Extract from:
Irish in Europe Association (International) aisbl

Constitution

(Articles of Association, Bye-Laws and Standing Orders)

For Members and affiliated Chapters & Groups

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Chapter I – Name, Headquarters

**Article 1: Name of the Association:**

1.1 An international non-profit making association, governed by the Belgian law of 25.10.1919 as amended by the law of 6.12.1954 and the law of 30.06.2000, is hereby established under the name of the “Irish in Europe Association (International)”, hereafter referred to as IEAI.

1.2 IEAI shall be referred to in the Irish language as “Cumann na nGael san Eoraip (Idirnáisiúnta)”.  

1.2.1 IEAI shall be referred to in the French language as “L’Association des Irlandais en Europe (Internationale)”.  

1.2.2 IEAI shall be referred to in the Dutch language as “Ieren in Europa Vereniging (Internationaal)”.  

1.2.3 IEAI shall be referred to in the German language as “Verein für Irisch in Europa (International)”.  

1.3 The headquarters of IEAI is situated in the administrative district of Brussels.  

1.4 The headquarters may be transferred to any other place in Belgium by a decision of the Board of Directors, which should be published in the Annexes of Moniteur Belge within one month of the decision. In addition to its headquarters in Belgium, the Board of Directors may decide to have an administrative office or offices anywhere in Europe.  

1.5 All acts, invoices, notices, publications and other documents issued by IEAI must mention its official name (The Irish in Europe Association (International)), immediately preceded or followed by the words “non-profit making international association” or acronym “aisbl”, as well as its registration number.  

1.6 All persons acting in the name IEAI lacking one of the above elements will be considered personally responsible for all or part of the actions taken in the name of IEAI.

Chapter II Duration, Independence of Association, Motto, Logos, Objectives, Activities -  

**Article 2:**

2.00 Duration:  

IEAI shall be formed for an unlimited duration and shall be dissolved at any time by a decision of the General Assembly under the terms defined in the present Articles of Association.  

2.1 IEAI is a non-profit-making organisation. It is completely independent of any political or religious organisation and will not accept affiliation or membership from such organisations. However, to meet its objectives, it will operate and participate in the political, religious, social and cultural life of Ireland and other European states, both within and outside the European Union.  

2.2 In carrying out its tasks, IEAI and the Board of Directors shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government, European Union institution, their agents or any other body.  

2.3 The IEAI motto shall be “Community, Social Responsibility and Accountability”.  

2.4 IEAI’s official logo shall consist of a shamrock with the colours of the Belgium flag in the left leaf, the Irish colours in the centre leaf, and the Europe Union colours in the right leaf. IEAI shall also adopt logos for each European state in which the Irish colours shall always be the central leaf. For the European Union or candidate countries, the logo must include the European Union colours and the member state colours. In the case of bilateral logos with non-European states, the logo shall include the Irish colours in the centre, with the state colours and the European Union colours in the other two leaves. See Annex IX for guidelines on use of IEAI logos and intellectual property.

**Article 3: Mission Statement**

*The IEAI mission is to:*

- Promote a sense of community, Irish identity, culture and heritage
• Support the socio-economic, educational and cultural well-being of the Irish Diaspora living and working in Europe

• Promote the contribution of the Irish Diaspora as a source of innovation, inspiration, regeneration and renewal

• Act as an advocate for the Irish Diaspora in Europe

In order to achieve these aims, IEAI has set the following specific objectives:

Article 4: Social and Civic Society Objectives

4. Recognise the achievements, contributions and sacrifices of the Irish Diaspora in Europe since 563 AD (the beginning of the Irish missionary and scholastic period in Europe) and those of the other immigrant/migrant communities in relation to the local and wider community. Specifically, celebrate the annual Feast Day of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of the Irish Diaspora. See Annex I on the purpose and objectives of the Brussels Saint Patrick’s Day Parade of the Nations and Regions and Invocation Address for first Parade in 2009.

4.1 Be a European umbrella organisation providing visibility and networking opportunities for all the Irish Diaspora groups active in Europe. The objective is to cover all sections of society, incorporating constituent groups with diverse interests, in order to be a source of information and support for them and their members.

4.2 Establish a Pan-European network of local, regional and national chapters in Europe and associate chapters outside of Europe to support IEAI’s mission, aims and objectives. See Annex II on IEAI Chapter Organisation and Regulations.

4.2.1 These chapters will provide a dynamic, ongoing forum for the vast network of Irish Diaspora businesses, Irish pubs, artists and grassroots communities in Europe. They will facilitate the exchange of information on the activities of the various Irish Diaspora-related groups, Irish alumni, associations, clubs and organisations active in Europe, and in particular in Brussels, the capital of the European Union.

