

**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE
COMMISSION EXPERT GROUP ON SUPPORT FOR THE STRATEGIC
COORDINATING PROCESS FOR PARTNERSHIPS**

THE EXPERT GROUP ON SUPPORT FOR THE STRATEGIC COORDINATING
PROCESS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Having regard to the creation of the group by DG RTD,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure of expert groups¹,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

Point 1

Operation of the group

The group shall act at the request of DG RTD, in compliance with the Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups² ('the horizontal rules').

Point 2

Convening a meeting

1. Meetings of the group are convened by the Chair, with the agreement of DG RTD either on its own initiative, or at the request of a simple majority of members after DG RTD 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 on Commission premises or virtually, depending on the need.

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.

¹ C(2016) 3301, Annex 3.

² C(2016) 3301.

Point 4

Documentation to be sent to group members

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meeting and the draft agenda to the group members no later than fifteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. The secretariat shall send documents on which the group is consulted to the group members no later than seven calendar days before the date of the meeting.
3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 may be reduced to five calendar days before the date of the meeting.

Point 5

Opinions of the group

1. In principle, the group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports 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 that 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 reports.

Point 6

Invited experts

DG RTD 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 or recommendation 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 Chair shall convene a meeting of the group as soon as possible.

Point 8

Secretariat

DG RTD shall provide secretarial support for 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 under the responsibility of the Chair.

Point 10

Attendance list

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the Chair, an attendance list³.

Point 11

Conflicts of interest

1. The Chair of the group shall, at the first meeting of each calendar year, remind all members appointed in a personal capacity of their obligation to promptly inform DG RTD 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 DG RTD to assess it in due course, in compliance with the horizontal rules.
2. Should a conflict of interest in relation to an expert appointed in a personal capacity arise, DG RTD shall take all appropriate measures, in compliance with the horizontal rules⁴.
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 DG RTD, copy to the Chair.
2. Correspondence for group members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose or via the Teams channel dedicated for the expert group.

Point 13

Transparency

1. The group shall be registered in the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities ('the Register of expert groups').

³ The names members may be included only subject to their prior freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous consent, in compliance with Article 3(15) and Article 7 of Regulation 2018/1725.

⁴ C(2016) 3301, Article 11.

2. The name of the individuals appointed in a personal capacity shall be published on the Register of expert groups.
3. DG RTD shall make available all relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions, on the Register of expert groups. In particular, DG RTD shall publish the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be possible where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001⁵.

Point 14

Access to documents

Applications for access to documents held by the group shall be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001⁶.

Point 15

Deliberations

In agreement with DG RTD, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

⁵ These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

⁶ 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).