

Brussels Labour International Branch
CONSTITUTION
Adopted at the Annual General Meeting of 29 March 2000

NAME

1. The name of the organisation shall be the Brussels Labour International Branch.

PURPOSES

2. The Branch shall bring together Labour International (LI) members and other Labour Party members in Brussels and elsewhere in Belgium for political and social activities and shall promote the aims, values and objectives of the British Labour Party (the Party). The general provisions of the constitution and rules of the British Labour Party shall apply to this Branch. The Branch shall operate in accordance with the constitution of the British Labour Party and regulations approved by the National Executive Committee of the Party (NEC) and the Labour International Co-ordinating Committee (LICC).
3. In pursuance of its aims, the Branch may organise political activities which could include the following:
 - a) organise meetings for the information of members and the discussion of policy;
 - b) organise campaigns on specific topical issues;
 - c) organise contacts and activities with sister socialist and social democratic parties, with relevant international organisations or institutions established locally, with other local organisations whose aims are shared by the Branch, and with the wider community;
 - d) affiliate to organisations whose aims are shared by the Branch, where appropriate;
 - e) express the political standpoints of the Branch by appropriate means;
 - f) feed back to the Party the views of Members on Party policy, particularly where this is based on experience of the host country where members are living.
 - g) actively support and campaign for the Labour Party in Britain;
 - h) actively recruit new members to Labour International;
 - i) campaign for the registration of overseas voters in UK elections;
 - j) participate in and contribute to Labour International activities such as LICC, LI newsletters or campaigns.

MEMBERS

4. Ordinary membership of the Branch shall be open to persons who are members of Labour International.
5. Associate membership shall be open to those who support the aims and objectives of the British Labour Party.
6. Extraordinary membership shall be open to members who retain party membership through a constituency Labour Party in Britain.

VOTING RIGHTS

7. Only ordinary members may vote on Labour Party matters.
8. Extraordinary members may make proposals related to Branch business and vote thereon.

FINANCE

9. A local subscription may be levied to fund Branch activities at a rate determined at the Annual General Meeting. Other monies may be raised for purposes consistent with paragraphs 2 and 3.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

10. The Branch shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) normally before the end of April each year. In the event of the AGM not being held by the end of that month for any reason, it shall be held as soon thereafter as possible.
11. The Committee shall call the AGM, giving not less than one month's notice of the meeting. The AGM shall be the highest authority of the Branch.
12. The financial year of the Branch shall end on 31 December each year.
13. The AGM shall:
 - a) receive reports of the activities of the Branch in the past year and give guidelines for future activities;
 - b) receive the accounts and Auditors' reports for the previous year;
 - c) elect the Committee and the Auditors;
 - d) consider and vote upon political resolutions, policy guidelines and constitutional amendments for which appropriate notice has been given, as laid down in 14 and 15;
 - e) decide on proposals to affiliate to other organisations;
 - f) determine the amount and terms of any local subscription;
 - g) decide upon proposals to commit expenditure from Branch funds where the amount exceeds 500 euros;

- h) consider and vote on matters relating to the operation of the Labour International Co-ordinating Committee and Labour International activities and delegates for the Labour Party Annual Conference.

The Branch shall not enter into affiliation or give support financially or otherwise to any political party or organisation ancillary or subsidiary thereto declared ineligible for affiliation to the Party by Party Conference or by the National Executive Committee.

- 14. Proposed political resolutions, proposals for affiliation to other organisations, proposals to commit expenditure from Branch funds in excess of 500 euros, and policy guidelines shall be tabled in writing by the Committee or individual members not later than 14 days before the AGM, and shall be circulated to the membership by the Secretary. The AGM may waive these requirements.
- 15. Nominations for the Officers, Committee and Auditor shall normally be received by the Secretary not less than seven days before the AGM. The AGM may decide to accept nominations up to the opening of voting, where nominations for the posts to be filled have not been received within the specified deadlines.
- 16. Proposals for constitutional amendments to LI Branch rules shall be tabled in writing by the Committee or individual members not less than 14 days before the AGM, and shall be circulated to members. Any such proposals approved by the Branch AGM shall be forwarded for consideration by the LICC and NEC of the Labour Party.
- 17. A quorum shall be ten per cent of the paid-up ordinary Branch membership at the opening of the meeting.