4.2.2 The chapters will work closely with local, regional and European authorities and, where necessary, will act as a point of contact between Irish Diaspora residents and the relevant authorities.

4.3 Encourage Ireland to extend Irish citizenship rights for the Irish Diaspora beyond the present grandparent limit and seek the right of return for members of the Irish Diaspora to reside, work, study and own property in Ireland.

4.4 Seek the right to vote in referenda, national parliament and presidential elections in Ireland for Irish citizens living outside the country but who were born or who have lived in Ireland.

Article 5: Irish Diaspora Free Movement Rights Objectives

5. Use IEAI’s network of chapters to improve employment and business opportunities for Irish Diaspora workers and enterprises; assist Irish students to secure work experience placements and internships; and generally increase geographical and occupational mobility within Europe and the European Union in particular for all members of the Irish Diaspora.

5.1 Develop dialogue and mutual aid through business mentoring and social support systems amongst members of the Irish Diaspora living in Europe.

5.2 Increase awareness of the appropriate services and funding programmes in Europe for immigrants and migrants in order to better satisfy the local needs of Irish Diaspora families.

5.3 IEAI will set up working parties in order to promote better enforcement of EU legislation for Irish Diaspora rights in moving around the European Union. Specifically, these working parties will act to:

5.3.1 Examine specific problems on impediments to the operation of the European Union Internal Market.

5.3.2 Seek establishment of a progressive, pragmatic and user-friendly “Migration Policy” in Europe.

5.3.3 Highlight the lack of funding and assistance in job creation and equal opportunity for EU migrants.

5.3.4 Examine cases of misconduct caused by members of state agencies and police forces who abuse their authority through harassment and seeking bribes from legal migrant workers and legally established businesses, highlighted by IEAI members, chapters or non-governmental organisations, or as proposed by the Board of Directors.
5.4 Promote the concept and establishment of Creative Industry, Enterprise and Cultural Irish Village Clusters in Europe. Additionally, encourage establishment of venture capital and other funding mechanisms to help start-up and business expansion schemes to assist such villages and support initiatives aimed at improving the material conditions of the Irish Diaspora in Europe, particularly in the local communities where they reside.

5.5 Retain the Irish “Brain Drain” in Europe and attract back to Europe the "brain gain” of the worldwide Irish Diaspora living elsewhere in the world.

Article 6: Education and Integration Objectives

6. Seek the provision of an orderly, user-friendly, multi-lingual information on-line service on the operation and transparency of the European Union Internal Market, and the relevant taxation and administrative documents in each of the member states of the European Union.

6.1 Facilitate efficient working of the Internal Market by promoting provision of specific educational and training opportunities in all regions where unemployment rates are above the European Union average. These provisions would include multi-lingual training in innovation and entrepreneurship; job skills and language-training; start your own business, trade and business expansion scheme studies; and tax compliance studies.

6.2 Collect and diffuse information to IEAI members and to appropriate authorities; help the newly-arrived Irish Diaspora members in Europe, both socially and economically; and ensure that Irish culture, i.e. art, dance, song, music, cuisine and sports, is fostered and preserved.

6.3 Prepare specialised information dossiers on topics of particular interest to IEAI members.

6.4 Take part in international meetings organised by similar associations.

6.5 Influence and work with governments and European decision-makers to address, promote understanding, and raise awareness of the issues surrounding the Irish Diaspora and other immigrant/migrant groups. Wherever possible this will be done in partnership with local, regional, national and international groups acting as effective and visible advocates for the Irish Diaspora and other migrant/immigrant communities.

6.6 Provide factual and balanced information, through educational materials and events, which challenges myths, stereotypes, (racist and sectarian), attitudes and behaviours directed against the Irish and other migrant/immigrant communities in Europe.

6.7 Bring together leading business, scientific, medical, economic and academic writers, journalists, social entrepreneurs, community leaders and cultural minds to explore how the economic, intellectual, social, sporting and cultural capital of the Irish Diaspora can be harnessed to serve the interests of Ireland and the Irish Diaspora in Europe.

6.8 Engage with and influence government, business and grassroots communities to support and develop both short- and long-term relationships and initiatives to benefit the Irish Diaspora.

6.9 Facilitate integration, community diversity, volunteerism and settlement within host communities. Specifically, to promote equal access to education, jobs, skills training, employment and other partnership initiatives and opportunities, in order to encourage and empower the Irish Diaspora to play their full part in local, regional and national communities in Europe.

