

## **Establishment**

Association Registration No.: 30023

Recognition Order No.: 100/2014

Athens Court of the Peace

## **Amendment of the Statutes**

Association Registration No.: 30023

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### **Article 1 – Establishment– Name – Seat- Seal**

A not-for-profit organisation operating under the name Syllogos Diermineon Synedrion Ellados (SY.DI.S.E.) is hereby established in accordance with the provisions and requirements of the Hellenic Civil Code and has its seat in Athens. The Association may open and maintain offices/branches in any city within Greece or abroad, based on a decision of its General Meeting. The name shall be rendered in English as the ‘Hellenic Association of Conference Interpreters’ and the acronym as “SYDISE”. The Association shall have a round seal in both Greek and English, the perimeter of which shall contain its full name, and the acronym SYDISE in the centre along with the Association’s registration number (30023) and below that the year in which the Association was established.

### **Article 2 - Key definitions**

Interpretation deals exclusively with oral communication: rendering a message from one language into another, naturally and fluently, adopting the delivery, tone and convictions of the speaker and speaking in the first person (European Commission, DG SCIC).

Conference interpreting of spoken language includes successive interpreting (namely interpreting after the speaker has finished speaking), simultaneous interpreting (namely interpreting while the speaker is talking, done within a suitably equipped, sound-

insulated booth or using other suitable technical equipment) and chuchotage (namely whispered simultaneous interpreting whether with or without the use of special equipment).

Court or legal interpreting can either be successive interpreting, chuchotage or simultaneous interpreting in courtrooms, at the police and border authorities or aliens services, or notarial offices for the reading and signing of notarial deeds, etc.

Community interpreting or public service interpreting is successive interpreting done at public services or organisations, the asylum service or hospitals or NGOs which primarily deal with refugee and migrant issues, and at hotspots or refugee and/or migrant camps.

### **Article 3 – Goals**

The goals of the Association are to establish rules for the interpreting profession, to safeguard, protect, promote and collectively represent the interests and rights of interpreters who are its members, as well as clarify their obligations/duties towards the recipients of interpreting services.

In addition, the Association's goals shall include:

- a) The drafting, dissemination and future amendment of a Code of Conduct for its members.
- b) The promotion and protection of correct professional standards, working practices and conditions.
- c) Informing all those involved in organising conferences about the particular needs of conference interpreting and other types of interpreting, to ensure suitable and decent working conditions for the profession.
- d) Promoting and improving court or legal interpreting.
- e) Promoting and improving community interpreting.
- f) Collaborating with other natural or legal persons, associations, unions and federations with the same or similar objective and participation in industry-wide organizations/federations or confederations which may be established in the future at national, European and international level.
- g) Contributing to the education and training of conference interpreting through

conferences, seminars, meetings, publications, etc., as well as providing information to graduates and junior interpreters regarding the profession's working conditions.

- h) Providing assistance to its members in order to assert their reasonable rights.
- i) Maintaining a register of interpreters in Greek and/or other languages and seeking statutory recognition for the register of interpreters.
- j) The enhancement, overhaul and improvement of the image of conference interpreters.
- k) Providing opinions and decisions on the suitability of interpreting venues and facilities.
- l) Encouraging inter-professional dialogue.
- m) Keeping members informed about educational courses and training seminars in Greece and abroad.
- n) The drafting of templates/model texts (for example interpreting services contracts, guidelines).
- o) The recognition of members of the Association as sworn/official interpreters with all of the rights deriving from this, including official translation.
- p) The possibility of the Association representing its members before all competent administrative, judicial, social security, taxation and other authorities, on any issue or problem relating to interpreters or interpreting both in Greece and the European Union.
- q) Any other goals not specified above, but clearly flowing from the above or associated with them.

#### **Article 4 – Means**

The means for realising the Association's goals shall be as follows:

- a. The Association shall have a website with a URL (Uniform Resource Locator) and an official e-mail address.
- b. The Association shall maintain a register of members in Greek and/or other languages in printed and electronic format.
- c. The Association shall have an online search index for active professional conference interpreters in Greek and/or other languages.
- d. The Association shall have a register containing the minutes of General Meetings and

a register containing the minutes of Board of Directors' meetings.

