

RULES OF PROCEDURE

DECISION No 2020/04 OF THE REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE TRANSPORT COMMUNITY

on the travel rules for staff of the Transport Community [2023/587]

THE REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE TRANSPORT COMMUNITY,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the Transport Community, and in particular Article 24(1) and Article 30 thereof,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The travel rules for staff of the Transport Community, set out in the Annex, are hereby adopted.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

Done at Sarajevo, 29 July 2020.

*For the Regional Steering Committee
The President*

ANNEX

TRAVEL RULES FOR STAFF OF THE TRANSPORT COMMUNITY

1. Scope
 - 1.1. These rules shall apply to all official travel from the place of employment in the interest of the Transport Community.
 - 1.2. These rules shall apply to all staff members of the Transport Community subject to the Staff Regulations of the Transport Community.
2. Travel authorisations
 - 2.1. Before going on official travel, the staff member shall obtain authorisation in the form of an approved travel request. Travel requests are approved in writing by the Director or a staff member authorised by the Director. The travel request must provide the Director with all the details he needs to take an informed decision, such as:
 - the purpose of official travel, its location and the starting and finishing times of the meeting(s);
 - the duration of official travel based on the means of transport used and the times and itinerary for the round trip, including local transport where appropriate;
 - accommodation arrangements;
 - estimated costs based on optimum cost-efficiency.
 - 2.2. It is the responsibility of the staff member to obtain the necessary authorisation before commencing official travel. The approved travel request will be kept by the staff member and attached to the claim for reimbursement of travel expenses ('travel claim') upon return from mission together with a travel report.
 - 2.3. For official travel by the Director, a memorandum will be prepared in advance, based on the template set out in the Appendix and signed by the Director. The memorandum will indicate the reason for official travel and its envisaged duration. The Director shall follow the common procedures as envisaged in these rules.
3. Transport between the place of employment and the place of official travel
 - 3.1. As a general rule the most cost-effective mode of transportation, relative to the purpose and duration of official travel, will be authorised.
 - 3.2. Travel by air will take place by the most direct route at the lowest available price. When travel dates suggest the inclusion of a weekend in order to obtain a reduced fare that is available on some air and train tickets when they are booked a certain period in advance ('Advance Purchase Excursion' or 'APEX' fare), the staff member will be entitled to the additional daily subsistence allowance ('DSA'), provided that the APEX fare constitutes the lowest available airfare and overall savings can be achieved.
 - 3.3. The normal standard for travel by rail will be second class.
 - 3.4. When air or rail transport is not available or is not cost-effective, travel by bus or car will be authorised.
 - 3.5. When travel by car is authorised, the staff member is encouraged to make use of the car-rental arrangements made by the Transport Community. The Transport Community will provide for the highest possible insurance coverage available. Where the insurance nonetheless carries a retention, the Transport Community shall cover it. The Transport Community shall not be liable in cases where the insurance does not cover the damage, loss or theft.

3.6. Exceptionally, the use of a private vehicle may be authorised. In such cases, costs will be reimbursed to the staff member in an amount equivalent to the costs of a second class rail-ticket in accordance with point 3.3. When more than one staff member travels by private vehicle, reimbursement will be made to the owner of the vehicle only. When the Transport Community authorises the use of a private vehicle, the Transport Community shall not assume liability for any third party claim, damage to the vehicle, loss or theft of personal items left in the vehicle.

3.7. Staff members may include private destinations in an official travel itinerary if this has been duly authorised by the Director. If the inclusion of a private destination results in higher costs, the staff member shall pay the difference between the fare of the official itinerary and the changed fare.

4. Purchase of tickets

4.1. The booking of travel arrangements is centralised within the Administration Division of the Permanent Secretariat (the 'Administration Division').

4.2. Staff members are expected to communicate their travel needs as early as possible so that the most economical fare can be obtained.

4.3. The Administration Division shall send the approved travel request to the authorised travel agent and return it to the traveller. The travel agent shall be instructed by the Transport Community not to issue or deliver tickets before having received, by fax, the authorised travel request. The same procedure applies for rail tickets. If rail tickets cannot be obtained through the travel agent, staff members may purchase their own rail tickets and will be reimbursed upon submission of the related travel claim.

