

Policy on Reimbursement of Expenses incurred by Invitees invited by ECDC

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to lay down the rules for reimbursement of expenses that have been incurred by invitees who were invited by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to a meeting/event/activity or similar.

2. Scope and Applicability

These rules apply to all activities of the ECDC (the Centre) where external invitees are invited by ECDC, and reimbursement of expenses is anticipated and that are not covered by any other ECDC policy and/or agreement.

The invitee may be anyone who is, at the request of the Centre, invited to a meeting/event/activity or similar, wherever the location of the meeting and provided that the Centre has explicitly indicated in the invitation its intention to reimburse expenses. Travel expenses from the place of employment or place of residence to the place of the meeting shall be covered by ECDC for all such invitees, by the most appropriate means of transport given the distance involved.

3. Guiding Principles

Everyone involved in the process of organising travel is under an obligation to act in good faith vis-a-vis ECDC. In particular, they must take account of all the following factors when deciding on travel arrangements:

- The interests of the service.
- The cost-efficiency of the travel and the principle of sound financial management i.e. the most economical way possible in terms of time and money.
- The minimisation of the environmental impact of travel as much as possible, in line with the European Commission's environmental policy, and the Communication on Greening the Commission.
- The prevention of any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest and the need to preserve the ECDC's reputation and independence.
- The duty of care towards and the work-life balance of invitees.

4. Procedure Description

➤ Travel arrangements

The invitee registers to ECDC meetings using a designated registration portal provided by ECDC. Upon registration, an invitee is verified by ECDC and confirmed as a registered attendee. The necessary travel arrangements are managed through the event platform, and all relevant details are forwarded by ECDC to ECDC's authorised travel agency. The travel agency finalises bookings directly with the invitee, in accordance with ECDC's instructions. Deviated itinerary requests may be considered if no additional cost is incurred to ECDC. All such requests must be communicated to ECDC in advance and are subject to prior approval. All accommodation and travel arrangement requests (including requests to arrange own travel or travel with deviations) must reach ECDC within the deadline specified in the invitation letter issued by the Centre.

A deviation from this policy may be authorised **ex-ante** by the responsible Authorising Officer/Authorising Officer by Delegation in ECDC, in exceptional cases and when duly justified.

➤ Applying for reimbursement of expenses

Reimbursement applications must be complete, accurate and submitted to ECDC as soon as possible after the event via ECDC's designated event portal, but not later than 30 calendar days after the last day of the meeting/event. The applicant may submit one application per meeting accompanied by all supporting documents. Supporting documents should be provided in PDF or JPG format. For any claimed cost, clearly readable proof needs to be submitted. Typically, this should be tickets, invoices or receipts. If tickets are not available, a bank transfer confirmation may be provided as proof of payment under the condition that the confirmation allows to clearly link the transfer to an eligible expense.

ECDC's Mission and Meetings Group (M&M) verifies and processes applications for reimbursement issued in accordance with this procedure. Correct applications are processed in accordance with all applicable regulations, internal procedures and work instructions related to the processing of payments in ECDC. Among others, M&M ensures the presence of an invitation letter, an attendance list and a completed application for reimbursement, that are consistent with one another.

A claim containing mistakes, missing information or missing supporting documents may be rejected or suspended in accordance with the applicable law and ECDC rules. In those instances, M&M will inform the invitee in writing, motivate the rejections or suspension and ask for further clarifications or amendments of the claim needed to process the claim. The applicant will be requested to remedy within two weeks from the date of receipt of ECDC's notification by email. If no or incomplete follow up is provided, ECDC reserves the right to make the appropriate reductions for ineligible costs or mistakes or reject the claim in full.

All reimbursements will be done through bank transfer and in EUR¹. Costs incurred in a currency other than EUR will be reimbursed at the monthly average accounting exchange rate for the EUR² in force on the month of the first day of the event. ECDC is not liable for any intermediary or recipient bank charges.

If the reimbursement application and/or the supporting documents have not been submitted within **30 calendar days after the last day of the meeting/event, ECDC may be absolved from reimbursing the invitee.**

For any queries related to reimbursements, please contact Reimbursements@ecdc.europa.eu.

M&M will bring to the attention of the Authorising Officer/Authorising Officer by Delegation any serious or repeated failure to comply with this policy. If fraud is suspected, M&M will proceed in accordance with the Internal Procedure ECDC/IP/068 on Reporting of Irregularities.