- e. The Association reserves the right to set up any suitable online communication platform (blog, social media) or any other future platform which may emerge. It may also use e-consultation platforms to consult and communicate with members of the Association or third parties.
- f. The Association shall publish a newsletter.
- g. The Association shall produce position papers and open letters.
- h. The Association reserves the right, acting via the General Meeting and/or the Board of Directors, to set up committees or working groups for special purposes.
- i. The Association may prepare and host events, meetings, seminars, discussions, conferences, and participate in similar events in Greece and abroad, and represent its members at similar events, and in consultations and negotiations relating to the profession of translator and interpreter.
- j. The Association may participate in research projects and programmes run by the Greek State, the European Union or more generally the international community, in order to achieve SYDISE's goals.
- k. The Association reserves the right to grant sponsorship to events or activities in keeping with its goals and/or which serve them.
- l. The Association reserves the right to introduce prizes or competitions in the context of its goals and to use any other lawful means which it considers appropriate.

#### **Article 5 - Members**

- a. Any natural person in the interpreting profession, who practices within the territory of Greece and/or beyond, may become a member of the Association after submitting an application.
- b. The application for a new member shall be submitted to the Board which is obliged to check that it is complete and valid in accordance with the Statutes. The Board must then accept or reject the application and present its decision to the Association's General Meeting for approval. In the period between the Board's decision and confirmation of that

Decision by the General Meeting, full membership rights shall not be conferred on the prospective member.

c. Members of the Association are divided into:

**1) Full members**

Each full member shall have the right to take part in the Association's activities, to participate in General Meetings with the right to vote, and to elect and be elected to the Association's various bodies. He/she shall also have the right to submit proposals, in writing and/or orally, to the Board and the General Meeting.

**2) Associate members**

The following persons may register as associate members: (a) undergraduate and/or postgraduate students on courses specialising in interpreting in Greece and abroad, (b) graduate interpreters who do not yet meet the full membership criteria for the Association, and (c) professional interpreters who partially meet the full membership criteria for the Association. The purpose in including associate members is for them to subsequently register as full members, and the maximum period for which one can be an associate member is 4 years, extendible for a further 2 years where there are suitable grounds for doing so. Associate members are entitled to attend and speak at the General Meeting but have no voting rights, nor do they have the right to elect or be elected, nor shall they appear in the Association's online register.

**3) Retired members**

Former full members of the Association who retire shall enjoy all the rights of full members and shall continue to appear in the register and online directory of members accompanied by the phrase "retired member".

**4) Honorary members**

On a proposal from the Board or from any member of the General Meeting, any person can be declared an honorary member of the Association following approval from the General Meeting and provided the said person consents and accepts the honorary member status which was proposed:

- 1) where they are interpreters who offer outstanding services to the Association or the

interpreting sector or have been acclaimed for their professional career as interpreters, and are members of the Association or

- 2) where they are leading figures who have made an outstanding scientific contribution to the interpreting sector. Honorary members shall be exempt from paying fees and do not have the right to elect or be elected. Honorary members shall be listed in a separate list in a separate part of the Association's website. Honorary members in category 2 shall not appear in the online directory of professional interpreters.

#### **d. Entry criteria for new members**

The following persons shall be accepted as full members:

**d1.** Anyone who holds a degree in conference interpreting (bachelor's or master's degree) and has a minimum of 100 days working as a conference interpreter.

or

**d2.** Anyone who holds any other higher education degree, with training in conference interpreting and a minimum of 120 days working as a conference interpreter.

or

**d3.** Anyone who is a graduate of higher education and has more than 150 working days.

or

**d4.** Anyone who does not fulfil the above requirements but has more than 150 working days and enjoys a high level of prestige in the field of interpreting and is accepted by a unanimous decision of the Board.

