C/2025/3603

1.7.2025

DECISION OF THE BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

of 16 June 2025

laying down the Rules on the reimbursement of expenses incurred by petitioners when participating in official fact-finding visits of the Committee on Petitions within the European Union

(C/2025/3603)

THE BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 227 thereof,

Having regard to Rule 25, paragraphs 2 and 9, and to Title IX of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the Bureau Decision of 24 June 2024 on Rules on Public Hearings,

Having regard to the Decision of the Conference of Presidents' of 13 March 2025 on the Implementing provisions governing missions outside the three places of work of the European Parliament;

Whereas:

(1) When investigating petitions, establishing facts or seeking solutions, Parliament's Committee on Petitions may organise official fact-finding visits to the Member State or region concerned by admissible petitions that have been already debated in that Committee.

(2) Petitioners are regularly invited to meet the members of the delegation of an official fact-finding visit of the Committee on Petitions when their petitions are discussed, since the presence of petitioners can reveal crucial facts and details on specific matters due to the information and experience they can share.

(3) In duly justified exceptional cases, there should be a possibility of reimbursement of the costs of participation of petitioners in official fact-finding visits of the Committee on Petitions when the official fact-finding visit takes place outside the place of residence of the petitioner,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Scope and annual limit

A yearly maximum of 16 petitioners who participate in an official fact-finding visit of the Committee on Petitions within the Union may have their expenses reimbursed in accordance with this Decision and subject to the availability of funds.

Article 2

Requests for reimbursement of expenses

1. Within the scope and limit set out in Article 1, petitioners participating in official fact-finding visits of the Committee on Petitions may have their expenses reimbursed, on an exceptional and case-by-case basis, upon request by the petitioner, at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee on Petitions, provided that:

— the official fact-finding visit takes place in the Union;

— the petitioner resides on the territory of the Union;

— the distance between the permanent place of residence of the petitioner and the place of the official fact-finding visit is more than 200 kilometres.

2. Requests that have been approved by the Chair of the Committee on Petitions shall be submitted by that committee's secretariat, on behalf of the Chair, to the authorising officer by sub-delegation and shall indicate the names of the petitioners quoted in the reports (as well as the number of the relevant petition) to prove that the requestor is a petitioner.

3. When the petition is signed by more than one natural or legal person, only the expenses of the designated representative may be reimbursed.

4. The petitioners shall be informed by the secretariat of the Committee on Petitions of the decision taken on their reimbursement request.

5. The Chair of the Committee on Petitions shall be responsible for ensuring geographical balance among the petitioners whose expenses are reimbursed each year.

Article 3

Financial arrangements

Petitioners whose request for reimbursement of expenses has been approved shall be entitled to reimbursement of their travel expenses and to a daily allowance, in accordance with the following arrangements:

(a) Travel expenses:

(i) If they travel by train or air, petitioners shall be entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses actually incurred, up to a maximum of the first-class train fare or the flexible economy-class airfare, as appropriate; that reimbursement shall be made on the basis of the shortest route between the closest railway station or airport to the petitioner's permanent residence and the venue for the meeting, and on presentation of the original train or airplane tickets, in paper or electronic format, including the boarding cards, if applicable; if the petitioner can demonstrate that a different route or class of air travel is more economical than that described in this point, that petitioner may be reimbursed accordingly; petitioners shall receive a flat-rate allowance to cover the cost of a return journey between their permanent residence and the nearest railway station or airport, including any parking fees paid at the station or airport; the amount of the flat-rate allowance shall be the one set out in the Bureau Decision on Rules on Public Hearings;

(ii) petitioners travelling by car shall be entitled, on presentation of a written declaration of honour, to a flat-rate reimbursement of their expenses corresponding to the second-class train fare calculated on the basis of the shortest route between their permanent residence and the venue of the official fact-finding visit; if there is no railway station in the direct vicinity of the permanent residence of the petitioner or of the venue of the official fact-finding visit to allow for such calculation, reimbursement shall be on the basis of a per-kilometre allowance paid at the rate set out in paragraph 78 of the Parliament's Internal Rules governing missions and duty travel by officials and other servants of the European Parliament ([1]);

(iii) travel from and to a place other than the permanent residence of the petitioner may be authorised in exceptional circumstances and shall have to be duly justified by the petitioner;

([1]) The currently applicable rate is EUR 0,32 per kilometre. That amount may be adapted.

(b) Daily subsistence and overnight allowances on the basis of flat rates:

(i) petitioners shall be entitled to a daily allowance for each day of active participation in a meeting in order to cover the cost of meals, local transport at the place of the official fact-finding visit and other expenses; a 30 % reduction shall be applied to the daily allowance for each meal provided free of charge; in the event that breakfast is provided free of charge, that reduction of the daily allowance shall be of 10 %;

(ii) if petitioners are required to spend the night at the place of the official fact-finding visit, they shall be entitled to an overnight flat-rate allowance subject to prior authorisation by the authorising officer; in exceptional cases, petitioners may be authorised to spend more than one night at the place of the official fact-finding visit; in such cases, petitioners shall be entitled to the same overnight flat-rate allowance for the additional night(s) subject to prior authorisation by the authorising officer;

(iii) the amounts of the daily subsistence and overnight flat-rate allowances shall be those set out in the Bureau Decision on Rules on Public Hearings.

Article 4

Implementing measures

The Secretary-General may adopt measures for the implementation of this Decision.

Article 5

Entry into force and publication

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.