

## UNWG HIKING GROUP – Notes to hikers

Thank you for your interest in joining the UNWG Hiking Group. Please read through these notes to gain an understanding of the type of hikes the group does, and how the group operates. Then, feel free to contact one of the Hiking Group Leaders listed at the end of the notes to see whether this group may be for you.

First of all, it is important to specify that this is a Hiking Group and not a walking group. The hikes last generally 4 to 5 hours but can sometimes be longer. The hikes cover rough terrain, which means often hiking through mud and over tree roots on rugged mountain paths, and can include routes with technical difficulty, i.e. including use of chains and ladders. The group walks at a steady pace and therefore a good level of fitness and some hiking experience is required.

In winter, on snowshoes, the hikes vary between 300-600m height gain, and in summer, as the days are longer, so are the hikes, with an average height gain of 700m, and some hikes of over 1,000m.

A hike is planned for every Wednesday of the year with the exception of Christmas and New Year.

There is also an **Alternative Hiking Group** that hikes also on Wednesdays. These hikes still tend to be relatively long, average 10-14kms, but with a height gain not usually exceeding 300-400m. This group also takes in points of interest, visits to museums found along the way, and hikes at a less sustained pace.

Details regarding the hikes are sent by email on Sunday or Monday to all members of the Hiking Group. If you wish to participate, a reply is required at the latest by Monday night for the carpooling to be organised. Please read the description of the hike carefully and if you are still unsure whether the hike is suitable for you, please contact Gill or Reva by email. The hikes last all day, and it is not possible to know the exact time you will return. If you have an engagement in the evening it is advisable to not join the hike that day.

The group meets either in Ferney-Voltaire or near Divonne/Chavannes, and carpools from there. Every passenger pays the carpooling fees in Euros as well as the tolls on the French highways – the driver does not pay. You will need to bring small change in Euros and Swiss Francs for the carpooling fees, highway tolls and refreshments after the hike.

### Necessary hiking gear and equipment

- Good hiking boots
- Hiking poles
- Suitable hiking clothing, e.g.
  - Quick drying hiking trousers, not jeans
  - A waterproof and windproof jacket
  - Hat, gloves, and fleece even in the summer
  - Rain poncho
  - Snowshoes and crampons for winter hikes
- A sturdy and comfortable backpack
- A water bottle and a flask for warm drinks, snacks, e.g. banana, protein bar
- A small, padded seat for picnicking, as the ground can be humid

- ❑ Sunglasses, sunscreen and first aid kit (including plasters for blisters)
- ❑ Spare clean shoes for the car rides
- ❑ Official identification (ID card/passport) for crossing the border
- ❑ Picnic lunch

There is an annual Planning Meeting at the Christmas lunch where every member of the Hiking Group is asked to volunteer to lead at least one hike during the year. The ethos of this group is conviviality, cooperation and sharing of experiences, time and effort. Everyone is expected to contribute by driving or navigating to the destination and leading a hike.

In the summer, a weekend away in France, Switzerland or Italy is organised, to which family and close friends can be invited to participate. Hikes of varying levels are organised by the person volunteering that year, and the emphasis is on enjoying the wonderful mountains, each other's company and hiking.

### Responsibility

The hiking leaders are not professionals but volunteers, and they are in no way liable in the event of an accident or injury to a participant. This is why, before a new member joins the group, their level of fitness and hiking competence is discussed with them to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment.

Each participant is responsible for her own safety and must therefore ensure they have an accident insurance that covers any possible evacuation and medical care. For those residing in France [www.actimut.org](http://www.actimut.org) offers a very good coverage, and for those in Switzerland [www.rega.ch](http://www.rega.ch).

If you are, or are able to be, a member of the United Nations Women's Guild (UNWG), and would like to join this wonderful Hiking Group, please get in touch with one of the Leadership Team, listed below. We look forward to welcoming you to the group. Please note, this is strictly a no smoking group.

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