



# MALTA WOMEN'S LOBBY STATUTE

## **TITLE I – NAME. REGISTERED OFFICE, DURATION, AIM**

### Article 1 -Name, purpose, duration, applicable law

The Malta Women’s Lobby (MWL) is established as a national non-profit making, non-political organisation with a philanthropic, scientific, cultural and educational purpose in order to promote the integration and implementation of gender equality in all areas of Maltese society. The Malta Women’s Lobby, will hereinafter be referred to as “MWL”.

The MWL shall represent the concerns, needs and interests of women from all walks of life in dialogue and networking at a national, European and international level.

The MWL will be governed by the Laws of Malta in particular by this Statute, and by the internal rules of the MWL.

The duration of the MWL shall be unlimited.

### Article 2 – Registered office

The Hon. Secretary’s address shall be the address of the MWL.

The registered office may be transferred to any other location in Malta by decision of the MWL, which decision will be communicated in writing to all the members of the Confederation.

### Article 3 – Purpose

The purpose of MWL is to integrate and unify all national Maltese NGOs for Women, as well as some individual women, in order to represent Malta at the European Women’s Lobby Group in Brussels, as a full member.

The objectives of the MWL are:

- i) to provide a forum for debate;
- ii) act as a national forum where informed reflection and debate on women's rights lead to concrete recommendations, conclusions and actions;
- iii) to disseminate best practices in the field of women's rights in order to guarantee equal opportunities;

- iv) to contribute towards an improvement of the national policy and strategy vis-a-vis women's issues;
- v) to improve the co-operation between policy makers, NGOs and individual members working in the field of women's issues
- vi) to inform, link and raise awareness of women's organizations on European issues;
- vii) to work directly with European institutions to ensure that women's needs and perspectives become an equal and integral part of European policies.
- viii) to keep MWL members updated on all national and EU directives, regulations and legislation regarding women's issues and gender mainstreaming.

The MWL, through its member organizations and individual members, aims:

- a. to work within democratic, open and transparent procedures of communication, decision-making and accountability in order to support the involvement and empowerment of all women.
- b. to take into account the needs and perspectives of different groups of women, and the multiple identities of women at all stages of their life.
- c. to provide regular input in all areas at a national and EU level by actively participating and addressing issues on policy development and implementation that impact women's lives and relate to the promotion of equality between women and men.
- d. to monitor the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming in order to ensure that mainstreaming entails the full integration of women's human rights, needs and aspirations in all areas of national, EU and international policy.

## **TITLE II – MEMBERS**

### Article 1 – Membership Categories, General Membership Criteria.

MWL is made up of different membership categories:

- a. Organisations for women;
- b. Sections for women in organisations of more than one sector;
- c. individual members;
- d. Foundations, organisations or entities committed to supporting the aims and objectives of the MWL.

All members must:

- (i) meet the criteria for membership set out in the statute;
- (ii) accept the purpose and aims of the MWL;
- (iii) pay an annual membership fee.

All entities and individual members must:

- a) demonstrate a clear commitment to gender equality on the basis of past and current activities and future plans;
- b) demonstrate support for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, and the Beijing Platform for Action;
- c) demonstrate that, in the policies and structures of their organisation, account has been taken of the needs and perspectives of the many women that face multiple discrimination, including women of different age, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, ability, and sexual orientation. This list is not exhaustive;
- d) act independently of any political party or religious authority.

A person who is an elected member of a political party's executive committee, council, or is a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), cannot be a member of MWL.

Member organisations shall have a maximum of two representatives on the MWL with the right to one vote between them.

Individual members shall be grouped together and treated as a one organisation (GIMMS) for the purpose of representation and voting rights. The Guidelines for individual membership are explained in Annex A.

#### Article 2 – Membership Fees

All entities and individual members must pay an annual membership fee, the amount of which shall be decided by the MWL.

Any foundation, entity or organization wishing to become a member of the MWL but cannot afford to pay the membership fee, shall at the discretion of the Executive Council be eligible to a one-year free membership.