Article 7: Cultural Objectives

7. Provide a bridge between Ireland and the 70 million worldwide Irish Diaspora, including those who are generations removed from their ancestral homeland.

7.1 Promote inter-group leadership and work in partnership with other agencies to help create a united, harmonious community at local, regional, national and European level that welcomes the Irish Diaspora and other immigrant/migrant communities, and celebrates the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic diversities of these peoples.

7.2 Explore issues of Irish Diaspora identity and common roots, focusing on their relevance to a modern Ireland and Europe in a globalised economy and an increasingly interdependent world at this unique and dynamically peaceful stage of our European history.
7.3 Provide a European forum for social interaction and celebrating the cultures and traditions of the Irish Diaspora and other immigrant/migrant communities (especially through, song, dance, music, cuisine, sport, language, literature, art, theatre and film) in all European countries that are members of the Council of Europe.

7.4 Organise seminars, lectures, conferences, exhibitions, fairs, as well as issuing publications that address Irish Diaspora issues and the significant contentious issues of European and international policies of our times.

7.5 Bring together people of different cultural, political and religious backgrounds to contribute to public discourse on the challenges facing Europe and the world in order to influence public opinion and the opinion of those who shape policy.

7.6 Create synergies between artists, promoters, sponsors and audiences in order to foster better understanding and appreciation of Irish and Irish Diaspora culture across Europe.

7.7 Promote a symbiotic relationship between the cultures of Ireland and the worldwide Irish Diaspora.

7.8 Encourage interaction between Irish Diaspora artists and artists from other cultures in Europe and elsewhere.

7.9 Promote the mobility of Irish and Irish Diaspora exhibitions, performances and artists in Europe.

7.10 Project the resilience, imagination, talent, ingenuity, richness, ambition, vision and vibrancy of the Irish and Irish Diaspora cultural heritage to the wider society.

7.11 Help realise the potential of the new media and technology to connect the Irish Diaspora across time, distance and cultures; to extend the range of artistic expression and facilitate greater access to Irish culture.

7.12 Propose and/or put into place mechanisms to sustain and promote Irish culture and cultural diversity in Europe. In particular, where no Irish Cultural Centre currently exists, to promote establishment of “Irish in Europe Cultural and Trade Institutes” in European capitals and in cities and towns with a significant Irish population or historic links with Ireland. See Annex VI on Irish language and Culture projects.

7.13 Support work, studies and activities that address or reflect the contemporary Irish Diaspora experience.

7.14 Encourage a diversity of voices and other forms of cultural expression of the Irish Diaspora at large.

7.15 Support, work with, or join other appropriate organisations throughout Europe and beyond that seek to preserve and support Irish and other cultural heritages. See Annex VII on Irish in Europe Commemoration Projects.

**Article 8: Citizenship and Good Governance Objectives**

8. From time to time, IEAI will invite Irish government ministers from the island of Ireland and other political leaders with a role in Irish affairs to address IEAI and to submit regular country reviews and progress reports about work on cultural and trade programmes undertaken by Irish consular offices and agencies in Europe.

8.1 In order to generate a sense of direction and guidance, IEAI seeks to provide feedback to the Irish authorities (on the island of Ireland) on the management of their respective economies, their respect for good governance, and implementation of good corporate governance in Éire-Ireland and Northern Ireland.

8.1.1 Provide feedback to the Irish authorities on the impact of their policies on the Irish Diaspora and on recruitment procedures and operation and performance of their agencies, schools and consular services in Europe.

8.1.2 Provide feedback to the Irish authorities on the value for money and added value of Irish projects/trade/culture missions/state visits and promotions funded by Irish and European tax-payers.

8.2. IEAI from time to time will provide feedback to European Union institutions, the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organisation, and international organisations on international agreements proposed or negotiated by them and how their policies and legislation impact on the Irish Diaspora, on the island of Ireland, the operation of EU-funded projects, and the conduct of their permanent representations and delegations in and outside of Europe.
8.3 In order to fulfil its aims and objectives, IEAI and its chapters from time to time will exercise the right to petition the European Parliament or any national parliament, to apply to the European ombudsman or any national ombudsman, and to address the institutions and advisory bodies of the European Union, in any of the European Union Treaty languages, on any issues that are of concern to its members.

8.4 In order to fulfil its aims and objectives, IEAI may initiate or support a ‘European Union Citizen Initiative’ inviting the European Union Commission or any national government to submit appropriate proposals on matters where IEAI members consider that a legal act of the European Union or national parliament is required for the purpose of implementing the European Union Treaties and/or seeking a legislative remedy in a European state.

