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BUREAU OF THE ASSEMBLY

Reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses of members of the Parliamentary Assembly, members of special guest delegations, experts and personalities travelling under the Assembly's budget

Memorandum prepared by the Office
of the Clerk of the Assembly

1. The first rules applying to the reimbursement of the travel and subsistence expenses of members of the Assembly were drawn up by the Bureau in 1957. Since then they have gradually been changed to take account of the guidelines approved by the Committee of Ministers within the framework of the budget debates. The aide-memoire on reimbursement procedures drawn up by the Clerk of the Assembly and used until 31 December 1994 was the result of the changes introduced since 1957.
2. The rules governing the reimbursement of the travel and subsistence expenses of the members, secretaries and parliamentary officials of special guest delegations in connection with their participation in Assembly activities (plenary sessions, Standing Committee meetings, committee meetings, activities of the interparliamentary co-operation programme) were adopted by the Bureau of the Assembly in March 1992. They were updated in 1993 to take account of the adjustment of the daily allowances. In fact, all these persons were reimbursed on the same basis as the governmental experts and other personalities travelling at the charge of the Council of Europe.
3. Logically, any other person invited by the Assembly or its committees to take part in their activities (meetings, conferences, seminars, hearings) was reimbursed according to the rules applied to governmental experts.

4. In December 1994, during the debate on the Council of Europe budget for 1995, the Committee of Ministers examined and adopted a new set of rules governing the reimbursement of the expenses of persons travelling at the Organisation's expense which took effect as from 1 January 1995. The Committee of Ministers thus updated the existing rules, introduced in 1982.

5. The most important change in relation to the previous rules is the substantial increase in the daily allowance (from 1,095 FF in 1994 to 1,510 FF in 1995 for members of the Assembly, and from 700 FF in 1994 to 975 FF in 1995 for experts).

6. In the rules relating to experts, the following changes should also be noted:

- the payment of the daily allowance covers all expenses incurred in participating in the meeting, except for the travel expenses,
- travel expenses are reimbursed within the limits of the fare for the normal route, as determined by the Secretariat according to the means of transport authorised, irrespective of the means of transport actually used,
- transit fares in connection with changing from one means of transport to another and fares paid for travel between home or meeting place and railway station or airport, as well as local travel costs incurred during meeting days, are provided for within the daily allowances paid for attendance at the meeting and shall not directly be reimbursed,

7. In the light of the foregoing, the Clerk of the Assembly has adapted the aide-mémoire on the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses of members of the Parliamentary Assembly. The new text appears in Appendix I. The rules on the reimbursement of experts and other personalities as adopted by the Committee of Ministers are in Appendix II.

8. The Bureau of the Assembly is therefore invited to take note:

- of the changes in the procedures for reimbursing persons travelling under the Council of Europe budget;
- of the new aide-mémoire on the reimbursement of members of the Parliamentary Assembly;
- of the new rules on the reimbursement of experts, which will apply to the members and secretaries of the special guest delegations, parliamentary officials and any other persons invited by the Assembly or its committees to take part in their work.

9. Regarding the limits on the reimbursement of special guest delegations' travel and subsistence expenses, the Bureau, in order to increase parliamentary participation, could make some improvements in its 1993 decision. Thus, the Assembly could meet the following expenses:

- at plenary sessions of the Assembly: 4 parliamentarians per delegation (including representatives of the majority and the opposition) and the delegation secretary;

- at meetings of the Standing Committee: 2 parliamentarians per delegation (one representative of the majority and one of the opposition) and the delegation secretary;
- at committee meetings: no reimbursement except where there is an explicit invitation to the parliamentarian to examine a particular item on the agenda requiring his presence (agreement of the Clerk of the Assembly required);
- at conferences, hearings and seminars: no reimbursement except where there is an explicit invitation from the Clerk of the Assembly.

APPENDIX I

AIDE-MEMOIRE

**concerning the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses
of the members of the Parliamentary Assembly
at the charge of Council of Europe budgets**

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Travelling expenses shall be reimbursed and daily subsistence allowances paid in accordance with the present aide-mémoire.
2. In unavoidable special cases, or in particular circumstances, the Clerk may waive one or more of the provisions of the present aide-mémoire on the basis of a claim showing good reason and accompanied by evidence of the expenditure actually incurred. Any additional reimbursement in such cases may not exceed that provided for below by more than 20%.

II. MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND TRAVELLING EXPENSES

3. Members of the Parliamentary Assembly shall be entitled, as provided for below, to reimbursement of travel expenses incurred in travelling between their place of residence and the place of the meeting.
4. If, for personal or professional reasons, members of the Parliamentary Assembly travel to or from a place further away from the meeting place than their place of residence, the refund shall be restricted to the amount of expenses they would have incurred in travelling to or from their place of residence. If however members of the Parliamentary Assembly travel from or to a place closer than their place of residence, the refund shall be restricted to expenditure actually incurred, as provided for in this aide-mémoire.
5. Travel expenses shall not be reimbursed more than once per meeting.
6. The amount of refund shall not exceed the fare for the normal route, as determined by the Secretariat according to the means of transport authorised (see appendix 1), irrespective of the manner in which the member of the Parliamentary Assembly actually travels. In no case may reimbursement exceed the expenditure actually incurred. Members of the Parliamentary Assembly shall be required to declare any reductions from which they may have benefited.
7. **All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses for all means of transport must be accompanied by the relevant ticket or a copy.**
8. ***Rail travel***

The reimbursement of the first class rail fare is authorised.

Where the duration of the journey is longer than 6 hours between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., the cost of a 1st class single-berth sleeper may be reimbursed.

9. ***Air travel***

Air travel is reimbursed on the basis of the fare in the most economical class (tourist class or equivalent) on the normal route, irrespective of the class and route actually used.

Excess baggage charges are not refundable unless justified on grounds of official requirements.

The President of the Assembly may be reimbursed on the basis of the first class air fare should travel be effected in this class.

10. ***Sea travel***

The reimbursement of travel by sea shall not exceed the amount of the air fare as defined in paragraph 9 above.

11. ***Travel by car for personal convenience***

Members of the Parliamentary Assembly travelling by car shall be refunded a lump sum based on the first class rail fare, excluding any supplements and without taking into account any other expenditure occasioned by the use of a car.

If two or more members of the Parliamentary Assembly entitled to claim expenses use the same car, a refund shall be made only to the person in charge of the vehicle, with an increase of 20% for each passenger.

Members of the Parliamentary Assembly travelling by car do so at their own risk. The Council of Europe disclaims all liability in respect of any accident that may occur during the journey.

12. Transit fares in connection with changing from one means of transport to another and fares paid for travel between home or meeting place and railway station or airport will be reimbursed on the basis of the amount of the fare of the existing public means of transport.

III. DAILY ALLOWANCES

13. During the meeting, members of the Parliamentary Assembly shall be entitled to receive an allowance at a daily rate determined annually by the Committee of Ministers (*the rate in force as from 1 January 1995 is 1,510 F*). This rate is the same wherever the meeting takes place.

14. This allowance shall be deemed to cover all expenditure incurred by members of the Parliamentary Assembly in attending meetings, except for the travel expenses provided for above.

15. The duration of the period conferring entitlement to the allowance shall be determined as follows:

- a. the subsistence allowance is payable for each 24-hour period within the duration of a mission. Part-days totalling 12 hours give entitlement to the full allowance and parts totalling between 6 and 12 hours to half the allowance ; parts totalling less than 6 hours give no entitlement ;
- b. the duration of a mission is calculated according to the day and hour of departure from and return to the **usual** place of residence. The allowance covers all expenses incurred with the exception of travelling expenses mentioned in the above paragraphs.

IV. SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT

16. As the insurance taken out by the Council of Europe on behalf of the members of the Parliamentary Assembly is limited to the risk of accidents, they should make their own arrangements under the scheme to which they are affiliated in their own country for sickness cover during the journey and/or the meeting.

V. REIMBURSEMENT

17. The expenses referred to above shall be refunded upon submission of a claim certified true and correct by the member of the Parliamentary Assembly, according to the form shown in Appendix 2 and to which vouchers (or copies) required in paragraph 7 must be appended.

**LIST OF THE NORMAL ROUTES
- TO AND FROM STRASBOURG -**

*on which the reimbursement of travel costs will be based
in application of the Article 3 of the Rules*

To Strasbourg from	Routes
Andorra	by rail to Barcelona or Toulouse; by air to Strasbourg via Zurich or Paris
Austria	by rail; or by air to Strasbourg via Zurich ; or by air to Basle or Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
Belgium, Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland	by train or by air if direct connection and/or distance over 400 km
Bulgaria	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Paris or Zurich
Cyprus, Greece, Turkey	by air to Basle + rail to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Milan, Rome or Zurich
Denmark, Norway, Sweden	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Paris or Brussels (*)
Spain, Portugal	by air to Basle + rail to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Zurich or Paris (*)
Estonia	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
Finland	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Paris
Hungary, Poland	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Zurich
Ireland	by air to Strasbourg via London or Paris
Iceland	by air to Luxembourg + rail to Strasbourg
Italy, Malta	by air to Basle + rail to Strasbourg by air to Strasbourg via Milan, Rome or Zurich
Lithuania	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
Luxembourg, Liechtenstein	by rail
Slovak Republic	by air to Strasbourg via Zurich or Vienna
Czech Republic	by air to Strasbourg via Zurich or Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
Rumania	by air to Strasbourg via Paris
United Kingdom	by air to Strasbourg direct or via Paris
San Marino	by air to Strasbourg via Milan or Bologna or (Rimini - only summer time)
Slovenia	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
NEW ROUTES TO BE OPENED	
Albania	by air to Strasbourg via Rome or Zurich (some days)
Republic of Armenia	by air to Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
Republic of Azerbaïdjan	by air to Strasbourg via Istanbul (some days)
Belarus, Croatia, "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Georgia, Latvia, Moldova, Ukraine	by air to Strasbourg via Zurich or Frankfurt + rail/"navette" to Strasbourg
Russian Federation	by air to Strasbourg via Paris