Working days refers solely to days worked as a conference interpreter (consecutive/simultaneous or chuchotage) and not court or escort interpreting.

Working days shall be proven in the following way:

Those applying for membership shall provide a list with days worked (setting out the date/conference title/working languages). The Board has the prerogative to request additional documentation from candidates (including copies of invoices for conference interpreting services provided by the candidate).

The above supporting documents shall be verified by the Board as being complete and accurate, assisted in this task by any special committee which may be set up for that

purpose.

Applicants must be registered with the tax office as an interpreter and must continue to carry on the profession of conference interpreter.

Interpreter training:

The interpreter's curriculum must have included at least 6 months of consecutive and simultaneous interpreting training.

To join the Association, the following supporting documents must be submitted in light of the foregoing points:

- 1) A new membership application form.
- 2) Main university qualification.
- 3) Postgraduate qualifications in conference interpreting, if appropriate, or a certificate on successful completion of a conference interpreting training course as defined herein, if appropriate.
- 4) A list of working days and any other evidence.
- 5) Curriculum vitae.
- 6) Certificates demonstrating language proficiency for the working language combinations stated in the application for membership, when the application is not based on university studies, and for the addition of new language combinations.
- 7) Proof that one is carrying on the profession issued by the General Secretariat for Information Systems (GSIS) of the Ministry of Economy & Finance ([www.gsis.gr](http://www.gsis.gr)) for those based in Greece, or a similar document in the case of persons based abroad.
- 8) A solemn declaration from the applicant that he/she has read and accepts the provisions of the Association's Statutes and the Code of Conduct.

The following rules shall apply concerning verification that membership criteria continue to be met:

Members of the Association are obliged to report any change in their statutes to the Board,

and both the Board and General Meeting reserve the right at any time to request verification of the member's declared status and a new clearance form.

#### **Article 6 – Members' obligations**

Members are obliged:

- To contribute to achievement of the Association's goals.
- To adhere to the provisions of the Statutes and the Association's Code of Conduct.
- To act in a way that does not undermine the Statutes or the Association's interests.
- To implement the decisions of the General Meeting and the Board, and
- To pay the membership fee in good time.

#### **Article 7 - Seal for full members of the Association**

Full or honorary members (but not retired members) of the Association may use a round seal indicating the name of the Association in Greek or English as specified above, the member's name, their register number and the name of any international professional association which the Association is a member of.

#### **Article 8 – Bodies the Association**

The bodies of the Association include the General Meeting, the Board, the Audit Committee and the Disciplinary Council.

#### **Article 9 – General Meeting**

The General Meeting of Members is the Association's supreme body.

a. It shall decide on issues relevant to the Association proposed by the Board. It shall elect, exercise control and oversee the Association's other bodies, taking into account recommendations from the Board. It shall determine the Association's policy and plans.

b. The General Meeting shall be called by the Board and to commence proceedings a quorum shall be required, formed by 50% + 1 of the members of the Association. Where no quorum is achieved, the General Meeting shall reconvene following a decision of the Board about the precise time and place, within two (2) days with the same items on the agenda. The repeat General Meeting shall have a quorum irrespective of the number of members present.



c. The holding of a General Meeting shall be announced by the Board at least 30 calendar days prior to its date. Members shall be notified by means of individual written invitations sent by email and by the invitation being posted on the Association's website; said invitation shall set out the items on the agenda, the venue, the date and time of the meeting. Having ascertained that there is a quorum the President of the Board shall declare the General Meeting open. Where the President is absent, the meeting shall be declared open by the Vice President. The General Meeting shall be chaired by a bureau comprised of at least three (3) members of the Board, who shall present the Association's activities. The bureau shall coordinate proceedings and draft the minutes of the meeting, which shall be duly kept in the register of minutes of the Association's General Meeting.