#### Article 3 – Membership Application Procedure

Applications for admission as a member (be it as an NGO or an individual member) shall be directed to the Honorary Secretary of MWL.

#### Article 4 – Resignation, Exclusion

Any entity or individual member can withdraw from the MWL provided the member has notified such withdrawal to the Hon. Secretary of MWL by any means of written or online communication.

Any entity or individual member who violates, or is no longer in compliance, with the provisions of this statute or the internal rules, or who acts in a way that is detrimental to the interests of the MWL or its members, may be excluded by the MWL.

Any entity or individual member who, in whatever way and for whatever reason, ceases to be a member of the MWL will not, because of such cessation of membership, have the right to claim reimbursement of the membership fee.

### Article 5 – Quorum, Votes

The quorum for meetings shall be 50% of members plus one. If there is no quorum present at the time the meeting is due to start the meeting will be postponed for 15 minutes.

Each member organization shall have the right to one vote. The chair of the MWL, if she happens to be the only person representing her member organization, shall have a member vote plus a casting vote in case of a tie.

Decisions are to be reached by consensus. Should consensus not be reached, decisions are to be taken on a majority outcome (50% + 1).

Voting in certain circumstances shall be made by show of hands unless a secret ballot is requested.

Voting outcomes on national and/or international issues, such as for, against or abstention shall be recorded in the minutes and submitted to the European Women Lobby.

### Article 6 – EWL Representation

The Chairperson of the MWL shall attend all EWL General Assembly and Board Meetings. Two additional members shall be elected as representatives to the EWL and shall represent the MWL at the EWL General Assembly. In the case when one of these three members will be unable to attend the MWL shall decide on a substitute.

Their term of office shall be of 2 years.

No member shall hold the same position for more than two consecutive terms unless the Council unanimously agrees to extend the number of terms that a person can hold for the same office.

### Article 7 – Meetings

The MWL will meet a minimum of six times a year, unless Extraordinary General Meetings are called for.

A General Meeting shall be held every year within three months following the end of March of any given year

A call for Extraordinary General meetings can be made, following a request by at least one third of the members of the MWL.

Should one or both representatives, of the representative organizations, be unable to attend any MWL meeting, substitute representatives can be appointed by proxy by the respective organization to attend in their place.

### **TITLE III – THE CONFEDERATION**

#### Article 1 – Composition, Powers, Responsibilities

The Members of the MWL shall act in the common interest of the MWL.

Each member organization may be represented by two individuals, who shall share in the work of the MWL.

#### Article 2 – Election of Officials

Persons holding the post of either CEO, Chairperson or other high-ranking position of statal or para-statal entities shall not be eligible for a position on the Council.

The MWL shall elect from among its members a Chairperson, an Honorary Secretary, a Financial Officer, a Communications Officer and a Fund-Raising Officer, whose term of office shall be of 2 consecutive years.

No organization shall have more than one official among those elected for the above posts which will make up the Council.

These officials shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

## **The Chairperson**

The Chairperson of the Council shall also be the Chairperson of the MWL.

The Chairperson shall chair all the meetings of the MWL and attend all EWL Board meetings and pass all information obtained at such meetings to all the members of the MWL. If the Chairperson is unable to attend meetings another person shall be appointed by the MWL to attend.

The Chairperson is obliged to renounce her post on the Council if deemed a politically exposed person<sup>1</sup> or if she has a direct or indirect conflict or potential conflict of interest.

No Chairperson shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms unless the Council unanimously agrees to extend the number of terms that a person can hold for the same office.

Unless she ceases to be a member of the Council at an earlier date, the Chairperson of the Council shall hold office until the election of a new Council, provided that the outgoing Chairperson shall continue to hold office until a new Chairperson is elected.

## **The Honorary Secretary**

The Honorary Secretary in consultation with the Chairperson shall draw up the agenda for all meetings and communicate the date and venue to all the MWL members at least 5 working days prior to meetings. The Honorary Secretary shall take the Minutes of each meeting and circulate them to each MWL member. She shall deal with the correspondence received by the MWL, and shall submit an annual administrative report to the AGM.