8.5 IEAI shall promote within all European Union institutions and their agencies the need to uphold European and family values, to support family-friendly policies and local employment initiatives, and monitor how the remuneration of their staffs take account of local economies, and in particular local unemployment rates, together with the exercise of their social responsibility to and practical integration with local communities.

8.6 IEAI affirms its full support for the Good Friday Agreement endorsed by the people of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic on May 22, 1998.

8.6.1 IEAI contends that the social, economic and cultural interests of the Island of Ireland that is already in a European Union without economic borders and in an increasingly globalised world, and together with the interests of all the people of the island and the Irish Diaspora would be best served if the island of Ireland were politically united in accordance with the procedures for unification set down in the Good Friday Agreement.

8.6.2 IEAI welcomes in the Good Friday Agreement that the Irish Nation cherishes its special affinity with the people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.

8.6.3 IEAI are committed to working with all bodies created under all of the institutional and constitutional arrangements of the Good Friday Agreement in areas where there is a cross-border and all-Island benefit to support the well-being of all the peoples of the island of Ireland and its Irish Diaspora.

Article 9: Help Ireland in Europe

9. Notwithstanding the obligations of members to their local communities and economies, IEAI will establish a "Help Ireland in Europe" programme which recognises the worldwide importance of Ireland’s culture and its profound connection to the Irish economy. Specifically, the "Help Ireland in Europe" programme will promote Ireland as:

- An emerging source of green energy and quality food, and as a smart and knowledge economy.
- A destination for holidays, language training and cultural exchange programmes.
- A destination for town/rural twinning and conferences, education, job creation, public procurement and investment, innovation, research, retirement and health care.
- The "Help Ireland in Europe" programme will assist in the promotion of Irish goods and services and interstate trade in Europe.

9.1 The operation of this "Help Ireland in Europe" programme, together with a cultural training programme on Irish citizenship and on being a civic ‘Goodwill Ambassador for Ireland’, is contingent upon ongoing support for and recognition of the rights afforded to Irish citizens living outside Ireland and how issues of major concern to them are addressed by the Irish authorities.

Article 10: Awards - Irish in Europe Spirit of Ireland Community Awards

10.1 IEAI will endeavour to recognise and honour the Irish Diaspora, Irish citizens and other persons who have demonstrated exemplary leadership, achievement, creativity, and contribution to the wider community.

10.2 IEAI will organise (if necessary in co-operation or partnership with other bodies) awards and events at local, regional, national chapter and European levels.

- These awards and events are set out in Annex IV. At its discretion, the Board of Directors may organise any other award or event to recognise achievement not listed in Annex IV.
Article 11: Grants and Scholarships

IEAI shall award grants and scholarships to its members and their children for projects that excite a spirit of enquiry and may lead to improvements in the well-being of the Irish Diaspora and the communities in which they live in Europe.

Article 12: Irish in Europe Community and Integration Games

IEAI shall endeavour to introduce and adapt the proven ‘Irish Community Games’ concept to Europe as the ‘Irish in Europe Community and Integration Games’. This could take the form of a European Union Health and Integration Support Programme that would include Gaelic football, hurling, camoige, handball, rounders and poc fada (long puck) to promote healthy living and integration amongst young people in Europe. The annual European finals would be held in Ireland.

Article 13: Incorporation of Associations, Committees and Projects

13.1 IEAI from the date of its incorporation shall manage and take control of the following unincorporated associations and committees listed hereunder, their titles, policies, publications, intellectual property, and their existing and proposed projects outlined in Annex IV:

13.1.2 The Brussels Saint Patrick’s Day Parade of the Nations & Regions Committee
13.1.3 The Saint Patrick’s Guinness Irish Festival of Brussels Committee
13.1.4 The Village Integration Project in Brussels Committee
13.1.4 Pobal Gaeilge na Brúíséile
13.1.5 Pobal Gaeilge na hEorpa
13.1.6 Coiste Coláiste Schuman
13.1.7 Walkers & Talkers
13.1.8 Village Integration Quiz
13.1.9 Crossing Borders on the Terrace

13.2 As from date of incorporation, IEAI shall take over the funds and other assets and liabilities, including any loans, of these currently unincorporated associations and committees listed in Article 13.1.2 to13.1.6.

13.2.1 All members and volunteers of these above mentioned unincorporated associations and committees shall be eligible at any time for admission as ordinary members of IEAI by the Board of Directors provided they agree in writing to become members and pay the ordinary membership fee or special founder membership fee that may be determined by the Board of Directors.

13.2.2 Founder Committee Members of the above mentioned associations and committees shall be automatically eligible for life membership in IEAI on reaching their 60th birthday and by petitioning for life membership in writing to the Board of Directors.

