

Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies, has been formally established in 2007 as a legal entity under Belgian law as an International not-for-profit Association (INFPA / AISBL). It is the legal successor of the Equinet project and organisation without legal identity that existed from 2002 until 2007.

This information guide contains information on how to become a member of Equinet and on membership contributions and administrative requirements.

For any further information or clarification, please contact:
Equinet Secretariat – European Network of Equality Bodies
138 Rue Royale / Koningsstraat, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 (0)2 212 31 82
Fax: +32 (0)2 212 30 30
Email: Letizia.Bartocci@equineteurope.org

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I - SUBMISSION OF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

According to the Equinet statutes, the procedure for admission of new members is the following:

1. In order to become an Equinet member, the organisation needs to write a formal letter of application addressed to the executive director (Article 5 of Statutes).
 - The letter of application (see basic template overleaf) must be submitted on the organisation letterhead and signed by the appropriate representative, CEO or chair of the board.
 - *Copy of legislation, statute or other document demonstrating the body in question:*
 - is specialised in equality issues;
 - performs the functions of an equality body as listed in article 13 of 2000/43/EC (independent assistance to victims, independent advice, conduct independent research, publish independent reports and give independent advice) and/or article 8a of 76/207/EEC, inserted by article 1.7 of 2002/73/EC.These documents must be accompanied by a translation/summary in English of their contents (if original language other than English)
2. The application will be submitted to the Executive Board at its next meeting following receipt of the application, for review and to decide on the acceptance or rejection of the application.
3. The decision (in case of acceptance) of the Board will need to be ratified by the Annual General Assembly at its first meeting following the approval by the Equinet Executive Board, in order to formalise the membership.

The executive director will inform the candidate organisation in writing of the decision of the Executive Board (and subsequent AGM ratification) regarding the formal acceptance (or rejection) of the application for membership.

Template letter of application for Equinet membership

Printed on organisation letterhead

Executive Director
EQUINET Aisbl
European Network of Equality Bodies
138 Rue Royale
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

Date, place

On behalf of [name of the organisation] I request formal membership of Equinet AISBL/INFPA – European Network of Equality Bodies, enjoying the rights that members of Equinet are entitled to and respecting the obligations the membership brings with it, including adhering to Equinet statutes.

[Chief Executive of the organisation]

II - MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

According to the Equinet statutes and by decisions of the Annual General Meeting (AGM 27-28 February 2007), the following contributions are expected and required from effective Equinet Members.

The members' contributions are essential to ensure the co-financing of the Network by members required to complement the European Commission grant according to EC budget regulations (EC grant maximum 80% of total budget with a minimum 20% external co-financing required).

1. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

With reference to the decisions of the Equinet AGM (February 2007) and according to the Equinet statutes (article 6), each member organisation will have to pay a contribution in cash of a minimum of € 1,000 (one thousand Euro) membership fee per year (period 1.1.200X – 31.12.200X).

The Equinet AGM (February 2007) suggested that some larger organisations may be able to contribute more than the minimum € 1,000 annual membership fee, and any additional voluntary contribution will be much appreciated to support the functioning and activities of the Equinet network.

Payment procedure:

Step 1

Each member organisation will receive an invoice for the annual membership fee (for the period 1.1.200X- 31-12-200X - see Template Invoice Membership Fee overleaf) from the Equinet Secretariat at the start of the year (or following membership acceptance in case of new members joining).

Step 2

The membership fee must be paid at the beginning of each year (before 15 February or following new membership) by bank transfer to the following account:

Beneficiary: EQUINET Aisbl
Bank name: ING Belgium SA/NV
IBAN (of the account): BE 95363017481258
BIC/Swift (code of the Bank): BBRUBEBB
Reference for the payment: Quote membership <year> - <name member>

Important notes

- Equinet Aisbl will not accept payment of additional fees for bank transfers or for acceptance of cheques.
- Following decision of the Board, if the minimum membership fee has not been paid by a member, Equinet Aisbl reserves the right not to proceed with reimbursement of costs due to the member (travel, accommodation and per diem for Equinet Training, Working Group meetings etc) up to the first € 1000 as a compensation for the membership fee.

Template Invoice for payment of Annual Equinet Membership Fee



Rue Royale 138
 B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
 Tel +32 (0)2 2123182
 Fax +32 (0)2 2123030
info@equineteurope.org
www.equineteurope.org

ANNUAL EQUINET

MEMBERSHIP FEE <YEAR>

INVOICE

Member Organisation	
COUNTRY	

Date of the Invoice	Communication	Total Amount (€)
dd/mm/year	Equinet Membership Fee <year 200X>	€ 1000, 00*

** This amount is a minimum annual Membership Fee. Member organisations which are able or willing to contribute a higher amount as a support and co-financing to the functioning and operations of the Network are welcome to do so.*

We hereby request payment of the above mentioned Annual Membership Fee 200X by your member organisation. Payment should be made by bank transfer only as per details below, within 30 days following the date of this invoice.

