

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF THE VIA FRANCIGENA WAYS (EAVF)

STATUTE

Article 1 – Name, headquarters and duration

The association named the “EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF THE VIA FRANCIGENA WAYS”, holder of the title, as granted by the Council of Europe, of “Carrier Network” [*réseau porteur*] (2007) for the safeguarding and valorisation of Archbishop Sigeric’s route, is hereby established. This route, recognised by the Council of Europe as a “Cultural Route” (1994), is the historically recognised basis of the main itinerary, to which Italian and European Francigena variants to Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago are added. The registered office is in Fidenza (PR), Italy, in Piazza Duomo 16 at Casa Cremonini. The association may establish secondary offices, branches, agencies and representation. The association will last until 31/12/2050.

Article 2 – The territorial reference areas

The territorial reference corridor is Archbishop Sigeric’s route, as declared by the Council of Europe as a “Cultural Route”, extending across five European states – Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Italy and the Vatican State. Further variants may be included, when surveyed according to the technical standards of the main route, referring to historically documented routes, from across Europe converging on the City of Rome, and towards the south of Italy and as far as Jerusalem. Such scientifically justified and technically surveyed variants shall be accepted and approved by the General Assembly of Members, subject to the authorisation of the competent national and regional authorities.

Article 3 – Aims

The Association is not for profit. The aims are to:

- Promote productive relations with European institutions (the Council of Europe and the European Union) and international organisations
- Continue the close relationship with the European Institute of Cultural Routes of Luxembourg
- Promote dialogue and sharing of good practices, related to developing the route, with other European and Mediterranean Cultural Routes
- Hold initiatives to raise awareness, protect, promote, add value and coordinate the European Via Francigena ways
- Unite and coordinate the European public bodies along the Via Francigena of Sigeric’s historical route, extended to the Via Francigena of the South on the stretch between Rome and Brindisi/Santa Maria di Leuca
- Encourage collaboration with the religious world, promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue
- Unite and coordinate the Organisations, Universities and Associations which, in any capacity, work for the development, enhancement and communication of the Via Francigena ways
- Promote awareness and appreciation of devotional and cultural pilgrimage sites and routes
- Welcome other route variants into the association
- Favour and protect the pilgrims’ journey through support and promotion with competent territorial bodies for the creation of adequate infrastructure and services for better use of the routes to encourage sustainable tourism
- Organise and promote initiatives together with those involved in the promotion of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela and other European cultural routes



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road to Rome

Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel
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- Promote and organise initiatives to strengthen citizens' knowledge of their national roots and to consolidate a common European identity
- Harmonise the promotional activities of territories, enhancing their cultural and touristic vocation, encouraging the sale of local products

The association may carry out any activities connected to and similar to those listed above, as well as perform all acts and conclude all commercial, financial and real estate transactions that are necessary or useful for the achievement of said aims. The association may join other associations, bodies and companies that carry out activities within the scope of its objectives.

Article 4 – Members

European territorial collectives of municipal, inter-municipal, provincial (departmental), regional (cantonal) and county dimension, as well as public and private non-profit and non-commercial associations can become members as long as they carry out activities in support of the overall project for the enhancement of the Via Francigena ways and have signed a memorandum of understanding with the association. The associations must be at least of a provincial nature and must be presented by a public partner member (region, province etc) of the corresponding geographical area to the Assembly. In the case of an association established on a national level, relations will be maintained with the national leadership.

The following membership categories are foreseen:

- Founding member: those who joined the association before the 30th of April 2006;
- Ordinary members: those who joined after the 30th of April 2006;

The Assembly may also appoint, from public and private entities, meritorious and honorary members: these are people who, by virtue of their personality or by attendance at the Association or by having contributed financially or having carried out activities in favour of the association, supporting its activities and its enhancement.

Article 5 – Friends of the Via Francigena ways

The Friends of the Via Francigena ways are non-profit, non-commercial public and private associations who, while not contributing financially to the Association, support the overall project of enhancing the Via Francigena ways. The Friends of the Via Francigena ways are not entitled to a vote.

Article 6 – Withdrawal and exclusion

Withdrawal. Other than the cases foreseen in law, a member who is no longer able to share the social objectives may withdraw. Notice of withdrawal must reach the Board by the 31st of October of the calendar year preceding that in which the withdrawal takes effect.

Exclusion. Exclusion shall be decided by the Assembly against any member who:

1. Does not comply with the provisions set out in the current statute, with social regulations or with the resolutions legally adopted by the organisation;
2. Has failed to pay the membership fee in full for two consecutive years, following a written invitation by the President sent to the member, with an invitation to pay the membership fee within 60 days of receipt;
3. Carries out activities in competition with or contrary to the interests of the association.

