in good faith by the Association of:

(a) reasonable and proper remuneration to any member of the Association (not being an officer) for any services rendered to the Association;

(b) interest at a rate not exceeding 5% per annum on money lent by officers or other members of the Association to the Association;

(c) reasonable and proper out-of-pocket expenses incurred by any officer in connection with their attendance to any matter affecting the Association;

(d) fees, remuneration or other benefit in money or money's worth to any company of which an officer may be a member holding not more than one hundredth part of the issued capital of such company.

15 AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may be amended by a simple majority vote of the Council but so that such amendment shall be only effective when ratified by the members of the Association at a General Meeting of the Association. No addition, alteration or amendment shall be made to or in the provisions of this Constitution for the time being in force unless the same shall have been previously approved in writing by the Revenue Commissioners.

16 WINDING UP

The Association shall be wound up upon a resolution in that behalf being carried at a General Meeting of the Association. It shall be employed in meeting the liabilities of the Association (and of the respective Committees) and any surplus shall be made available to such one or more charitable bodies or institutions having a direct connection with both parts of Ireland which shall be selected in that behalf by the members by resolution.

If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Association there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, it shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Association. Instead, such property shall be given or transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having main objects similar to the main objects of the Association. The institution or institutions to which the property is to be given or transferred shall prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property among its or their members to any extent at least as great as is imposed on the Association under or by virtue of Clause 14 hereof. Members of the Association shall select the relevant institution or institutions at or before the time of dissolution and if and so far as effect cannot be given to such provisions, then the property shall be given or transferred to some charitable object.