The Equinet Board and Secretariat thank you in advance for your cooperation.

PAYMENT DETAILS (BANK TRANSFER ONLY):

Name of bank account holder:	EQUINET AISBL
Bank name:	ING Belgium SA/NV
Bank address & country:	Brussels North Area–Central Station Rue Ravenstein 68 B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Account Number:	363-0174812-58
IBAN:	BE 95363017481258
BIC:	BBRUBEBB

2. STAFF TIME CONTRIBUTION

In addition to the payment of the membership fee, a contribution in staff time by each member to Equinet activities forms part of Equinet's own financial contribution to the budget (to reach the minimum 20% co-financing requirement under the EC grant regulations).

With reference to the decisions of the Equinet AGM (February 2007), each member organisation will ensure a staff time contribution of an average of 30 days per year to Equinet activities, but with a differentiation between larger and smaller members possible to allow smaller organisations to contribute substantially less than 30 days.

The contribution in staff time by each member organisation covers contribution to the range of Equinet activities by any staff member, including: participation in Equinet AGM event, contribution to the Equinet Working Groups activities (communication, inputs, preparations of reports, meetings), participation in and preparation of Equinet Training events.

For Board members, additional contribution in staff time also covers Equinet Board inputs, communication and activities, and participation in regular Board meeting.

EC Administrative requirement – Timesheets

Timesheets will be requested and required from each member in November at the end of each year. Indeed, Members Timesheets (based on template provided – see indicative template overleaf) must be included in the final financial report to the European Commission. It is important for members throughout the year to keep track of dates and activities of staff time contribution by any of their staff (e.g. AGM attendance, participation in a training event, inputs to Working Group exchanges, etc.).


Members will send their timesheets to the Equinet Secretariat (before 15 December):
Letizia Bartocci, Administrative Officer
Equinet Secretariat – European Network of Equality Bodies
138 Rue Royale / Koningstraat, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Email: Letizia.bartocci@equineteurope.org
Fax: +32 (0)2 212 30 30

Important note:

- Without all timesheets by members, the EC final report cannot be completed and submitted (hence blocking payment of the budget balance to Equinet), nor can the Equinet grant application for the following year be processed without prior approval of the final report of the previous year.
- Day rates are provided by members corresponding to the costs of their staff time inputs in order to quantify the level of co-financing by Equinet provided in staff time contribution, in addition to membership fee. The day rates provided must correspond to real costs for the member organisation. The European Commission may ask at times for justification of certain day rates to be provided upon specific request for financial reporting and auditing purposes.

Template Timesheet format from each Equinet member

Printed on organisation letterhead

 Equinet European network of equality bodies	TIMESHEET EQUINET MEMBER 1 January [200X] – 31 December [200X]
Name of Organisation (Equinet Member):	[insert]
Country:	[insert]
EC Contract Title Reference:	Equinet Aisbl – European Network of Specialised Equality Bodies
EC Contract Reference:	[VS/2007/0283] [Commitment SI2.471595]

Please fill out each date worked (in full 1 day or 0.5 day) by any of your staff member to contribute to Equinet activities (Equinet AGM, Training, Working Group meetings/reports/activities, communication and exchange with members, etc.)

Date	Number of day(s) –	Place of work	Name of staff person / Detail on event or activity
dd/mm/year	1		
dd/mm/year	0.5		
TOTAL (days)	[total sum]		

Name of member representative: [insert]
 Date: dd/mm/year
 Signature: [sign]
 Stamp of organisation:

3. AGM TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION OF MEMBERS

Finally, in accordance with the decision and agreement by the Board to ensure the sufficient level of co-financing (20 % min) to the Equinet budget according to the EC grant regulations, member organisations will be expected to cover for the travel and accommodation costs for their representatives' attendance at the Members General Assembly (AGM) in Brussels.

EC Administrative requirement – copy of tickets & invoices

A copy of the travel ticket and hotel invoice will be required for EC reporting as supporting evidence of co-financing requirements by Equinet members, and should be provided to the Equinet Secretariat.

Important notes:

- All other costs related to the AGM and members' attendance (conference venue, costs, documentation, meals, etc.) will be covered by the Equinet budget.
- There will be limited resources available from the Equinet budget to support those members which may not be able cover for these (travel and accommodation) costs to ensure their participation. Equinet will be in a position to support attendance of 10 persons (maximum) at the AGM by reimbursing the costs for travel and accommodation where necessary.
- Travel and accommodation for participation of members in all other Equinet activities (e.g. training events, working group meetings, board meetings for board members, etc.) will be reimbursed to members and covered by the Equinet budget.

