

Social Platform Code of Conduct

Adopted on: 20 November 2022 at Social Platform EGA

As a civil society network dedicated to the values of non-discrimination, gender equality and equality and social inclusion, Social Platform and its representatives must live our values and ensure the appropriate level of safeguarding within our operations and activities.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to ensure :

- that proper safeguards are in place to protect employees and anyone engaged with our activities,
- that the spaces we provide for participation are inclusive and safe,
- that everyone who represents us does so with professionalism and a commitment to inclusion,
- that we are accountable as an organisation for providing this inclusive, professional and safe space and dealing with any breaches of this code.

Positive consequence of the proper application of this code of conduct is that employees and representatives will feel safer at work, will know how to behave appropriately and will encourage the good governance and reputation of Social Platform.

This code of conduct should be read in complement to our Statutes, Internal Rules and other policy documents that guide our work including our overarching strategy, Social Media policy and wellbeing plan and, in the case of employees, the employment rules and regulations. The code of conduct covers all individuals (including Management Committee members, employees), representatives from organisations in our membership, any organisation or person who we enter into an agreement with and the section on behaviours at our activities binds anyone who attends our events, meetings or activities. This means that in all cases, individuals bound by the code must behave and act in accordance with the code of conduct and be alert and act to reduce the risk of violations.

All incoming members, representatives of members and representatives and employees of Social Platform will receive a copy of these codes of conduct and must sign or agree to it before attending or undertaking any activities on behalf of Social Platform. The section of the code of conduct that applies to those engaging with our activities will be posted on our website and forwarded to everyone participating in our activities and events and a copy of the relevant articles and complaint form will be placed on our website to allow breaches to be reported.

Social Platform will facilitate conversations with employees and those with specific responsibilities under this code of conduct to ensure that everyone is aware that they should use this code of conduct when they feel there has been a breach and so those with responsibilities to respond to violations now how to do so.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Social Platform and our members are committed to equality, solidarity, nondiscrimination, the promotion of social justice and respect of fundamental rights for all.

As a workplace and safe and inclusive community, Social Platform aims to foster mutual respect, wellbeing and dignity in all its relations in the workplace and with partners and individuals.

Representatives of Social Platform, particularly Management Committee members, shall always act in the interest of Social Platform and in accordance with its Statutes and Internal rules and other policies including internal our social media policy, wellbeing plan and code of conduct. Representatives of Social Platform must also adhere to Belgian or national laws that are applicable, if abroad, and applicable international conventions. Any breach of the law will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest may arise within the operation of Social Platform. When decisions are taken that are not in the best interest of the organisation or its operations, a conflict of interest might be the reason. The existence of family ties, friendships, or financial relationships between persons linked to our activities may affect the perception of Social Platform's credibility, impartiality, and independence.

Conflicts of interest can arise from financial, political or other strategic interests of individuals representing Social Platform and may negatively impact our strategy, the management of financial resources, contracting, procurement, travel, and participation in activities. Those covered by the code of conduct shall report possible conflicts of interest to Social Platform's Secretary General or Management Committee.

Safeguarding

Social Platform is committed to safeguarding employees and individuals that are involved or benefit from our activities from within and outside our membership. This includes addressing improper uses of power, ensuring security, dealing with any forms of harassment, bullying, discrimination and violence which will be dealt with below.

Security concerns the work environment, safety, health and well-being of employees and partners, as well as the sustainability of the activities. Social Platform has security responsibilities for its employees and is responsible for discussing security aspects and measures with member organisations and partner organisations.

Safety and risk awareness are also a responsibility of employees and representatives of Social Platform. Security must be considered when planning events, meetings, accommodation and travel and must also be considered outside of working hours. Those covered by the code of conduct should do their utmost not to expose themselves or others to risk when travelling for work. It is important to be aware of, and avoid, risk behaviours that could lead to yourself, your colleagues or partners facing situations of conflict or reprisals by authorities, threats, violence, blackmail, or other dangers. Information shall be handled with care. This applies to all communications and information, especially digital. Carelessness could directly endanger colleagues, partners, and yourself.

Employees and representatives of Social Platform may also be subject to improper uses of power, security risk, forms of harassment, bullying, discrimination and violence at events or activities of our partners. Social Platform commits to raise any such behaviour with external partners and request specific action through relevant complaints procedures or dialogue with the partner. In order to protect employees and representatives, decisions can also be taken to disengage with partners, if behaviours are not sufficiently addressed. Social Platform representative or employee can raise such behaviour

directly with the Secretary General, Head of Operations or the staff and wellbeing focal point in the Management Committee. Anyone who raises such an issue should not be fearful of the impact on their employment and all issues raised will be dealt with in a serious manner. Social Platform will encourage partners to develop their own safeguarding and reporting procedures to encourage a safe environment for all.

