

To participate in COST Action meetings, participants eligible for reimbursement may receive financial support for their travel, meals and accommodation expenses, following MC approval.

Participants eligible and entitled for reimbursement should:

1. Choose the most economical means of transportation;
2. Make their transportation arrangements as early as possible upon receipt of their official invitation to the meeting;
3. Arrive and depart as close as possible to the beginning/end dates of the meeting.

In order to receive the payment, the eligible and entitled participant must:

1. Register their bank detail prior to the meeting on e-COST at <https://e-services.cost.eu>;
2. Sign the meeting attendance list on each day that they attend the meeting;
3. Declare that he/she will not receive any similar reimbursement or allowance from a third party;
4. Submit a duly completed and signed by hand Travel Reimbursement Request (TRR) form within 30 calendar days from the end date of the approved meeting;
5. Submit readable copies of all invoices/receipts. Original invoices/receipts must be kept by the claimant until 31 May 2019 (5 years after the end of the Seventh Framework Programme) for audit purposes;

All payments are made in EUR, at an exchange rate automatically calculated by e-COST at the meeting end date. Any fees related to returned or refused payments due to incorrect bank account information provided by the participant may be subtracted from their reimbursed amount. For audit purposes, the COST Office reserves the right to contact the participant's institutions to enquire about instances where potential double funding is suspected

The default flat rate expense amounts are EUR 120 for each eligible night and EUR 20 for each eligible meal. Before sending the invitations from e-COST, the MC may decide to apply a different ceiling on the applied flat rates for accommodation expenses and/or meal allowance never exceeding the default flat rate. In these cases, all participants must be notified before receiving their formal invitation. The same flat rates must be afforded to all participants for every night and every meal of the meeting in question. The MC may also decide to cap the total amount to be reimbursed. In this case, all participants must be informed before receiving their invitation, and the same amount must be afforded to all participants. The above-mentioned flat rate rules for accommodation and meals reimbursements must be respected.

Additional information/help about reimbursement rules while attending Action meetings, conferences or training school can be in Annex III.

4.1 Eligible expenses

If, due to Force Majeure (sickness, strike, delays, natural disaster, etc.) before or during the meeting, the participant needs to cancel/change his/her travel ticket and hotel reservation, then any non-refundable amount can be considered as being eligible for reimbursement. The non-refundable amount (face value and net of VAT) must be claimed by submitting together with the TRR a statement from the service provider (airline company, hotel etc.) mentioning the non-refundable amount together with a reasonable justification (medical certificate in case of sickness). Grant Holders shall submit for approval to the COST Office the justifications provided by the participant, together with the supporting documents before processing the reimbursement.

4.1.1 Accommodation (including breakfast)

1. This is based on flat rates only (at a maximum of EUR 120 per person per night, including breakfast);
2. Maximum number of nights to be reimbursed equals the number of attended meeting days (as confirmed by the attendee's signatures on the daily attendance list) plus 1 in case the participant arrived the day before the meeting starts;
3. The accommodation expenses must be paid directly by the participant. Accommodation expenses paid centrally by the Grant Holder or by the Local Organiser are non-eligible;

4. When sharing the hotel room with another participant entitled to reimbursement, only one participant should claim the reimbursement of the nights.

4.1.2 Meals

1. This is based on flat rates only (at a maximum of EUR 20 per person per meal);
2. Meals provided by other sources must be deducted from the number of meals to be reimbursed.

4.1.3 Travel expenses

In order to be reimbursed, participants must submit as supporting documentation their travel tickets (original or legible copies) and/or the related invoice/receipts.

For flight tickets, the provided justification must include the ticket price, the name of the passenger, the dates of travel, departure and arrival times and the booking class – essentially, evidence of the full costing and itinerary of the journey.

For all other eligible modes of transport as detailed in this section (section 4.1.3 and 4.1.4), it is understood that in certain instances, evidence of travel and the subsequent costs such as taxi receipts and certain train/bus/metro tickets do not contain the name of passengers and/or the full itinerary. In every instance, every receipt provided must demonstrate the nature of the journey, the date, the time (where timing is necessary to evidence eligibility) of the travel and the full cost of the ticket.

Travel to and from countries other than the approved meeting destination and the country where the participant is residing (country of residence be the country where the participant is registered on their e-COST profile) must be explained in the justification box and must be accompanied by a comparative price quote evidencing that the purchased ticket is cheaper or equal to the value of a return ticket from the country of residence of the participant to the meeting.

The following conditions apply to the different modes of eligible travel expenses:

1. Airplane

- Only economy class tickets are eligible for reimbursement;
- Air tickets exceeding EUR 1 200 require prior approval from the COST Office;
- Seat reservations and luggage transportation costs are eligible;
- Administrative fees charged by travel agencies are eligible.

2. Train or Bus

- First and second class tickets are eligible for reimbursement;
- Supplements for fast trains and sleepers are eligible expenses.

3. Car

Car travel is limited to a maximum distance of 2 000 km and is reimbursed as follow:

- At EUR 0.20 per km, when a participant entitled to reimbursement is travelling alone;
- At EUR 0.30 per km, when additional participant entitled to reimbursement are travelling in the same car. Only the driver shall be reimbursed. The names of the passengers must be mentioned on the remarks section of the TRR submitted by the driver.
- Proof of distance showing the travelled route beginning at the place of origin to the approved meeting venue must be submitted along with the TRR by means of a printout from a route planner web services. Parking costs are eligible for reimbursement and can be found under Local transport expenses.

4. Ferry

In order to be reimbursed, participants must submit as supporting documentation: the tickets (and the related invoice if the price is not indicated on the ticket) mentioning the name of the passenger, the

price, dates of travel, departure and arrival times and the booking class – essentially the full itinerary of the journey.

4.1.4 Local transport expenses

Local transport expenses are any transport costs (including public transport - shuttle, buses, trains, metro, tramway - taxis, car, parking costs and ferry costs) incurred travelling between the following points:

- Home to Airport / train station;
- Airport / train station to meeting venue / hotel;
- Hotel to meeting venue;
- Meeting venue to hotel;
- Meeting venue / hotel to airport / train station;
- Airport / train station back to home.

The rules concerning the reimbursement of public transport expenses - shuttle, buses, trains, metro, tramway - are as follows:

- If the amount claimed is less than EUR 25, no tickets are required to be submitted for reimbursement but the journey(s) must be detailed on the TRR (for both the outbound & inbound journeys);
- If the claimed amount exceeds EUR 25, receipts justifying the total amount claimed must be provided. All receipts must display the amount and the date that the expenses were incurred. In this case, a detailed journey must be provided with the tickets.

Action Participants are limited to use taxis:

- When no other means of public transport is available;
- For early departures (travel departure before 7 am) or late arrivals (travel arrival after 10 pm);
- For up to EUR 80 for the entire travel when the above conditions have been met.

Car costs can be reimbursed according to the rules stated in section 4.1.3. Parking expenses can be reimbursed based on receipt only.

4.1.5 Other eligible expenses

1. Short term visa fees relevant to attending the approved Action meeting. Any claimant must validate the amount by producing a supporting document (e.g. a receipt/stamp from the embassy/consulate issuing the visa which clearly shows the amount paid and the conditions of the visa);
2. An Extra night accommodation (when duly justified and approved by the COST Office prior to the participant incurring the expense);

4.2 Non-eligible expenses

1. Registration, honorarium or lecture fees;
2. Transportation expenses associated with obtaining the short term visa;
3. Health related expenses, life and medical insurance;
4. Travel cancelation and luggage insurance;
5. Overnight stay during a trip by car, fuel costs, road tolls and car rental costs;
6. Wi-Fi, telephone, internet and minibar consumption;
7. Printing costs, postage;
8. Regional or national taxation fees, stamp duty expenses.