

IVY POLICIES

# Volunteer Service Framework



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# Supported volunteering activities

IVY is the first volunteering programme of the European Commission's DG REGIO and has been set up to support European Territorial Cooperation. It aims to promote Interreg, thanks to the solidarity and civic engagement of young people.

IVY is centred around the volunteers who commit their time and lend their competences to benefit and promote Interreg and the host organisations, which enables volunteers to help shape cooperation policy.

Volunteers carry out activities with the goal of promoting Interreg. It is important to note that a volunteering activity is undertaken for a non-profit cause and does not replace paid staff. Equally, volunteering is not a learning activity, but provides the opportunity to contribute to European Territorial Cooperation. In this sense, the general objective of volunteering activities in IVY is expected to be the promotion of Interreg.

To enable a successful IVY experience, the involvement of IVY volunteers must respect the following conditions:

- the volunteering nature of the initiative: volunteers support the host organisation with additional tasks, but do not replace staff (see 'No job substitution policy' for details);
- activities are in line with the principles and objectives of IVY: host organisations plan the tasks of the volunteer ahead of time, when applying to host a volunteer. AEBR monitors compliance with the principles and objectives of IVY and gives feedback accordingly;
- tasks exclusively promote Interreg: IVY volunteers will only be involved in tasks directly related to the implementation of the Interreg programme or project the host organisation is responsible for, in accordance with the tasks agreed upon in the application form.



The general tasks are previously agreed upon between AEBR and the host organisation and must be upheld. The specific content of the task description should be ultimately developed and agreed upon together by the host organisation and the volunteer to allow the volunteer to have an active say in their experience. However, specific tasks will need to be coherent with those outlined and agreed upon in the Programme or Project Note.



Changes to the tasks agreed upon should be communicated in a timely manner to AEBR's team in order to ensure transparency, collaboration and a quality experience for everyone. If new tasks do not respect the conditions outlined above, AEBR will reject the changes and will ensure that the original tasks are carried out in line with IVY's principles and objectives.

As a general rule, IVY volunteers' tasks shall aim to:

- Support the communication and visibility of Interreg and its benefits;
- Support the implementation of Interreg projects.

Volunteers' tasks are expected to demonstrate the benefits of cooperation and highlight the solidarity dimension of Interreg. Some examples are:

- communication about Interreg (articles, newsletters, posts for social media, support for event organisation);
- communication with project partners;
- promotion of projects with local media and stakeholders;
- implementation of activities that reflect the solidarity aspects of projects.





# Eligibility and participation criteria

AEBR is responsible for the involvement of host organisations and volunteers in the programme. Their selection is based on adherence to IVY's principles and objectives to best reflect the European Commission's and AEBR's values of volunteerism and cooperation.

## POLICIES OF PARTICIPATION OF INTERREG PROGRAMME AND PROJECTS

- Eligibility criteria for host organisations:
- Any Interreg programme
- Any beneficiary of an ongoing Interreg project

# PARTICIPATION CRITERIA FOR HOST ORGANISATIONS

Host organisations wishing to host a volunteer in the framework of the IVY initiative are expected to adhere to the principles of IVY and deploy the volunteers in line with the objectives of the volunteering programme, as follows:

## OBJECTIVES OF IVY

- promote concrete achievements within Interreg programmes and projects;
- strengthen the visibility of Interreg programmes and projects among the general public;
- allow young volunteers to provide support to Interreg projects and programmes;
- provide young people with solidarity-engagement opportunities.

## PRINCIPLES OF IVY

- voluntary nature of the experience, meaning that the primary goal of hosting a volunteer is to foster European Territorial Cooperation through solidarity;
- no job substitution: volunteers complement and supplement regular work and are not intended to replace paid staff or to perform work that would otherwise be done by paid staff;
- co-shaping: we aim to enable young people to shape European Territorial Cooperation and cohesion through their experience.

Every host organisation must also adhere to the additional principles laid out by AEBR, referenced from the [European Solidarity Corps Charter](#), the [European Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers](#) by the Youth Forum with the support of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, and the [Charter of the European Voluntary Service](#) (EVS).