➤ Registration of bank accounts and personal details

If the invitee has never been reimbursed before by ECDC, other EU-agencies or the European Commission, or if the banking/personal details have changed since the last reimbursement, it is a requirement to register the legal

¹ In case the recipient bank does not accept EUR, payments will be done in the currency required (for example USD, CAD, etc.)

² The monthly accounting rate of the Euro is published by the European Commission under the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/index_en.cfm

entity (personal details) and financial information to receive payments. To do this, a duly filled and signed [Identification Form for natural person](#) needs to be submitted to ECDC, along with a) a legible copy of an ID document and b) a recent bank statement if it is not possible to get a Bank Representative's Signature and Bank's Stamp (bank statement, RIB, bank certificate, online banking screenshot, etc. – financial information can be blacked out). The statement needs to show the account number (IBAN), name of the account holder, SWIFT/BIC code, bank name, and statement date. The relevant form and documents should be submitted via the ECDC provided tool.

5. Reimbursable Expenses

➤ *Travel*

Travel expenses from the place of employment or place of residence to the place of the meeting shall be reimbursed for the most appropriate means of transport given the distance involved.

Air travel

The Centre can issue pre-paid return tickets at the most economical rate available at time of booking. Itineraries will be based on the official meeting schedule and shall respect the principles listed in paragraph 3. Information about the booking method is specified in the invitation letter.

If the invitee is authorised to book the air tickets themselves, the Centre will establish a Notional Timetable (NTT) and inform the invitee of the equivalent cost of an economy return airfare. The ticket purchased by the invitee will be reimbursed up to that NTT.

Where boarding is denied or a flight is cancelled or delayed, the invitee may be entitled to in-kind (e.g. accommodation or meals paid for by the airline) and financial compensation under the rules of [air passenger rights](#). The invitees are required to claim the relevant entitlements. The invitees are obliged to declare any compensation paid for by the airline which will be considered when processing the reimbursement claim. Only when the airline does not honour its obligations can the invitee apply for reimbursement via ECDC, providing a written acknowledgement of the airline's refusal.

Train

Rail travel as greener travelling option is encouraged where it is an efficient alternative to air travel, for example where high-speed and/or overnight trains are available for the route. The Centre can issue pre-paid train tickets, if requested and where available. In case of self-arranged travel, first class return ticket is reimbursable when booked in accordance with this policy. Any related costs to self-arranged train travel, such as overnight hotel accommodation³ between travelling will not be reimbursed.

Travel by car

If the location of the meeting, event or activity is at a place not accessible by public transport⁴, or if the use of car is the most cost-effective means of travel, use of car may be authorised. A request to use a car must in that case be submitted to the Centre for approval within the deadline specified in the invitation issued by the Centre.

The car could be a rented car in the lowest category or a private car.

Reimbursement of expenses for travelling to an event by car will be granted at the rate of € 0.30 per km. Car rental cost may exceptionally be reimbursed if authorised in advance and only if well-justified. No other costs will be considered (e.g. car parking, tolls). The travel by car is reimbursed upon presentation of a statement indicating the exact route⁵, which must be the fastest one available, and the number of kilometres or kilometre log.

³ This does not refer to night trains

⁴ Public transport refers to any shared passenger transport service that is made available for general public use, operates on a fixed route, and allows boarding based on a publicly available fare

⁵ For example, excerpt from Google maps

Other means of transportation

A decision regarding reimbursement of expenses for other means of transportation not covered in the above-mentioned points, for example travel by boat, will be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the duration, cost and environmental impact of the travel, as well as the Guiding Principles set out in paragraph 3 of this policy.

➤ ***Daily Subsistence Allowance***

To be eligible to receive the daily subsistence allowance (DSA) the invitee must be resident 100 km or more from the meeting/event venue. In some exceptional cases, reimbursement of daily allowance or certain fees, such as conference fees, may be reimbursed, if approved in advance, even when the invitee does not match the above listed requirement for receiving daily allowance.

A standard amount (see paragraph 6) per each day of confirmed attendance will be paid to cover meals, all local transportation and personal expenses. The number of daily allowance days will be calculated based on the agenda and only one DSA per attended meeting day is payable.

The DSA will be reduced by 15% for breakfasts, 25% for lunches and 25% for dinners provided.

The invitee does not need to claim the DSA via the reimbursement application as it will be automatically calculated based on confirmed attendance, the meeting location and the provided meals.