13.2.3 All persons who meet the following conditions shall be automatically eligible for Honorary Membership:
1. Entered in the Roll of Honour for supporting establishment of the first Saint Patrick’s Day Parade of the Nations and Regions in Brussels in 2009 and 2010 and also the First Saint Patrick’s Guinness Irish Festival of Brussels and second parade in 2010
2. Have reached their 65th birthday
3. Agree in writing to the Board of Directors to become Honorary Members.

13.3 The first 5,000 members of IEAI shall be automatically eligible for Honorary Membership on reaching their 70th birthday and by agreeing in writing to the Board of Directors to become Honorary Members.

13.4 Foundation Day

The seventh day of January will be designated IEAI Foundation Day. It will be an annual celebration marking the convening of the first meeting to form the Saint Patrick’s Day Parade of the Nations & Regions Committee in Brussels, which took place on Wednesday, 7 January 2009, at Kitty O’ Shea’s Irish Pub in Brussels.
Article 14: Social Principles, Policy Formation and Discussion Headings, Memorial Lectures

14.1 IEAI shall adopt Social Principles and Values compatible with IEAI aims and objectives, shall stimulate discussion, promote and assist policy development by holding public lectures, debates and conferences, and formation of policy groups.
14.1.1 IEAI shall publish its lectures, debates and policy documents. The Board of Directors from time to time shall propose topics and discussion headings of concern to IEAI members to encourage ongoing debate.
14.1.2 Sample topics for discussion for the time being may be selected from the discussion headings in Annex VIII - Policy Principles and Policy Discussion Headings outlined hereunder:
   14.1.3 Irish Policy Principles & Discussion Headings
   14.1.4 European Union Policy Principles & Discussion Headings
   14.1.5 Brussels as European Union Capital and Global City Principles and Discussion Headings
14.2 The ‘Irish in Europe Memorial Lecture’ series shall be established. The lecture series will bring to Brussels top scholars, scientists, world leaders, philosophers, novelists, musicians, physicians, activists, historians, forecasters, educators and other persons of prominence to address a wide range of subjects in order to commemorate the unique contribution to society made by some of the world-wide members of the Irish Diaspora.
14.2.1 The lectures shall help maintain the collective memory of the contribution of the global Irish family to the well-being of the countries and the communities in which they have lived around the world from generation to generation.
14.2.2 The lectures shall help strengthen the capacities of the social, cultural, political and economic links of the Irish Diaspora in Brussels and in Europe in order to serve as a bridge between Europe and the world-wide community of nations and its Irish Diaspora in pursuit of co-operation, peace and prosperity for all.
14.2.3 Memorial lecturers are expected to deliver a public lecture, to remain in Brussels for 1 to 2 days to meet with members of IEAI, Brussels residents and students, and to participate in activities such as round-table discussions, classes or other events that give Irish Diaspora members and students opportunities to interact with the lecturer. The lecturer is also expected to interact with the media, as requested, before or after the lecture, and to participate in social events associated with the lecture, such as dinners, receptions or other activities.

Article 15: Powers

15. In order to achieve its aims and objectives, IEAI may engage in a variety of activities, which include but are not limited to the following:
15.1 IEAI may acquire loans; possess movable and immovable property, owned exclusively or held in usufruct; receive, manage and disburse money, securities and other financial instruments.
15.1.1 IEAI may establish private or public foundations.
15.2 IEAI may carry out all acts or operations, and may take all steps or measures that could useful in achieving its aims and objectives. These may include the search for and realisation of solutions on an international basis.
15.3 The speed at which IEAI achieves its aims and objectives is subject to the availability of adequate human and financial resources to carry out the aforementioned activities under article 15.2
Irish in Europe Association (International) aisbl
(Incorporating the Brussels Saint Patrick’s Day Parade of the Nations & Regions Committee)
Established 2011 by Royal Decree of King Albert II of Belgium to help the Irish Diaspora and promote Irish Culture & Integration at local Chapter level in Europe

“Community, Social responsibility and Accountability”

2015 Year Theme: Irish give generously to aid Development & Help Communities

2015 Brussels Saint Patrick’s Day Parade of the Nations & Regions
Grand Marshal:
Mr. Bart Depestele
President
Vlaanderen-Ierland

“Your Donation no matter How Great or Small Will make the Difference”!

Bank: Crelan – Agentschap Jubelpark / Parc 50Naire,
Avenue d’Auderghem 59A,
1040 Brussels,
Belgium.
Name account: IEAI
Account nr: 860-1159139-68
IBAN: BE 82 8601 1591 3968
SWIFT/BIC-code: SPAABE22

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