

The President

DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

of 8 July 2021

on security measures to limit the spread of COVID-19

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,

- (1) The epidemiological situation continues to improve in many Member States, in particular as a result of the accelerated roll out of the vaccination campaigns, but since only by the end of August 2021 between 70 and 80% of the adult population may be fully vaccinated, it remains a priority to limit the circulation of the coronavirus and its potentially more transmissible so-called Delta variant..
- (2) At its meeting of 27 April 2020, the Bureau of the European Parliament endorsed several risk mitigation measures, including mandatory checks of body temperature at the entrances to Parliament's buildings; likewise, at its meeting of 23 November 2020, it reinforced risk-mitigation measures to enable an increased physical presence of Members at official meetings. On 5 July 2021, the Bureau endorsed proposals for lifting some restrictions on Parliament activities, including individual visitors, as of September 2021 based on risk assessment and in line with the applicable national, Union and international rules.
- (3) As recommended by Parliament's Medical Service in order to reinforce the protection of Members and staff as well as to further reduce the release of infectious respiratory

particles, medical face masks EN14683¹ or FFP2 respirators² (hereinafter medical face masks) should be worn while in Parliament's buildings.

- (4) The World Health Organisation lists fever as one of the most common symptoms of COVID-19.
- (5) 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.
- (6) 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.
- (7) In order to minimise health risks for Members, staff and other persons working in and visiting the European Parliament, access to Parliament buildings should still be limited while ensuring that Parliament continues to safeguard its operational capacity, particularly its legislative and budgetary activity.
- (8) Physical presence in Parliament's buildings should be limited to avoid an increase of infection rates inside the European Parliament while the obligation to telework should gradually be relaxed taking into account essential tasks and organisational constraints.
- (9) The age groups of staff of Parliament's administration which have been offered vaccination twice and after an additional 14 days have lapsed so that maximum protection can be reached, enter new teleworking arrangements depending on the needs of the service, unless full physical presence is absolutely necessary. The same gradual relaxations should apply to staff of Members and political groups. To this end, Members and political groups should align their new teleworking arrangements with the updated calendar followed by Parliament's administration and annexed to this Decision.
- (10) Member's staff (accredited parliamentary assistants, trainees) and staff of political groups for whom the relaxations do not yet apply, should telework on average at least 80% of their monthly working time unless their presence is absolutely necessary. Only staff that has been vaccinated twice and after an additional 14 days have lapsed may share offices.
- (11) In addition to PCR tests, rapid antigen tests are still available as an additional health-security measure for long duration meetings such as trilogues.
- (12) In light of the above, the measures set out in the Decision of 1 June 2021 on security measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 should be adapted as set out in this new Decision.

¹ A medical face mask needs to comply with EN14683:2019, as referred to in point 147 of Annex I to Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/437 of 24 March 2020 on the harmonised standards for medical devices drafted in support of Council Directive 93/42/EEC (OJ L1 90, 25.3.2020, p. 1).

² As described in EN149:2001 and referred to in Commission communication in the framework of the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2016/425 on personal protective equipment (OJ C 209, 15.6.2018, p. 17), provided they are not equipped with a valve.

- (13) 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 data³ and the Bureau decision of 17 June 2019 on implementing Rules relating to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION

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:
 - 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 and other designated spaces involving breakfast, lunch, dinner or cocktails.

2. The House of European History, the Parliamentarium in Brussels and Strasbourg, the Hemicycle visits facilities outside part-sessions, the Station Europe and the European Parliament Liaison Offices and the Europa Experience sites remain open for individual visitors, in line with the measures adopted by the competent national authorities and Parliament.

³ OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39.

Article 2

1. The political groups shall not be restricted to function normally, however without the physical attendance of interest representatives nor visitors. The Chair shall ensure that physical distancing of 1.5 meter between participants is observed.

Plenary meetings of the Committee of Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee in Parliament's buildings shall remain possible under the same conditions. The same shall apply to meetings organised in the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, to which observers and other participants may be invited.

