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European Union

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LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL DECISION on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travel expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates, and repealing Decisions 2013/471/EU and (EU) 2023/1013

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2024/...

of ...

**on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travel expenses
of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and their alternates,
and repealing Decisions 2013/471/EU and (EU) 2023/1013**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular
Article 301, third paragraph, thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Council Decision 2013/471/EU¹ laid down rules on the granting of daily allowances to and the reimbursement of travel expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee (the ‘Committee’) and their alternates.
- (2) Council Decision (EU) 2023/1013² introduced a derogation from Articles 2, 3 and 4 of Decision 2013/471/EU as regards the granting of daily allowances and the reimbursement of travel expenses to members of the Committee and their alternates (together referred to as the ‘beneficiaries’), entitling beneficiaries who attend meetings remotely by electronic means to a daily allowance. Moreover, it was considered appropriate that the granting of such daily allowances be part of a future comprehensive revision of Decision 2013/471/EU, to be undertaken before the end of the current term of office of the Committee.

¹ 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, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2013/471/oj>.)

² 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, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/1013/oj>.)

- (3) Decision (EU) 2023/1013 provided for a daily allowance for beneficiaries who attend certain meetings of the Committee remotely by electronic means. Specifically, that Decision provided for daily allowances for meetings that have been authorised in accordance with the internal rules of the Committee, except for Bureau meetings, plenary sessions of the Assembly, meetings of sections and meetings of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change, and, in duly justified and exceptional circumstances, for other duly authorised meetings, that are impossible to organise fully in person and essential in guaranteeing the Committee's institutional and business continuity. For reasons of clarity and transparency, it is appropriate to incorporate into this Decision the same conditions that have applied since 2023.
- (4) On 25 August 2023, the Committee requested the Council to adopt a new decision on the granting of daily allowances and the reimbursement of travel expenses of members of the Committee and their alternates, to adjust the amounts of daily allowances set in Article 2 of Decision 2013/471/EU in order to take into account the changes in purchasing power between 2013 and 2023 according to Eurostat data. In that context, it is also important to maintain the appropriate balance between the various institutions and advisory bodies of the Union, in particular with the European Committee of the Regions.

- (5) The amounts of the daily allowances paid to members of the Committee and their alternates have not been adjusted since 2013 and should be adapted. A review of the amounts should take place on a regular basis. Accordingly, a review should take place within the 12 months preceding the start of the 5-year term of office of the Committee. In addition, it should be possible for a review to take place when inflation levels exceed a particular percentage according to Eurostat data. Provision should also be made for a system for the reimbursement of travel expenses on the basis of actual costs, as well as for allowances compensating for the time spent by members of the Committee and their alternates in performance of their duties and for related administrative costs.
- (6) Where appropriate, detailed rules relating to the granting of allowances, the reimbursement of travel expenses and the setting of ceilings for reimbursement of travel expenses should be established at Committee level. Furthermore, such detailed rules on allowances should aim to maximise the benefits resulting from remote attendance while at the same time ensuring that there is no unjustified increase in the number of meetings organised by the Committee. The implementing rules should give preference to greener modes of transport, in particular train travel for shorter distances, and to travel arrangements that reduce the carbon footprint of the beneficiaries in line with the EU 2050 climate goals. Starting from the first day of the next term of office of the Committee, as a general rule, the implementing rules should set reference amounts for the maximum reimbursement for air travel, which should be comparable to an economy class fare.

- (7) The Committee should submit to the European Parliament and to the Council regular reports on the reimbursement of travel expenses and allowances paid to beneficiaries in the preceding year. Those reports should, in particular, indicate the budgetary impact and the travel expenses incurred and reimbursed, the allowances paid for both in-person and remote attendance of meetings, the evolution in the number of meetings of the Committee attended remotely by electronic means, the duration of such meetings, and any budgetary savings and environmental benefits associated with remote attendance.
- (8) The Committee should submit to the Council an evaluation report on the application of this Decision, and particularly on its budgetary impact. That evaluation report should include the elements that will enable the Council to determine, as necessary, the allowances of beneficiaries.
- (9) Decisions 2013/471/EU and (EU) 2023/1013 should therefore be repealed,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The members of the European Economic and Social Committee (the ‘Committee’) and their alternates (together referred to as the ‘beneficiaries’) shall be entitled to a daily allowance for meeting days, to the reimbursement of their travel expenses and to distance and duration allowances in accordance with this Decision.

