

**RULES OF PROCEDURE**  
**OF THE ESIF STRUCTURED DIALOGUE GROUP OF EXPERTS<sup>1</sup>**

THE ESIF STRUCTURED DIALOGUE GROUP OF EXPERTS,

Having regard to the Commission Decision setting up the group COM(2014) 4175,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure of expert groups,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

*Article 1*

**Convening a meeting**

1. Meetings of the group are convened by the Chair, i.e. the representative of the Commission.
2. Meetings of the group shall be held on Commission premises.

*Article 2*

**Agenda**

1. The secretariat, provided by the Commission, shall draw up the agenda under the responsibility of the Chair and send it to the member organisations.
2. The agenda shall be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting.

*Article 3*

**Documentation to be sent to member organisations**

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meeting and the draft agenda to the representatives nominated by the member organisations no later than thirty calendar days before the date of the meeting. Member organisations are requested where possible to avoid sending alternates replacing permanent representatives so as to help ensure continuity of debate.
2. The secretariat shall send documents on which the group is consulted to the group members no later than fourteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in 1 and 2 may be reduced to five working days before the date of the meeting.

*Article 4*

**Opinions of the group**

1. As far as possible, the group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

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<sup>1</sup> These rules of procedure are based on the standard rules of procedure of expert groups established by the Commission.

2. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by a simple majority of the members.

#### *Article 5*

#### **Admission of third parties**

The Commission's representative may invite on an ad hoc basis experts from outside the group with specific competence in a subject on the agenda to participate in the work of the group. In addition, the Commission's representative may give observer status to individuals, organisations as defined in Rule 8(3) of the horizontal rules on expert groups, and candidate countries.

#### *Article 6*

#### **Written procedure**

1. If necessary, the group's opinion or recommendation on a specific question may be delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the secretariat sends the group members the document(s) on which the group is being consulted.
2. However, if a simple majority of group members asks for the question to be examined at a meeting of the group, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the Chair shall convene a meeting of the group as soon as possible.

#### *Article 7*

#### **Secretariat**

The Commission shall provide secretarial support for the group.

#### *Article 8*

#### **Summary minutes of the meetings**

Summary minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and the opinions delivered by the group shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair within 3 months following the meeting. The minutes shall not mention the individual positions of the member organisations during the group's deliberations.

#### *Article 9*

#### **Working languages**

The working languages of the ESIF structured dialogue expert group meetings are English, French and German.

#### *Article 10*

#### **Attendance list**

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the Chair, an attendance list specifying, where appropriate, the authorities, organisations or bodies to which the participants belong.

#### *Article 11*

#### **Arrangements for travel and accommodation**

1. Participants (permanent representatives and alternates) are responsible for making their own travel and accommodation arrangements. If required, travel expenses can be reimbursed by the Commission according to the normal rules of meetings held

by the Commission for reimbursement of experts. Reimbursement will be limited to one expert per organisation.

2. The number of invited participants is limited in order to help ensure real exchange of views and discussion.

#### *Article 12*

#### **Conflicts of interest**

1. Should a conflict of interest in relation to an expert arise, the Commission services may exclude this expert from the group or a particular meeting thereof, or they may decide that the expert in question shall abstain from discussing the items on the agenda concerned and from any vote on these items.
2. At the start of each meeting, any expert whose participation in the group's work would raise a conflict of interest shall inform the Chair.
3. Conflicts of interest shall be reported in writing, e.g. in the summary minutes of the group's meeting.
4. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 shall also apply to deliberations taken by the group in written procedure.

#### *Article 13*

#### **Correspondence**

1. Communication between the member organisations of the ESIF structured dialogue expert group and the Commission will be by electronic means wherever possible.
2. The single address for correspondence with the Commission related to the group is:

European Commission, REGIO DDG1.01  
ESIF Structured Dialogue  
BU5 03/186 - B-1160 Brussels  
E-mail address:  
[REGIO-ESIF-STRUCTURED-DIALOGUE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:REGIO-ESIF-STRUCTURED-DIALOGUE@ec.europa.eu)

3. Correspondence for member organisations shall be sent to the e-mail addresses which they provide for that purpose.

#### *Article 14*

#### **Access to documents**

Applications for access to documents held by the expert group will be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001<sup>2</sup> and detailed rules for its application<sup>3</sup>.

#### *Article 15*

#### **Confidentiality of deliberations**

1. The group's deliberations shall be confidential.

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).

<sup>3</sup> Commission Decision 2001/937 of 5.12.2001 (OJ L 345 of 29.12.2001, p. 94).

2. In agreement with the Commission's services, the group may, by a simple majority of its members, decide to open its deliberations to the public.

*Article 16*

**Protection of personal data**

All processing of personal data for the purposes of these rules of procedure shall be in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001<sup>4</sup>.

*Article 17*

**Informing other Union institutions**

1. The Commission will report to the European Parliament and the Council on the outcome of the ESIF structured dialogue at least once a year.
2. The Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee will be kept informed about the work of the expert group through a regular exchange of information.

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<sup>4</sup> Regulation (EC) 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).