The additional principles are outlined in the Programme and Projects application notes and include:

- Respect for the criteria to identify tasks, among which activities must be in line with IVY's objectives, tasks must be outlined clearly for candidates and discussed in-depth with the selected volunteer, and volunteers should be allowed to suggest specific tasks that align with their interests and skills.
- Compliance with standards and principles to implement in order to select and empower the volunteer, such as: selecting the volunteer in compliance with the principles of equal treatment, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and based on the competences and interests of the candidates, as well as valuing the volunteers' contributions and recognising their support.
- Commitment to ensure guidance, including support and feedback.
- Offer support to engage the volunteer, including ensuring a decent and safe environment, integrating the volunteer in the organisation and the local community, and actively involving them.
- Respect for the participants: volunteers shall not bear any costs related to participation in IVY, and their data must be stored in a way that protects their rights.

The full list of principles can be viewed [here](#).

Host organisations are selected based on the information provided in the application documents, the Programme Note and Project Note for Interreg programmes and project beneficiaries, respectively. AEER's team reviews the submitted documents on the basis of the IVY principles and objectives to ensure that the applicant demonstrates the capacity to host volunteers in the framework of IVY and in full respect of its values.

# POLICIES OF PARTICIPATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Eligibility criteria for young people:

- A citizen or resident of an eligible participant country (see the full list of eligible countries [here](#));
- Between 18 and 30 years old;
- Must not have participated in IVY before.

Selection criteria for volunteers:

- Candidates are expected to share a passion for cooperation;
- People with different cultural backgrounds, competences, experiences and interests are recruited, depending on the specific projects;
- For some offers, certain relevant competences may be required, as well as language proficiency;
- IVY volunteers must show a commitment to the principles and values of volunteerism and European Territorial Cooperation.

Candidates are screened and recommended to the host organisation by AE BR's IVY team, based on the information provided by the applicants, namely their curriculum vitae (CV) and, if attached, additional information such as motivation letters or similar documentation.

## EXCEPTIONS

- Volunteers may be recommended directly by the host organisation or the mentor. To avoid misuse and to foster complete alignment with the volunteering programme, the IVY team will assess the candidate's profile and motivation to ensure that they are suitable for the position. AE BR may suggest different candidates to the host organisation if the one proposed initially is not suitable for the placement offer and/or does not respect the principles of the IVY programme.
- Volunteers may carry out an internship in parallel with the host organisation while volunteering, if the tasks of the internship are the same as those outlined in the volunteering agreement and are therefore in line with the principles of the IVY initiative.



A parallel contract may be made if needed, but the activities and conditions outlined must be the same as those included in the IVY volunteering agreement, unless explicitly agreed upon differently with the IVY team.

Organisations hosting a volunteer who is also an intern will be expected to uphold the volunteering principles of IVY (voluntary nature of the experience, no job substitution and co-creation).

In the case of a parallel internship, it is important to ensure that there is no double-funding: the participant shall not receive funds from EU resources for expenses that are already covered by the IVY programme (that is, organisational and personal support for food, accommodation and local transport).

## AS PARTICIPANTS OF THE INTERREG VOLUNTEER YOUTH PROGRAMME, VOLUNTEERS SHALL UPHOLD THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES

- embrace the values of solidarity, respect for human dignity and human rights, and believe in the promotion of a fair and equal society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality prevail;
- strive to enhance solidarity between people, while respecting their cultures and their traditions, and aim to build a community of shared responsibilities and mutual support;
- be willing to make meaningful contributions to society and show solidarity, cooperation and mutual understanding.

Measures to support volunteers in need of tailored assistance are in place (see details in the chapter 'Compensation, support and benefits'). Volunteers who would like to request assistance can inform AEBR's team at [ivy@aebr.eu](mailto:ivy@aebr.eu).

## CODE OF CONDUCT, PARTICIPATION POLICY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To guarantee that everyone involved feels safe and respected, AEBR, volunteers and host organisations must comply with the following set of norms and responsibilities:

- not act in any way that could put others or themselves at risk of being harmed;
- respect the rules, organisational structure and practices that govern the host organisation, also bearing in mind that this framework may be necessary to respect the personal health, safety and dignity of individuals involved in the activity;
- abide by the laws in force in the host country;
- joining the Interreg Volunteer Youth initiative must always be the voluntary choice of a young person, who is free to resign from the initiative. They have the right to refuse to accept any offer of deployment without affecting their chance of receiving other offers in the future;
- participation in this initiative does not involve the payment of any fee;
- at the end of their placement, volunteers are entitled to receive a certificate, confirming their participation in the activity;
- when accepting a placement for a volunteering activity, supervisors representing the host organisation and volunteers will sign an agreement with AEBR and the other parties, detailing the conditions of the activity, in line with the principles of the IVY initiative;
- prior to the start of the activity and during their deployment, volunteers will receive clear information about the tasks they will carry out and, where appropriate, adequate training.



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