d. All members of the Association may attend the General Meeting either in person or via video-conferencing, where the latter option is appropriate in the case. Members who attend the General Meeting in person or via a proxy are deemed to be "present". Members of the Association who are in good standing and who can vote (full and retired members) shall be entitled to vote on the items on the agenda, if present either physically or by proxy. Video-conferencing is provided for the purposes of discussion and not for the purpose of voting. All the decisions of the General Meeting shall be taken by open ballot, unless otherwise decided before voting on a proposal from a Board or a full member in good standing. If not otherwise specified by the law or the Statutes, an absolute majority of the members present (namely 50% + 1) shall suffice. On a proposal from a full member in good standing, the General Meeting may decide to add an item to the agenda.

e. The Ordinary General Meeting of members of the Association shall be held once a year, ideally within the first 15 days of January of each year and in all events, where there are special reasons, no later than the end of the first quarter. The Ordinary General Meeting shall consider the accountability of the outgoing Board, approve the balance sheet and financial report for the previous year, and every two years the meeting shall coincide with the elections for the new Board.

f. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened whenever deemed necessary by the Board. It may also be convened by 1/5 of the members with voting rights (full and retired members) in good standing on a written request submitted to the Board. The request shall specify the items on the agenda. In this case the Board must convene the General Meeting

within 40 days of receiving the request.

#### **Article 10 - Elections**

The elections to choose Board members, the Audit Committee and the Disciplinary Council shall be conducted as follows:

a. The outgoing Board shall convene the Ordinary General Meeting and set the date and the venue for the elections, while announcing the start of the candidature submission period to choose the Elections Committee, the Board, the Disciplinary Council and the Audit Committee. 7 calendar days prior to the elections, the Board shall announce any candidatures to members, and only if the necessary number of candidates has not been achieved, shall it keep nominations open until the date of the elections. At the end of the candidature submission period the Board shall examine the validity of candidatures. The General Meeting shall elect an Elections Committee by a show of hands comprised of 3 members who may not include members who have already submitted their candidatures for the Board as part of the elections being held. The Elections Committee shall elect its Chairman from among its members, appoints someone to keep the minutes for the election process and conduct the elections.

b. The venue for voting and its duration shall be stated in the agenda. The Elections Committee may declare that voting is closed if all members with voting rights have voted. After voting ends, ballots shall start to be sorted, which must be numbered and initialled by members of the Committee and handed to the Chairman of the Committee. The Elections Committee shall then prepare minutes which record the names of candidates and the number of votes obtained by each one. Those minutes shall be signed by all members of the Elections Committee. Candidates who received a relevant majority of valid votes shall be the winners and shall be elected. In the event of a tie, the elections shall be conducted by drawing lots.

c. Any objections during the voting or sorting procedure shall be submitted to and ruled on by the Elections Committee after the end of voting, but in all events during the General Meeting which elects a new board. The electoral material shall be kept at the headquarters of the Association by the Elections Committee until the newly-elected Board is constituted (and then by the newly-elected Board) for a period of 1 calendar year.

d. It shall also be possible to use postal votes (if that option is chosen by the Board). Postal votes must be received at the member's own responsibility no later than the closing of the election polls. Specifically, Members of the Association shall send a letter containing the ballot paper enclosed in a white envelope, and, separately, the deposit slip for their annual subscription fee, as a means of identification, to the address specified in each case by the Board.

e. Likewise, it shall be possible to vote by proxy. Members wishing to vote by proxy must send the proxy form, indicating the name of the member they authorise to vote in the elections in their stead, scanned by email or fax. Each member shall be entitled to vote by proxy for up to two other members.

f. It shall also be possible to vote electronically where that is technically feasible and all measures have been taken to ensure the fairness of the vote and to safeguard secrecy.

g. All full and retired members of the Association in good standing, who are not already members of the Board or other bodies of other professional associations with similar or related goals are entitled to stand for the following bodies of the Association: the Board and Disciplinary Council. Likewise, elected members of bodies of the Association are not permitted to stand for election to the bodies of other associations with similar or related goals.