## **The Financial Officer**

The Financial Officer shall have the responsibility of collecting fees from members of the MWL and shall pay all dues by the MWL including EWL membership fees from the funds of the MWL. The Financial Officer shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of funds. She shall also manage all fees derived from fund-raising activities and sponsorships. The Financial

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by MFSA Guidelines



Officer shall be responsible for drawing up the financial report and submit it to the MWL prior to the AGM for outside audit.

### **The Fundraising Officer**

The Fundraising Officer shall be responsible for coordinating the fundraising activities.

Subject to approval from the MWL, individuals from representative organizations shall be co-opted to assist the above-mentioned officials in their duties.

The Chairperson and the Hon. Secretary shall hold legal representation jointly.

### Article III

The legal Advisor appointed by the MWL shall be responsible for advising, overseeing and ensuring that all the policy issues decided by the MWL shall be in conformity with the Laws of Malta and as such advise on relevant legislation affecting issues or otherwise

### Article IV

Any Member of the Council may, for unreasonable behaviour or for being in breach of the MWL Statute, be removed from her position by a resolution taken at a General Meeting.

Members of Council who do not, without justifiable reason, attend for any meetings during a six-month period will automatically lose their seat on Council.

This Statute can be amended at the Annual General Meeting.

## **Annex A**

### **Group of Individual Members (GIMMS) affiliated to the Malta Women's Lobby as Independent Individual Members**

#### **Name and Purpose**

The Group of Independent Individual Members (GIMMS) has the aim of representing individuals (rather than organisations) who wish to join MWL as **Independent Individual Members**.

The GIMMS group shall be affiliated exclusively to the MWL and shall at all times adhere to the aims and objectives as laid down in the Articles expressed in the MWL Statute. They shall act in the common interest of the MWL.

GIMMS shall be grouped together and treated as a member organisation for the purpose of representation and voting rights. GIMMS shall have the right to one vote on the MWL Council.

#### **Election of Officials**

GIMMS members shall meet at least once every two years in order to:

- Vote for two representatives to represent GIMMS on the MWL Council.
  
- Elect a member from amongst the two selected representatives to head the GIMMS group. The elected head shall be responsible to disseminate information to the other independent individual members and to organise the meetings (at least once every two years) and other activities as deemed fit.

In both cases, the term of office shall be of 2 years.

No member shall hold the same position for more than three terms consecutively.

#### **Membership Categories, General Membership Criteria.**

The MWL is composed of women's organisations, the women's sections of mixed organisations, individual supporting members,

and supporting organisations which are foundations, organisations or entities committed to supporting the aims and objectives of the MWL.

A GIMMS member must:

- (i) Meet the criteria for membership set out in the MWL statute;
- (ii) Accept the MWL purpose and aims;

### **Membership Application Procedure**

Applications for admission as an individual member shall be directed to the MWL Hon. Secretary.

Upon joining, individual members must pay an annual membership fee which shall be stipulated by the MWL. The value of the full group membership fee must be covered by the individual members in order for GIMMS to be represented on the Council. In the absence of sufficient funds, the full MWL membership fee must be paid by the two elected members.

To qualify as a member of GIMMS an Individual must:

- a) Demonstrate a clear commitment to gender equality.
- b) Demonstrate support for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol and the Beijing Platform for Action.
- c) Demonstrate that, in all policies and structures, account has been taken of the needs and perspective of the many women that face multiple discrimination, including women of different age, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, ability, and sexual orientation. This list is not exhaustive.
- d) Act independently of any political party or religious authority.

### **Resignation/Exclusion**

Any individual member can withdraw from GIMMS with immediate effect, provided the member has notified such withdrawal to

GIMMS by any means of communication, written or online.

Any individual member who violates, or is no longer in compliance with, the provisions of the MWL statute or the internal rules, or who acts in a way that is detrimental to the interests of the MWL or its members, may be excluded by GIMMS.

Any individual member who, in whatever way and for whatever reason, ceases to be a member of GIMMS will not, because of such cessation of membership, have the right to claim reimbursement of the membership fee.