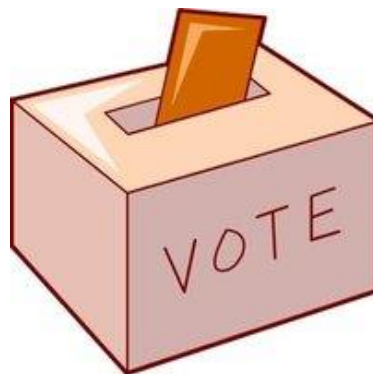




A GUIDE TO EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS



EQUINET ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
9 November 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE..... 3
EQUINET BOARD ELECTION PROCEDURES..... 5
ANNEX I – Extract of the Equinet Statutes.....8



PREAMBLE

This guide contains the **Elections Procedures for the Equinet Executive Board** as adopted in 2010 by the General Assembly of Equinet Members at their Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2010 and subsequently amended at AGM 2016.

Every second year, the General Assembly of Equinet Members is called upon to renew the Executive Board of Equinet at the Annual General Meeting of that year. The Executive Board is generally composed of nine Members who are high-level representatives of national Equality Bodies that are Members of the Equinet network. The Board is the highest governing body of the Network and is in charge of defining the general strategic direction of the Network as well as supervising the implementation of the proposed activities in collaboration with the Equinet Secretariat.

The nine members of the next Equinet Board will be elected by secret ballot for a **two-year mandate (2021 - 2023)** by the General Assembly of Equinet Members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which will take place **online on 9 November 2021, 09:30 – 12:15 (CET Brussels Time)**. We hereby invite you to note and save the date to ensure your attendance at this important event gathering the heads of member Equality Bodies.

The procedures have been designed to ensure that the **diversity** within the membership of Equinet, be it **geographical** or in **size** and scope of mandate, is reflected as much as possible at the level of its Executive Board.

Current Board Members are available to share their experiences. They remain at your disposal should you have any questions or need more information.

- **Tena Simonovic Einwalter** (Chair of Equinet; Ombudswoman, Croatia) - tena.simonovic.einwalter@ombudsman.hr
- **Valerie Fontaine** (Equinet Board Member; Advisor for partnerships and public relations, Defender of Rights, France) - valerie.fontaine@defenseurdesdroits.fr
- **Patrick Charlier** (Equinet Board Member & Treasurer; Co-Director, Unia - Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities, Belgium) - Patrick.Charlier@unia.be

Equinet's Membership and Network Development Officer, **Sophie Hale** (sophie.hale@equineteurope.org) is also available if you have any questions.



Main responsibilities of the Board Members

- Continued and active involvement in the development and implementation of Equinet strategies and activities, overseeing of the Equinet budget and the work of the Secretariat.
- Attend and actively participate in Board meetings and Annual General Meetings (AGM). There will be a minimum of 4 Board Meetings, that take place in Brussels and/or other European cities (if circumstances allow for in-person meetings).
- Actively participating in selected Equinet conferences, seminars, trainings and/or working group(s).
- Providing feedback on regular requests and consultations circulated by the Chair or Equinet Secretariat between Board meetings throughout the year.
- Potentially representing Equinet and the interests of Equality Bodies at external events

Board Members sit in their personal name on the Equinet Executive Board and not as representatives of their respective organisations.



EQUINET BOARD ELECTION PROCEDURES

(Approved by the Equinet General Assembly on 29-30 September 2016)

1. The number of Board members in the Equinet Executive Board

1.1. The Equinet Executive Board has nine members unless otherwise regulated in this document.

2. The geographical electoral groupings

2.1 There are three geographical clusters of members for the Board elections.

| Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 |
|------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Belgium | Austria | Albania |
| Denmark | Czech Republic | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Finland | Estonia | Bulgaria |
| France | Hungary | Croatia |
| Germany | Latvia | Cyprus |
| Great Britain | Lithuania | Greece |
| Ireland | Malta | North Macedonia |
| Italy | Poland | Montenegro |
| Luxemburg | Romania | Serbia |
| The Netherlands | Slovakia | Kosovo* |
| Norway | Slovenia | |
| Northern Ireland | Moldova | |
| Portugal | Georgia | |
| Spain | | |
| Sweden | | |

2.2. In case of an equality body joining the network from a country that is not listed in the above clusters, the Equinet Executive Board will decide in which cluster the country in question is to be grouped in. This decision shall be made at the first meeting of the Equinet Executive Board after the AGM that ratified the membership.