(*) Travel "via Paris" is admissible on Saturdays and Sundays if there is no flight on the above route.

N.B.: Where the reimbursement of air travel is authorised but there is no direct air connection, part of the journey must be made by rail in order to comply with the shortest normal route.

1st class rail travel is authorised for all or part of the journey on all routes.

In case of doubt about the route to be taken the "Bureau des Voyages" of the Council of Europe should be contacted before travel arrangements are made.

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Appendix 2

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CLAIM FOR TRAVELLING EXPENSES
(please use block capitals)

Purpose of journey:

Place: Date: from to

I certify that the amounts stated below are the costs actually incurred for my journey and that I have not claimed the reimbursement of these costs from any other authority.

Name:

Forename:

Address:

Town: Postcode:

Country:

Date Signature

DETAILS OF JOURNEY

Journey		Means of Transport	Travel costs	
Outward journey	Return journey		Currency	Amount
Departure from	Departure from			
.....			
Date	Date			
Time	Time			
Arrival at	Arrival at			
.....			
Date	Date			
Time	Time			

METHOD OF PAYMENT

On the spot FF
(only if the meeting takes place in Strasbourg).

☐

or by bank transfer to the account(s)
indicated on the attached bank transfer order form(s).

☐

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Travel expenses				Daily allowances			TOTAL travel expenses and daily allowances FF
Currency	Amount	Exchange Rate	Amount FF	Number of days	Daily Rate	Amount FF	
TOTAL FF							
Comments :							Balance in FF
.....							

TO BE COMPLETED AT THE BANK

Bank approval	The undersigned certifies having received a balance of : FF <input type="text"/>
	Name:
	Date Signature

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
PAYMENT BY BANK TRANSFER
(please use block capitals)

Form GF-VBI

PART I

PAYMENT BY BANK TRANSFER OF THE TRAVEL AND/OR SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES OF:

1. NAME:
Forename(s):
2. Meeting of: at date

PART II

ACCOUNT TO BE CREDITED

3. Name of account holder (For persons, enter the NAME followed by forename(s), or if appropriate enter: "As above").:
4. Name of bank:
5. Address of bank: Branch
Street No.
Town Country
6. Account No.:
7. Further details (if applicable):
Bankcode, BLZ, sort code, etc.:

SWIFT address:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Bank		Country		Town		Branch	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

BUDGET	ART.	VISA	N° REF.
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PART III

ORDRE DE VIREMENT SOGENAL

Veuillez virer le montant de FRF au bénéficiaire indiqué ci-dessus.

Motif: Frais de voyage/séjour de M. (insérer par. 1 ci-dessus) concernant (insérer par. 2 ci-dessus).

Strasbourg, le :

Nom :

Signature :

APPENDIX II

RULES

concerning the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses
to government experts and other persons travelling
at the charge of Council of Europe budgets

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

1. Experts and other persons travelling on Council of Europe business and at the Council's expense shall arrange their journeys in the most economical manner. Travelling expenses shall be reimbursed and daily subsistence allowances paid in accordance with the present Rules.
2. In unavoidable special cases, or in particular circumstances, the Secretary General may waive one or more of the provisions of the present Rules on the basis of a claim showing good reason and accompanied by evidence of the expenditure actually incurred. Any additional reimbursement in such cases may not exceed that provided for below by more than 20%.

II. MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND TRAVELLING EXPENSES

Article 2

1. Experts shall be entitled, as provided for below, to reimbursement of travel expenses incurred in travelling between their place of residence as specified in the notice of the meeting, and the place of the meeting.
2. If, for personal or professional reasons, experts travel to or from a place further away from the meeting place than their place of residence, the refund shall be restricted to the amount of expenses they would have incurred in travelling to or from their place of residence. If however experts travel from or to a place closer than their place of residence, the refund shall be restricted to expenditure actually incurred, as provided for in these Rules.
3. Travelling expenses shall be refunded to only one expert per meeting. If one expert is replaced by another in the course of the meeting, the latter shall not be entitled to travel expenses.