Improper use of position of power

Social Platform recognizes that power can be held by our organisation and our representatives and is committed to addressing power imbalances. A position of power must never be used improperly for someone's own benefit or at the expense of others. An economic, or other close relationship (ie romantic or friendship) with a person who is, or may be perceived to be, dependent or junior or in a less privileged position to you is inappropriate and shall be avoided, as such a relationship could risk exposing you or the other party to negative consequences, both in the current relationship and in the future. Should such a relationship arise, the Secretary General, Head of Operations or the wellbeing and staff focal point in the Management Committee shall be informed as soon as possible. In addition, a position of power must not be used to give anyone advantages they would not normally have enjoyed. Conduct and relations shall be carried out in such a way that there can never be a perception that different benefits are expected or required.

Information and data management

Information and data management are essential tools for Social Platform. Adherence to GDPR is key to be able to guarantee the integrity of our employees, members, and partners. The dissemination of information through various channels is a central part of Social Platform's communications. Those covered by the code of conduct are expected to adhere to our social media policy.

Social Platform strives to be open and transparent regarding our operations and financing. This means proactively sharing timely, accessible, relevant, and clear information about the organisation and its activities, as well as answering requests for information.

There are times when it is inappropriate to disclose information. Disclosure of sensitive information, including personal information related to human resources, risks seriously compromising the security of employees and partners, compromising Social Platform's effectiveness, and reducing our credibility. Discretion is therefore expected, and sensitive information must not be disseminated. Information that has not been made public and that is known to you because of your position may not be used for private benefit. It is understood that this does not affect the exchange of information among colleagues that is necessary for the Social Platform's operations.

Alcohol and drugs

Carrying out activities on behalf of Social Platform while under the influence of alcohol could risk the reputation of the organisation and lead to an erosion of trust and respect from colleagues and partners. Therefore, a restrictive approach to alcohol shall be observed. Employees of Social Platform should also adhere to the alcohol and drug policy in the employment rules and regulations.

Alcohol consumption is only permitted in exceptional cases, such as at public dinners, occasionally during team buildings and similar events. On these occasions, it is important that alcohol consumption is

moderate. An 'alcohol relationship' must not be developed within the framework of Social Platform's activities. Meetings and decisions must not be moved to the pub or similar establishments. When on trips on behalf of Social Platform, you should restrict your alcohol consumption during your leisure time in line with your responsibility as a representative of Social Platform. Alcohol consumption is strictly forbidden when travelling by car and, as a passenger, you should always react if you suspect that the driver is under the influence of alcohol.

All forms of involvement with and consumption of substances classified as illegal narcotics are prohibited both during working hours and leisure time. Exceptions are made if the substances relate to prescription medicine for personal use.

Struggles with substance abuse issues, in line with Social Platform's employee rules and regulations and general commitment to fostering wellbeing at staff and organisational level, will be dealt with in a spirit of support and caring.

Discrimination, harassment and violence

Social Platform opposes all forms of harassment, violence, bullying, discrimination, or any similar harmful behaviours and has a zero-tolerance policy for such behaviours. This also includes personalised critical remarks about staff or other meeting participants or members in meetings of Social Platform. Feedback on staff can be made privately to the Secretary General. At all times in Social Platform spaces, we communicate honestly and respectfully.

No single person or group, regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, social status, political opinion, or functional variation may be discriminated against.

In the Social Platform employment rules and regulations, employees and Social Platform are bound by the policy on prevention of psychosocial load caused by work, including violence, harassment and sexual harassment at work. In line with the employment rules and regulations, violence is understood to be any situation in which a person is threatened or is physically or psychologically attacked whilst representing or attending a Social Platform activity.

Harassment can be several forms of similar or different forms of abuse that are external or internal to the activities of Social Platform, which occur over a certain period of time and which have the aim or the effect of harming the personality, dignity or physical or psychological integrity of a person attending Social Platform activities or an employee whilst carrying out his/her work so as to pose a threat to their work or to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment and which manifests itself, in particular, through words, intimidation and unilateral acts, gestures and written materials.

Sexual harassment, abuse, and sexual exploitation

No individual shall in any way be subjected to sexual harassment, whether in physical or mental form. It can involve touching, groping, jokes, suggestions, glances, and images that are sexually evocative and devaluing. In line with the employee rules and regulations, sexual harassment can take the form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is designed to harm the dignity of a person or to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It is the victim

who decides whether the behaviour is unwelcome. The code of conduct should be read in complement to the social media policy and specifically the provisions on inappropriate or explicit content.

All forms of sexual abuse and exploitation are prohibited, as are all forms of sexual contact between adults and children. It is unacceptable to exploit a person or group in a situation of vulnerability.