4. LETTER OF COMMITMENT – EC EQUINET ANNUAL GRANT APPLICATION

At the beginning of each year, a letter of commitment from each member will be required as part of the Equinet Grant Application to the European Commission for the coming year.

EC Administrative requirement – Member's Letter of Commitment

A letter of Commitment will be requested and required from each member to confirm members' contributions for the next year (based on template provided – see indicative template overleaf) in order to complete the Equinet Grant Application to the EC for the next year.

The letter of commitment will confirm the member's agreement in the course of the year to (1) pay the required annual membership fee, (2) deliver contribution in staff time to Equinet activities (2) cover for travel and accommodation of its representative(s) at the AGM.

Members will send their Letter of Commitment for the following year to the Equinet Secretariat (before 1 December):
Letizia Bartocci, Administrative Officer
Equinet Secretariat – European Network of Equality Bodies
138 Rue Royale / Koningstraat, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Email: Letizia.Bartocci@equineteurope.org
Fax: +32 (0)2 212 30 30

Important Note

Without all letters of commitment by members, the EC Grant Application for the Equinet Budget cannot be completed and submitted (hence blocking any budget advance payment to Equinet for the coming year).

Template letter of Commitment from each Equinet member

Printed on organisation letterhead

EQUINET Board
c/o EQUINET executive director
Rue Royale 138
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Re: Contribution [200X] to the EQUINET Network

Dear Members of the Board,

On behalf of [member organisation] I hereby inform you that our organisation will contribute in the year [200X] the staff as provided for in the Equinet Network proposal (beneficiary contribution) and budget, being:

1. A [200X] membership fee of minimum € 1000
2. [x] number of days at a daily rate of [y]
3. [a] number of days at a daily rate of [b] (in case a different rate is applied for AGM attendance, working group/ training activities, Board)
4. Travel and accommodation for minimum 1 night for 1 AGM to be held in Brussels, Belgium, in [200X] for at least one representative of our organisation.

The contribution is calculated on an annual basis for [200X].

Yours sincerely,

[executive officer]
[member organisation]

III – REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERS

According to Equinet budget and EC financial regulations, Equinet members will be reimbursed for all travel and accommodation costs for their participation in relevant Equinet activities. These include attending Equinet Trainings, Working Groups meetings and other events as appropriate.

Claim for reimbursement of costs incurred should be submitted to the Equinet Secretariat using the template form overleaf.

Reimbursement of costs will be processed according to EC financial regulations and Equinet budget limits (e.g. air travel second class tickets only, maximum € 450) and only with the required supporting documents (e.g. copy of the invoices and boarding pass/tickets)

Members will send their Reimbursement Form to the Equinet Secretariat:
Letizia Bartocci, Administrative Officer
Equinet Secretariat – European Network of Equality Bodies
138 Rue Royale / Koningstraat, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Email: Letizia.Bartocci@equineteurope.org
Fax: +32 (0)2 212 30 30

Important Note

As proposed by the Equinet Board and Treasurer and approved by the AGM (18 April 2008), actual payments and reimbursement of members' costs may be postponed to the end of the financial year in order to bridge cash-flow gaps related to the payment schedule of the EC Grant to the Equinet Network.

Template Reimbursement Form for Equinet members



EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT FORM

Please return this form to:
Letizia Bartocci - EQUINET
Letizia.Bartocci@equineteurope.org
 Rue Royale 138, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
 Tel. +32 (0)22123182 / Fax +32 (0)22123030

Name: <Firstname, Surname>
Organisation (if applicable):
Event / activity:
Date of the event:
Place of the event: <Place, Country>

DETAILS OF REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM:

Date	Item	Cost per item (€)*	Total Amount (€)*
	Travel - details (1)		
	Per diem costs – details (e.g. meals, local transport, etc.)		
	Accommodation – details		
TOTAL for Reimbursement (in Euro currency):			

(1) International travel only in economy class, local transfer included in per diem
 * If the supporting invoices/tickets are provided in another currency than Euro (€), please attach a copy of the daily exchange rate applied in order to present your claim above in Euro (€) currency.

