

**PROCEDURAL ACT  
OF THE ENERGY COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT**

**2023/02/ECS-EnC: On the adoption of the Energy Community Reimbursement Rules**

The Energy Community Secretariat,

Implementing the *Procedures for the Establishment and Implementation of Budget, Auditing and Inspection of the Energy Community* as adopted by the Ministerial Council in Skopje on 17 November 2006 and amended on 23 September 2014 and particularly Article 37 thereof,

Taking into account the experience gained with the implementation of the Reimbursement Rules so far,

Having regard to the approved *Work Program and Energy Community budget*,

Having regard to the budgets stemming from the other sources of revenue (*extraordinary budget*),

ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURAL ACT:

**Article 1**

The Director of the Energy Community Secretariat adopts Reimbursement Rules as attached.

**Article 2**

This Procedural Act enters into force on the day of adoption.

For the Energy Community

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Artur Lorkowski".

Artur Lorkowski

Director

Done in Vienna on 23 March 2023

## ENERGY COMMUNITY REIMBURSEMENT RULES

### Article 1 General

- 1) These Reimbursement Rules establish the procedure for reimbursement of the costs of travel for attendance of Energy Community events as specified in Article 2 et seq. below.
- 2) The principles of these Reimbursement Rules also apply to the reimbursement of the costs of travel for the attendance at the meetings organized under the specific projects ("grant contracts"; "EU funded projects"<sup>1</sup>) as implemented by the Energy Community and its Secretariat.
- 3) Where and to the extent a Decision of the Ministerial Council under Article 92 of the Treaty provides so, representatives from the Parties concerned are taken out from the scope of eligible participants under these Rules.
- 4) Without prejudice to the specific rules below, the principles for reimbursement established in Articles 1 to 3 shall apply.
- 5) The reimbursement of travel costs can be either under the Energy Community or budget defined under projects depending on the type of event as defined in Article 2 below.  

In case extraordinary circumstances, i.e. health reasons, force majeure etc., so require, and subject to budget availability, the Director of the Energy Community Secretariat may grant in writing exceptional travel reimbursement beyond the provisions of these Rules.
- 6) These Rules cannot contradict the approved Budget or the Energy Community *Procedures for the Establishment and Implementation of Budget, Auditing and Inspection*<sup>2</sup>, which shall prevail in case of a conflict.
- 7) These Reimbursement Rules also provide for the reimbursement of the members of the Advisory Committee established under Article 32 of the Rules of Procedure on Dispute Settlement under the Treaty (Procedural Act No 2008/01/MC-EnC, as amended by Procedural Act No 2015/04/MC-EnC) and by Procedural Act No 2021/..MC-EnC, as specified in Article 13 below.

### Article 2 Events under consideration within the Reimbursement Rules

- 1) Without prejudice to more specific rules below, participation at the meetings of the following bodies shall be eligible for reimbursement under these Rules:
  - 1.1. the Ministerial Council, the Permanent High-Level Group, the Energy Community Fora (Electricity Forum, Gas Forum, Oil Forum) and the Energy Community Regulatory Board, including its Working Groups (Electricity WG, Gas WG, Customer WG);
  - 1.2. the Budget Committee;
  - 1.3. the Task Forces, Coordination Groups and other working bodies established by the decisions or conclusions of the Ministerial Council or the Director<sup>3</sup>;
  - 1.4. Energy Community Parliamentary Plenum meetings;

<sup>1</sup> The reimbursement of travel costs for the delegates attending meetings organized specifically for the purposes of the implementation of the grant contracts, shall take place from respective projects' budgets, currently under Grant Contract ENI/2020/420-848

<sup>2</sup> Energy Community Procedures for the Establishment and Implementation of Budget, Auditing and Inspection of 17 November 2006 (Procedural Act No 2006/03/MC-EnC) amended on 23 September 2014

