



NMS' CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Adopted by NMS' General Assembly June 2023

CONSTITUTION

- § 1** The Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) is an independent organization within the Church of Norway for accomplishing the mission work of the church.
- The Norwegian Mission Society consists of associations, groups and individual members who work in accordance with §§ 2, 3 and 4 of the constitution.
- The Norwegian Mission Society is the parent organization of the independent children's and youth organization, the Norwegian Mission Society's children's and youth organization (NMSU).
- § 2** The purpose of the Norwegian Mission Society is to testify to God's grace in Jesus Christ, in word and deed, and to contribute to the growth of the worldwide church and the spread of God's kingdom among all peoples.
- § 3** To realize its purpose, The Norwegian Mission Society collaborates with churches and organizations in Norway and in other countries.
- The work in the regions in Norway is the basis for the business.
- The Norwegian Mission Society sends missionaries both from Norway and through their partner churches outside Norway.
- The Norwegian Mission Society's missionaries are consecrated or prayed for according to current arrangements.
- The Norwegian Mission Society conducts missionary research and education.
- § 4** The Norwegian Mission Society is committed to the Holy Scriptures and the articles of faith of the Norwegian Church.
- § 5** The General Assembly is The Norwegian Mission Society's highest authority. It is held every three (3) years.

CONSTITUTION

cont. The following have the right to speak, make proposals and vote during the General Assembly:

§ 5

- » All members of NMS and NMSU who turn fifteen (15) at the latest during the year of the General Assembly
- » One (1) delegate from each of the missionary associations
- » One (1) delegate from each cooperative church
- » One (1) NMSU representative elected by their National Board
- » One (1) representative from each thrift store

The General Assembly takes decisions, deals with matters and makes elections as described in the bylaws for the General Assembly.

The National Board is the organization's highest authority in the periods between general assemblies. The protocol committee supervises the National Board. The election committee prepares elections to be held at the General Assembly.

The administration looks after the day-to-day running of the organisation.

The National Board establishes delegation regulations that show which matters the head office through the General Secretary has responsibility for and decision-making authority for.

The National Board assesses the need for and, if necessary, establishes bylaws for the work on the fields.

Otherwise, the regions (nationally) and the fields (internationally) work within the framework set by the National Board.

- § 6** The Norwegian Mission Society works actively for equality between the sexes.
- § 7** The Norwegian Mission Society works actively for a sustainable management of God's creation.
- § 8** Meetings of The Norwegian Mission Society's governing body are open to the public, unless the meeting itself decides to close the meeting in individual matters.
- § 9** Official name in English and French is:
English: *The Norwegian Mission Society*
French: *Société des missions Norvégiennes*
- § 10** Amendments to the constitution require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes cast at the General Assembly. Amendments to 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 framework given by the General Assembly and the action plan for the work in Norway. The General Assembly establishes bylaws for regional work. The individual regional board determines the structure of the work in the region. An area structure is the standard arrangement.
- § 12** Upon dissolution, any remaining assets are to be transferred to the Church of Norway through the National Council.

BYLAWS

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- § 1 The National Board convenes a General Assembly no later than three (3) months in advance. The convocation includes a proposal for an agenda with associated documents.

Before the National Board draws up a convocation, a deadline is published for individual members and regional boards to come up with proposals for matters that they wish to be dealt with at the General Assembly. If at least 50 % of the regional boards want a matter addressed, the National Board is obliged to propose the matter.

- § 2 The General Assembly decides the following matters:

- » Approval of the summons and agenda
- » Approval of negotiation regulations
- » Constitution
- » Strategy plan for the coming three-year period
- » The constitution
- » Bylaws for the composition of the General Assembly
- » Bylaws for elections during the General Assembly
- » Bylaws for the chairman of the National Board
- » Bylaws for the National Board
- » Bylaws for the protocol committee
- » Bylaws for the General Assembly's election committee
- » Bylaws for the regional boards
- » Bylaws for the area committees
- » Determination of the number of regions and their boundaries
- » Other matters that the National Board presents to the General Assembly for decision

The General Assembly also deals with the following matters:

- » Three-year report from the National Board including briefing on the financial situation
- » Report of the Protocol Committee
- » Other matters that the National Board presents to the General Assembly for consideration

At the General Assembly, the following elections are made:

- » Election of the head of the National Board
- » Election of the national government
- » Election of protocol committee
- » Election of election committee

In connection with the General Assembly, space must be provided for spiritual renewal, inspiration and mission information.

