

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 and evidence of the expenditure actually incurred (invoice, credit card slip...).**

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.

Where the duration of the air journey on the normal route is in excess of 7 hours flying time in each direction, business class is authorised, subject to **prior agreement** of the Service. If business class is used, the reimbursement will be made on the basis of the fare on the normal route. The flight itinerary should be presented to justify the duration of flying time.

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 2006 is € 169*). 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.

However, in exceptional circumstances and when justified by the specific hotel resources of the place of the meeting, and subject **to prior agreement** from the Service, the amount of the daily allowance may be increased by 20% (and up to 75% when the place of the meeting is in Central or Eastern Europe) on the basis of a claim accompanied by evidence of expenditure actually incurred.

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 € 84.50 * (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	€ 84.50 *	(50% of the daily allowance)
- In respect of each main meal (lunch or dinner)	€ 25.35 *	(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 € 84.50 * (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

When travelling on behalf of the Council of Europe, government experts are covered in respect of risks specifically related to such travel by insurance taken out by the Organisation on their behalf. They are nevertheless obliged in the first instance to exhaust all possibilities of payment of benefits due to them under the scheme to which they are affiliated in their own country in respect of illness and accident occurring 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.