

**Rules governing the crèches and nursery sections  
run under the supervision of the European Parliament in Brussels**

Approved by Parliament's Crèche and Nursery Sections Management Committee  
(hereinafter 'the Management Committee') in Brussels on 24 October 2023.

The crèches and nursery sections run on behalf of the European Parliament in Brussels shall be managed by external bodies under the supervision of the Management Committee, which shall comprise an equal number of representatives of the Administration and the Staff Committee.

**I. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS - ADMISSION**

Article 1

- (1) The crèches and nursery sections shall be reserved for the children of Members, officials, other servants, seconded national experts and accredited parliamentary assistants<sup>1</sup> of the European Parliament working in Brussels and, provided places are available, the children of freelance agents.
- (2) Children shall be admitted to the crèche and nursery sections from the age of three months until 31 August of the calendar year in which they reach the age of four.  
Admission shall be contingent on the availability of places for children in their age group.
- (3) Applications for admission to the crèche, duly completed and signed, must be submitted to the Working Time and Childcare Facilities Unit (hereinafter 'Parliament's managing department') three months prior to the requested date of admission. Applications for admission may be submitted no earlier than the 22nd week of pregnancy, as substantiated by a certificate from a gynaecologist.

Applications for admission to the nursery sections must be submitted before the end of September of the year preceding the calendar year in which the child reaches the age of three.

- (4) Decisions on admission, on the basis of complete applications, shall be taken by the Management Committee, which shall meet at least twice a year.
- (5) Applications for admission shall remain valid on the waiting list for a maximum of nine months if a place is not allocated for the requested date. Any deferral of a place which has been offered shall result in the forfeiture of that place. Once a place offered has been turned down twice, the relevant application for admission shall be removed permanently from the waiting list.

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<sup>1</sup> Temporary staff member, contract staff member, seconded national expert or accredited parliamentary assistant with a contract for full-time work valid for at least one year from the probable date of admission of the child when the place is allocated.

## Article 2

(1) The priorities for admission to the crèches and nursery sections shall be as follows:

### Priority 1:

- a single parent having sole responsibility for the child's upbringing and education;
- a parent entitled to the double dependent child allowance in compliance with Article 67(3) of the Staff Regulations;
- a parent whose child is recognised, in the opinion of Parliament's doctor, as being at least 20% disabled;
- a parent who, as assessed by Parliament's doctor, is recognised as being at least 20% disabled.

### Priority 2:

- (a) two parents working full time at Parliament;
- (b) two parents working full time, two parents one of whom works full time and the other at least half time.

Proven, regular full-time attendance at an educational establishment shall be regarded as half-time working. That condition implies that the course of studies followed has a purpose recognised by the State, that normal teaching hours and the duration of compulsory traineeships amount to at least 50% of the normal working hours at Parliament and that courses are taken during Parliament's official working hours.

### Priority 3:

- two parents one of whom works full time and the other works less than half time or is unemployed.

(2) Within each priority group, applications shall be classified by Parliament's managing department according to the number of children dependent on and in the care of the parent who makes the application and the family's income level, starting with the lowest (as known to Parliament's managing department on the date on which the application is dealt with).

As far as possible, efforts shall be made to keep siblings together.

- (3) Places shall be allocated on the basis of priority group, requested admission date and age of the child.
- (4) The waiting lists drawn up by Parliament's managing department for the crèche and nursery sections shall take account of the above priorities.

## Article 3

(1) Submission of an application shall be taken to signify that the parents accept these rules, the Medical Rules and any emergency measures which may be taken by those in charge of the crèche and nursery sections.

- (2) Parents must inform Parliament's managing department in writing of any change in their family, financial or professional circumstances, or of any change as regards attendance at an educational establishment as referred to in Article 2(1), within 15 calendar days of them learning about that change. The severing of all contractual links with Parliament shall mean that any children of the parent(s) concerned no longer have the right to attend the crèche or nursery sections. Nevertheless, Parliament's managing department, in agreement with the Management Committee, may decide to extend that right, on an exceptional and temporary basis, for a maximum of three months, provided that the parents pay in advance the contribution corresponding to the additional period.

## **II. FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION**

### Article 4 - Parental contribution

- (1) The parental contribution shall be payable from the admission date agreed with Parliament's managing department.

If a child fails to attend on the date agreed, his/her place shall automatically be forfeited and the parents shall be required to pay compensation equal to one month's contribution. If the admission application is withdrawn in writing at least one month prior to the proposed admission date, this compensation shall not be payable.

However, if a child fails to attend for reasons of illness, as substantiated by a medical certificate, and Parliament's managing department is notified as soon as the parents become aware of the illness, the admission date may be deferred.