<sup>3</sup> Through respective Act/Note of Establishment signed by the Director

- 1.5. the Advisory Committee meetings.
- 2) Participation in conferences, other fora (such as sustainability, law or dispute resolution forum, competition and state aid conferences etc.), meetings and workshops organized by the Secretariat in implementing the Work Program of the Energy Community, shall be eligible for reimbursement. Whether participation costs are subject to refunding or not, shall be explicitly indicated in the relevant invitation.
- 3) Meetings of different nature organized by the Secretariat related to the Secretariat's tasks under Article 67 of the Treaty, including cooperation with constitutes on drafting of the legislation, assistance under Article 2 of the Dispute Resolution Procedures<sup>4</sup>, enforcement, alternative dispute resolution etc.
- 4) Meetings of different nature organized within the scope of projects' implementation (like high-level debates, workshops etc).
- 5) Further to the provisions of this Article, travel expenses of the applicants for the posts announced by the Energy Community who are invited for an interview with the Selection Committee shall be refunded within the scope of these Rules and within the overall limit of EUR 800.--.

### Article 3 Eligible Participants

- 1) The following types of eligible participants are defined as *beneficiaries* under these rules:
  - 1.1. participants from the state authorities from the Contracting Parties (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo<sup>5</sup>, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine) and Observers (Armenia and Turkey) under the Treaty,
  - 1.2. participants from the state authorities and/or *private sector entities* defined as target groups under the projects ("grant contracts")<sup>6</sup>,
  - 1.3. members of the Advisory Committee.
- 2) Only officially nominated representatives from the eligible participants shall be reimbursed for their participation in the meeting in question.
- 3) The representatives officially nominated by their respective institutions or entities shall present with the request for reimbursement the act of nomination for the relevant event (e-mail confirmation, travel order etc.).
- 4) Without prejudice to the specified exceptions, only one representative per beneficiary party (ministry, regulatory authority, agency, entity etc.) shall be eligible for reimbursement.
- 5) The Director of the Energy Community Secretariat may allow reimbursement for more than one representative on an ad hoc basis for eligible representatives of the beneficiaries (see Art 3(1)) specific institutional set up on the ground of their political structure.
- 6) For workshops and conferences, participation of up to two representatives per Contracting Party and other beneficiary countries, as defined under Art 3(1) above,

<sup>4</sup> Rules of Procedure of 16 October 2015 on dispute settlement under the Treaty

<sup>5</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

<sup>6</sup> To be reimbursed under the project budget

unless the Director decides otherwise.

- 7) Where only one participant is eligible, two or more participants from one beneficiary party may be reimbursed within the overall envisaged budget for one participant in accordance with the established limits.
- 8) In case two or more representatives from the same eligible authority of the beneficiary party attend the same meeting, the Secretariat shall be informed prior to the meeting by or on behalf of the superior of the attendees about the name of the delegate eligible for reimbursement within the established limits. In case such notification is missing, reimbursement shall be made to the representative who first submitted a claim in accordance with Article 11.
- 9) In case two representatives from different eligible authorities of the same beneficiary party attend the same meeting and there is no in advance clarification on the attendee eligible for reimbursement, the Secretariat shall reimburse within the overall limits the first applicant from each of the authorities.

#### **Article 4 Reimbursement for participation at meetings of ECRB and its Working Groups**

- 1) Only one officially nominated representative from the regulatory authority from each beneficiary party shall be eligible for reimbursement.
- 2) The President in the office of the ECRB will receive a refund of expenditures for her/his participation at the meetings of the ECRB and other institutional meetings of the Energy Community as required for the purpose of those meetings.
- 3) Chairs of the ECRB Working Groups shall be considered eligible for the purpose of their participation at the institutional meetings of the ECRB throughout the year.

#### **Article 5 Reimbursement for participation at meetings of the Energy Community Fora**

For participation at the Electricity, Gas, Oil, Dispute Resolution and Competition Fora of the Energy Community, one representative from the government and one representative from the regulatory authority per beneficiary party may be reimbursed in the maximum reimbursable amount as stated in Article 7.4).

#### **Article 6 Speakers' Reimbursement for the Energy Community meetings**

Requests for reimbursement of speakers at Energy Community events shall be considered eligible only if the Director of the Energy Community Secretariat has approved their reimbursement in advance. The staff member inviting a speaker shall ask the Director for confirmation in writing before making an invitation.

