

INTERNAL REGULATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL FOUNDATION “Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies”

as decided in the General Assembly meeting of 13.05.2025

Part 1 General regulations

1. Objective of the Internal Regulations

- 1.1 The objective of the Internal Regulation is to establish specific guidelines for the daily operations of the Centre.
- 1.2 In case of conflicts of interpretation between an article in the Statutes and one in the internal regulations, the interpretation given to the article in the Statutes prevails.

2. Language of the Centre

- 2.1 The working language of the Centre is English.

3. The Tasks, Powers and Functions of the Non-Statutory Boards

The Honorary Board

- 3.1 The Honorary Board and its Chairman are nominated by the Executive Board.
- 3.2 The Honorary Board has the power to have meetings to enhance the profile and exposure of the Centre.
- 3.3 Meetings have to be approved by the Executive Board.

The Academic Council

- 3.4 The members of the Academic Council and its Chairman are nominated by the Executive Board for a period of 3 years.
- 3.5 The Academic Council is composed of esteemed academics and researchers.
- 3.6 The Academic Council secures and maintains the high academic standards of the Centre by reviewing the progress of the Research, publications and Studies of the Centre and giving recommendations to the Executive Board.
- 3.7 The Academic Council has a duty of promoting the Centre and its activities to the academic world.
- 3.8 The Academic Council has a maximum of 30 members.

- 3.9 The Academic Council can nominate temporary ad-hoc working groups of experts to assist in a particular research project.
- 3.10 The Executive Board can nominate Research Associates for term of two years with the possibility of being re-nominated. The Research Associates support the in-house research capacity of the Martens Centre. The Research Associates have no staff status.

4. Political Auditors

- 4.1 Political Auditors are responsible for conducting an independent appraisal of the Centre's financial activities within the limits of the council regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.
- 4.2 The political auditors are responsible for giving assurance to the General Assembly and the Executive Board on financial aspects of the Centre.
- 4.3 The political auditors have the right to access all financial documents of the Centre which it considers necessary to fulfill its responsibility.
- 4.4 The political auditors are nominated by the General Assembly for a mandate of 2 years.
- 4.5 Political auditors are not a statutory position unlike the external auditors and hold no executive position in the Centre.
- 4.6 There is a maximum of 4 political auditors.

5. Fundraising Committee

- 5.1 The Fundraising Committee will be responsible for searching for sponsors, and donors and for their screening. The Fundraising Committee will be responsible for planning all fundraising activities in support of sponsored events and/or sponsored publications of the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies. The Committee will be chaired by the Chairperson appointed by the Executive Board.
- 5.2 The members of the Fundraising Committee will be proposed by the Chair of the Fundraising Committee and accepted by the Executive Board.
- 5.3 The Fundraising Committee and its Chair will be responsible to the Executive Board and all the decisions regarding the functioning of the Fundraising Committee and the sponsoring activities will be due for the approval of the Executive Board.

6. Specific Guidelines

Guidelines for Co-Operation

- 6.1 Centre in this section refers to Statutory and non statutory boards, auditors and the Secretariat of the Centre

- 6.2 Co-operations in the sense of the internal regulations do not imply any obligations unless specifically agreed upon.
- 6.3 To fulfill its objectives and to broaden its exposure, the Centre has the right to enter on an individual basis to specific forms of co-operation with Universities, organizations, think tanks, institutes, foundations, NGOs and other relevant organizations. Third-party organizations with which the Centre co-operates can be called Partners in daily communication, following the decision of the Executive Board. The Partners do not have any statutory rights.
- 6.4 Co-operations must be completed in order to enhance the work of the Centre.

Guidelines for the election of the Executive Board

- 6.5 All candidatures for a position on the Executive Board must be submitted to the Secretariat at least a week prior to the election. Only ordinary members can submit candidatures.
- 6.6 The Secretariat then informs the Executive Board of the candidatures.
- 6.7 If vote is called in the election of the Executive Board, the vote will take place with two lists simultaneously; (1) a list composing the proposals of the recommendation of the EPP Presidency, to elect maximum four physical persons, as members of the Executive Board and (2) a list composing the additional candidates to elect maximum four physical persons proposed by one or more political foundation/think-tank member/members, as members of the Executive Board.

Guidelines for membership

- 6.8 For the ordinary member application of a Political Foundation/Think Tank to be valid it must be submitted at least 28 days prior to the next General Assembly meeting.
- 6.9 Political foundation/Think-tank ordinary membership applicant will be invited to a General Assembly meeting to present the membership application with the agreement with the President of the Centre.
- 6.10 A political foundation/think-tank applying for ordinary membership that has no legal personality separate from an EPP Member party may, upon the recommendation of the Executive Board and the decision of the General Assembly, be invited to the meetings of the General Assembly and to the Centre regular activities as a Permanent Guest, provided that it:
 - (i) has its own staff dedicated to the activities of the political foundation/think-tank;
 - (ii) performs regular activities and
 - (iii) is recognised by an EPP Member-party as the official political foundation/think-tank of that EPP Member-party.