## **Article 11 – Board**

The Association shall be governed by a five-member Board serving for a two-year term with the right to be re-elected.

a. The Board shall administer and manage all affairs of the Association in line with the Statutes and in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the General Meeting. It shall administer the Association's assets and coordinate the activity of any working group and committee set up by the General Meeting or the Board.

b. The Board shall meet regularly every 30-45 calendar days and extraordinarily when a written request is submitted to the President by two (2) Board members. It shall have a quorum when at least 4 members are present. Board meetings may be attended in person or remotely using electronic media. Decisions shall be taken by absolute majority of those members present. In case of a tie, the vote of the President shall be the casting vote. If all

members agree in writing using any means to a specific urgent proposal, a decision may be taken without the Board member's holding a meeting. That decision must be confirmed by the next meeting of the Board and entered in the minutes.

c. The newly elected Board shall be convened by the person who attained the highest number of votes in the elections within 10 working days from the elections and it shall officially constitute itself through internal elections among its members for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Treasurer.

d. The President of the Board shall represent the Association both in and out of court. He/She shall convene and conduct the meetings of the Board. He/she shall co-sign any document issued by Association with the Secretary, and all payment orders with the Treasurer.

e. The Vice President shall cooperate with the President in executing the Board decisions. He/She shall stand in for the President in all his/her activities when he/she is absent or indisposed.

f. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Board meetings, which must be signed by all the members who attended the meeting, shall be responsible for the files and records of the Association (other than the Treasury Books), shall process any electronic and hard copy correspondence, shall keep the Association's seal and shall sign the Association's documents jointly with the President.

g. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the Association's Treasury. He/she shall manage the proceeds and payments against receipts or payment orders that are co-signed by the President and shall be accountable to the Board. He/She shall keep the books and records pertaining to financial management of the Association. He/She shall prepare the annual budget based on the Board's action plan and submit it to the General Meeting for approval. His/her opinion shall be required for any extraordinary spending by the Association. He/She shall prepare the annual financial report and present it to the General Meeting. He/She shall open and manage the Association's bank account. He/she shall be responsible for maintaining the Association's reserve, the level of which is set by the General Meeting and is intended exclusively to address emergencies.

h. The Deputy Secretary shall assist the Secretary in performing his/her duties and shall

stand in when he/she is absent or indisposed.

i. All members of the Board may, in light of the needs which arise in each case, by officially assigned specific duties.

j. The General Meeting shall decide on whether remuneration is to be provided to Board members, its form and amount.

k. The expenditure of Board members for attending ordinary or extraordinary General Meetings shall be paid from SYDISE's cash reserves. Moreover, where Board members travel to represent SYDISE's Board, the cost shall be reimbursed from the Association's cash reserves, following approval from the Board.

#### **Article 12 – Audit Committee**

1. During the elections the General Meeting shall elect three persons as auditors from among the Association's full members, who shall audit the books and the financial management of the Board in general in relation to its activities and submit a signed report to the General Meeting. The Audit Committee shall have a quorum when two of its members are present and decisions shall be taken by majority.

2. Elections shall be held every two years at the same time as elections for the Board and Disciplinary Council. Members of the Audit Committee may not submit candidatures for the Board or the Elections Committee.

#### **Article 13 - Disciplinary Offences**

1. Breaches of the duties and obligations of members of the Association specified in these Statutes, legislative provisions relating to the professional rights of conference interpreters, decisions of the Association's General Meeting and the Code of Conduct in effect from time to time or the Code of Practice shall constitute disciplinary offences which shall be decided on by the Association's Disciplinary Council, as defined below, which can either exonerate the members concerned or impose the relevant disciplinary penalties, notwithstanding any criminal liability or other consequences under the applicable legislation.

2. Disciplinary power shall be exercised by the Disciplinary Council acting ex officio or following a written report or notice from a public authority or following a named, signed complaint from any interested person or on a proposal from the Board.

3. Specifically, the Board may recommend to the Disciplinary Council that members who are not in good standing with the Association for more than 2 years be removed from the register.

4. Where members breach the provisions of the Statutes, the Code of Conduct or Conduct of Practice or decisions of the General Meeting or systematically engage in activities harmful to the Association's interests or goals, the Disciplinary Council shall be entitled to impose the following penalties listed from least to most severe: a) oral rebuke, b) written rebuke, c) expulsion for a period of one, three or six months as appropriate and d) proposal for final removal from the register submitted to the General Meeting.