The guest speaker reimbursement eligibility shall be assumed approved in cases when the staff member included the name of the respective guest speaker in event's agenda that was approved by the Director.

## Article 7 Reimbursable Costs and Limits

- 1) The reimbursement shall cover the minimum necessary period of stay for the relevant event.
- 2) Only costs of travel are reimbursed. No per diems will be paid in addition to the travel expenses.
- 3) The costs of travel comprise the costs of transportation and costs of accommodation as necessary for the purposes of the meeting in question.
- 4) For all events where participation is eligible for reimbursement, the cost of travel to be reimbursed per meeting and per eligible participant from any beneficiary party may not exceed EUR 800. This maximum may be subject to changes, depending on the budgetary situation of the Energy Community.
- 5) For invoices paid in foreign currency, the conversion from the local currency to Euro should be done in line with European Commission's InforEuro exchange rate, in the month that the transaction took place<sup>7</sup>.

## Article 8 Transport

- 1) As a matter of principle, reimbursement shall only be made for taking the most direct route and the most cost-effective mode of transport.
- 2) Subject to the following specifications, costs of travel by airplane, public transport and car will be reimbursed.
- 3) For travel by plane, the costs of an economy-class return ticket will be reimbursed.
- 4) For travel by train, the costs of a 2<sup>nd</sup> class return ticket will be reimbursed.
- 5) For travel by private car, mileage costs based on the most recent scale under Austrian legislation<sup>8</sup> will be reimbursed. The mileage reimbursement covers all incidentals related to the travel, like costs of petrol, insurance, toll fees, costs of parking, wearing down etc. A co-driver will not be reimbursed.
- 6) Costs for public transportation (bus, train, metro) shall be reimbursed. Taxi costs shall not be reimbursed; whenever public transportation is in place or reasonable. In exceptional cases, when taxi costs are claimed, the traveler shall enclose the invoice together with note justifying the use of taxi services. For meetings taking place in Vienna, public transportation shall be used.

## Article 9 Accommodation

- 1) Accommodation costs for the number of nights necessitated by the meeting in question shall be reimbursed. Overnight stay shall not be considered necessary where travel from or back to the traveler's home destination on the day of the meeting is reasonable.
- 2) The costs of accommodation shall be reimbursed up to EUR 150 per night.
- 3) Only costs of accommodation shall be reimbursed. Any other expenditure related to the stay at the hotel shall not be reimbursed (internet, costs of phoning, copying, minibar, non-included breakfast, etc.).

<sup>7</sup> The official European Commission's InforEuro webpage address: <https://ec.europa.eu/budget/graphs/inforeuro.html>

<sup>8</sup> Since 1.1.2011 EUR 0.42/km [ <https://www.bmf.gv.at/themen/steuern/kraftfahrzeuge/kilometergeld.html> ]

### **Article 10 Purchase of ticket**

- 1) The participants, eligible under these Rules, are required to purchase their tickets as early as possible so that the most economical fare can be obtained.
- 2) In principle, the travelers shall make bookings of the tickets individually.

### **Article 11 Reimbursement Procedure**

- 1) Reimbursement of eligible expenditures is possible only if the claimer has previously registered for the event in question through the website of the Energy Community.

This requirement does not apply currently for the events organized under the grant contacts. In order to claim the eligible expenditures under a grant contract, a specific form for reimbursement shall be used (see Annex 3).

