



WBAA Statute

As of April 2022

WBAA STATUTE - CONTENT

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ARTICLE 1 GENERAL POLICY AND NOMINATION

The name of the organisation is the “Western Balkans Alumni Association”, the common abbreviation is WBAA.

WBAA is an alumni association based on the principles of democracy, cohesion, solidarity and equality among the students and alumni of the Western Balkans region, i.e. the following countries (alphabetically):

- a) Albania
- b) Bosnia and Herzegovina
- c) Kosovo¹
- d) Montenegro
- e) North Macedonia
- f) Serbia

WBAA is neutral, unbiased and nonpartisan in the existing political discourse.

WBAA shall respect the rights and values of its members and WB students and alumni, autonomy of institutions and legal, constitutional, and internal norms when cooperating with partner institutions.

ARTICLE 2 WORKING LANGUAGE

Working language due to the fact that it is an international and regional association is English. The general communication in WBAA structure should always be English, but for specific local activities promotion can be made in the local language.

ARTICLE 3 MISSION

The aim of the WBAA is to establish a strong union of alumni coming from the Western Balkans countries in order to provide a platform for regional collaboration to jointly

- advocate for modernization and contribute the quality of higher education in the region
- empower young people of the Western Balkans on their academic and career development towards successful employment

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

- to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of higher education, transition from education to employment and academic research, as to support exchange of successful practices
- to support the regions efforts towards European integration

ARTICLE 4 OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The WBAA shall have the following objectives:

1. Build membership of the WBAA and expand with new individuals and partners that meet the membership and partnership criteria of the association;
2. Involve and motivate WBAA members and other individuals into programmes/projects, workshops, panel discussions and other activities focused on raising awareness of the Western Balkans students' and academic staff's needs;
3. Support networking and cooperation between WB and EU higher education institutions as well as within WB region;
4. Promote and facilitate two-way mobility flows between the Western Balkans and the European Union;
5. Support new research initiatives and evidence-gathering of higher education reforms;
6. Advocate and promote policy actions and activities that improve the quality of higher education and research capacities within the Western Balkans region;
7. Cooperate with all relevant institutions in the WB region and the EU in achieving the goals of development and modernization of higher education within WB and by following the most successful European practices regarding higher education;
8. Support higher education modernization and research capacities in the WB region through advocacy for regulatory and policy initiatives/changes necessary to support improvements concerning elements such as outdated teaching methods, curricula and lack of practical knowledge;
9. Work and assist career development of students and contribute to graduates' employability.

ARTICLE 5 MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Member of WBAA can be an individual who

1. Is a citizen of a Western Balkans country, and
2. Who pursued international learning mobility in an Erasmus+ program country, funded either by the European Commission or differently;
3. Has no economic or political benefits intended to WBAA;
4. Accepts the WBAA Statute and Internal Rules and Regulations, mission statement, objectives and principles, thus confirms the self-awareness of the aforementioned.

The above-mentioned rules apply for members applying after the 27.10. 2018 onwards. Members, who joined before 27.10.2018 remain WBAA members regardless of the compliance with the above-mentioned rules.

ARTICLE 6 MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES

An individual can become a member of WBAA by applying in the Online Community. Acceptance of members will be granted by WBAA according to the above-mentioned membership criteria. The Regional Board can adopt a specific procedure for the application procedure as well as to mandate the Service Provider with this task.

All WBAA members are expected to abide by WBAA Code of Conduct.

ARTICLE 7 RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

All WBAA members have the following rights:

1. To elect and to be elected as a member of WBAA Board; eligibility in addition is subject of the place of residence in correspondence to the respective body;
2. To propose changes in WBAA Statute and Internal Rules and Regulations;
3. To seek, through $\frac{1}{4}$ of members an extraordinary GA meeting;
4. To propose and participate in project ideas that correspond to WBAA principles and values, as well as to the mission statement and WBAA objectives;
5. To be regularly informed about all WBAA activities and updates of any kind;
6. To defend her/himself, in case the expulsion procedure is initiated, in front of a relevant body;
7. To contribute to the implementation of WBAA objectives, WBAA activities and overall progress;
8. To participate in WBAA programmes/projects, activities and/or other events (incl. the General Assembly).

ARTICLE 8 DUTIES OF MEMBERS

All WBAA members have the following duties:

1. To respect WBAA principles and values;
2. To conform to the association's Code of Conduct;
3. To observe the WBAA Statute and Internal Rules and Regulations;

ARTICLE 9 MEMBERSHIP LOSS

The membership in the WBAA can be lost if a member:

1. Resigns by his/her own will;

2. Violates any article of WBAA Statute, and Internal Rules and Regulations;
3. Claims to officially represent WBAA, or a body of it, in public meetings/discussions/forums without prior consultation with the respective body.

An according process is described in the Internal Rules and Regulations.