2. Staff of Members and political groups belonging to an age group indicated in the Annex for which 14 calendar days have passed since the offer of the last recommended dose of one of the COVID-19 vaccines authorised in the EU pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 726/2004⁴ shall telework between 1 and 3 days a week on average per month depending on the needs of the service, unless full physical presence is absolutely necessary. The dates as of which the new teleworking arrangements will apply for the relevant age groups are provided for in the Annex. Only staff of Members and political groups that has been vaccinated twice and after an additional 14 days have lapsed may share offices.
3. Until relaxations are put in place for their age group as outlined in paragraph 2, staff of Members and political groups shall telework on average at least 80% of their monthly working time unless their physical presence is absolutely necessary.

Article 3

1. It is mandatory to wear a medical face mask that covers mouth and nose at all times while in Parliament's buildings, including when speaking, and while using Parliament's official cars. The requirement to wear a medical face mask does not apply when chairing a meeting, when speaking from the front rostrum in plenary or when in the immediate office environment.
2. Medical face masks shall be worn when Parliament's buildings are entered and before security personnel is approached at entrances.
3. This Article is without prejudice to the general rules on access control to Parliament provided that physical distancing is ensured.

Article 4

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.

⁴ Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency (OJ L136, 30.04.2004, p. 1).

Article 5

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. Members and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 must immediately inform Parliament's Medical Service, including on any contacts, to ensure proper contact tracing.
3. Access to Parliament's buildings is denied to any person who is not wearing a medical face mask in accordance with Article 3.
4. Any person encountered inside Parliament's buildings in breach of Article 3 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.
5. 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.
6. The Secretary-General shall immediately be informed if a measure is taken pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 3 to 5. If such measure taken concerns a Member, the President shall immediately be informed as well.
7. 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 6

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 7

The Secretary-General shall implement this Decision and ensure that compliance is monitored.

Article 8

1. This Decision shall take effect on 12 July 2021.
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 lapse on 5 September 2021 unless renewed, amended or repealed.

Strasbourg, 8 July 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Maria SASSOLI', written in a cursive style.

David Maria SASSOLI

Annex

Updated calendar of Parliament's administration outlining which week different age groups will enter the new teleworking arrangements.

Place of work	Birth year	Maximum protection reached	1-3 days teleworking as of
Brussels	1960 and earlier	Week of 31/5/2021	7 June 2021
Brussels	1961-1965	Week of 7/6/2021	14 June 2021
Brussels	1966-1970	Week of 14/6/2021	21 June 2021
Brussels	1971-1975	Week of 21/6/2021	28 June 2021
Brussels	1976-1980	Week of 5/7/2021	12 July 2021
Brussels	1981-1982	Week of 12/7/2021	19 July 2021
Brussels	1983-1985	Week of 19/7/2021	26 July 2021
Brussels	1986-1993	Week of 26/7/2021	2 August 2021
Brussels	1961-1970 (Astra Zeneca)	Week of 2/8/2021	9 August 2021
Brussels	1994-1995	Week of 2/8/2021	9 August 2021
Brussels	1971-1980 (Astra Zeneca)	Week of 9/8/2021	16 August 2021
Brussels	1996-2003	Week of 9/8/2021	16 August 2021
Luxembourg (LU rules)	1966 and earlier	Week of 14/6/2021	21 June 2021
Luxembourg	1967-1970	Week of 21/6/2021	28 June 2021
Luxembourg	1971-1972	Week of 28/6/2021	5 July 2021
Luxembourg	1973-1974	Week of 5/7/2021	12 July 2021
Luxembourg	1975-1976	Week of 12/7/2021	19 July 2021
Strasbourg (FR rules)	1971 and earlier	Week of 21/6/2021	28 June 2021
Strasbourg	1972-2003	Week of 12/7/2021	19 July 2021
External offices (same rules following local vaccination calendar)			