- 2) A claim for reimbursement of travel expenses has to be submitted using the online form on the Energy Community's website within 30 calendar days after the date of the meeting in question. The reimbursement button will stay activated through the website of the Energy Community until 30 days after the event.
- 3) The online claim must be supported by documents as evidence of the costs incurred, namely flight, railway, public transport tickets, hotel invoices etc. There will be no reimbursement of expenditures without invoices provided.
- 4) Any related correspondence regarding reimbursement matters shall be sent in writing to [accounting@energy-community.org](mailto:accounting@energy-community.org) or to [eu4energy@energy-community.org](mailto:eu4energy@energy-community.org) (for grant contracts).
- 5) Reimbursements shall be made only via banktransfer.
- 6) Reimbursement will be made in Euro to the stated bank account of the institution nominating the delegate.
- 7) On an exceptional basis, reimbursement shall be made to private bank accounts only upon explicit and official written reasoned request by the institution nominating the participant to the meeting concerned.
- 8) Advance payment of expenditure for participants in eligible events, including bookings of flights and/or hotels on behalf of the Energy Community remains limited to exceptional cases. In exceptional cases, provisions of Article 12 of these Rules shall apply.
- 9) The bank account details given have to contain the following details: name of the beneficiary (account holder), address of the account holder, bank name, bank account number (IBAN), Swift Code (BIC).
- 10) The Advisory Committee members are exempt from the provisions of Art 11. The Advisory Committee members, upon the adoption of the decision on their reimbursement, shall submit a letter stating their up-to-date bank account details to [accounting@energy-community.org](mailto:accounting@energy-community.org).

### **Article 12 Exception Rules on advanced payments of travel expenses**

- 1) The Director may decide - on a case-by-case basis - based on a request submitted to him/her in writing from the nominating authority about the advanced payment of travel related expenditures (including accommodation).

- 2) The eligible representative of the beneficiaries has to submit the request for advanced payment in writing to the Secretariat, to the dedicated email address - [accounting@energy-community.org](mailto:accounting@energy-community.org) (in accordance with Annex 1) or to [eu4energy@energy-community.org](mailto:eu4energy@energy-community.org) (for grant contracts and in accordance with Annex 2), at least 21 calendar days before the date of the event. The late submission can serve as a justification for a rejection of the request.
- 3) The application has to include the written justification (description of the exceptional circumstances) for the application of the procedure and the official authorization of the relevant business trip by the responsible authority (within the relevant institution). The participant has to register online to the event, as requested by the Secretariat.
- 4) Further to the request, and in accordance with the draft agenda for the event, the Secretariat shall arrange upon own discretion a flight ticket and hotel accommodation to the participant to the event. The Secretariat will submit to the eligible representative via email bookings confirmations for the ticket and accommodation required.
- 5) With the application for the advanced payment of travel expenditures, the participant guarantees that he/she will take part in the meeting in question.
- 6) In case that the eligible representative of the Beneficiary is not in the position to participate to the event - for reasons, which do not lie within the responsibility of ECS - the Beneficiary shall indemnify the Secretariat for the costs undergone in relation to the organization of the trip (e.g. costs of tickets booked incl. cancellation fees etc).

### **Article 13 Advisory Committee members**

- 1) The Advisory Committee is established by the Ministerial Council as a body independent of the Energy Community institutions in general, and in particular of the Secretariat as a party to the dispute settlement cases heard by the Advisory Committee.
- 2) The Advisory Committee establishes its own scheme for reimbursement of its members on an annual basis and notifies it to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will annually pay the amount due to each member of the Advisory Committee on the basis of the reimbursement scheme against individual requests.
- 3) Before paying, the Secretariat will review the individual requests for factual errors. If it deems the reimbursement scheme submitted by the Advisory Committee excessive or otherwise inappropriate, it will notify the Budget Committee in its advisory role thereof.

### **Article 14 Administrative and final provisions**

- 1) The Head of Administrative and Finance Unit of the Energy Community Secretariat shall be responsible for the proper implementation of these Rules.
- 2) The Reimbursement Rules shall be made public through the website of the Energy Community upon their adoption.
- 3) These rules repeal any previous versions of the Reimbursement Rules.