GENERAL MEETINGS

- 18. A General Meeting may be called at any time by the Committee or on the written request of twenty per cent of the membership. A meeting shall be called within one month of such a request.
- 19. Notice of general and special meetings shall be sent to all members a minimum of seven days in advance.
- 20. A General Meeting may transact business under 13 (d), (e), (g) and (h) for amounts under 500 euros for which at least the appropriate notice has been given in the circular calling the meeting. The quorum of a General Meeting shall be ten per cent of the paid-up ordinary Branch membership at the opening of the meeting.
- 21. The Committee may organise other meetings of the Branch which shall not be empowered to take decisions.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

- 22. The Committee shall be composed of up to ten ordinary members, who shall be members of the Branch elected at the AGM in separate ballots as follows:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Up to six members of the Committee

At least 50 per cent of the Committee shall be women.

The Branch shall appoint two auditors and other functional officers as required.

The quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be 50 per cent of members, including at least one of the officers.

- 23. Casual vacancies on the Committee shall be filled by election at a General Meeting. Until such a meeting, the Committee may fill such a vacancy by co-option, provided that two-thirds of the members of the Committee concur.
- 24. The Committee shall, within the provisions of this Constitution and such guidelines as the AGM and General Meetings may from time to time lay down:
 - a) establish its working methods;
 - b) organise the day-to-day work of the Branch;
 - c) ensure the external representation of the Branch;
 - d) carry out the policies and manage the funds of the Branch in accordance with the aims and objectives of Labour International and with such guidelines as are determined by the AGM and duly constituted General Meetings.
 - e) ensure continuing liaison with and representation of the Branch's views to the LICC.
- 25. The Committee shall be empowered to make special donations from Branch funds up to a maximum of 500 euros for each donation. Such donations shall be consistent with the aims of the Branch (as defined in Articles 2 and 3), and shall not exceed a total of 1500 euros in any one financial year without the authorisation of a General Meeting.

26. The Auditors, who shall be ordinary members of the Branch, shall not be members of the Committee.

PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

27. Constitutional amendments may only be made at the AGM or a General Meeting called for that purpose and for which at least one month's notice has been given. A proposal for constitutional amendments shall be adopted if it receives a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast in its favour and shall thereafter be forwarded for information to the LICC.

LOCAL LAW

28. The Branch shall comply with the legal requirements governing its organisation and financial arrangements in force in Belgium.

DISSOLUTION OF THE BRANCH

29. The Branch may be wound up by a motion to that effect adopted by three-quarters of the votes cast at a General Meeting called for that purpose and for which at least one month's notice has been given. The disposal of any outstanding assets of the Branch shall be determined by that General Meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS

30. It shall be the duty of this Branch to take all necessary steps to safeguard the constitution, programme and principles of the Labour Party within its area. Any decision taken under this clause proposing the expulsion or exclusion of any individual from membership shall be in the form of a recommendation to the LICC which shall determine the matter in accordance with the disciplinary procedures laid out in the national rules of the Labour Party.

31. This Branch shall not without the approval of the LICC and the consent in writing of the NEC:

- a) buy freehold or leasehold land and to erect buildings thereon and/or freehold or leasehold premises;
- b) appoint trustees or a company to hold any land or property so acquired for or on behalf of this Branch;
- c) define the powers of any trustees or company so appointed or lay down the manner in which such power shall be exercised;
- d) borrow money on mortgage or otherwise on security of any property owned by the Branch;
- e) grant or take a lease or sell freehold or leasehold land or property.

32. Should the Branch be dissolved or cease to exist for any reason its assets, after the payment of any outstanding liabilities shall be transferred to the LICC.

33. The Branch may adopt standing orders and may make such changes in the procedural rules as may be agreed by the LICC. Such changes shall not contravene the spirit or intention of the model rules as accepted by party conference or the NEC.