

ENOC

Handbook on application for membership of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC)

[NOTE: This handbook has been prepared as a tool to assist in clarifying the ENOC membership application process. Its purpose is to act as a guide and reference; it does not purport to replace the relevant sections of the ENOC Statutes, which remain the definitive provisions governing the application process.]



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Glossary

Full membership

Open to all independent children's rights institutions within Council of Europe member-states which meet the criteria set out in Article 4 of the Statutes. Full members have the right to participate fully in the work and decision-making of the Network; they may also put themselves forward for membership of the Bureau of ENOC.

Associate membership

An institution that does not meet the criteria for full membership may be considered for associate membership if it demonstrates that it is actively seeking to meet those criteria. Associate members can participate fully in the work of ENOC but cannot become members of the Bureau or vote at the General Assembly.

Application process

The application process for institutions wishing to join ENOC is set out in Article 5 of the ENOC Statutes.

The stages of the application process are as follows:

- The institution addresses a request for membership to the Bureau of ENOC.
- The Bureau reviews the application based on the criteria set out in Article 4 of the ENOC Statutes; the Bureau is assisted in this by the Honorary Adviser to ENOC (currently Mr Peter Newell), who furnishes an opinion to the Bureau regarding the extent to which the legislation establishing the institution appears to meet the criteria for membership set out in Article 4 of the ENOC Statutes.
- It should be noted that the application process is **not** an assessment of the operation or general effectiveness of the institution per se. It is a process that examines the legislation establishing the institution against the criteria set out in Article 4.
- The Bureau then makes a determination regarding the application.
- If the Bureau decides that the institution meets the criteria for full membership, the Bureau circulates its recommendation regarding the application to all full members of ENOC.

- If the Bureau decides that the institution does not meet the criteria for full membership but can be considered for associate membership, then the Bureau writes to the institution, explaining its decision and explaining that associate membership can be considered if the institution can demonstrate that it is actively seeking to meet the criteria for full membership.
- Once the institution replies, the Bureau will decide whether to offer the institution associate membership and, if the Bureau does so, the Bureau circulates its recommendation in this regard to all full members.
- When circulating a recommendation to full members, the Bureau informs them that any full member can request that a recommendation (accepting or rejecting an institution for full or associate membership) can be referred to the General Assembly for further discussion.
- If following circulation of the Bureau's recommendation there are no such requests, the Bureau will inform the applicant institution of its decision. If an institution is informed that it does not

meet the criteria for full membership, and/or is not invited to become an associate member of the Network, it may appeal that decision in writing to the General Assembly.

Review of membership status

- The Statutes require that the Bureau review the membership status of associate members every three years. As part of this review, the Bureau shall invite an associate member to inform the Bureau of any relevant changes to its functions or powers, and also what steps the institution is taking/has taken to actively seek to meet the criteria for full membership. Should the institution in question fail to engage adequately with the review process or satisfy the Bureau that it is taking steps to meet the criteria for full membership, the Bureau will send a letter of warning indicating termination of membership in the absence of any positive action by the member.
- Full members are required to inform the Bureau immediately of any changes in the legislation establishing the institution or other developments that may affect

their fulfillment of the criteria for full membership as set out in Article 4.

Resignation and dismissal

- A full or associate member of ENOC can resign at any time by submitting a letter of resignation to the Bureau.
- Full or associate members of ENOC may be dismissed in accordance with Article 8 of the Statutes. The General Assembly, after having given to the concerned institution the opportunity to be heard, may dismiss:
 - a full member, if the institution no longer meets the criteria for full membership set out in article 4;
 - a full or associate member, if the institution has brought or may bring ENOC into disrepute;
 - a full or associate member if the institution has not attended three consecutive annual meetings;
 - a full or associate member, if the institution has not paid fees for 2 consecutive years.