Article 2

1. The daily allowance for beneficiaries attending in-person meetings shall be set at EUR 367.

The Committee may decide to increase the daily allowance by a maximum of 50 %:

- (a) where a beneficiary duly invited to one or more meetings is obliged to pay for overnight accommodation at the meeting venue both before the first meeting and after the last meeting; or
- (b) in the event of a mission outside Brussels, where the rates of the hotels selected as accommodation for the beneficiaries exceed EUR 190 per night.

2. The daily allowance may be paid to beneficiaries for a maximum of two days bridging the gap between two meetings, where that allowance is less than the reimbursement of the travel expenses which would otherwise be incurred by the beneficiary in making a return journey between those meetings.

Article 3

1. The daily allowance for beneficiaries attending meetings remotely by electronic means shall be set at EUR 149.
2. The granting of the daily allowance referred to in paragraph 1 shall only be applicable to meetings that have been authorised in accordance with the internal rules of the Committee, except for Bureau meetings, plenary sessions of the Assembly, meetings of sections and meetings of the Consultative Commission on Industrial Change.
3. In duly justified and exceptional circumstances, the daily allowance referred to in paragraph 1 shall also be granted for any other duly authorised meeting other than for those for which the daily allowance is granted in accordance with paragraph 2, provided that such a meeting cannot be organised fully in person and that it is essential in guaranteeing the Committee's institutional and business continuity.

Article 4

The travel expenses of beneficiaries shall be reimbursed on the basis of the expenses actually incurred. The Committee shall set appropriate reimbursement ceilings, with a view to ensuring that its travel-related expenditure does not exceed the level contained within its voted annual budget.

Article 5

Beneficiaries shall be entitled to distance and duration allowances. In the case of journeys between the beneficiary's place of residence and Brussels, the beneficiary shall be entitled to allowances in relation to one journey to Brussels and one journey back from Brussels in respect of each week of work at the Committee.

Article 6

The Committee shall adopt detailed rules implementing Articles 2, 3, 4 and 5 by ... [3 months from the entry into force of this Decision].

Article 7

The distance allowance referred to in Article 5 shall be calculated as follows:

- (a) for the part of the journey between 0 and 50 km: EUR 18,98;
- (b) for the part of the journey between 51 and 500 km: EUR 0,10/km;
- (c) for the part of the journey between 501 and 1 000 km: EUR 0,05/km;
- (d) for the part of the journey between 1 001 and 3 000 km: EUR 0,03/km;
- (e) for the part of the journey exceeding 3 000 km: no allowance.

Article 8

The duration allowance referred to in Article 5 shall be calculated as follows:

- (a) for a journey of a total duration of between two and four hours: an amount equivalent to one eighth of the daily allowance provided for in Article 2;
- (b) for a journey of a total duration of between four and six hours: an amount equivalent to one quarter of the daily allowance provided for in Article 2;
- (c) for a journey of a total duration of more than six hours and not requiring an overnight stay: an amount equivalent to half the daily allowance provided for in Article 2;
- (d) for a journey of a total duration of more than six hours and requiring an overnight stay: an amount equivalent to the daily allowance provided for in Article 2, subject to the presentation of supporting documents.

Article 9

1. Within the 12 months preceding the start of the 5-year term of office of the Committee, the Council shall consider an adjustment of the amounts referred to in Article 2(1), Article 3(1) and Article 7.
2. Following a request by the Committee, the Council may also consider an adjustment of the amounts referred to in Article 2(1), Article 3(1) and Article 7 when the accumulated yearly inflation has exceeded 6% according to Eurostat's Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) for the EU27 since the last adjustment agreed by the Council.

Article 10

The Committee shall, by 30 April of each year, submit to the European Parliament and to the Council a detailed report on the reimbursement of travel expenses and allowances paid to beneficiaries in the preceding year. That report shall detail the number of beneficiaries, the number of journeys, the destinations, the travel class and the travel costs incurred and reimbursed, as well as the allowances paid, including for both in-person and remote attendance to meetings. The report shall also include any budgetary savings and environmental benefits associated with remote attendance.

Article 11

By 31 December 2026, the Committee shall submit to the Council an evaluation report on the application of this Decision, and particularly on its budgetary impact.

That evaluation report shall include the elements that will enable the Council to determine, as necessary, the allowances of beneficiaries.

Article 12

Decisions 2013/471/EU and (EU) 2023/1013 are repealed with effect from 1 September 2024.

Article 13

This Decision shall enter into force on 1 September 2024.

Article 9 shall be applicable from 1 January 2026.

Done at ..., ...

For the Council

The President