ARTICLE 10 STRUCTURE OF ASSOCIATION

WBAA structure shall have the following bodies:

1. The General Assembly
2. The Regional Board
3. The WBAA Teams
4. The National Chapters
5. The Advisory Council

National Chapters may establish additional governance structures on national and sub-national level to serve WBAA and in line with WBAA's principles.

ARTICLE 11 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The GENERAL ASSEMBLY of WBAA (hereinafter: the GA) is the highest decision-making body of WBAA.

The regularly constituted GA is represented by all its members and has the broadest powers to take, execute or ratify all decisions taken in the interest of WBAA. The decisions taken by the GA shall be binding for all members, including the absent or dissenting ones.

GA meets once per year, unless defined otherwise. Details about the meeting (location, date, time) shall be given to each WBAA member at least two (2) months and the agenda with accompanying documents two (2) weeks in advance. The GA is prepared and chaired by the Regional Board. The Regional Board can delegate this role.

At all GA meetings each WBAA member shall be entitled to one (1) vote upon every matter raised. All voting processes shall be done publicly, if not decided otherwise. All decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority. Each WBAA member can propose amendments to matters discussed in the meeting.

In the case of equality of voting (tie), the Chairperson shall directly initiate a second round. If the second vote ends up with a tie as well the session should be interrupted by 15 to 30 minutes followed by a third vote. This procedure will be continued till a decision is made.

To assure sufficient participation, WBAA - after decision of the board and in collaboration with the EC and the SP - will provide travel subsidies to a limited number of participants.

ARTICLE 12 MANDATE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The WBAA GENERAL ASSEMBLY has a mandate to:

1. Adopt the GA meeting agenda;
2. Confirm the members of the Regional Board elected by the National Chapters with a welcoming ceremony
3. Mandate the WBAA Teams and appoint their chairs (and vice-chairs) nominated by the WBAA Teams
4. Adopt the Statute and/or other relevant legal documents of WBAA as well as the amendments in these documents;
5. Adopt the Annual Working Report of the past year presented by the Regional Board;
6. Adopt the Strategic Priorities and the Annual Working Plan for the upcoming year of WBAA, presented by the Regional Board;
7. Consider complaints and suggestions raised by any of WBAA bodies or members;
8. Adopt additional decisions of relevance to WBAA and in accordance with the Statute;

ARTICLE 13 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

Extraordinary General Assembly meetings can be summoned by two thirds of the Regional Board or one quarter of the WBAA membership.

If requested, extraordinary General Assembly meetings must be organised within thirty (30) days from the day of its decision. It is organised by the Regional Board. All details concerning the extraordinary General Assembly meeting will be forwarded to all WBAA members fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting the latest.

ARTICLE 14 THE REGIONAL BOARD

The Regional Board (hereinafter: The RB) is the decision-making and the management body. Engagement in the RB is on a voluntary basis. The RB shall be based on democratic principles such as the rule of the majority.

The RB consists of twelve (12) members (two (2) Representatives from each of six (6) National Chapters). The members of the RB are confirmed at the GA meeting. They serve a mandate of two (2) years. They can be re-elected for another mandate, after which they cannot be delegated again.

In the event of the resignation of a RB member, he/she will be replaced by another WBAA member from the respective National Chapter. This is done within the authority of the respective National Chapter. Any member appointed this way shall retain his/her position only until the next GA meeting, but he/she shall then be eligible for re-election.

The procedure for dismissing a member of the Regional Board can be initiated by:

1/3 of members of the National Chapter the member represents, if the member is not representing the interests or decisions of the National Chapter in good faith, or for not respecting the duties defined by the Article 8 of the Statute, or;

2/3 of all members of the Regional Board, if the member did not take part in at least three consecutive meetings of the Regional Board, or for not respecting the duties defined by the Article 8 of the Statute.

The voting takes place within the respective National Chapter or within the Regional Board. A simple majority of votes is necessary for dismissing a member of the Regional Board. The respective member of the Regional Board has the right to defend herself/himself before the vote of confidence takes place. In case the incumbent member of the Regional Board is dismissed, the vote for the new member of the Regional Board needs to take place within one month by the procedure described in the Internal Rules and Regulations.

Board members have the duty to participate at the General Assembly, unless there is a valid reason for absence of which the member must inform the rest of the Regional Board and the Service Provider in due time.

ARTICLE 15 MANDATE OF THE REGIONAL BOARD

The Regional Board has a mandate to:

1. Represent the WBAA in public and during events;
2. Manage strategic and other relevant activities of WBAA between two General Assemblies;
3. Ensure logistical support for strategic, operational and financial plans of WBAA;
4. Conclude and terminate agreements on collaboration with external partners of WBAA;
5. Present a report on the national/regional activities at every meeting of the Board;
6. Convene the General Assembly;
7. Prepare and present the following documents at the GA meeting:
 - a. Internal regulations required for the functioning of WBAA;
 - b. The Annual Working Plan of WBAA;
 - c. The Annual Working Report of WBAA;
8. Mandate and support/liaise with WBAA Teams and delegate special tasks to them;
9. Appoint a liaison person out of the Regional Board for every WBAA Team;
10. Decide on which WBAA Teams or which tasks should be specifically supported;
11. Execute other tasks as defined in this Statute or by the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 16 WBAA TEAMS

To support and unburden the Regional Board and to make best use out of the excellence and expertise the WBAA members have, so called WBAA Teams, will be established to support the associations' work.

