

## Forms

EDF members survey: Constitutional Review

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# EDF members survey: Constitutional Review

The EDF General Assembly in 2022 called for the setup of a Constitutional Working Group to undertake a review of our statutes. The Constitutional Working Group has developed this survey to collect the views and the experience of all EDF members.

This survey asks you questions about EDF statutes but we are also interested in learning about your statutes so that we can build on your practices and experience. So, before you answer the questions, you could make sure you have your own statutes at hand as you may need them to answer some of the questions. You will find EDF statutes and working rules here:

- Statutes of the European Disability Forum 2022 (English version) : <https://www.edf-feph.org/content/uploads/2022/10/Statutes-of-the-European-Disability-Forum-2022.docx>
- EDF Internal Rules in English: [https://www.edf-feph.org/content/uploads/2020/03/internal\\_rules\\_agr\\_051007-EN-3.pdf](https://www.edf-feph.org/content/uploads/2020/03/internal_rules_agr_051007-EN-3.pdf)

For your information, there are some terms used in this survey which are defined here:

- **A term limit** is a restriction that limits the number of terms an officeholder (as an individual person) may serve in a particular elected office. Therefore, if there are term limits set in the statutes of an organisation, this means the elected individual will be restricted in the number of terms they can serve. Currently, in EDF there are not term limits, meaning an individual can run for election for as many terms as their organisation nominate them.

- **A mandate** of an elected official is the number of years they are elected for. In EDF, each mandate is 4 years, as there are full elections every four years.

This survey should be filled out **on behalf of the EDF member; it should be filled in only once**. It will take about 20 minutes to fill out. The results will be analysed by the EDF secretariat. As summary will be presented to the Constitutional Working Group, who will use this information to reflect on EDF current statutes and working rules. The outcomes of the survey will be summarised and shared with all members. Individual names and organisations will not be mentioned in this summary report.

**The Survey is open until January 16th end of the day.** Let us know if you need more time to fill it in- write to [catherine.naughton@edf-feph.org](mailto:catherine.naughton@edf-feph.org) for an extension of the deadline for your organisation.

We thank you for your time and support.

#### Section 1

### Administrative information

This is a short set of administrative questions which will help us organise and better analyse the responses.

1.Organisation/ Name of EDF member Required to answer. Single line text.

Belgian Disability Forum asbl (BDF)

2.Your membership category Required to answer. Single choice.

Full member- national council

Full member- ENGO

Ordinary member

Observer member

Associate member

I do not know

3.In which country is your organisation registered? (we ask this because we will ask some questions in this survey about your statutes) Required to answer. Single line text.

Belgium

4.Survey is filled in by Required to answer. Single line text.

Olivier MAGRITTE

5. Is your organisation represented in the Board of EDF? Required to answer. Single choice.

Yes

Not now, but we have been in the past

We have never been part of the EDF Board

## Section 2

### EDF constitutional review- your priorities and views

This section asks you to give your views on the priorities for EDFs constitutional review

6. How important are the following issues for the EDF Constitutional Review Likert.

	Not important at this point	Quite important	Very important	The most important issue
Youth representation		x		
Gender equality	x			
Term limits- limiting the number of times an individual can hold elected office			x	
Criteria for membership in the ENGO category			x	
Other forms of diversity such as race ethnicity or LGBTIQ identity	x			

7. Would you like to see other issues reviewed from the EDF statutes? Single choice.

Yes

No

8. Which other issues would you like to see considered? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

If youth representation is considered as "quite important" or higher, the representation of ageing persons with disabilities must be considered at the same level and a specific committee should be created. The same for the women Committee.

Shouldn't it be the right time to have it evolving as a "gender equality committee" which would cover the situation of women, girls, men, boys, lgbtiqa+ ???

## Section 3

### Electoral or nomination committees

9. Electoral/nomination committee: Does your organization have a body appointed to find potential candidates for the Board or seek candidates for different offices such as the president, vice presidents, etc? Single choice.

No  
Yes

10. You said that your organisation has an electoral committee, how does it function? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

11. Do you think EDF should consider including an electoral committee in its constitution? Single choice.

No  
Yes

12. Could you give the reason for your views on this? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

The EDF is an umbrella organization of umbrella organizations. Each one of these has its own working ways. Who could decide that this way is better than another one? Who could decide that there is only one correct way to act?

The BDF doesn't have such an electoral committee. This "role" is assumed by the BDF Board. If the BDF had to create such a committee, almost the same persons would sit in it as in the Board... Don't forget that all members of the BDF Board are volunteers, just like in the EDF and that their organization is paying for them to participate...

Attracting competent members is one of the duties of almost every Board...

Section 4

## Co-optation

13. Do you allow the co-optation of individuals in your governing bodies such as the board? Single choice.

No  
Yes

14. If you said yes, your organisation allows co-optation, how does it work? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

While BDF answered NO, BDF still wishes to express its concerns and to ask the EDF to be extremely careful with cooptation as it can be a double edged knife. If the original idea is to "bring new blood" in a structure, it can also be used to weaken specific tendencies in a governing body...

## Section 5

### Building leadership and influence

15. How do you secure leadership and political influence in the governing bodies of your organisation? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

In almost 25 years, the BDF has always been able to decide by consensus on every topic. And this in a country that is known worldwide as one of the most complicated one with the century long tensions between language based communities...

The BDF secures it by dialogue and a maximum of clarity in the decision process. All decisions are based on proper notes with due evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of the proposed decision or decisions.