Resolutions adopted for exclusion shall be notified to the member by registered letter with return receipt or by an electronic equivalent. The appeal against the exclusion, under penalty of forfeiture, must reach the Board no later than 15 days after receiving the communication. The presentation of the appeal does not have the effect of suspending the exclusion and its possible acceptance does not entitle to compensation for damages. Withdrawal or exclusion of members shall not entitle them to reimbursement of membership fees paid.

Article 7 – Governing Bodies

The following form the Governing Bodies:

- a) The General Assembly
- b) The Executive Board
- c) The President, Vice-Presidents and Deputy Presidents.

All members of the Governing Bodies remain in office for three years from the date of appointment and may be re-elected.

Article 8 – The General Assembly

The Assembly is made up of legal representatives of the Founding members and of the Ordinary members, or their delegates. Meritorious or honorary members and the European Institute of Cultural Routes are permanent guests of the Assembly and do not have the right to vote. The convocation of the General Assembly shall take place by written communication, sent at least ten days before the meeting, by e-mail or legal e-mail, informing of the place, date and time of the first and second convocation together with the Agenda.

The meeting may be held through the use of digital platforms for remote participation, which allow for the participation of members, even when located in different places, through audio and video communication. The connection must ensure compliance with the Association's methods and the principles of good faith and equal treatment of members. In particular, it is necessary that:

- The Chairman of the General Assembly, also by means of the Executive Board, is able to ascertain the identity and legitimacy of those present, regulate the proceedings of the meeting, and ascertain and proclaim the results of votes
- The person taking minutes is able to adequately understand the meeting to be verbalised
- Those present are allowed to partake in the discussion and simultaneous voting on the items on the agenda
- The notice of meeting (except for the case of a full-attendance ordinary meeting) indicates the ways in which members can access audio/video connections provided by the association, with the meeting deemed to have been held in the place where the Chairperson and the minute-taker are present

The assembly deliberates on matters of:

1. Guidelines of the association
2. Promotional projects and plans
3. Balance sheets and budgets
4. Appointment and dismissal of the President, Vice-Presidents and of the Board
5. Determination of remuneration and reimbursement of expenses of the Governing Bodies
6. Determination of the membership fee
7. Exclusion of members
8. Amendments to the Statute



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9. Appointment, if deemed appropriate, of an International Scientific Council composed of renowned scholars from each nation crossed by the Francigena route
10. Admission, appointment and resignation of members on the basis of provisions of art. 6 set out above

The Assembly is convened and shall meet at least once a year, within the four months following the end of the financial year. It shall be convened on the initiative of the Board or when a written request is made by at least one-fifth of the members', indicating the items to be discussed. In the latter case, the Assembly must meet within thirty days of the request.

The Assembly is chaired by the President of the Association, or in the event of their absence, by the first Deputy. The Assembly is considered valid when:

- In the first convocation, half plus one of the members entitled to vote are present.
- In the second convocation, any number of the members entitled to vote are present.

For a resolution to be deemed valid, both in the first and second convocation, a simple majority is required. At the Assembly, only the legal representative of the member body or association, or a member with an official proxy to the legal representative, may vote. Each member entitled to a vote may hold no more than two voting proxies in addition to his own. The resolution to amend the Articles of Association, and the eventual dissolution of the association, in both the first and second convocation, shall be adopted with the votes of at least two thirds of the members present.

Article 9 – Executive Board

The Executive Board is composed of:

- The President
- Eight Vice-Presidents
- Legal representatives or delegates of seven Provinces or Departments or Districts designated among those adhering to the association
- Legal representatives or delegates of each Region or Canton or County members of the Association
- The mayor or their delegate of the cities of Rome and Canterbury
- The mayor or their delegate of the municipalities hosting Association offices
- A representative of the Vatican City
- Legal representatives or their delegates of eighteen Municipalities, normally located in each of the European regions of the Itinerary
- Legal representatives or delegates of member associations representing 10% on a European scale
- Nationals of member countries of the Council of Europe endowed with particular expertise and experience in one or more fields relevant to the Council of Europe Cultural Routes programme, not exceeding 10% of the total delegation

The Executive Board is convened on the initiative of the President, or when requested by at least one third of the members. In this case, the President shall convene the meeting within 15 days of the request.

