

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GROUP OF HIGH-LEVEL SPECIALISTS ON THE FUTURE OF COHESION POLICY

THE GROUP OF HIGH-LEVEL SPECIALISTS ON THE FUTURE OF COHESION POLICY,

Having regard to Commission Decision setting up the Group of high-level specialists on the future of cohesion policy,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

Point 1

Operation of the group

The group shall act at the request of the Director-General of the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, in agreement with the Chair.

Point 2

Convening a meeting

1. Meetings of the group are convened by the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, after consultation of Chair, or at the request of a simple majority of members after the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy has given its agreement.
2. Joint meetings of the group with other groups may be convened to discuss matters falling within their respective areas of responsibility.
3. In principle, meetings of the group shall be held preferably on Commission premises or virtually, depending on the circumstances.

Point 3

Agenda

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

Point 4

Documentation to be sent to group members

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meeting to the group members no later than thirty calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. The secretariat shall send the agenda to the group members no later than five calendar days before the date of the meeting.

3. The secretariat shall send documents on which the group is consulted to the group members no later than ten calendar days before the date of the meeting.

Point 5

Opinions of the group

1. As far as possible, the group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations and report by consensus.
2. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. The members who have voted against or abstained shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the opinions, recommendations or report.

Point 6

Invited experts

Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group on an *ad hoc* basis.

Point 7

Written procedure

1. If necessary, the group's opinion, recommendation or report on a specific question may be delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the secretariat shall send 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 Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy shall convene a meeting of the group as soon as possible.

Point 8

Secretariat

The Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy shall provide secretarial support for the group. It shall also set up an externally commissioned support body for assisting with these secretarial tasks. Commission officials from other departments with an interest in the proceedings may attend meetings of the group.

Point 9

Minutes of the meetings

Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by the group shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat, assisted by the externally commissioned support body referred to in point 8 and in agreement with the Chair. They will be circulated for comments among the group

members. Once finalised they will be uploaded on the group's dedicated webpage. These minutes will be fed into the final report of the group.

Point 10

Attendance list

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the Chair, an attendance list.

Point 11

Conflicts of interest

1. The Chair of the group shall remind all members appointed in a personal capacity of their obligation to promptly inform Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of any relevant change in the information previously provided, including as regards upcoming activities, in which case they must immediately submit a newly completed declaration of interests describing the change, in order to enable Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy to assess it in due course.
2. Should a conflict of interest in relation to an expert appointed in a personal capacity arise, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy shall take all appropriate measures.
3. Conflicts of interest shall be reported in writing, e.g. in the minutes of the group's meeting. Information registered must be adequate, relevant and not going beyond what is necessary for the purpose of the management of the conflict of interest.

Point 12

Correspondence

1. Correspondence relating to the group shall be addressed to Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and the externally commissioned support body referred to in point 8, with the Chair in copy.
2. Correspondence for group members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose.

Point 13

Transparency

The Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy shall ensure an equivalent degree of transparency to that applicable to Commission expert groups within the meaning of Commission Decision C(2016) 3301¹, through dedicated webpages.

¹ Commission Decision C(2016) 3301 of 30 May 2016 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups.

Point 14

Access to documents

Applications for access to documents held by the group shall be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001².

Point 15

Deliberations

In agreement with Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

² 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).