

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING,

Having regard to Council Decision 2004/223/EC of 26 February 2004¹ and in particular Article 1 thereof,

Having regard to Council Decision 1999/468/EC of 28 June 1999² laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission, and in particular Article 7(1) thereof,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure published by the Commission,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

Article 1

Convening a meeting

1. A meeting of the committee shall be convened by the chair, either on his/her own initiative, or at the request of at least one-third of the members of the committee.
2. Joint meetings of the committee with other committees may be convened to discuss issues coming within their respective areas of responsibility.

Article 2

Agenda

1. The chair shall draw up the agenda and submit it to the committee.
2. In accordance with the advisory procedure provided for in Article 2 of Council Decision 2004/223/EC, the agenda shall make a distinction between:
 - 2.1. points on which the committee is asked to give an opinion
 - 2.2 other issues put to the committee for information or a simple exchange of views, either on the chair's initiative, or at the written request of a member of the committee.

¹ OJ L 68, 26.02.2004, p. 25

² OJ L 184, 17.7.1999, p.23

Article 3

Invitation and documentation to be sent to Committee members

1. The chair shall send the invitation to the meeting, the agenda and points on which the committee is asked to give an opinion and any other working papers to the members, alternates and observers of the committee, as a general rule, no later than 14 calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. In urgent cases, and where the opinion to be adopted relates to article 2.2.b) the chair may, on his/her initiative, shorten the period laid down in the above paragraph to five calendar days before the date of the meeting.

Article 4

Interest groups

The interest groups established in Article 4.1 of Council Decision 2004/223/EC hold separate preparatory meetings ahead of the meeting of the full meeting of the committee. The preparatory meetings are chaired by the co-ordinator of the interest group designated in accordance with Article 4.3 of Council Decision 2004/223/EC or a delegated member, in the absence of the co-ordinator.

Article 5

Bureau

1. The bureau, made up in accordance with Art. 4.3 and 5.2 of Council Decision 2004/223/EC, is chaired by the chair of the full committee. The chair is not a member of the bureau and shall not vote.
2. The bureau will meet at least one month before the meeting of the committee to prepare the agenda. The Commission will invite and chair the meetings. Additional meetings of the bureau are held by invitation of the chair or if requested by at least three of the bureau's members.
3. If the spokesperson or co-ordinator of an interest group is prevented from attending a meeting, he/she can designate a delegate, informing the chair of the committee.
4. If the committee has delegated taking a decision or to deliver an opinion on its behalf to the bureau, the vote has to be cast unanimously by the representatives of the interest groups.
5. The rules of procedure of the committee apply *mutatis mutandis* to the bureau.

Article 6

Opinion of the Committee

1. When the advisory procedure leads to a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by an absolute majority of the votes validly cast.
2. The chair, on his own initiative or at the request of a member of the committee, may postpone the vote on a particular item on the agenda until the end of the meeting or a later meeting in the following cases:
 - if a substantive change is made to the proposal during the meeting,
 - if the text of the proposal has been submitted to the committee during the meeting.

If there are specific difficulties, the chair may, with the agreement of the majority of members, extend the meeting until the following day.

3. If the committee has not issued an opinion within the time frame laid down by the chair, the latter may extend this period, until the end of the following meeting at the latest. If necessary, the written procedure provided for in Article 7 may be applied.

Article 7

Written procedure

1. If necessary and in substantiated cases, the opinion of the committee may be obtained by written procedure. To this end, the chair shall send the members of the committee the draft points on which the opinion of the committee is sought. Any member of the committee who does not express his opposition or intention to abstain from voting on the draft points within the time-limit laid down in the letter shall be considered to have given his tacit agreement to the proposal. That time -limit may not be less than 14 calendar days.
2. If one of the co-ordinators of the interest groups or 12 members of the committee request that the draft measures be examined at a meeting of the committee, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the chair shall put the measure on the agenda of a meeting of the committee as soon as possible.

Article 8

Working groups

1. The committee may create working groups, representing all interest groups, to examine particular issues. The rules of procedure are those of the bureau.
2. The groups shall report back to the committee. To this end, they may appoint a *rapporteur*.

Article 9

Admission of third parties

1. The chair may decide to invite experts to talk on particular matters, at the request of a member or on his own initiative.
2. The observers mentioned in Art 6.8 Council Decision 2004/223/EC, shall be invited to attend the meetings of the committee.
3. Experts and representatives from third countries or organisations may be invited but shall not participate in voting of the committee.
4. With the chair's permission, the members may be accompanied by observers or experts participating at their own expense. The chair's permission may be exercised in a way, that the members give two weeks notice to the secretariat of the committee and if the chair does not object to the participation of an expert or observer in advance of the committee meeting, the permission is considered to be granted.
5. Other observers may be invited at the discretion of the chair.

Article 10

Secretarial support

The Commission shall provide secretarial support for the committee, the bureau and, if necessary, the working groups created in accordance with Article 8. The Commission will nominate one of its officials as secretary of the committee.

Article 11

Minutes of meetings

1. The minutes of each meeting shall be drawn up under the auspices of the chair containing, in particular, the opinions expressed on the draft measures referred to in Article 2 (2)(a) and, if necessary, the opinions expressed on the issues referred to in Article 2 (2)(b). The text of the opinions shall be given in a separate annex and shall include the minority opinions.

2. The members of the committee shall send any comments they may have on the minutes to the secretary in writing. The committee shall be informed of those comments. If there is any disagreement, the proposed amendment shall be discussed by the committee. If the disagreement persists, that amendment shall be annexed to the minutes.

Article 12

Attendance list

At each meeting, the chair shall draw up an attendance list.

Article 13

Correspondence

Correspondence relating to the committee shall be addressed to the Commission, for the attention of the secretary of the committee.

Article 14

Transparency

The principles and conditions concerning public access to the committee's documents shall be the same as those defined in Regulation (EC) n° 1049/2001³. It is for the Commission to take a decision on requests for access to those documents. The committee's discussions shall be kept confidential.

³ OJ L 145 of 31.5.2001 p.43.