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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	Budget Committee
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Council Decision on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travelling expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates, and repealing Decisions 2013/471/EU and (EU) 2023/1013 – <i>Adoption</i>

1. On 21 December 2022, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) submitted its evaluation report on the application of Council Decision 2021/1072¹ (covering reimbursements made from June to November 2022). In addition, this report contained a request for the Council to consider establishing a Decision on a structural allowance for remote attendance at EESC meetings.

¹ Council Decision (EU) 2021/1072 of 28 June 2021 on a temporary derogation from Decision 2013/471/EU on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travelling expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates in view of the travel difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Union (OJ L 230, 30.6.2021, p. 30).

2. Following the discussions on the EESC request at its meeting on 1 March 2023, the Budget Committee agreed on a two-step approach: firstly, to convert the temporary daily allowance for remote attendance included in Council Decision 2021/1072 into a permanent one; secondly, to pursue a broader discussion on the full set of EESC allowances, including a potential future comprehensive revision of Decision 2013/471/EU², to be undertaken before the end of the current term of office of the EESC.
3. The first step of the approach mentioned above was completed by the adoption of Council Decision 2023/1013 in May 2023³. In order to proceed with the second step, the Budget Committee discussed, at its meeting on 9 April 2024, a comparative overview⁴, prepared by the Commission, covering the meeting allowances of the Committee of the Regions, the EESC and the Commission and the executive agencies. Following this preparatory discussion, the EESC submitted a proposal to revise Decision 2013/471/EU on 12 April 2024⁵ and presented it to the Budget Committee on 16 April 2024.
4. On the basis of a Presidency proposal, the Budget Committee discussed the text of the revised Decision at its meetings on 30 April and 28 May 2024. Discussions mainly focussed on the daily allowance amounts for both in-person and remote attendance to meetings, the possible future review and adjustment of such amounts, as well as on the modes of transport and reimbursement levels applicable to EESC members.

² Council Decision 2013/471/EU of 23 September 2013 on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travelling expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates (OJ L 253, 25.9.2013, p. 22).

³ Council Decision (EU) 2023/1013 of 16 May 2023 on a derogation from Decision 2013/471/EU on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travelling expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates, and repealing Decision (EU) 2021/1072 (OJ L 136, 24.5.2023, p. 69).

⁴ Doc. WK 4381/2024 REV1 + ADD1.

⁵ Doc. WK 5227/2024.

5. Following these discussions, the Budget Committee agreed to suggest that the Permanent Representatives Committee advise the Council to:
- adopt the Council Decision on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travelling expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates, and repealing Decisions 2013/471/EU and (EU) 2023/1013, as set out after legal-linguistic finalisation in document 9514/24;
 - have this Decision published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.
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