5. Travel expenses

Travel expenses paid or reimbursed by the Transport Community on the basis of supporting documents comprise:

- cost of transportation, including transportation to and from the airport or other point of arrival or departure (e.g. hotel, other place of dwelling, meeting venue, premises of the Permanent Secretariat);
- DSA;
- other costs in direct relation with official travel and authorised with the request for travel (e.g. excess baggage, visa costs, registration fees for conferences, seminars).

6. Transportation to and from airports, ports and stations at the place of employment

As a general rule, staff members shall use public transport. However, transfers by taxi may be authorised by the Director if they are justified, such as when two or more staff going on mission share the taxi, when no other public transport options are available or when the transfer occurs before 8 am or after 9 pm. The corresponding costs will be reimbursed on presentation of the supporting documents. Use of a private vehicle may be authorised if it is justified. In such cases, reimbursement will be limited to parking fees (at the airport, station or port) on presentation of supporting documents.

7. Transportation at the place where official travel takes place

As a general rule, staff members shall use public transport. Use of a taxi is nevertheless permitted if public transport is not an appropriate alternative (on security grounds, for example). By signing the travel claim of the staff member concerned, the Director is acknowledging this fact. The costs will be reimbursed on presentation of supporting documents.

8. Cancellation and modification for prior to departure

If official travel is cancelled or modified, the staff member must:

- immediately inform the Director and the Administration Division and provide the reasons;

- immediately cancel or rebook the tickets and reservations issued by the authorised travel agent, in writing, even if they are not refundable;
- take the necessary steps to cancel or rebook tickets acquired directly by another means;
- immediately cancel or modify hotel reservations and car-rental bookings, in writing;
- draw up a statement of expenses incurred as a result of the cancellation or modification.

The Transport Community will cover the costs of cancellation and rebooking irrespective of the means of reservation used.

9. Extension

If the duration of official travel as initially indicated on the travel authorisation is extended due to unforeseen circumstances, leading to additional costs, this must be mentioned in the travel claim (see point 15).

10. Interruption

Official travel may be interrupted for the requirements of the service, for reasons of force majeure or for personal reasons of a serious nature recognised as such by the Director. The interruption must be authorised in advance by the Director except in cases of extreme urgency or if the Director cannot be reached. All expenses resulting from an interruption authorised by the Director on the grounds listed above will be covered by the Transport Community and reimbursed as part of the official travel.

11. Changes made for personal reasons

Staff going on official travel may be authorised to adapt the timetable, accommodation or transport arrangements for personal reasons. In that case they shall include in the travel request a comparison between the proposed costs and the costs that would have been incurred without such changes. The comparison must be drawn up on the basis of information available at the time of the travel request, using one of the methods chosen for organising the official travel and based on similar conditions. The staff member going on official travel will meet directly and personally (by the means notified to him by the Administration Division):

- any additional cost, measured in relation to the overall cost of the official travel without the DSA, which arises from the changes made for personal reasons, including departure from and/or return to another location, if the comparison indicates an increase in the cost of the mission;
- any fees charged for carrying out the comparison, if this was done by a travel agency.

12. Daily subsistence allowance (DSA)

12.1. The DSA includes the costs of paid accommodation and meals, gratuities and other incidentals.

12.2. The DSA rates applicable to EU-funded external aid contracts shall apply at their most recent scale ⁽¹⁾.

The rate applicable is that for the place at which the staff member spends the night. A full day's DSA is paid for the day on which the official travel starts. No DSA is paid for the day on which official travel is concluded, i.e. DSA is paid based on the number of nights spent away.

12.3. Higher compensation may exceptionally be approved by the Director, on a case-by-case basis, when the traveller is requested to stay at pre-determined hotels for which the room rate would absorb 60% or more of the DSA rate. In such cases, the accommodation costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of the related bill. In any case, circumstances entailing a claim for higher compensation must be described in the travel request and approved prior to departure.