**Annex 1**

**APPLICATION FOR ADVANCE PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENDITURES**

**1. Traveler’s Details – please fill in ALL fields marked with [\*]**

Last Name*:		
First Name*:		
Salutation: Mr/Ms./Mrs.		
Name of the Organization/Institution:		
Function:		
Passport Number* (required for booking purposes):		
Contact Phone No.:		
E-mail:		
Title and Place of Event to be attended		
Dates of the Event:	From:	To:
Arrival date:	From:	To:
Route:	Departing from:	Arriving to:

**2. Request for Booking - please cross the relevant box:**

- FLIGHT/TRAIN TICKET**
- FLIGHT LUGGAGE**
- HOTEL**

**3. Refunding Clause in accordance with EnergyCommunity Reimbursement Rules Art 12(6):**

I, the undersigned, confirm that I am aware of the refunding clause laid down in the applicable Energy Community Reimbursement Rules, which reads as follows: Art. 12(6) In case that the eligible representative of the Beneficiary is not in the position to participate to the event - for reasons, which do not lie within the responsibility of Secretariat - the Beneficiary shall indemnify the Secretariat for the costs undergone in relation to the organization of the trip (e.g. costs of tickets booked incl. cancellation fees etc).

**4. Data Protection**

The Energy Community Secretariat is committed to protect the right to privacy and has implemented measures to ensure data protection. If you want to learn more or have concerns, please send an email to [data-protection@energy-community.org](mailto:data-protection@energy-community.org)

- I agree for my personal data to be stored and processed by the Secretariat and the third parties with a legitimate interest in line with and for the period required by the purpose of my advance payment request, as well as any contractual obligations of the Secretariat

<u>Remarks:</u>
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**Date, place:**

**Traveler’s Signature**

**Date, place:**

**Traveler’s Direct Superior  
Signature**



**IMPORTANT NOTES FOR APPLICANTS:**

- This form serves a basis for travel arrangements made by the Energy Community Secretariat on behalf of traveler. It shall be approved in advance by the traveler’s direct superior and submitted in a scanned form to the Secretariat’s to the mailbox: [accounting@energy-community.org](mailto:accounting@energy-community.org)
- Traveler is solely responsible for the correctness of submitted details and bears full responsibility for incomplete or erroneous data which might result in cancellation, impossibility to travel, change of booking details and/or additional related charges.
- All the extra costs (use of mini-bar in the hotel, parking fees, additional nights etc.) will be paid solely by the traveler.

For Energy Community Secretariat/ *INTERNAL USE:*

**1. Booking Information**

Flight Ticket Price (in EUR)	
Hotel Accommodation Price (in EUR)	
TOTAL	

**2. Director’s Approval**

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved	Remarks:
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## Annex 2

### APPLICATION FOR ADVANCE PAYMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENDITURES

#### 1. Traveler's Details – please fill in ALL fields:

Last Name:		
First Name:		
Salutation: Mr/Ms./Mrs.		
Name of the Organization/Institution:		
Function:		
Passport Number (required for booking purposes):		
Contact Phone No.:		
E-mail:		
Title and Place of Event to be attended		
Dates of the Event:	From:	To:
Arrival date:	From:	To:
Route:	Departing from:	Arriving to:

#### 2. Request for Booking - please cross the relevant box:

- FLIGHT/TRAIN TICKET
- FLIGHT LUGGAGE
- HOTEL

#### 3. Refunding Clause in accordance with Energy Community Reimbursement Rules Art 12(6):

I, the undersigned, confirm that I am aware of the refunding clause laid down in the applicable Energy Community Reimbursement Rules, which reads as follows: Art. 12(6) In case that the eligible representative of the Beneficiary is not in the position to participate to the event - for reasons, which do not lie within the responsibility of EnCS - the Beneficiary shall indemnify the Secretariat for the costs undergone in relation to the organization of the trip (e.g. costs of tickets booked incl. cancellation fees etc).