The convocation shall be sent by email, registered letter or digital equivalent at least seven days before the meeting with an indication of the items on the agenda. The meeting may be held through the use of digital platforms for remote participation, which allow for the participation of members, even when located in different places, through audio and video communication. The connection must ensure compliance with the Association's methods and the principles of good faith and equal treatment of members. In particular, it is



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necessary that:

- The President is able to ascertain the identity and legitimacy of those present, regulate the proceedings of the meeting, and ascertain and proclaim the results of votes
- The person taking minutes is able to adequately understand the meeting to be verbalised
- Those present are allowed to partake in the discussion and simultaneous voting on the items on the agenda
- The notice of meeting indicates the ways in which members can access audio/video connections provided by the association, with the meeting deemed to have been held in the place where the Chairperson and the minute-taker are present

The Executive Board is considered valid when:

- In the first convocation, half plus one of the members entitled to vote are present.
- In the second convocation, any number of the members entitled to vote are present.

Resolutions are passed by an absolute majority of the votes cast by the members present. In the event of a tie, the vote of the President prevails.

The Executive Board is vested with the broadest powers for the management of the Association. Should a member leave office, the Assembly shall replace them at the first useful assembly.

The President has legal and procedural representation and signatory powers.

Article 10 – The President and Vice-Presidents

The President and the eight Vice-Presidents are elected by the Assembly with the favourable vote of the majority of those present. The President represents the association and is the guarantor of the achievement of its purpose and compliance with the statute, and convenes and chairs the meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Board. The President has the power and authority to delegate operational powers to the members of the Executive Board, cooperating to implement the orders of the Assembly and the Executive Board. The eight Vice-Presidents are appointed by resolution of the Assembly, on the proposal of the President. From the eight Vice-Presidents, the President, after consulting the Executive Board, appoints at least one Deputy, and if deemed appropriate, a second Deputy. The first and second Deputies replace the President in the event of absence or impediment. Replacement takes place in the order of their appointment; thus, in the event of the President's absence or inability to attend, the first Deputy replaces the President, and if the first Deputy is also absent or unable to attend, the second Deputy replaces him.

Article 11 – Management and operative structure

The President, having consulted the Executive Board, entrusts activities pertaining to the achievements of the objectives of ordinary operations and strategic development, planned by the Governing Bodies, to the employees, external collaborators and employees of the local member organisations deemed suitable in terms of experience and skills, by means of collaboration and recruitment assignments.

Article 12 – Treasurer

The Treasurer, as identified in accordance with Article 11, is responsible for the correct financial management of the Association. The Treasurer performs the accounting functions and cooperates with the management structure in the drafting of provisional and final budgets, as well as collecting the Association's revenues and paying expenses in accordance with the provisions of corporate bodies.

Article 13 – Finance and Assets

The Association's assets consist of tangible and intangible assets owned by the Association itself.

The Association's income consists of:

- Annual fees paid by members
- Any extraordinary fees decided by the Assembly in relation to particular initiatives that require funds in excess of the ordinary budget
- Economic contributions from the State, the Regions, the EU and any other public or private bodies or subjects
- From donations, subsidiaries or legacies from third parties or associates
- Any other income that contributes to increasing the Association's assets

The annual membership fee, which founding members and ordinary members are required to pay, is resolved by the Assembly, upon proposal of the Executive Board, and must be paid by members by the 30th of April of the relevant financial year. The amount of the annual fee shall in any case be differentiated according to the type of entity, and with regards to municipalities and similar European territorial bodies, commensurate with the number of inhabitants.

Articolo 14 – Financial Year

The financial year of the Association corresponds to the calendar year.

The balance sheet, accompanied by an illustrative report on the activities carried out during the financial year by the Association, is to be approved by the Assembly within four months of the closure of the financial year. Following the same deadline, the Assembly shall approve the budget for the current financial year.

Article 15 – Auditing Body

The Auditing Body consists of between one and three members, appointed by the Assembly. The Body, if collective in composition, will determine its President from the members, and exercises the function of administrative and accounting control to safeguard the correct use of the Association's resources, of examining the budget and final accounts and draws up accompanying reports, and, if convened, participates in Executive Board meetings and at the Assembly, with the right to reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of its functions.

Article 16 – Dissolution

In the event of dissolution of the association, the Assembly shall decide on the donation of assets for public benefit.

Article 17 – General Provisions

The original Italian version of the present Statute is the only version that holds legal value. Any dispute arising out of or in connection with this deed and the relationship between members arising out of it shall fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Court of Parma with the application of Italian law.

With regards to anything not foreseen in the present Statute, the laws in force shall apply.