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/per-diem-rates-20200201_en.pdf

12.4. Reduced DSA rates shall be applied when:

12.4.1. official travel does not involve an overnight stay:

- for official travel of 8 hours or more, 50 % of the DSA of the respective destination shall be paid;
- for official travel of less than 8 hours and more than 5 hours, 35 % of the DSA shall be paid;
- for official travel up to and including 5 hours, 20 % of the DSA shall be paid;

12.4.2. free accommodation is provided to the traveller:

- 50 % of the DSA of the respective destination shall be paid;

12.4.3. official travel involves over-night inter-continental flights or train rides:

- 50 % of the DSA of the respective destination shall be paid;

12.4.4. free meals such as breakfast, lunch or dinner are provided to the traveller:

- for each free meal, 10 % of the DSA rate shall be deducted;

12.4.5. free accommodation and meals are provided to the traveller:

- 20 % of the DSA rate shall be paid.

12.5. When official travel concerns travelling within the host country (Serbia), the DSA of the host country will apply. For relevant deduction of the DSA within Serbia, the same provisions as those for official travel abroad will apply.

12.6. When all expenses are borne by the organiser of the event, the above stated provisions regarding the DSA calculation will apply.

12.7. No DSA will be paid for the part of official travel that was subject to changes made under point 11.

13. Travel advances

13.1. If requested by the traveller, the Transport Community will provide an advance of funds for official travel of up to 80 % of the DSA for the journey. Requests for travel advances must be made minimum 4 working days before the day of departure.

13.2. Any sums paid by way of an advance will be deducted from the amounts reimbursed to cover mission expenses. If an advance has been paid which proves to be greater than the actual cost of the mission, the surplus will be recovered in a single payment from a subsequent salary payment to the staff member carrying out the mission. If an advance has been paid to a staff member for a mission that is subsequently cancelled, the amount of the advance will be automatically deducted from a subsequent salary payment.

14. Travel reports

Staff members on official travel shall submit a short travel report within one week of their return to the office. The travel report shall be signed by the supervisor, attached to the travel claim and sent to the Director as well as to other staff concerned, as appropriate.

15. Reimbursement of travel expenses

15.1. A staff member shall submit a travel claim accompanied by the travel report, the travel authorisation and supporting documents to the Administration Division and the Director within one week after return to the office, whether or not a travel advance has been paid. No bills for hotels and meals or other incidentals have to be attached since the established DSA is a lump sum compensation for these expenses.

- 15.2. If a staff member was provided with a travel advance under point 13 and fails to submit the related travel claim within the specified period, the travel advance shall be deducted from subsequent salary payment. The deducted travel advance will be reimbursed only if the travel claim is filed.
16. Staff responsibility and liability
- Staff members shall be responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the declarations and representations made by them when planning, carrying out and reporting their official travel. They shall, without prejudice of the provisions of the Staff Regulations of the Transport Community, be liable for any amount unduly received or for any misconduct.
- Staff members shall implement official travel in line with the general performance requirements laid down in the Staff Regulations of the Transport Community. Staff members are expected to live up to the highest standards of professional ethics and to remain independent at all times.
17. Control Measures
- The Transport Community shall retain the records, documents and evidence related to the authorisation, planning and organisation of official travel and to the settlement of the payment dues for a period of five years.
- The financial rules and auditing procedures of the Transport Community shall apply.
18. Application
- These rules shall apply from the day following their adoption.

APPENDIX

MEMORANDUM FOR OFFICIAL TRAVEL BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT

To be completed and signed before departure:

PURPOSE OF OFFICIAL TRAVEL	
DESTINATION	
DEPARTURE DATE	
RETURN DATE	
ITINERARY	
ACCOMODATION ARRANGEMENTS	
COMBINED WITH PRIVATE TRAVEL	☐ no ☐ yes: ☐ cost of official travel combined with private travel: ☐ cost of official travel without being combined with private travel
ESTIMATED COSTS	
COMMENTS	

Signature:

Date:

To be completed and signed upon return:

FINAL COSTS	Travel expenses: Daily subsistence allowance: Other: TOTAL COST:
OBJECTIVE OF OFFICIAL TRAVEL	☐ objective achieved ☐ objective not achieved COMMENTS:

Signature:

Date:
