

Il Presidente

THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Having regard to

- Article 22(5) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament,
- the Bureau decision of 15 January 2018 on rules governing security and safety in the European Parliament;

Whereas,

- COVID-19 cases continue to rise in many Member States and national authorities are taking further measures to limit the spread of the virus;
- infection rates in the Brussels-Capital Region have increased to alarming levels;
- the Bureau of the European Parliament at its meeting of 27 April 2020 endorsed several risk mitigation measures, including mandatory checks of body temperature at entrances to Parliament's buildings;
- the World Health Organisation lists fever as one of the most common symptoms of COVID-19;
- Parliament's Medical Service advised, in line with an evolving understanding of the respiratory illness caused by the novel coronavirus COVID-19, that an increased body temperature of 37.7 degree Celsius or more should be considered as a possible symptom of COVID-19;
- detection of an increased body temperature before entering the Parliament's buildings and subsequent denial of access can further reduce the spread of and infection with the COVID-19 virus;
- in order to minimise health risks for Members, staff and other persons working in and visiting the European Parliament, access to Parliament buildings should be further limited while ensuring that Parliament continues to safeguard its operational capacity, particularly its legislative and budgetary activity;
- Parliament's administration and political groups have significantly reduced the presence of their respective staff by introducing systematic teleworking;
- given the recent aggravation of the pandemic situation, in particular in the Brussels-Capital Region, it is now necessary to further limit physical presence in Parliament's buildings;
- therefore, Parliament's administration and political groups should increase teleworking to an average of at least 80% of monthly working time and should ensure that simultaneous presence in Parliament's buildings is limited to a minimum;

- also Member's staff (accredited parliamentary assistants, trainees) should telework an average of at least 80% of their monthly working time and their physical presence should be limited to one staff member per Member in Parliament's buildings at any given time;
- in light of the above, the decision of 24 September 2020 on COVID-19 should be replaced by an updated and amended decision;
- in the implementation of this decision, Parliament should ensure the protection of privacy and personal data in compliance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data¹ and the Bureau decision of 17 June 2019 on implementing Rules relating to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725;

HAS DECIDED

Article 1

1. The following types of events and visits in Parliament buildings in all three places of work, and the European Parliament Liaison Offices inside and outside of the European Union, shall not be organised or remain cancelled until further notice, irrespective of their organiser or authorising authority:
 - Delegations
 - Committee Hearings and workshops
 - Participation in Parliamentary Assemblies and bodies thereof
 - Election observation delegations
 - Events organised by committees
 - Member-sponsored visits
 - Members' personal visits
 - Accredited assistants' personal visits
 - Visits of local assistants
 - Staff personal visits
 - Events organised by Parliament's administration
 - Euroscola, Euromed-Scola and Euronest-Scola events/seminars
 - Seminars, including press seminars
 - Individual and group visits to Parliament and opinion multiplier events
 - Cultural events and exhibitions
 - Events by outside bodies taking place in Parliament's buildings
 - Events co-organised with the European Parliament taking place in Parliament's buildings
 - Events organised by the Political Groups or by individual Members
 - Events making use of the Members restaurant, Members' salons, other restaurants and other designated spaces involving breakfast/lunch/dinner/cocktails.
2. Unless otherwise specified in paragraph 1, the governing bodies of Parliament, plenary, ordinary and extraordinary committee meetings, and the political groups shall not be restricted in their ability to function normally, however without the attendance of interest representatives nor visitors other than those specifically invited by the Chair as a speaker and with the following additional measures being applied:
 - a) the respective Chair shall ensure to the extent possible that attendees do not approach each other closer than 1,5 meter when seated,

¹ OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

b) attendees shall avoid direct physical contact such as handshakes,

Plenary meetings of the Committee of Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee on Parliament's buildings shall remain possible under the same conditions.

3. Members' staff and staff of the General Secretariat and political groups shall telework an average of at least 80% of their monthly working time and simultaneous physical presence in Parliament's buildings shall be limited to a minimum. No more than one member of staff per Member shall be allowed to be physically present in Parliament's buildings at any given time.
4. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, delegations of Parliament shall be able to meet for urgent business by remote participation.
5. The House of European History, the Parlamentarium, the Europa Experience sites and European Parliament Liaison Offices remain open to visitors in line with the measures adopted by the competent national authorities and Parliament.

Article 2

1. It is mandatory to wear a community mask that covers mouth and nose at all times while in Parliament's buildings, except in the immediate office environment.
2. Community masks shall be worn when Parliament's buildings are entered and before security personnel is approached at entrances. In car parks, community masks shall be worn when outside a vehicle.
3. This Article is without prejudice to the general rules on access control to Parliament provided that physical distancing is ensured.

Article 3

1. A temperature check shall be performed on any person entering Parliament's buildings in the three work places.
2. The result of a temperature check shall not be stored and shall not be transferred.

Article 4

1. Access to Parliament's buildings will be denied to persons who:
 - a) show symptoms of respiratory illness such as sneezing or coughing;
 - b) have been tested positive for COVID-19, or have been in known contact with a person whose infection with COVID-19 has been confirmed, and who have not yet received confirmation from a medical practitioner that they are not or no longer infected.
2. Access to Parliament's buildings is denied to any person who is not wearing a community mask in accordance with Article 2.

3. Any person encountered inside Parliament's buildings in breach of Article 2 who, upon reminder, does not immediately comply with that provision shall be ordered to leave and shall be escorted out of Parliament's building by security personnel.
4. Access to Parliament's buildings is denied to any person who is found to have a body temperature of 37.7 degree Celsius or more or who refuses to have the body temperature checked.
5. The Secretary-General shall immediately be informed if a measure is taken pursuant to paragraphs 2 to 4. If such measure taken concerns a Member, the President shall immediately be informed as well.
6. Access to a building which Parliament shares with another Institution or entity is granted in accordance with any additional applicable access rules to such building.

Article 5

Non-compliance with this decision, its implementing rules, as well as with the measures taken in their application may lead to an action under Parliament's Rules of Procedure and the Staff Regulations or engage contractual liability.

Article 6

1. The Secretary-General shall implement this decision.
2. The Secretary-General shall take the measures necessary to enable remote participation to meetings of Parliament's governing bodies, committees and the plenary, without prejudice to decisions of the Bureau of the European Parliament on matters relating to the conduct of sittings.

Article 7

1. The decision of the President of 24 September 2020 renewing the measures put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is repealed with immediate effect.
2. This decision shall be without prejudice to any additional preventive and health-security measures for risk mitigation by the Bureau of the European Parliament or other competent authorities of Parliament.
3. This decision shall not apply to Parliament buildings that are entirely occupied by other Union bodies.
4. This decision shall take immediate effect. This decision shall lapse on 30 November 2020 unless renewed, amended or repealed by the President.

Brussels, 13 October 2020



David Maria SASSOLI