Article 3

1. The amount of refund shall not exceed the fare for the normal route, as determined by the Secretariat according to the means of transport authorised (see appendix), irrespective of the manner in which the expert actually travels. Experts shall avail themselves of reduced fares where possible. In no case may reimbursement exceed the expenditure actually incurred. Experts shall be required to declare any reductions from which they may have benefited.
2. All claims for reimbursement of travel expenses for all means of transport must be accompanied by the relevant ticket or a copy.

Article 4

1. Rail travel

The reimbursement of the first class rail fare is authorised.

Where the duration of the journey is longer than 6 hours between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., the cost of a "special" or 1st class two-berth sleeper may be reimbursed; if a "single" sleeper is used, only the value of the special or two-berth sleeper will be refunded.

2. Air travel

Air travel is reimbursed on the basis of the fare in the most economical class (tourist class or equivalent) on the normal route, irrespective of the class and route actually used:

- i. if the distance between the place of departure and the place of the meeting by the shortest rail route exceeds 400 km; or
- ii. if the normal route includes a direct air connection; or
- iii. if the journey involves a sea crossing.

Excess baggage charges are not refundable unless justified on grounds of official requirements.

3. Sea travel

The reimbursement of travel by sea shall not exceed the amount of the air fare as defined in paragraph 2 above. When experts travel by car, the cost of transporting the car by sea shall not be reimbursed (see Article 6, paragraph 1).

Article 5

Transit fares in connection with changing from one means of transport to another and fares paid for travel between home or meeting place and railway station or airport as well as local travel costs incurred during meeting days are provided for within the daily allowances paid for attendance at meetings and shall not therefore be directly reimbursed.

Article 6

1. Experts travelling by car shall be refunded a lump sum based on the first class rail fare, excluding any supplements and without taking into account any other expenditure occasioned by the use of a car.
2. If two or more experts entitled to claim expenses use the same car, a refund shall be made only to the person in charge of the vehicle, with an increase of 20% for each passenger.
3. Experts travelling by car do so at their own risk. The Council of Europe disclaims all liability in respect of any accident that may occur during the journey.

III. DAILY ALLOWANCES

Article 7

1. During the meeting, experts shall be entitled to receive an allowance at a daily rate determined annually by the Committee of Ministers (the rate in force as from 1 January 1995 is 975 F). This rate is the same wherever the meeting takes place.
2. This allowance shall be deemed to cover all expenditure incurred by experts in attending meetings, except for the travel expenses provided for above.

Article 8

The duration of the period conferring entitlement to the allowance shall be determined as follows:

1. The daily rate stipulated in Article 7 shall be payable in respect of each day's or part of a day's actual attendance.

If a meeting is shortened from its intended length, the allowance shall not normally be payable for days on which it is not held. If the meeting is held on either side of a weekend and experts remain at the place of meeting during this period, the Saturday and Sunday shall count as days of attendance. Office-closing days and days of absence owing to illness at the meeting place, as attested by a medical certificate, shall be counted as days of attendance, provided they do not exceed the duration of the meeting. Where the interval between meetings is not sufficient for experts to return to the place of departure, or if they prefer not to do so, they shall be entitled to the allowance for the intervening days, provided that, in the second case, the total amount of allowances for such days may not exceed the minimum authorised amount of reimbursement for the return journey.

2. Should public transport timetables on the normal routes oblige experts to spend a number of nights away from home which is superior to the number of meeting days, additional daily allowances or fractions thereof may be paid to compensate additional costs.
3. In respect of attendance at a one day meeting, where the expert's actual travel arrangements do not involve a night spent away from home the daily allowance shall be reduced by 487 F * (50% of the daily allowance).
4. Where the board and/or lodging or meals of experts are provided free of charge the daily allowance shall be reduced by the following amounts:

— Overnight accommodation	487 F *	(50% of the daily allowance)
— In respect of each main meal (lunch or dinner)	146 F *	(15% of the daily allowance)

5. The daily allowances of experts attending meetings 50 km or less from their place of residence shall be reduced by 487 F * (50% of the daily allowance) unless they produce a hotel bill attesting that they have actually incurred expenditure on overnight accommodation.

IV. SICKNESS AND ACCIDENT

Article 9

As no insurance is taken out by the Council on behalf of experts, it is their responsibility to make their own arrangements for cover under the scheme to which they are affiliated in their own country in respect of sickness or accident during the journey and/or the meeting.

V. REIMBURSEMENT

Article 10

The expenses referred to above shall be refunded upon submission of a claim certified true and correct by the expert to which vouchers (or copies) required by Article 3, paragraph 2 must be appended.