

NMS' CONSTITUTION and bylaws

**ADOPTED BY
NMS' GENERAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 2017**



CONSTITUTION

§ 1

Det Norske Misjonsselskap (the Norwegian Mission Society), NMS, is an independent organization within the Church of Norway, and a tool for realizing the church's mission commission.

The Norwegian Mission Society consists of associations, groups, and individual members that work in accordance with §§ 2, 3 and 4 of this constitution.

The Norwegian Mission Society is the parent organization of the independent children's and youth organization Det Norske Misjonsselskaps barne- og ungdomsorganisasjon (the Norwegian Mission Society's Children's and Youth Organization), NMS U.

§ 2

The purpose of the Norwegian Mission Society is to witness in word and deed about God's grace in Jesus Christ, and to contribute to growth of the worldwide church and the extension of God's Kingdom among all peoples.

§ 3

In order to realize this purpose, the Norwegian Mission Society collaborates with churches and organizations in Norway and in other countries.

The regional work in Norway forms the basis for the activity of the organization.

The Norwegian Mission Society sends missionaries both from Norway and through its partner churches outside Norway.

The missionaries of the Norwegian Mission Society attend a dedication ceremony in church or are prayed for according to current arrangements.

The Norwegian Mission Society is engaged in missiological research and education.

§ 4

The Norwegian Mission Society submits to the Holy Scripture and the confessional documents of the Church of Norway.

§ 5

The General Assembly is the highest authority within the Norwegian Mission Society. It is held every third years.

The following persons have the right to speak, put forward suggestions, and vote:

- All paying members in NMS and NMS U who during the election year have turned at least 15 years old
- One delegate from each association
- One delegate from each cooperating congregation
- One representative from NMS U elected by NMS U national board
- One representative from every NMS Reuse charity shops

The General Assembly will make decisions, address agenda items, and hold elections as described in the bylaws for the General Assembly.

The National Board is the organization's highest authority in the periods between the General Assemblies. The Protocol Committee reviews the activity of the National Board. The Election Committee prepares for the elections to be held at the General Assembly.

The administration attends to the daily management of the organization.

The National Board draws up regulations regarding delegation, which show the items that fall under the responsibility and decision-making purview of the main administration represented by the General Secretary.

The National Board considers the need for and potentially draws up bylaws for the work in the international areas.

Moreover, the work in the regions (nationally) and the areas (internationally) is carried out within the frameworks drawn up by the National Board.

§ 6

The Norwegian Mission Society works actively for equality between the genders.

§ 7

The Norwegian Mission Society works actively for sustainable stewardship of God's creation.

§ 8

Meetings of the executive bodies of the Norwegian Mission Society are open to a listening audience unless the meeting itself decides to close the meeting for individual agenda items.

§ 9

The official names in English and French are:

English: The Norwegian Mission Society

French: Société des missions Norvégiennes

§ 10

Changes in the Constitution require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes cast at the General Assembly. Changes in the Bylaws require a simple majority.

§ 11

The Norwegian Mission Society's activities in Norway are divided into regions. The work in the region is led by a regional board. The region works within the limits set by the General Assembly and the action plan for work in Norway. The General Assembly determines the statutes for the regional work. Each regional board determines the structure of the work in the region. Area structure is normal order.

BYLAWS

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

§ 1

The National Board summons to the General Assembly no later than three (3) months in advance. Together with the summons, a suggested agenda will be sent with agenda documents attached.

Before the National Board draws up the summons, a deadline is publicly announced for individual members and Regional Boards to submit suggestions for items they wish to be considered by the General Assembly. If at least 50% of the Regional Boards wish to include an item, the National Board is obligated to present the item.

§ 2

The General Assembly makes decisions regarding the following items:

- Approval of the summons and agenda
- Approval of the negotiation regulations
- Constituting the meeting
- The Constitution
- A Strategic Plan for the upcoming four-year period
- Bylaws for representation at the General Assembly
- Bylaws for elections at the General Assembly
- Bylaws for the Chair of the National Board
- Bylaws for the National Board
- Bylaws for the Protocol Committee
- Bylaws for the Election Committee of the General Assembly
- Determination of the number of regions and their borders.
- Other items that the National Board presents to the General Assembly for decision

In addition, the General Assembly reviews the following items:

- A three-year report from the National Board, including an orientation regarding the financial situation
- The report of the Protocol Committee
- Other items that the National Board presents to the General Assembly for review

At the General Assembly the following elections are held:

- Election of the Chair of the National Board
- Election of the National Board
- Election of the Protocol Committee
- Election of the Election Committee

In association with the General Assembly there will be opportunities for spiritual renewal, inspiration, and accessing information about mission.

