



Council of the European Union

General Secretariat

Directorate-General Communication and Information - COMM

Directorate Information and Outreach

Information Services Unit / Transparency

Head of Unit

Brussels, 1 July 2021

Ms Suzy Sumner

Email: ask+request-9410-e0d22857@asktheeu.org

Ref. 21/0960-dcp/jl

Request made on: 03.05.2021

Deadline extension: 27.05.2021

Dear Ms Sumner,

Thank you for your request for access to documents of the Council of the European Union containing information on the rotating Presidencies of the Council.¹

The budget of the European Council and Council, a section of the EU budget, covers all activity that takes place in the institutional framework of the Council and its preparatory bodies. Any other events or activities of Member States holding the rotating Presidency of the Council, including informal meetings, cultural, touristic or scientific events, remain under the sole responsibility of the Member State concerned and are financed by the respective national budget. The Council has no information about Presidency-related national budget expenditure. This information should be obtained from the authorities of the Member State in question.

Each incoming Presidency is duly informed in advance of their financial responsibilities (national budget) such as:

- The costs of meetings convened on the Presidency's initiative outside the institutional framework. This includes, mainly, those held in its own country as informal meetings of ministers, e.g. Coreper, the Political and Security Committee, the Special Committee on Agriculture and the 15 working parties officially convened by each Presidency.

¹ The General Secretariat of the Council has examined your request on the basis of the applicable rules: Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43) and the specific provisions concerning public access to Council documents set out in Annex II to the Council's Rules of Procedure (Council Decision No 2009/937/EU, OJ L 325, 11.12.2009, p. 35).

- Travel and accommodation expenses for staff of the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) coming to the Member State for briefings and training programmes in preparation of the Presidency.
- In some cases, travel and accommodation expenses for GSC staff participating in informal ministerial meetings.
- The cost of security staff to supervise contractors carrying out work for decoration and exhibitions initiated by the rotating Presidency in Council buildings.
- The cost of insurance for works of art which the Presidency displays in Council buildings.

Member States in exercise of the Presidency receive from the Council budget a limited additional support for the following concrete purposes:

- Each Member State is entitled to a reimbursement up to a fixed annual amount for delegates' travel expenses. For the Member State holding the Presidency this amount is increased by 50 %.
- There is only a limited number of meetings giving the right to reimbursement.
- A limited number of official meals.

The budget of the Council of the European Union is a budget by nature and does not break down expenditure by single activities and events.

Yours sincerely,

Fernando FLORINDO