The Board members fulfill their duties within the frame set by the yearly General assembly. All important decision is submitted to the "contact person" of all the member organizations, with a due delay for answer (except when the BDF Board is forced to work in a short delay due to requests coming from EU level or from Belgian government.

The main role of the President is to lead the debate ensuring that every member fully understands and has the opportunity to express his or hers point of view.

Leadership is not received when acquiring a title such as "president". Leadership is when the members accept to follow the way proposed by a president.

16. Do you have a process for persons who want to run for president, vice – presidents, treasurer, secretary general etc. to be trained in advance?

For instance as president elect before becoming president? Single choice.

No

Yes

17. How does this training process function? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

18. Do you think EDF should have such a process? Single choice.

No

Yes

19. Could you explain the reason for your answer? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

The idea of training a future president in advance sounds strange to the BDF. If one is candidate, he or she

comes with his or her qualities and weaknesses. He or she is elected on basis of his or her qualities. Now, before entering into function, he or she must receive due information on the working ways of the organization by the staff. If it is what is meant by "training", then it is OK.

## Section 6

### Elections and term limits

20. EDF holds full elections every four years. How often do you think EDF should hold full elections? Single choice.

Every 4 years

every 3 years  
every 4 years  
every 5 years  
we have no opinion on this

21. Currently, each elected official in EDF can be nominated and run for office to the governing bodies without any term limits. Do you think EDF should introduce term limits for individuals holding office. This would mean that an individual could hold a certain office for a limited number of terms. Single choice.

Yes  
No  
we have no clear opinion on this

22. You answered yes, you believe there should be term limits. How many terms do you think an elected official in EDF should serve at the maximum, meaning, how many times can they run consecutively for election for the same role? Single choice.

3 terms

1 term  
2 terms  
3 terms

23. Could you give reasons for your answer on term limits, to help us understand your views. Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

EDF is a huge organization and his or her President is elected by the delegates in the General Assembly. As the President represent all types of disabilities and the various member states, it would be legitimate to

**Commenté [MO1]:** OME : je fais une distinction entre la situation de l'EDF et du BDF à ce niveau. Le contexte n'est pas tout à fait le même. Mais cela se discute !!!

fix a reasonable limit in order to guarantee a minimum rotation.

It is also important to fully discuss the subject: several persons were upsetted by the fact that there was only one candidate to the presidency. Now, the rules were clear. If no one competes, there is only one candidate...

The situation of the BDF is different as the President is not elected by delegates to the General Assembly. He or she is elected by the elected members of the Board. In fact, he is "President of the BDF Board"

24.Does your organisation have term limits? Single choice.

No

Yes

25.You answered yes, your organisation has term limits. Could you tell us what the term limit is? Single line text.

Enter your answer

...

26.Are there other rules you have about term limits in your organisation which you would like to share? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

...

## Section 7

### Representation and diversity

27.Does your organisation have rules or practices to ensure self representation of persons with disabilities? Single choice.

No

Yes

28.You said your organisation has rules to or practices to ensure self representation of persons with disabilities- can you describe the rules or practices which you have? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer /

29.Does your organisation have rules or practices to ensure gender equality in your governing bodies? Single choice.

No

Yes

30.You said that your organisation has rules or practices to ensure gender equality in its governing bodies, can you describe them? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer /

31.Does your organisation have rules or practices to ensure youth participation in its governing bodies? Single choice.

No

Yes

32.You said your organisation has rules or practices to ensure youth participation in your governing bodies. Can you describe the rules or practices in place to ensure youth participation? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer /

33.Does your organisation have rules or practices to ensure other kinds of diversity, such as increasing representation from persons with disabilities from racial or ethnic minorities, LGBTIQ communities, Single choice.

No

Yes

34.You answered yes, that your organisation has rules or practices to enhance diversity. Could you describe the rules and practices you have in place to ensure other forms of diversity in your governing bodies? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer /

**Commenté [MO2]:** OME : Je ne souhaite pas devoir mener des enquêtes sur la situation de handicap, les préférence de genre des membres de l'OA-BO !

Les membres de l'OA-BO sont élus "en équipe" sur base des présentations de candidats par les organisations membres du BDF.

Qui pourrait aller dire à une organisation "vous devez présenter un ou une candidate LGBTQIA+ âgée de moins de 35 ans, mesurant plus de 1m95 et présentant tel type handicap???"

Section 8

## Final questions

35.Do you see other barriers which may hinder organisations putting forward candidates in EDF elections? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

For the BDF, the real barrier is the cost. Being President requires a deep investment that no one in the BDF could afford : their organization would not have one of their workers spending so much time for the EDF...

36.Do you have ideas on how to promote and facilitate organisations to put forward candidates in EDF elections? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

???

37.Are there developments in governance you would like to see in your own organisation in the future?Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

No

38. Do you have other points you would like EDF to take into consideration for the constitutional review? Multi Line Text.

Enter your answer

- About quota of persons with disabilities and gender, EDF Board depends on the candidates presented by National Councils and ENGO's. EDF has to trust it's members : they are to present the best candidate possible
- About the proposal of having a vote by the members of the members... This is almost impossible. How could EDF establish and manage the list of voters? What would be the legitimacy of a president elected by 250 voters in comparison with a general population of 450mio inhabitants ?
- About the rule of being present in 14 member states for the ENGO's to be member of the EDF, the BDF is positive about reducing this number. To the CWG to make proposals...
- About the mandate of the CWG, the BDF would like to have it confirmed that this Committee is in charge of carrying a reflexive process and of making proposals, but that the decision belongs to the EDF Board...

Add new

Parallèlement à la réponse au questionnaire, le BDF envoie-t-il la Note de position du CSNPH au Président du CWG ???