#### **Article 14 - Disciplinary Council**

1. The body responsible for deciding on disciplinary offences and imposing any penalties shall be the Association's Disciplinary Council.

2. The Disciplinary Council shall consist of three (3) members, who shall elect the President, Vice President and Secretary of the Disciplinary Council. Stand-in members may stand in for members of the Disciplinary Council, in the order in which they were elected. Elections shall be held every two (2) years at the same time as elections for the Board and Audit Committee.

3. One (1) member of the Association's Board must be present at meetings of the Disciplinary Council.

4. Members of the Disciplinary Council shall serve for a 2-year term which coincides with the term in office of members of the Board.

5. The Disciplinary Council shall always meet with all members present, decide by absolute majority and keep minutes of its meetings.

#### **Article 15 - Operation of the Disciplinary Council**

1. Disciplinary penalties shall not be imposed before the person concerned has made a statement or at least been invited to do so by registered mail. The deadline for making a statement may not be less than 15 days from receiving the invitation.

2. The Disciplinary Council may examine witnesses at its discretion. After the person concerned has made a statement or where he/she fails to show despite it being confirmed

that the invitation was received, or he/she recalcitrantly refuses to accept it, the Disciplinary Council shall issue its decision.

3. Members on whom penalties are imposed shall be entitled within 10 days of being sent the decision by registered mail, submit an objection to the Disciplinary Council which is obliged to ensure that it is included as an item on the agenda for the next Ordinary General Meeting. Where no objection is filed, the decision is deemed to be final.

4. The General Meeting shall decide at second instance and shall be entitled to order a new examination conducted by one of its members appointed by decision of the Meeting in accordance with the provisions of these Statutes, which decision shall also set out the procedure.

5. Final decisions shall be taken by the General Meeting by absolute majority of the voting members of the Association in good standing who are present at the Meeting.

6. Members of the Board against whom complaints are submitted shall not participate in the Disciplinary Council deciding their case nor in the vote on the relevant discussions at the General Meeting.

#### **Article 16 - Resources**

The Association's resources shall include:

1) the annual membership fee, the level of which is set by decision of the ordinary or extraordinary General Meeting, which may differ depending on the category of members referred to in Article 5<sup>1</sup> above.

2) extraordinary contributions from members, the level of which is set by the ordinary or extraordinary General Meeting or by unanimous decision of the Board and unanimous decision of the Audit Committee.

3) grants from public or private bodies.

4) financing from European and other international programmes.

5) revenues from exploiting the Associations assets or investments.

6) revenues from running training seminars, conferences and other events, publications,

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<sup>1</sup> Sic 45 (mistake in the original Statutes)

other activities in accordance with these Statutes.

7) donations.

8) sponsorship.

9) revenues from advertising on the SYDISE website or at SYDISE events,

and any other lawful resource concomitant with the nature of SYDISE as an association.

#### **Article 17 - Amendment of the Statutes**

The Statutes may only be amended by the General Meeting, if it is attended by at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of voting members in good standing and the decisions shall be taken by a majority of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those present. The amendment of the Statutes must be included in the items on the agenda sent to the Association members and cannot be added during the General Meeting (which, in this case, is called the Statutory General Meeting).

#### **Article 18 - Dissolution of the Association**

The Association shall be dissolved when there are fewer than 15 remaining members. It may be also dissolved by decision of the General Meeting, with the quorum and the majority referred to in Article 17 above. Where the Association is dissolved, its assets shall be transferred to an association or collective body pursuing similar or related goals.

#### **Article 19**

All issues not explicitly regulated by these Statutes shall be governed by the provisions of the Hellenic Civil Code pertaining to associations.

#### List of founding members

Surname	Name	Address	Signature
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The President			
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The Secretary			
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Maria Petrocheilou			
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Maria-Achilleia Tilli			
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