WBAA Teams are:

1. Higher Education Reform and Equal Access to Higher Education
2. Quality Mobility and Student Exchange within Higher Education
3. Transition from Higher Education to Labour Market and Professional Life
4. Research

Each team has a 3-person leadership:

1. WBAA Team Head
2. WBAA Team Vice Head for Advocacy
3. WBAA Team Vice Head for Communication

The WBAA Teams and their leadership will be clearly mandated and dedicated to specific tasks and topics which have to be covered by WBAA for its flourishing. Further, WBAA Teams leadership can be organized in WBAA communities to ensure better coordination among teams and exchange.

The WBAA Teams should be mandated by the General Assembly and supervised by the Regional Board. Specifics will be defined in the Internal Rules and Regulations.

ARTICLE 17 THE NATIONAL CHAPTERS

Under the regional level of WBAA the next level is the National Chapter.

National Chapters will promote WBAA in their respective country and support the overall WBAA in the implementation of the working plans, projects etc.

National Chapters will act as the interlocutors for national stakeholders like Ministries, higher education institutions and Agencies, maintain these networks and facilitate the contacts and information flow from regional to national and local level.

National Chapters elect two of their members to the Regional Board. The Regional Board can define requirements in regard to transparency and democratic legitimacy.

WBAA members will be dedicated to National Chapters. The board will decide about the rules and procedures in regard to the members affiliation in the Internal Rules and Regulation document.

Each National Chapter is a self-regulative body which organizes itself according to the national framework and context. The organisation must be in line with the general principles of WBAA, specifically transparent and democratic.

The Regional Board can set standards for the organisation and elections of National Chapters.

ARTICLE 18 THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The WBAA Advisory Council (hereinafter: The Advisory Council) serves as an advisory body to the WBAA and its activities in general.

The Advisory Council members are individuals who have contributed to the work of WBAA or have expertise that can benefit the WBAA. The members are outstanding individuals selected based on reputation, work experience and their academic record, willing to share their expertise and networks with WBAA.

The Advisory Council has an advisory and promotional role and has no decision-making functions. Members of the Advisory Council are appointed by the Regional Board and presented at the General Assembly.

Regional Board can consult with the Advisory Council on strategic matters whenever they see it as a contribution to WBAA objectives and mission.

ARTICLE 19 SUBSCRIPTIONS, PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The EU -as main sponsor of WBAA- will be invited to attend all governance meetings (i.e. board meetings, General Assemblies etc.). This includes the right to speak on any of the agenda items and to receive the minutes, documentation, recordings etc. The EC has no voting rights. The EC can mandate a Service Provider to attend the governance meetings on EC's behalf holding the same rights.

WBAA funding, projects and accounts will be managed by the official Service Provider, selected through an open and transparent tender procedure organised by the European Commission. The Service Provider is responsible for the overall project management of WBAA, including upkeeping the accounts and financial reporting.

Regional Board can make suggestions to the European Commission regarding the scope of work for the Service Provider to be selected through the said tender procedure.

WBAA has the right to develop new partnerships with other alumni associations and stakeholders for joint projects and apply as associated partners in potential other project proposals, other than those developed and supported under the Service Provider contract.

Decisions on new partnerships are made by the Regional Board.

ARTICLE 20 INTERNAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

All issues concerning the internal organisation of WBAA bodies, including internal procedures for meetings, electing and voting mechanisms for WBAA bodies, will be regulated by the Internal Rules and Regulations of WBAA.

All provisions in the Internal Rules and Regulations must be in line with the Statute as the supreme legal document of WBAA.

Procedures for proposing, adopting and amending the Internal Rules and Regulations shall follow respective procedures adopted for the Statute.

ARTICLE 21 DISSOLUTION

The work and existence of WBAA terminates if seventy/five percent (75%) of WBAA members decides upon this at the regular/extraordinary GA. In such occasion, the Regional Board shall take immediate steps to settle any debts and dispose of the WBAA property.

ARTICLE 22 CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS

Any changes or amendments to the Statute can be proposed by either the Advisory Council, at least three members of the Regional Board or at least 15 WBAA members representing at least three National Chapters.

Changes and amendments on this Statute must be confirmed by a 2/3 majority of all members of the Regional Board and a 2/3 majority of present members of the General Assembly (incl. the case of online voting in online General Assemblies).

ARTICLE 23 ENTRY INTO FORCE

The statute comes into force as of 3 April 2022.