IMPORTANT - please attach (as requested per EC financial regulations):

- Original tickets and boarding pass or boarding pass stubs (flights) / Tickets (train)
- Original copy of all invoices / receipts supporting claims listed above

REIMBURSEMENT DETAILS FOR BANK TRANSFER:

Name of bank account holder:	
Bank name:	
Bank address & country:	
IBAN:	
BIC:	
Your reference (if applicable):	

Date

Signature

IV – PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR EQUINET BOARD ELECTIONS 2009

Proposal voted and approved by EQUINET AGM 2008 (29 October 2008) in preparation for the next elections of the Executive Board (AGM 2009)

Current Board Status – EQUINET Aisbl

- The current Board was elected in 2007 (Elections AGM Feb 2007 confirmed by extraordinary AGM July 2007)¹
- The Board Mandate was extended to November 2009 (vote by AGM April 2008) to lead to period of next AGM.
- New elections of the EQUINET Board will take place at the AGM (Oct/Nov) 2009

Board Composition and Mandate

- Seven (7) board members constitute the EQUINET Executive Board
- Elections of the Board are held during the AGM Meeting every two years based on a closed ballot with 1 official vote per Member organisation (observers do not have a vote)
- Further to receipt and acceptance of candidatures prior to the AGM meeting, each board member is elected nominally by the AGM for a 2-years mandate (according to constitution)
- The elected Board Members nominate internally a Chair who must be a member of the Board, and a Treasurer for EQUINET for the same 2-years mandate
- A person can serve a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms as a Board Member.

BOARD ELECTIONS (2009) - Criteria for Board candidates nominations

- The EQUINET Executive Board consists of seven (7) elected Members
- Nominated candidates for Board member positions must be present at the AGM.
- Diversity in the broadest sense and gender balance within the composition of the Board should be actively encouraged.
- In order to ensure a cultural and regional balance, The EQUINET Board must consist of minimum one (1) elected Member and maximum two (2) Members from each of the following regional cluster groups:

<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>	<i>Group 4</i>
➤ Belgium	➤ Czech Republic	➤ Austria	➤ Denmark
➤ France	➤ Germany	➤ Bulgaria	➤ Estonia
➤ Italy	➤ Ireland	➤ Croatia	➤ Finland
➤ Luxemburg	➤ Netherlands	➤ Cyprus	➤ Latvia
➤ Malta	➤ Poland	➤ Greece	➤ Lithuania
➤ Portugal	➤ Slovakia	➤ Hungary	➤ Sweden
➤ Spain	➤ Great Britain	➤ Romania	➤ Norway
	➤ Northern Ireland	➤ Slovenia	

¹ The current EQUINET Board (2007-2009) is composed of the following members:

- Chila van der Bas (Chair), Equal Treatment Commission, The Netherlands
- Corina Comsa, National Council for Combating Discrimination, Romania
- Niall Crowley, Equality Authority, Ireland
- Dirk de Meirleir (Treasurer), Centre Equal Opportunities & Opposition to Racism, Belgium
- Esen Fikri, Commission for Protection against Discrimination, Bulgaria
- Ingrid Nikolay-Leitner, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria
- Mandana Zarrehparvar, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Denmark

Main responsibilities of Board members

- Continued pro-active involvement in the development and implementation of EQUINET strategy and activities
- Attend minimum 3/5 Board meetings per year (held in Brussels or other EU cities)²
- Attend and actively participate in EQUINET Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Participate actively in EQUINET Trainings and/or Working Group(s)
- Provide feedback on regular requests and consultations circulated by the Chair or Equinet Secretariat throughout the year between meetings

Call and Guidelines for Nomination for executive Board candidates (ELECTIONS 2009)

One of the main advantages of being an active board member is that you effectively have the opportunity to choose and influence the leadership and activities of EQUINET.

Does your member organisation have a good candidate for the function?

Nominations of candidates for the next Board must be received prior to the 2009 AGM and elections. Please send your candidate nominations before 30 September 2009 using the Board Candidate Nomination Form (see overleaf – to be prepared and available from the Equinet Secretariat in early 2009).

If members wish further information or have questions relating to the work of the Board, commitments of the Board members or key areas of work of EQUINET, please contact current members of the Board or the Equinet Secretariat.

² *Travel and accommodation costs for Members' attendance of Board meetings if and as required are covered by the EQUINET budget (payment of reimbursement claims submitted to EQUINET Secretariat with relevant support documents at the end of the financial year)*

Template Board Candidate Nomination Form

Form to be prepared and available from the Equinet Secretariat in early 2009.



BOARD CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORM EQUINET AGM ELECTIONS 2009

Please return this form to:

**Anne Gaspard, Executive Director
EQUINET Secretariat**

Anne.Gaspard@equineteurope.org

Rue Royale 138, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel. +32 (0)22123182 / Fax +32 (0)22123030

Name of Member

Organisation:

Country:

Name of Candidate: <Firstname, Surname>

Further information and details to be provided