



Internal Guidelines for Selection Panels for the selection of member organisations and the allocation of expert seats in civil dialogue groups¹

The selection panels will deliberate collectively and in full autonomy in accordance with these guidelines. There will be one panel per call. These panels will be composed of members from units R4, and I4 and the line unit(s) most involved in the policy area for which the CDG is in charge. The official from the designated **lead** unit of each panel will be responsible for compiling the results at the end of the call for application process, and handing in the complete documentation (see enclosed evaluation sheets), including the result sheet signed by all panel members stating the member organisations selected and the number of seats for each of them,² to the director of Directorate R by the deadline set. In the light of the panel's recommendations, the director-general will decide on the composition and final size of the groups, in accordance with Article 4(1) of the Commission decision. The director of directorate R will present the results of the selection panels to the director-general and assist him in reaching the final decision.

The process for member organisations that replied to the mandatory calls for applications to participate in the civil dialogue groups and the allocation of expert seats consists of four phases for each call:

- i. drawing up the list of member organisation applicants
- ii. drawing up the list of eligible member organisations from among the member organisation applicants
- iii. drawing up the list of qualifying member organisations from among the eligible member organisations

¹ Commission decision setting up a framework for civil dialogue, OJ EU, 17.12.2013, p. 115

² The complete selection process documentation will be archived to allow audit and requests for access to documents.

iv. allocating expert seats (hereafter 'seats')

i. Drawing up the list of member organisation applicants

R4 will draw up a list of all the member organisation applicants and forward it to the individual panels, together with the evaluation sheets to be filled in and necessary documentation.

ii. Drawing up the list of eligible member organisations from among the member organisation applicants

The eligibility criteria³ are:

1. Organisation

Applicants must be organisations such as representative organisations, socio-economic interest groups,⁴ civil society organisations and trade unions. This is not an exhaustive list (note '*including*') and should therefore interpreted loosely. Therefore, the following could be also considered eligible: networks, platforms or other forms of collective with or without legal status or legal personality.⁵

However, it excludes physical persons ('experts' or (self-employed) consultants), universities, companies & groups, research and academic institutions, political parties, law firms, professional consultancies and the like.

2. Non-governmental

The organisations must not be governmental⁶. For selection purposes, the term 'governmental' includes Member States and any lower levels of government (regions, provinces, *Länder*, *départements*, municipal authorities, or a combination or association of these, irrespective of whether these organisations are subject to public or private law), non-EU governments, international intergovernmental organisations, diplomatic missions or regional representations to the EU institutions, and agencies.

³ Article 4(2).

⁴ See Article 2 of Commission decision of 23.4.2004 on the advisory groups.

⁵ See also <http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/info/your-organisation/whoRegister.do?locale=en>.

⁶ The Member States, including regions, are already represented in the management committees and expert groups

3. European-level

The member organisations must be at least European-level. As a rule, any applicants must have *full*⁷ members⁸ in at least seven⁹ Member States.¹⁰ Exceptions can be made for specific groups,¹¹ or with regard to specific cases *duly justified* by the selection panel.¹²

4. Transparent

All applicants must be registered in the Transparency Register and furnish proof of registration.¹³ There will be no exception to that rule.

The panel will draw up a list (filled-in attached evaluation sheet) of the eligible member organisations.

iii. Drawing up the list of qualifying member organisations from among the eligible

The qualification criteria¹⁴ are:

1. Inability to participate via a higher European-level member organisation ('umbrella organisation')

~~Eligible member organisations that have, so far, participated in the advisory groups via an umbrella organisation should in principle continue to do so, unless they can furnish clear proof that this is impossible (e.g. because the umbrella organisation is not participating in the call for applications).~~

⁷ Associate members or partner members or any other degree of membership below full membership do not count.

⁸ If associations or groupings of member organisations are (full) members of the (federated) European-level umbrella organisation, the (full) members of these associations or groupings (sub-members) will be considered.

⁹ See Article 3(2) of Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative.

¹⁰ To make the selection process easier, proof of a valid website for each of the applicant's full members will be requested.

¹¹ For the CDG on International Aspects of Agriculture, for example, some key development-aid-oriented member organisations might not satisfy the 'European-level' criterion. In that case, global-level or regional-level representativeness (for example in the African, Caribbean and Pacific region or South America) may be considered instead.

¹² The panel should submit a written report giving reasons for making an exception to the seven-Member-State rule.

¹³ Registration number.

¹⁴ See also note D(2013)3403302 of 14.10.2013.

The simple fact that the member organisation applicant has left the umbrella organisation will not be considered clear proof. Even member organisations which have left an umbrella organisation have often been allowed to continue to participate in the advisory groups (their experts continued to be appointed and registered by the umbrella organisation). Therefore, written proof signed by the umbrella organisation stating that it is no longer able to allow the applicant to participate in the advisory groups via its structure appears to be mandatory, and sufficient. That information will of course influence the number of seats allocated to the umbrella organisation, if it participates in the call (see section IV).

2. Capacity

There are two key criteria for proving sufficient administrative capacity for vertical and horizontal coordination.

First, the number of permanent full-time staff (or equivalent) in the member organisation's headquarters should be sufficient to coordinate the activities on site with all its members and with the Commission departments.

Second, there must be appropriate infrastructure (e.g. for holding meetings, telephone or video conferences with its members), and an appropriate headquarter's website.

3. Stability

To prevent bogus member organisations from applying (i.e. member organisations created for the purpose of the call), the date of establishment should be given. As a rule, the member organisation should have been in place on 1 January 2012. In *exceptional* cases, for which the selection panel must give reasons, created after that date may qualify.