#### 4. Data Protection

The Energy Community Secretariat is committed to protect the right to privacy and has implemented measures to ensure data protection. If you want to learn more or have concerns, please send an email to [data-protection@energy-community.org](mailto:data-protection@energy-community.org)

- I agree for my personal data to be stored and processed by the Secretariat and the third parties with a legitimate interest in line with and for the period required by the purpose of my advance payment request, as well as any contractual obligations of the Secretariat

Remarks:

Date, place:

Traveler's Signature

Date, place:

Traveler's Direct Superior  
Signature

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- This form serves as basis for travel arrangements made by the Energy Community Secretariat on behalf of traveler. It shall be approved in advance by the traveler's direct superior and submitted (**21 calendar days in advance**) in a scanned form to the following e-mail: [EU4Energy@energy-community.org](mailto:EU4Energy@energy-community.org)
- Traveler is solely responsible for the correctness of submitted details and bears full responsibility for incomplete or erroneous data which might result in cancellation, impossibility to travel, change of booking details and/or additional related charges.
- All the extra costs (use of mini-bar in the hotel, parking fees, additional nights etc.) will be paid solely by the traveler.
- Traveler is obliged to keep all the boarding passes/travel tickets as proof of incurred travel and upon return he/she is asked to send the scanned copies to the email specified above.
- The Secretariat will make travel arrangements within the available air flights and hotel offers on the market that match the ECS Reimbursement Rules limits and rates, e.g. Art. 2(5) and Art. 9(2).
- The hotel bookings are possible with limited number of contracted hotels and upon availability of rooms.

For Energy Community Secretariat/ *INTERNAL USE:*

**1. Booking Information**

Flight Ticket Price (in EUR)	
Hotel Accommodation Price (in EUR)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**2. Director's Approval**

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved	Remarks:
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## Annex 3

### TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

Please scan and send as PDF document by email to [accounting@energy-community.org](mailto:accounting@energy-community.org)

1. MEETING DETAILS						
Description of the meeting:					Place:	
Date:		No. of days:				
2. PARTICIPANT						
FAMILY NAME:			FIRST NAME:			
INSTITUTION:			TITLE:			
COUNTRY:						
E-MAIL:			TEL:			
3. BANK DETAILS – please provide full IBAN and SWIFT/BIC code						
<b>NAME AND ADDRESS OF ACCOUNT HOLDER (INSTITUTION):</b> <i>(please indicate the name of owner/beneficiary of the bank account in this field)</i>						
BANK NAME						
Account Number						
SWIFT (BIC) Code						
IBAN						
4. ACCOMODATION						
DATES OF STAY		From:		To:		
Total number of hotel nights (max. rate of 150 €/night) <i>Please attach a copy of the hotel receipt/invoice</i>			Number:		Total (€*):	
5. TRAVEL EXPENSES						
Air plane, train, long distance bus, etc.	From	To	Class	Amount	Currency	In €*
<i>Itinerary</i>						
<i>Continue on separate sheet if required</i>						
<i>Please attach a copy of the available receipts/invoices, including boarding passes for flights/train/bus tickets</i>						
CAR	From:		To:		To (return):	
Proof of distance attached (copy of the route from GoogleMaps or ViaMichelin.com, to be submitted in PDF or JPG format) <input type="checkbox"/>				Km (both ways):		
Mileage (fixed) rate 0,42 € / km				Total (€*):		
<b>LOCAL TRANSPORT</b> (city public transport tickets, local shuttle trains etc) – receipts required						
<b>TAXI</b> (if local public transport was not available) - Receipts required; additional				Amount	Currency	€*

justification necessary		
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<b>TOTAL AMOUNT CLAIMED in EURO</b>		
<b>Other Remarks:</b>		
I <b>certify</b> that this travel claim is a true statement of travel expenses incurred by me. I have not been and will not be reimbursed for these expenses from any other source nor have I included any expenses paid or to be paid directly from another source.		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE:</b>	

**Data Protection**

The Energy Community Secretariat is committed to protect the right to privacy and has implemented measures to ensure data protection. If you want to learn more or have concerns, please send an email to [data-protection@energy-community.org](mailto:data-protection@energy-community.org)

- I agree for my personal data to be stored and processed by the Secretariat and the third parties with a legitimate interest in line with and for the period required by the purpose of my reimbursement request, as well as any contractual obligations of the Secretariat

*When submitting the reimbursement form, please attach copies of all the required supporting documents*

*\*Conversion from the local currency to EUR, should be done in line with the Inforeuro exchange rate [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/inforeuro/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/index_en.cfm), in the month that transaction took place*