§ 3

The employees' unions are represented by three (3) persons with the right to speak and put forward suggestions.

The General Secretary has the right to speak and put forward suggestions, and these rights may be delegated to other leaders in the administration.

Norwegian and international partner churches and organizations are invited as observers with the right to speak.

§ 4

The members of the National Board do not have the right to vote on items regarding assessment of the activity of the National Board.

§ 5

No region can have more than 40% of the votes at a General Assembly. Any potential removal of the right to vote will be carried out on the basis of the time of registration.

§ 6

The deadline for registration in order to exercise relevant rights during the General Assembly is 14 days prior to the start of the General Assembly.

§ 7

An Extraordinary General Assembly can be summoned on the basis of a two-thirds (2/3) majority decision of the National Board, or when two thirds (2/3) of the Regional Boards demand it.

An Extraordinary General Assembly is to be held as soon as possible and at the latest within six months after the demand was put forward.

Any elections that are held at the Extraordinary General Assembly will be valid until the next ordinary General Assembly.

ELECTIONS AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

§ 8

All elections are governed by the following regulations:

- The elections must be written
- In the event of a tie vote, the result will be determined by drawing lots
- Candidates are obligated to teach and live in accordance with the Holy Scripture and the confessional documents of the Church of Norway
- Candidates must be paying members of NMS
- For elections with several candidates, both genders must be represented among the nominated candidates
- Candidates must turn at least eighteen (18) years old during the year in which the General Assembly is held
- The election results are valid until the next General Assembly

§ 9

Election of the Chair of the National Board

The Regional Boards are given the opportunity to suggest nominations for Chair candidate(s) at least ten (10) months prior to the General Assembly.

The Election Committee puts forward from one (1) to three (3) nominations for Chair of the National Board. The candidates are presented to the General Assembly in alphabetical order.

The election of the Chair takes place before the election of the National Board.

- A candidate must receive at least 50% of the votes cast in order to be elected.
- In the event of an election in which there are more than two (2) candidates and no candidate has received at least 50% of the votes, a new election will be held with only the two (2) candidates who received the highest number of votes.

§ 10

Election of the National Board

Each Regional Board will suggest nominations for members of the National Board from their own region at least ten (10) months prior to the General Assembly.

- The list of suggestions must include a minimum of four (4) names
- Both genders must be represented
- The Regional Boards ought to contribute to the largest possible competency reach in the suggested members for the National Boards

Employees in NMS can only be elected on to the National Board in the capacity of employee representative (chosen by the employees).

The Election Committee nominates a minimum of fifteen (15) candidates and these are presented to the General Assembly in prioritized order.

Election at the General Assembly: Five (5) permanent members and five (5) substitute members are elected in two (2) separate elections.

§ 11

Election of the Protocol Committee

Each Regional Board suggests nominations for members of the Protocol Committee from their own region at least ten (10) months prior to the General Assembly.

Employees in NMS and members of the National Board cannot be members of the Protocol Committee.

The Election Committee nominates nine (9) candidates and these are presented to the General Assembly in alphabetical order.

Election at the General Assembly: Three (3) members and three (3) substitute members are elected in one (1) election. The three (3) candidates who receive the highest numbers of votes constitute the new Protocol Committee. The three (3) candidates who receive the next three highest votes become substitute members.

§ 12

Election of the Election Committee

Each Regional Board suggests nominations for members of the Election Committee from their own region at least ten (10) months prior to the General Assembly.

Employees in NMS and members of the National Board cannot be members of the Election Committee.

The Election Committee nominates twelve (12) candidates and these are presented to the General Assembly in prioritized order.

Election at the General Assembly: Five (5) members and two (2) substitute members are elected in one (1) election. The five (5) candidates who receive the highest numbers of votes constitute the new Election Committee. The two (2) candidates who receive the next two highest votes become substitute members.

CHAIR OF THE NATIONAL BOARD

§ 13

The Chair of the National Board is responsible for the activity of the National Board during the period.

The National Board represented by the Chair is responsible for personnel management of the General Secretary.

The National Board has legal authority in all business matters through the Chair of the Board together with the General Secretary.

In the event of a tie vote in the National Board, the Chair has two votes.

The Chair of the National Board receives an honorarium for the role according to current regulations.

THE NATIONAL BOARD

§ 14

The National Board consists of:

- A Chair elected at the General Assembly
- Five (5) other members elected at the General Assembly
- One (1) representative elected by and from among the employees
- One (1) representative elected by NMS U's National Board

The National Board itself elects a Vice Chair from among the members who were elected at the General Assembly.