4. Interest in the CAP (Art. 4(3))

Applicants that belong to and have regularly participated as experts in the advisory groups under decision (EC) 2004/319 (or in advisory groups comparable to the CDG they are applying to join) may be considered *ex officio* as having shown sufficient interest. In these cases, no material proof of interest is needed.

New applicants (i.e. applicants that have never participated in the advisory groups, or applicants that have in the past participated in advisory groups that cannot be compared to the CDG they are applying to join) will be considered as showing sufficient interest, if:

- a) they have submitted the application form, and furnished any required additional proof in time, if so requested by the selection panel, and
- b) have shown a number of publications in the applicant's name¹⁵ in relation to the CDG applied for that is deemed sufficient¹⁶ by the selection panel, or
- c) have shown a number of submissions to EU-level consultations and the like in the applicant's name¹⁷ in relation to the CDG applied for that is deemed sufficient¹⁸ by the selection panel.

5. Expertise

The purpose of this exercise is to select member organisations, and not experts. Experts will be nominated by the selected member organisations depending on the agenda items, and are hence unknown at this stage of the procedure. Therefore, in this phase the only criterion for assessing whether the member organisation can mobilise appropriate expertise appears to be capability to mobilise any kind of appropriate expertise for the relevant CDG.

The indicators of whether an member organisation is capable of mobilising experts with appropriate expertise are the same as those given under point iii, 4(1) and (2)(b) and (c) above. Reference is thus made to those points. Hence, already participating members of the advisory group system are exempt from proving their capability to mobilise the required expertise in the conditions set out in point 4(1).

The panel will draw up a list (filled-in attached evaluation sheet) of the qualifying member organisations.

iv. Allocation of expert seats

The 53 available seats per group will be allocated according to following principles:

¹⁵ Publications in the name of an applicant's (national, regional, etc.) member organisations or in the name of individual experts will not be considered sufficient, unless the panel expressly takes a different position.

¹⁶ The number is to be agreed by the panel. Otherwise, three publications or submissions in the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013 (three years) will be considered as 'sufficient'. For the ease of the selection, the publication or submission must be shown with a valid internet link.

¹⁷ Submissions in the name of an applicant's (national, regional, etc.) member organisations or in the name of individual experts will not be considered sufficient, unless the panel expressly takes a different position.

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1. The selection panel has to ensure a balance of the interests represented pursuant to Article 4(3).
2. Subject to the above legal requirements the selection panel is invited to bear in mind that there are sectors where in order to have a fruitful civil dialogue, the participation of member organisations capable of mobilising *technical* expertise relevant to the subjects of the dialogue appears as indispensable.
3. Qualifying member organisations must be given at least one seat, provided that there are sufficient seats available in the group.
4. Subject to the principles above, the criteria for the allocation of *further* seats are:
 - a. the availability of further seats
 - b. geographic representation
 - c. a *proven* need for the qualifying member organisation's delegation to represent a diversity of voices

The procedure

1. The panel will establish which member organisations are to be considered as representing economic¹⁹ or non-economic²⁰ interests.
2. It will establish the number of seats requested by each member organisation in the call.
3. Each qualifying (economic or non-economic) member organisation will be allocated *one* basic seat.
4. Only, if there are **further seats available** because not all seats have been allocated each member organisation with members (or sub-members²¹) in *more* than 20 Member States can receive one geographical top-up seat, unless it only requested one seat, up to the limit of max. 53 seats.
5. If there are still **further seats** available, the panel may decide to allocate them according to a proven need for the qualifying member organisation's delegation to represent a diversity of voices.²² The need must go beyond the simple fact that the member

¹⁹ Section II of the Transparency Register.

²⁰ Other sections of the Transparency Register.

²¹ See footnote 8.

²² [Examples of such a need may be, according to the CDG, the need to represent different agricultural regions (e.g. in CDGs relating to primary production), different food-chain interests (CDGs relating to the processing industry), different environmental or climatic regions (CDGs with environmental aspects), etc.].

organisation is represented in different Member States. In any event, this allocation must not result in the allocation of more seats than available, must in no case exceed the number of seats requested by the member organisation and must not lead to an overall *imbalance* between the economic and non-economic sector.

6. The panels will make proposals to the DG (filled-in attached evaluation sheet) on the basis of the criteria for the allocation of seats as set out above and in accordance with the requirements of the Commission Decision. The proposals will mention the requested seats and the actually allocated seats per each applicant, as well as their economic or non-economic affiliation, sign and forward it, within the set deadline to unit R4 to the functional email: agri-R4-civildialogue@ec.europa.eu. The final list will, as decided by the director general, be published on the DG AGRI website and in the SG experts register.

contact: J.P. SCHOFFER PETRIČEK (52970)

Antoine KOPP (50418)

Muriel DELALE (68576)

EVALUATION SHEET FOR MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

List of member organisations											Eligibility	Qualification
											Economic NGO	
											Organisation (Y/N)	
											Non-governmental (Y/N)	
											EU-level (Y/N)	
											Registration in the Joined Transp. Register (Y/N)	
											Eligible NGO (Y/N)	
											Highest-level participation (Y/N)	
											If no, given justification? (Y/N)	
											Capacity (Y/N)	
											Stability (Y/N)	
											Suff. Interest (Y/N)	
											Suff. Expertise (Y/N)	
											Qualified NGO (Y/N)	
											Requested seats	
											Allocated seats	