BYLAWS

- § 3** Medarbejderforeningen (MAF) is represented by three (3) people with the right to speak and make proposals.
- The board of NMS Recycling as well as subsidiaries directly under NMS are given the opportunity to elect a representative each with the right to speak and make proposals.
- The General Secretary has the right to propose and speak, which can be delegated to other managers in the administration.
- Norwegian and foreign cooperative churches and organizations are invited as observers with the right to speak.
- § 4** Members of the National Board do not have the right to vote in matters concerning the assessment of the National Board's work.
- § 5** No region can have more than 40 % of the votes at a General Assembly. In the event of deprivation of the right to vote, the time of registration will be decisive.
- § 6** The registration deadline to be able to use your rights during the General Assembly is fourteen (14) days before the start of the General Assembly.
- § 7** An extraordinary General Assembly can be called when it is adopted by the National Board with a two-thirds (2/3) majority or two-thirds (2/3) of the regional boards demand it.
- An extraordinary General Assembly is held as soon as possible and no later than six (6) months after a demand for such has been made.
- Elections that may take place at the extraordinary General Assembly apply until the first ordinary General Assembly.

ELECTION DURING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- § 8** The following applies to all elections:
- » The elections shall be in writing
 - » In the event of a tie, the result will be decided by drawing lots
 - » The candidates are obliged to learn and to live in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the articles of faith of the Church of Norway
 - » Candidates must be members of NMS
 - » In elections with several candidates, both sexes must be represented among the proposed candidates
 - » The candidates must be at least eighteen (18) years old no later than the year the General Assembly is held
 - » The election result applies until the next General Assembly

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§ 9 Election of the head of the National Board

The regional boards are given the opportunity to come up with proposals for leadership candidate(s) no later than ten (10) months before the General Assembly.

The election committee puts forward from one (1) to three (3) proposals for the chairman of the National Board. The candidates are presented in alphabetical order to the General Assembly.

Election of the leader takes place before the election of the National Board

- » To be elected, at least 50 % of the votes cast are required.
- » If there are more than two (2) candidates where no one has obtained 50 % of the votes, a new election is held between the two (2) candidates with the most votes.

§ 10 Election of the National Board

Each regional board proposes members to the National Board from its own region no later than ten (10) months before the General Assembly.

- » The proposal should contain a minimum of four (4) names
- » Both sexes must be represented
- » The regional boards should contribute to the greatest possible spread of expertise in proposed members for the National Board

The Employee Representative of NMS can only be elected to the National Board by the employees of NMS, NMSU, NMSE or campgrounds with an agreement with NMS.

The selection committee nominates a minimum of fifteen (15) candidates and these are presented in order of priority to the General Assembly.

The election during the General Assembly:

Five (5) permanent members and five (5) deputy members are elected.

Three (3) permanent members are elected in the first election round, then two (2) permanent and five (5) deputy members.

§ 11

Election of protocol committee

Each regional board proposes members to the protocol committee from its own region no later than ten (10) months before the General Assembly.

Employees of NMS and National Board members cannot be members of the protocol committee

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

The election during the General Assembly: Three (3) members and three (3) deputies are elected in one (1) election. The three (3) candidates with the highest number of votes form the new protocol committee. The following three (3) in the number of votes constitute the deputies.

BYLAWS

§ 12 Election of election committee

Each regional board proposes candidates to the election committee from its own region no later than ten (10) months before the General Assembly.

Employees of NMS and National Board members cannot be members of the election committee.

The election committee nominates twelve (12) candidates and these are presented in priority order to the General Assembly.

The election during the General Assembly: Five (5) members and two (2) deputies are elected in one (1) election. The five (5) candidates who receive the highest number of votes form the new election committee. The following two (2) in the number of votes constitute the deputies..

LEADER OF THE NATIONAL BOARD

§ 13 The head of the National Board is responsible for the work of the National Board during the period.

The National Board, chaired by the head, has personnel responsibility for the general secretary.

The National Board is legally responsible for business matters by the board's chairman together with the General secretary.

In the event of a tie in the National Board, the leader has a double vote.

The head of the National Board receives a fee for the position in accordance with current regulations.

THE NATIONAL BOARD

§ 14 The National Board (LS) consists of

- » chairman elected by the General Assembly
- » five (5) other members elected by the General Assembly
- » one (1) representative elected by and among the employees
- » one (1) representative elected by the National Board of NMSU (LS-NMSU)

The National Board itself elects a deputy chairman from among the members elected by the General Assembly.