Purchase of sexual services and use of pornographic material during work hours or when travelling to represent the organisation, all transactions, money, employment, goods, or services, in exchange for sexual acts or other forms of degrading behaviour and exploitation are prohibited. These activities are strictly prohibited where deemed illegal also during leisure time. The purchase of sexual services here does not only refer to the purchase of sexual services in the traditional sense, it also includes "private assistance" meaning payment of bills, rents, clothing, school fees, and so on in exchange for sexual services.

Visits to brothels, porn or strip clubs and similar establishments should be avoided and is prohibited when travelling to represent Social Platform. Furthermore, pornographic material must not be consumed using the technical equipment provided by Social Platform. Finally, any involvement with child pornography material is strictly prohibited.

Facilitating equal participation

Social Platform is committed to the participation of all people on equal terms and no representative of Social Platform should seek to make participation more difficult for anyone and should seek to facilitate the participation of the people from groups in vulnerable situations that we represent. This includes making meetings accessible and inclusive. Examples of this would be ensuring that those from vulnerable groups feel supported to contribute and that the space is shared equally with them.

Behaviour at events, meeting or other activities

Social Platform requires that the behaviour of any individual participating in any offline or online activity must be in line with the values of Social Platform and promotes an inclusive atmosphere and an accessible environment while enforcing nonviolent communication and balanced, inclusive facilitation.

Social Platform takes a zero-tolerance approach in its activities to any kind of discrimination, as defined above, and violence including but not limited to bullying, degradation, harassment, verbal, non-verbal, physical or non-physical humiliation and intimidation.

Before every activity, the staff member or other representative that is responsible for the event, meeting or activity will ensure that participants will be made aware of this code of conduct and the procedure in case of violations (outlined below).

VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Violations by participants in activities, events or meetings

For violations of the code during events or other activities by individuals participating, violations can be reported via an online complaints form which is available on our website and will be circulated to all participants after activities.

In the case of witnessing or having received a report of any written, non-verbal or verbal violent or discriminatory behaviour, conduct or discourse, the staff member or other representative responsible for the meeting may respond using their best judgment and depending on severity of the action with the following actions:

1. Remind participants of their obligation to act in accordance with the code of conduct.
2. Have a one-to-one conversation with the person to make sure that there is an understanding of the inappropriate action.
3. Engage with the person to explain and ask for an apology and/or retraction.
4. Suspend the session and/or ask the person to leave the meeting, event or activity. If the person refuses to leave, they can be ejected from the meeting online or escorted out.
5. In the case of violent or discriminatory behaviour, conduct or discourse that is physical in nature, immediately suspend the activity, ensure that the venue is safe for all participants and all concerned parties are in discrete locations and, if necessary, contact the police according to the laws of the country.

If the complaint is received after the event, then the Secretary General/Head of Operations will review the complaint and have conversations with those affected and the person about whom the complaint was made. If the code has been deemed to be breached, depending on the severity, actions can include:

1. Informing the persons involved that their behaviour is in breach of the code of conduct and reminding them of the code, if they want to participate in Social Platform activities in the future.
2. Ask the person to apologise to the person or group who made the complaint.
3. Temporarily banning them from attending meetings or activities.
4. Banning this individual from attending meetings or activities.
5. Reporting the breach to the person's employer or their member organisation, if relevant.

In cases where mediation is necessary between the parties, the Secretary General will endeavour to provide mediation on a good faith basis and in line with the principles of this code of conduct. The complainant may request an apology or other remedy mentioned above, if that step has not already been taken. Complainants should be informed of steps taken, in line with any confidentiality considerations.

Violations by representatives of Social Platform

Violations of the code of conduct or any suspicion of such shall be reported to either the Secretary General, Head of Operations or Management Committee, if the complaint is about the Secretary General, who are required to investigate the matter and act accordingly. Given that information regarding violations may be sensitive, information shall always be handled with care, both by the person providing the information and by the person receiving it.

It might not always be clear what is a breach of the code. If this is the case, those covered by the code of conduct are encouraged to consult Social Platform employees or relevant members of the Management Committee for advice. An active and open dialogue is essential.

The code of conduct is an integral part of all the agreements signed by Social Platform. This means that Social Platform can take contractual action in the unlikely event of a breach. Violations may result in disciplinary sanctions, the most extreme effect of which is dismissal or the end to a contract.

Employees suspected of an infringement shall be informed in writing of the accusation and be given ten days to respond before any disciplinary action is taken. National legislation shall be complied with by those covered by the code of conduct resident in Europe or in other countries if it does not conflict directly with international conventions. If an infringement of the code of conduct concerns a suspicion of a crime, the person concerned may also be reported to the police in Belgium or elsewhere.

The content of this policy is reviewed every two years by the Management Committee. The Secretary General and Head of Operations are responsible for ensuring that the policy and related documents are known and complied with in the organisation and that follow-up of compliance with the policy is conducted annually.