The said endorsement of the EPP Member-party shall be evidenced by a letter of recognition signed by the President or Secretary General of the respective EPP Member-party confirming that the applicant is considered as the official political foundation/think-tank of the respective EPP Member-party. An EPP Member party can endorse only one

application of a political foundation/think-tank for ordinary membership or Permanent Guest. The President of the Centre has a mandate to revoke the invitation to the Permanent Guest. Permanent Guests do not have any statutory rights.

Guidelines for Membership Suspension

- 6.11 An exclusion of a Member under article 7 of the Bylaws of Centre can only be exercised by the General Assembly once the concerned member has had a hearing on the matter of exclusion in front of the General Assembly.
- 6.12 If a member is absent at his exclusion hearing the General Assembly has the right to suspend the member at its discretion.
- 6.13 A suspended member loses his voting powers, his speaking power and the right to propose candidates for positions within the Centre until the suspension is lifted by the General Assembly.

Guidelines for exclusion

- 6.14 An exclusion under article 7 of the By-Laws may only be decided after a hearing of the member concerned by the General Assembly.
- 6.15 If the member does not show up for his hearing the General Assembly has the power to exclude him at its discretion.

Part 2 Internal Financial Regulations

The *'Regulations governing Political parties at European level: statute and funding (amend. Reg. (EC) 2004/2003'* prevail over the internal regulations of the Centre in case of conflict of interpretation.

1. Signatories

- 1.1 Authorised signatories for the approval of orders and issues of cheques on behalf of Centre are:
 - The President
 - The Secretary Treasurer
 - The Executive Director
- 1.2 All payments need to be approved and signed by two signatories.
- 1.3 Authorised signatories cannot approve costs incurred by their person.

2. Banking

- 2.1 The Executive Director and/or the Secretary Treasurer are responsible for, on behalf of the Executive Board, liaison with the Centre's bankers in relation to all bank accounts and the issue of cheques.
- 2.2 Cheques/Paying in slips shall be ordered only by the Executive Director who shall make arrangements for their safe keeping.

- 2.3 All bank accounts shall be in the name of Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies.
- 2.4 The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that all bank accounts are regularly reconciled.

3. Accounts and Audit arrangements

- 3.1 The Executive Director will keep the following documents on behalf of the Centre for a period of six years:
 - Orders
 - Invoices
 - Bank statements
 - Receipts
 - Audited accounts
- 3.2 The Treasurer will arrange for an annual audit of the Centre's accounts to be presented to the General Assembly meeting once a year.
- 3.3 The audit will be exercised by the external statutory auditor and the Internal Auditors.
- 3.4 All invoicing will be arranged through the Executive Director.

4. Budget

- 4.1 The Executive Board will prepare an annual budget to be presented to the Annual General Meeting for approval.
- 4.2 Projects with a value of 50.000 Euros or more must be approved by the Executive Board prior to being executed.
- 4.3 The Executive Board when faced with a 4.2 request can take a decision outside of a scheduled meeting via mail, fax or email.
- 4.4 A decision taken by the Executive Board outside of a scheduled meeting requires a simple majority of Members in order to be valid.
- 4.5 All expenses of over 20.000 Euros outside of research proposals and expenses falling under the "restricted calls"¹ must go through a tender a process and be presented with three competitive offers.

5. Authority to place orders

- 5.1 All substantial purchases for goods and/or services must have prior approval of the Executive Board.

¹ (i.e. only possible service provider, one specific location or venue suitable for person or the service provider has been used before and it can be demonstrated that service is still the most advantageous).

6. Event income

- 6.1 The Event organiser will submit the balance from the conference to the Executive Director as soon as possible after the end of the conference.

7. Expenses

- 7.1 Members of the Secretariat may make claims for reimbursement of reasonable travel and subsistence when on an official Centre mission. All the requests need to be approved by the Executive Director.
- 7.2 All claims for payment of travel, subsistence and incidental expenses should be presented to the Executive Director within one month of being incurred using a Centre claim form and be accompanied by appropriate invoices.
- 7.3 Any claims for overnight accommodation must first be approved by the Executive Director.
- 7.4 Claims for work lunches or dinners by staff members must be introduced with the bill of the set lunch or dinner accompanied with the names of the people attending it and the purpose of the meal. The reimbursement if it meets the criteria must be approved by one of the authorized signatories for the claim to be executed.
- 7.5 The nature of costs spent while representing the Centre must remain reasonable and proportional to the occasion. Luxurious consumable items are not authorized.
- 7.6 No internal representation is allowed between staff members of the Centre.
- 7.7 Honorariums and financial fees paid to the Members of the Centre organs and advisory bodies should be considered exceptions and require decisions of the Executive Board.

8. Loans

- 8.1 No Staff member of Centre may enter into loans or other credit on its behalf.

9. Inventory

- 9.1 An inventory of all equipment owned by the Centre will be kept by the Executive Director and reported to the General Assembly.
- 9.2 The disposal of any assets must be agreed in advance by the Executive Board