If the elected member is employed by NMS for more than 20 %, this member leaves LS for as long as the employment lasts. During the period, the deputy representative enters as an ordinary member.

A personal deputy representative is elected for the employees' representative and the representative from LS-NMSU.

§ 15 The permanent member and deputy representative from LS-NMSU follows NMSU's election period.

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§ 16 No person can sit consecutively as a permanent member of the National Board for more than two (2) periods. After a stay of at least one (1) period, one can be re-elected. These restrictions do not apply to deputies.

A member can serve for up to three (3) terms if part of the time they have been elected as leader.

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

§ 18 **About the work of the National Board:**

The General Secretary is the case handler for the National Board.

Quorum for The National Board is when at least half of the members are present.

NMS head office and the regions form part of a joint legal entity with the National Board legally responsible.

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

§ 19 **The tasks of the National Board include the following:**

The National Board has decisive authority in all matters not decided by the General Assembly. In important matters, the National Board should ask for the advice of the regional boards. The National Board considers and decides at all times which cases are sent for consultation.

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

The National Board finalizes the work on the strategic plan in line with decisions from the General Assembly, including editorial and layout changes.

The National Board is responsible for processing and making decisions on:

- » Program profile and principal documents as well as business plans
- » Delegation regulations
- » Major structural changes in the organization
- » The membership scheme
- » Bylaws for the work in the fields
- » Bylaws for NMS Recycling
- » Annual reports and reports from various branches of work
- » Budget and accounts, including financial contributions to NMS' children's and youth organization (NMSU)
- » Agreements that require the National Board's approval
- » Main agreement
- » Collective bargaining agreement
- » Employs the general secretary and deputy general secretary and is the employer for the general secretary.
- » Whistleblowing routines
- » Guidelines for management, purchase and sale of properties

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- cont. » Guidelines for the use of gifts for specific purposes
- § 19 » Appoints representatives to boards where this is required by the bylaws of the current board
 - » Venue for General Assemblies
 - » Approves minutes for the General Assembly
 - » Other matters brought 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 can be re-elected once (1).
- § 21 Whoever gets the most votes calls the first meeting. The committee itself elects its chairman and secretary.
- § 22 The protocol committee ensures that the National Board's decisions are in accordance with NMS's constitution and bylaws as well as the General Assembly's decisions.
- § 23 The protocol committee reviews the National Board's protocols.
- § 24 If the protocol committee believes there is a need to raise questions about or comment on the processing of cases, the National Board is made aware of this on an ongoing basis.
- § 25 The protocol committee normally has one (1) to two (2) meetings a year. It can, based on its own assessment, summon the general secretary and others in NMS's management to talk about current matters.
- § 26 The protocol committee chaired by the chairman 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 can be re-elected once (1). Whoever gets the most votes calls the first meeting. The committee itself elects its chairman and secretary.
- § 28 The election committee prepares the election of the chairman of the National Board, National Board, protocol committee and election committee in accordance with the bylaws for elections.
- § 29 No later than fifteen (15) months before the General Assembly, the election committee sends a notification to the regional boards about the elections to be held at the upcoming General Assembly with an invitation to propose candidates.

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- § 30** The election committee is free to assess proposals received from the regions and to propose its own candidates.
- The selection committee shall, on an independent basis, make a final nomination of the proposed candidates based on a necessary overall assessment of the possible composition with regard to geography, spread of skills and gender.
- § 31** In the case of several candidates for the head of the National Board, both sexes must be represented.
- § 32** The election committee must facilitate at least 40 % representation of both sexes in the National Board and the election committee, and that both sexes are represented in the protocol committee.
- § 33** The persons that the selection committee nominates on its proposal must be asked in advance and familiarized with NMS' constitution, principle and policy documents. Only people who are members of NMS and who have declared themselves willing to stand as candidates can be nominated.
- § 34** The election committee chaired by the chairman presents the candidates for the various elections to the General Assembly.

THE REGIONAL BOARDS

§ 35 BASIS

- a. The regional board works in line with the current constitution and bylaws for the organisation.
- b. The regional board's main task is to contribute to the realization of the NMS strategy within its geographical area and works in line with the adopted strategic plan.

