

International network promoting the values and principles of volunteering, active citizenship and social justice

President: Oonagh Aitken
Secretary General: Piotr Sadowski
Volonteuropa
c/o Volunteering Matters
18-24 Lower Clapton Road
London E5 0PD

VOLONTEUROPE CODE OF PRACTICE

These Codes of Practice enable the Volonteuropa Statutes to be implemented in a flexible and effective way. They have been prepared by the Board of Volonteuropa. They set the current operational regulations for the association. They are subject to a 3-yearly review by the Board. The Board can at any time decide to change them. Any changes will be communicated to the membership. All members will receive the current version of the Code of Practice alongside the Statutes, as part of their membership. The interpretation of the Code is the responsibility of the Board advised by the Secretariat.

All references are to the numbered Articles of the Volonteuropa Statutes shown in italics below.

Article 2. Aims

The purpose of Volonteuropa is to promote unpaid volunteer work, in European countries, in the widest sense of the word. Volonteuropa promotes the rights of all to volunteer and contribute to society. It works to improve the position of volunteers to that they get the same recognition as paid workers, except the payment.

Volonteuropa is committed to an inclusive, diverse and tolerant society and expects all its members and associates to actively promote these values.

Volonteuropa communicates with local authorities, governments and international governmental institutions such as the European Union and the Council of Europe, in order to enhance the recognition of volunteering in active citizenship policies at local, national or European levels.

In order to achieve these aims, Volonteuropa will have the possibility to participate in and/or coordinate European projects under various European programmes.

As a network committed to an inclusive, diverse and tolerant society, Volonteuropa expects all its members and associates to actively promote these values, and will itself actively promote and defend the concepts of active participation and citizenship at local, national and European level.

Article 5. Types of Membership

Volonteuropa shall be open to membership from amongst volunteer organisations, other agencies committed to volunteers, volunteering and social action (civil society, government, education, institutions and private sector organisations) and individuals (volunteers). Membership is valid for 1 year and runs from 1 April until 31 March the following year.

Volonteuropa shall also be open to associates.

As a membership organisation, Volonteurope must have at least five member or associate organisations in five different countries.

Members and associates may be admitted from any European country which is a member of the Council of Europe. Applicants from other countries may join as associates on a case-by-case basis, to be approved by the Board.

Volonteurope welcomes all types of members and associates from across all sectors that are committed to volunteers, volunteering and social action. Volonteurope is a network which encourages the exchange of information, good practice, learning and innovation, in promoting active citizenship in Europe. The membership list in the Statutes should be taken as indicative, not exclusive.

Volonteurope is committed to the widest spread of membership across all countries and regions of Europe.

Volonteurope recognises that there will be organisations and individuals who wish to contribute to the association but for whom it would not be appropriate to be full members. It therefore welcomes them as associates.

Article 8. Membership and associate dues structure:

The Board has the authority to make exceptions with regards to the specific membership dues paid by individual volunteers or any other membership groups.

Current details of the dues payment structure is to be found in the current Code of Practice.

- a) Civil society*
- b) Government, education and institutions*
- c) Private sector*
- d) Individuals (volunteers)*
- e) Associate*

The current dues payment structure is as following:

- a) Civil society: €100*
- b) Government, education and institutions: €200*
- c) Private sector: €300*
- d) Associate – individual: €30; associate – organisation: €50*

The Board has authority to waive membership fees and specifically for individual volunteers, in special circumstances.

Article 13. The Board

Volonteurope is managed by a minimum of 7 and maximum of 10-person Board with alternates allowed, elected by the membership, either at the General Assembly, by postal ballot or electronic ballot, beforehand. Arrangements for rotating terms of office are further detailed in the Code of Practice.

The Board may co-opt non-voting members as required.

The term of the office is 3 years up to a maximum of 3 terms. Any exceptions would have to be agreed unanimously by the Board.

Board Arrangements

The Secretariat is responsible for preparing a proposal to enable membership of the Board to rotate, so that Board Members are not all replaced at the same time.

The Board has the authority to co-opt non-voting members as required. This will enable the Board to have access to specialist professional advice, as well as any particular expertise they require from time to time.

The Board has the authority to establish committees and working groups to carry out and develop the network's activities. Where possible, Board Members will lead on the work of such committees and groups and they will report back to the Board. These groups can include the general membership. The Secretariat will support the work of these groups.

Board Responsibilities

The Board has responsibility for actively reflecting the geographic spread of the network's membership and ensuring that Volonteurope remains as representative as possible across Europe. The Board has responsibility for working closely with the Secretariat to build the network and the learning across it. It also has responsibility for supporting the Secretariat in carrying out the policy, advocacy and lobbying role at a European level.

Article 15. Composition

The Board is composed of persons from the membership who have paid their membership fees. The Board is required to reflect the full range of membership by geography and type of member.

The Board elects from amongst its members, and by secret ballot, officers of the association: a President and two Vice-Presidents to serve for 3 years. The Code of Practice reflects the specific responsibilities of Board Members. The Board recognises the General Secretary as the main executor for the decisions of the Board, however any legal, financial and employment matters associated with the employment of the General Secretary are the responsibility of the host organisation.

The type of membership refers to individual volunteers and sectors - civil society, institutions, government and corporate.

Article 16. Power of the Board

The Board has the power to manage and administer, subject to the approval of the General Assembly. Its responsibility concerns more especially:

- a) The strategic direction and policy-making of the network*
- b) The establishment of committees and working groups*
- c) The collection of funds, grants and subsidies*
- d) The annual report and accounts to be presented to the General Assembly*
- e) The proposal of standing orders*

Further details relating to the administration of these tasks are to be found in the Code of Practice.

Secretariat and the Board

The Secretariat is currently hosted by Volunteering Matters, a UK registered charity, which is accountable for the finances, audit and employment of any staff. This means that in practice the Volonteurope Board is

advisory in relation to the finances, audit and employment issues, as occurs in other European networks or alliances.

It is the role of the Secretariat to enable the Board to carry out its responsibilities specified in Article 16 of the Statutes.

Article 18. The Secretariat and the Host Organisation

The Secretariat is provided by a host member organisation that will have representation on the Board. The host organisation is accountable for the finances, audit and employment of any staff. The Board's role in these matters is advisory only.

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It needs to be recognised that the Secretariat is necessarily constrained by the resources available.

Volonteurope will review the potential and develop a scheme for paying Board Member expenses (particularly those not in employment) when it has the requisite finances.