2.3 Given the different size of the clusters, each group allows for a different number of candidates to be elected from it:

| Group 1 | Group 2 | Group 3 | =9 Members in total |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|
| 4 Members | 3 Members | 2 Members | |

2.4. In accordance with the statutes, values and objectives of Equinet, diversity in the broadest sense and gender balance within the composition of the Equinet Executive Board is strongly encouraged.



3. Nomination of candidates and requirements

3.1. Prior to the AGM, all effective members of Equinet are called to **nominate candidates** from their organisation for the nine positions of the EQUINET Executive Board, according to the following procedure and requirements:

- a) Each Equinet member has the right to nominate one candidate. Observers are neither allowed to nominate candidates nor to vote at the AGM. Organisations ratified as Equinet members at the AGM where the Board elections take place are not allowed to nominate a candidate for the Board but have the right to vote at the election of the Board Members.
- b) Member organisations are invited to communicate their intention to nominate a candidate by using the Online Declaration of Interest ([click here](#)) or by sending an email to Anne Gaspard (anne.gaspard@equineteurope.org), Equinet Executive Director, by **Monday 20 September 2021**.
- c) Equinet members that have already selected their candidate can send their proposed candidacies to Anne Gaspard, Executive Director of the Equinet Secretariat (anne.gaspard@equineteurope.org), using the Equinet Executive Board Candidate Nomination Form ([Click here](#)), and not later than **Friday 22 October 2021**. A candidate nomination form will be valid only if it is duly completed and signed, as well as accompanied by the compulsory information (CV in English).
- d) Nominated candidates shall be employees of the equality body (effective Equinet member) with a senior level of responsibilities in their respective organisation. As the language of the Board meetings is English, the candidates should also have a sufficient level of English.
- e) Nominated candidates for Board Member positions must be present at the AGM, that is taking place **online on 9th November 2021, 09:30 – 12:15 (CET Brussels Time)** except only in case of *force majeure*.

4. Election of Board members

Board elections are held during the AGM according to the following procedure:

- 4.1.** Election of the Board members takes the form of a closed ballot at the AGM with one vote per effective member organisation represented. **Members vote for a total of nine candidates – four candidates from group 1, three from group 2 and two from group 3.**
- 4.2.** Effective member organisations that are not represented at the AGM may delegate their vote to another member that is present (proxy voting).
- 4.3.** Board Members are elected from each cluster based on the number of votes received and within the boundaries of their geographical electoral cluster. No candidate can be elected as a Board Member without receiving a minimum of 5 votes.



4.4. Board Members are elected for a two-year mandate.

4.5. In case of an equal number of votes received by two or more candidates within one group and if, due to the limits of their cluster, they may not all become members of the Board a new round of voting shall be organised for the candidates in question. However, if a co-national of one of these candidates is already voted in as a Board Member, the candidate shall not become a Member of the Board. In case the second vote is still not decisive, the decision shall be made on a random basis by the drawing of names.

4.6. If the total number of candidates receiving at least 5 votes casted is at least six but does not reach nine, the Board will be composed of these candidates. If the total number of candidates receiving at least 5 votes casted does not reach six, a new round of voting will be called at the same General Meeting.

4.7. At their first meeting, the newly-elected Board Members elect a Chair and a Treasurer for Equinet for the same two-year mandate. The Chair must be one of the elected Board Members.

4.8. A person can serve a maximum of three consecutive terms as a Board Member.

5. During the Board's mandate

5.1 Board members shall be employees of the equality body (effective Equinet member) with a senior level of responsibilities in their respective organisation during the full length of their mandate. If this requirement is no longer fulfilled, their mandate will be automatically terminated.

5.2 Main Responsibilities of Board Members include:

- a) Continued pro-active involvement in the development and implementation of Equinet strategies and activities, oversee Equinet's budget and the work of the Secretariat
- b) Attend Board meetings. Board meetings take place in Brussels and other European cities
- c) Attend and actively participate in the Equinet Annual General Meetings (AGM)
- d) Participate actively in selected Equinet conferences, seminars, trainings and/or working group(s)
- e) Provide feedback on regular requests and consultations circulated by the Chair or Equinet Secretariat throughout the year between meetings
- f) Encourage the gender balance, the geographical representation and the diversity in the broadest sense in all activities of the network

5.3 If the mandate of a Board member terminates before the end of the term of the Board, the remaining Board members can temporarily appoint a substitute of their choice who will perform the mandate of the person she/he replaces. The substitute shall fulfil the criteria of article 3.1.b.