If an elected member is employed by NMS in a position of at least 20% then s/he will step down from the National Board. If a member is hired temporarily then s/he will step down for the period of the hire. During this period a substitute member will take on the role of ordinary member.

A personal substitute member will be elected for the employees' representative and the representative from NMS U's National Board.

§ 15

The permanent member and substitute member from NMS U's National Board will serve according to the election periods of NMS U.

§ 16

No persons can serve continuously as a permanent member of the National Board for more than two (2) periods. After an interval of at least one (1) period, a person can be re-elected. These limitations do not apply to substitute members.

A member can serve for up to three (3) periods if s/he is elected as Chair for parts of this time.

§ 17

The principal of VID Specialized University has the right to attend and speak at meetings of the NMS National Board.

§ 18

Regarding the work of the National Board:

The General Secretary presents items to the National Board.

The National Board has a quorum when at least half the members are present.

The main administration of NMS, the regions, NMS Gjenbruk (NMS Reuse charity shops), the camp sites, and the property management constitute a common legal entity for which the National Board is legally responsible.

The National Board will normally meet up to six (6) times per year.

§ 19

The tasks of the National Board include the following:

The National Board has decisive authority on all items which are not decided by the General Assembly. For important items the National Board should consult with the Regional Boards. The National Board is responsible for assessing and deciding which items will be sent out for consultation.

The National Board will organize at least two (2) meeting points for boards/leaders in the organization during each Board period.

The National Board will finalize work on the Strategic Plan in accordance with

decisions made by the General Assembly, including editorial and layout-related changes.

The National Board considers and makes decisions regarding the following:

- Programme profile documents, policy documents, and activity plans
- Delegation regulations
- Larger structural changes in the organization
- Membership arrangements
- Bylaws for the work in the international areas
- Bylaws for NMS Gjenbruk (NMS Reuse charity shops)
- Annual summaries and reports from various branches of the work
- Budgets and accounts, including financial contributions to NMS U
- Agreements that require the consideration of the National Board
- Hiring of the General Secretary, for whom the National Board acts as the employer
- Job descriptions for and hiring/appointment of other positions that represent employer responsibility on behalf of the National Board
- Guidelines for the management, purchase and sale of real estate properties
- Guidelines for the use of donations for designated purposes
- Appointment of representatives to boards when this is required by the bylaws of the boards in question
- Location for the General Assembly
- Approval of the protocol for the General Assembly
- Other items put forward by the General Secretary

THE PROTOCOL COMMITTEE

§ 20

The Protocol Committee is elected by the General Assembly and consists of three (3) members. Members may be re-elected one time.

§ 21

The member who receives the most votes summons the first meeting. The committee elects its own leader and secretary.

§ 22

The Protocol Committee monitors that the National Board's decisions are in accordance with the NMS Constitution and Bylaws as well as the resolutions of the General Assembly.

§ 23

The Protocol Committee reviews the protocols of the National Board.

§ 24

If the Protocol Committee is of the opinion that there is a need to raise questions or

make comments with regard to the processing of items, the National Board will be kept informed in a timely manner.

§ 25

The Protocol Committee normally holds one (1) or two (2) meetings per year. When the committee considers it necessary, it can summon the General Secretary and others in NMS management to discuss specific items.

§ 26

The Protocol Committee, represented by its leader, presents a report on the committee's work to the General Assembly.

THE ELECTION COMMITTEE

§ 27

The Election Committee is elected by the General Assembly and consists of five (5) members.

Members may be re-elected one time. The member who receives the most votes summons the first meeting. The committee elects its own leader and secretary.

§ 28

The Election Committee prepares the election of the Chair of the National Board, the National Board, the Protocol Committee, and the Election Committee, in accordance with the bylaws for elections.

§ 29

At least fifteen (15) months prior to the General Assembly, the Election Committee sends a notice to the Regional Boards detailing the elections that will be held at the upcoming General Assembly along with a request to suggest candidates.

§ 30

The Election Committee assesses the suggestions made by the Regional Boards and may also make its own suggestions.

The Election Committee independently draws up the final list of nominated candidates, based on the necessary overall assessment of possible combinations, taking into consideration geography, competency, and gender.

§ 31

If there are several candidates for Chair of the National Board, both genders must be represented.

§ 32

The Election Committee shall through their work ensure that at least 40% of each gender will be represented on the National Board and on the Election Committee, and that both genders are represented on the Protocol Committee.

§ 33

The persons that the Election Committee lists as nominated candidates shall be asked

ahead of time, and shall be made acquainted with NMS's Constitution, principle and policy documents. Only persons who are members of NMS and who have declared themselves willing to stand as candidates can be nominated.

§ 34

The Election Committee, represented by its leader, presents candidates for the various elections at the General Assembly.