§ 36 RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE REGIONAL BOARD

- a. Has a mandate to use employee resources within agreed limits..
- b. The representative of the regional board (area committee in the North region) participates in the process when it comes to the appointment of personnel with regional tasks.
- c. Participates in the preparation and amendment of instructions for positions for personnel with regional tasks.
- d. Is an interlocutor and consultative body for the National Board in important matters.
- e. Meets the National Board to discuss the work in the organisation. (Cf. bylaws for LS §19)
- f. Sends board minutes and annual report to the National Board.
- g. In regions without a regional board, it must be agreed with the area committees how the functions between the regional contact and the area committee leaders together is to be operationalised.

BYLAWS

§ 37 TASKS OF THE REGIONAL BOARD

- a. Prepare and adopt an action plan for the region on the basis of the area committees' action plans.
- b. Prepare budget proposals for the regional board's and area committee's activities.
- c. Collaborate with managers and employees within the relevant sections of NMS.
- d. Collaborate with NMS thrift stores, NMSU and NMS-conference centres in the region.
- e. Follow up volunteer work in the region in collaboration with employees and in line with overall plans.
- f. Coordinate the work in the region and being an inspiration for the area committees in collaboration with employees.

§ 38 REGIONAL BODIES, COMPOSITION/ELECTION

- a. The regional board consists of a minimum of four (4) people and is elected at the region's annual meeting or by the area committees. Both sexes must be represented. The regional board constitutes itself.
- b. The head of the regional board can be elected in a separate election.
- c. The representatives are elected for a period of one to three (1-3) years and can be re-elected once. Further re-election should not take place until then the individual in question has not been elected to the board for at least one election period. Personal deputies should be elected.
- d. All members of NMS and NMSU, members of associations and two (2) employees from each thrift store, as well as representatives of congregations with a mission agreement and who turn fifteen (15) at the latest during the year, have the right to speak, make proposals and vote at the annual meeting.
- e. Candidates should be members of NMS.
- f. The candidates are obliged to work in loyalty with NMS' basis and purpose.
- g. Candidates must turn eighteen (18) at the latest in the year the annual meeting is held.
- h. In elections with several candidates, both sexes must be represented among the proposed candidates.
- i. The regional board also has a representative from NMSU and an NMS employee whose workplace is linked to the region, with voting rights.
- j. The regional board is competent to make decisions when at least half of the members are present. In the event of a tie, the leader has a double vote.

§ 39

SUPPLEMENTARY BYLAWS

The regional boards can adopt supplementary bylaws based on their own needs. These must be approved by the National Board.

BYLAWS

THE AREA COMMITTEES

§ 40 BASIS

- a. The area committees work in line with the current constitution and bylaws for the organisation.
- b. The area committees' main task is to contribute to the realization of the NMS strategy within their geographical area and work in line with the adopted strategic plan.
- c. In regions without a regional board, an agreement must be made with the area committees to what extent they will take care of the regional board's tasks.

§ 41 DUTIES OF THE AREA COMMITTEES

- a. Prepare an action plan for their area and make the necessary priorities based on available resources.
- b. Work with motivational and fundraising work for associations, congregations and individuals.
- c. Be an interlocutor for the regional board in assessing the work in the area.
- d. Collaborate with NMS thrift stores, NMSU and NMS – conference centres in the area.
- e. Send minutes from the area committee meetings to the regional board/regional contact.

§ 42 ECONOMY

- a. Works based on the budget for the region/area.
- b. Financial management must take place in accordance with guidelines as described in the NMS financial handbook.
- c. Income in associations/groups affiliated to NMS belongs to the organisation. The funds are forwarded after necessary expenses have been deducted.

§ 43 COMPOSITION/ ELECTIONS

- a. The area committee should meet at least four (4) times a year.
- b. The area committee is competent to make decisions when at least half of the members are present.
- c. The area committee is elected at the annual meeting in the area, and must consist of a minimum of three (3) people. Both sexes should be represented.
- d. The representatives are elected for a period of one to three (1-3) years and can be re-elected once (1). New re-election should then not take place until after a stay of one (1) election period.
- e. The right to speak, make proposals and vote at the annual Regional meeting is extended to all members of NMS and NMSU, members of associations as well as representatives of congregations with mission agreements and employees in thrift stores, and who are at least fifteen (15) years old during course of the year.
- f. Candidates should be members of NMS
- g. The candidates are obliged to work in loyalty to NMS' basis and purpose.
- h. In elections with several candidates, both sexes must be represented among the proposed candidates..
- i. Candidates must turn eighteen (18) at the latest in the year the annual meeting is held.