ANNEX I – Extract of the Equinet Statutes

ARTICLES 18 TO 27 (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

TITLE V: Board of Directors

Article 18

The INFPA (International Not-For-Profit Association) is administrated by a board of directors made up of at least 6 members. The directors are elected by the general meeting for a two year renewable mandate. The mandate of director is an unpaid position.

The board of directors has all the powers of management and administration, subject to orders of reference from the general meeting. It can delegate the day to day management to one or more director(s), to the executive director, or to one or more employees whose powers it will set.

The directors are elected by the general meeting on the basis of a list of people designated by the effective members. Any effective member can propose candidates for nomination to the board of directors.

Their responsibilities will be terminated by death, resignation, civil incapacity or by provisional administration, revocation or expiry of the mandate. A director can be revoked by the general meeting if a two thirds majority of the present or represented effective members rule thusly.

In the event of vacation during a mandate, the board of directors can temporarily appoint a substitute who will perform the mandate of the person he replaces.

All documents relating to the appointment or revocation of directors will be established in accordance with the law, will be deposited in the file in the name of the INFPA at the clerk's office in the competent commercial court and published in the Appendices of the Moniteur Belge.

Article 19

The board of directors will choose a president from within its members for a period of two years. In the event of absence or unavailability of the president, the board meetings will be chaired by a president elected by the members of the board of directors who are present.

Article 20

The board of directors meets both in Belgium and abroad, at least once per annum, on convocation by the executive director, at the request of the president or a director. A written convocation, mentioning the place, day and time of the meeting as well as its purpose, will be sent to the directors before each meeting. This convocation will be sent to the directors by letter, fax or email.

The board of directors can only validly deliberate and act if half of its members are present or represented. If this quorum is not reached, the board of directors cannot deliberate or make a decision other than to provide for a vacant position or convene a general meeting.

A director, being unable himself to attend a board meeting, can be represented by another director provided that the president or the executive director have been warned. A director cannot however hold more than three proxy votes.

The resolutions of the board of directors are taken by a majority vote by show of hands by the directors who are present or represented. A meeting can be adjourned by a vote of two thirds of the directors who are present or represented and entitled to vote No item which could not have been discussed at the initial meeting will be considered at the adjourned meeting.



Article 21

The board of directors has the power to carry out all actions which are necessary or pertinent to the realisation of the association's objective, with the exception of those that the law or the present statutes reserve for the general meeting.

In particular, the board of directors must:

- handle the candidatures of new members;
- advise, at his request, the secretary general on any issue designated by the same;
- invite the members to pay their contributions which will cover the expenses relating to the operation of the INFPA and other costs incurred by the INFPA in the realization of its objectives; this includes payment of contributions to other associations that the board of directors judges necessary for the interests of association;
- to create and name the sub-commissions and delegate the hypothetically achievable tasks and businesses to them in accordance with article 25 of these statutes;
- to recruit and name the executive director and personnel of the INFPA and to set the terms and conditions of their employment.
- to establish the annual accounts for the previous accounting period as well as the budget for the following financial year.

Article 22

The resolutions of the board of directors are recorded in a register signed by the president and the executive director and kept at the disposal of the members of the association. All copies or extracts required for legal or other purposes are signed by the executive director or a director who can certify them as being true copies.

TITLE VI: Delegation of Powers

Article 23

The board of directors can delegate certain powers of the INFPA to sub-commissions made up of people who are considered capable of handling the activities of the INFPA in accordance with the conditions defined by the board of directors. The board of directors however reserves the right to make any decisions regarding documents which constitute a legal commitment for the association.

The board of directors appoints an executive director in accordance with the conditions to be defined by the board of directors. The board of directors has the power to revoke the executive director in accordance with its current mode of deliberation.

The executive director is responsible for convening the members of the general meeting and the board of directors and manages the INFPA within the framework of the day to day management. The board of directors will be able to delegate other powers to the executive director or other responsible people when it proves to be necessary in order to achieve the association's objectives.

Article 24

The document which engage the association, other than those related to the day to day management, are signed, except special delegations by the board of directors, by the president and a director, who shall not have to submit proof of his authority to third parties.

Article 25

Neither the directors nor the executive director incur any personal obligations a result of their position and they are only responsible for the execution of their mandate.



Article 26

Legal proceedings, either in terms of defending and pursuing, are filed or defended in the name of the INFPA by the board of directors represented by a director or the executive director.

Article 27

The documents relating to the nomination, revocation and suspension of the roles of the people entitled to represent the association, established in accordance with the law, are published in the Appendices of the Moniteur Belge and deposited in the file made up, in the name of association, at the clerk's office of the relevant commercial court.



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