➤ ***Airport / train station / port transfers***

Public transport

Transfers to airports, ports and/or train stations with public transport are reimbursed against presentation of supporting documents (please see paragraph 4). The rental fees for using soft or green mobility means of transport (e.g. shared bikes, electric scooters or non-electric scooters, car-sharing - electric or not) for transfers to/from airports, train stations and/or ports may also be reimbursed upon request, on presentation of the supporting documents.

Taxis

If taxi is used for transfers to airports, ports and/or train stations, the invitee can apply for the reimbursement up to the rate of equivalent public transport by attaching relevant supporting documents (e.g. price information from a shuttle company website in addition to the taxi receipt). If rates for equivalent public transport are not provided in the claim by invitee, no costs will be reimbursed and the occurred costs will be considered covered by the daily subsistence allowance. Transfers with ride-hailing services are considered equal to taxi transfers.

The Authorising Officer/Authorising Officer by Delegation may authorise full reimbursement of taxi costs in exceptional cases (e.g. lack of alternative means of transport, security concerns, and while travelling to/from high-risk countries) and/or in cases of flight/ship/train departures before 09:00 and arrivals after 20:00 in EU destinations. The choice of taking taxi instead of public transport needs to be clearly justified in the claim to be considered for reimbursement. In case taxi is shared, it needs to be clearly indicated who has paid and is seeking for reimbursement. No other costs, such as tips or waiting fees, will be reimbursed.

Private car

If in accordance with the Guiding Principles outlined in paragraph 3, reimbursement of using private car for airport/port/train station transfer/s will be granted at the rate of € 0.30 per km upon presentation of a statement indicating the route and the number of kilometres. No other costs will be considered (e.g. car parking, tolls).

➤ ***Accommodation***

The Centre books and pays the cost of the accommodation at hotels selected by the Centre directly. Information about the booking method is specified in the invitation letter.

Own accommodation bookings may only be made when indicated by the Centre in the invitation letter. In such cases, the accommodation will be reimbursed against an invoice and up to a ceiling (see paragraph 6) per night and in accordance with the meeting schedule. Non-obligatory expenses such as charity contributions, pay TV, telephone charges, mini-bar, etc. are not reimbursed and shall be settled by the invitee directly upon check-out.

When sharing a hotel room with someone not involved in the meeting, 25 % of the price of the double room will be deducted from the room price unless the hotel bill indicates the single occupancy rate for the room and this will be the only amount considered for reimbursement.

Accommodation is provided or reimbursed, respectively only to invitees who are resident 100 km or more from the meeting/event venue.

The Centre may reimburse additional accommodation due to flight cancellation only if not provided for by the airline or under other exceptional circumstances if duly justified by supporting documents.

➤ *Miscellaneous*

Invitees who need a visa to attend an ECDC meeting are responsible for applying for and obtaining it in accordance with the applicable visa application procedure. ECDC will, however, provide the invitee with an official invitation letter and necessary information on the travel itinerary. Visa fees will be reimbursed to the invitee upon submission of necessary supporting documents (please see paragraph 4).

All invitees travelling on behalf of ECDC are covered by travel insurance of the Centre.

ECDC is not liable for any material, non-material or physical damage suffered by invitees in the course of their journey to/from the meeting location, unless such damage is directly attributable to ECDC.

ECDC does not bear or reimburse the cost of modifications of travel arrangements unless these costs have been pre-approved by ECDC or are due to force majeure. Force majeure means any unforeseeable exceptional situation beyond the invitee's control, which results in a need to modify travel arrangements.

If travel to a meeting is cancelled, the invitee should immediately inform the meeting organiser in ECDC as well as meetings@ecdc.europa.eu. ECDC does not reimburse any expenses resulting from self-arranged travel and/or accommodation if the invitee subsequently cancels meeting participation except if the cancellation is due to force majeure.

6. Allowances and Ceilings

The daily subsistence allowances and hotel ceilings set in the Staff Regulations of officials and the Conditions of Employment of other servants of the European Union are those used in the application of the Rules for reimbursements of ECDC.⁶ Those rates are regularly reviewed by the European Commission.

The daily allowances and the ceilings applicable are those valid at the time of the meeting/event.

[Ceilings and allowances for EU countries](#)

[Ceilings and allowances for non-EU countries](#)

The above links are updated by ECDC whenever the Staff Regulations of officials and the Conditions of Employment of other servants of the European Union are updated as regards the daily subsistence allowances and hotel ceilings.

⁶ Regulation No. 31 (EEC), 11 (EAEC).