



HOUSE OF LORDS

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3rd Report of Session 2017–19

European travel on Parliamentary business

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House of Lords Commission

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Contact details

All correspondence should be addressed to the House of Lords Commission, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW. Telephone 020 7219 6644.

European travel on Parliamentary business

THIRD REPORT OF SESSION 2017–19

1. This report invites the House to agree changes relating to European travel on Parliamentary business within the scheme of Financial Support for Members.

Background

2. The current House of Lords rules are covered by a resolution of the House¹ which specifically links the travel to national parliaments of European Union states or candidate countries and EU institutions in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg. Since then the eligible countries and institutions have been revised to also include:
 - National parliaments of Council of Europe member states;
 - National parliaments of European Free Trade Association member states;
 - Any EU institution or agency, removing the restriction to those based in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg; and
 - Council of Europe institutions in Strasbourg.²
3. Prior approval is required for Members seeking reimbursement of such expenditure. The number of visits allowed per year (two from 1 April to 31 March), and what can be reimbursed (travel and subsistence for up to 48 hours) has not changed since the resolution agreed by the House in 2003.
4. This was previously in line with what MPs could claim; the only difference being that MPs could claim for three return trips per year. The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority has since made changes to the Commons system and the House of Lords Commission has accordingly reviewed the support available to Members of the House of Lords.

Commission recommendations

5. **The Commission recommends that the support for European travel on Parliamentary business should be changed as follows:**
 - **The existing link to national parliaments and EU/Council of Europe institutions and agencies be removed; and**
 - **The eligible countries be defined as member states of the EU, member states of the Council of Europe, member states of the European Free Trade Association, and the Holy See.**

1 Agreed on 5 March 2003.

2 The House Committee extended the scheme to be in line with the House of Commons in April 2008 and to include the Council of Europe institutions in Strasbourg in October 2013.

6. The limits on the number of visits (two from 1 April to 31 March) allowed per year and what travel and subsistence can be reimbursed (up to 48 hours) would remain. The requirements on eligibility of travel for reimbursement under the scheme, and for advance approval, should also remain.
7. **The Commission also recommends that:**
 - **Any further changes to support in relation to European travel on Parliamentary business should be decided by the Commission without further reference to the House, and that the resolution of 5 March 2003 be accordingly no longer operative; and**
 - **The provision of support in relation to European travel on Parliamentary business be reviewed in a year.**