- (2) Payments shall be made by deduction from the monthly salary, or on the basis of an invoice.
- (3) The amount of the parental contribution shall be calculated on the basis of the scale laid down and reviewed periodically and shall take into account:
- the net income<sup>1</sup> of the parents, plus or minus any maintenance received or paid;
  - the number of children dependent on the parents and in their care.
- (4) The change referred to in Article 3(2) shall give rise to an adjustment in the parental contribution if it continues for at least three months. It shall be taken into account from the month of receipt by Parliament's managing department of a request substantiated by supporting documents submitted by the parent. Subject to the provisions of paragraph (6) below, it may not be applied retroactively.

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<sup>1</sup> NET INCOME:

Net income of a person who has a contractual link with the institutions:

Net income as indicated on the salary statement corrected to take account of allowances received from another source and with temporary allowances deducted.

Net income of a person who does not have a contractual link with the institutions:

Net income as indicated on the salary statement corrected to take account of benefits in kind or other payments.

Net income of a self-employed person:

Income calculated on the basis of the tax declaration from the previous year (Belgian 'notice of assessment' or any other equivalent official document issued by the tax administration of the country in which the parent declares his/her income) and extrapolated over 12 months.

- (5) Parliament's managing department shall have the right at any time to verify the information determining parents' financial contribution and to request additional supporting documents. It reserves the right to charge the maximum contribution if the requisite documents are not supplied by the deadline set.
- (6) Failure to notify by the deadline set a change in family, financial or professional circumstances which would give rise to an increase in the parental contribution shall lead to retroactive recovery of the sums payable, in accordance with Article 85 of the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants.
- (7) If a child's other parent is self-employed or partly self-employed, a Belgian notice of assessment or any other equivalent official document issued by the tax administration of the foreign country in which the other parent declares his/her income must be provided.

If the other parent is seeking work, in Belgium or elsewhere, official proof of that status, stating, where appropriate, the amount of unemployment benefit received per month, must be provided.

- (8) Once a year, in February/March, Parliament's managing department shall update the amount of the contributions. Parents shall be required to provide the documents requested by Parliament's managing department by the deadline set. Parliament's managing department reserves the right to charge the maximum contribution if the requisite documents are not supplied by the deadline set. Paragraph (6) above shall continue to apply.

#### Article 5 - Absences

- (1) The absence of a child for any reason must be reported immediately by the parents to the secretariat of the crèche and nursery sections.

Refunds in respect of periods of annual leave shall be made by granting an automatic 10% reduction in the monthly contribution.

The only absences justifying a refund of the parental contribution shall be the following:

- (2) Illness

In the event of absence for reasons of illness, covered by a medical certificate and lasting at least five consecutive working days, a refund shall be paid from the sixth working day (one working day = 1/20th of the parental contribution).

Medical certificates shall be admissible only if they are dated no later than the day following the beginning of the period of absence to which they relate. No refund shall be paid if an inadmissible certificate is presented.

During the summer period, only one certificate, which must not cover more than 10 consecutive days, will be accepted for each child.

(3) Mission

If a child is absent for at least five consecutive working days because one of his/her parents is on mission, a refund shall be paid after the mission has been completed, provided that a refund application has been submitted by the parent for the actual period stipulated on the mission order approved by the staff member's immediate superior.

A refund shall also be payable for missions to Strasbourg lasting less than five days, after the mission has been completed, for the actual period stipulated on the mission order approved by the staff member's immediate superior<sup>1</sup>.

(4) No reductions in the parental contribution shall be granted for meals or snacks not taken at the crèche.

(5) Applications for refunds and/or reductions in the parental contribution as a result of a child's absence must be made in writing, using the form available on the website of Parliament's crèche service. If a child has been absent because a parent has been on mission or for reasons of illness, supporting documents must be submitted (original medical certificate, mission order and declaration of completion of mission by immediate superior) no later than 15 calendar days after the child's return.

(6) Other absences

Should leave be taken for a period in excess of two months during which the child does not attend the crèche, the child shall forfeit the place awarded to him/her unless there are medical grounds for the absence. The child may return as soon as a place in the appropriate age group becomes available, provided that the parents submit an application at least two months in advance.

### **III. PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS**

#### Article 6

(1) As far as possible, the opening hours of the crèche and nursery sections shall reflect the calendar and official working hours of the European Parliament in Brussels.

The crèche and nursery sections shall be open throughout the year, except for the days on which Parliament's offices are closed.

The crèche and nursery sections shall be open from 8.00 to 19.00 and from 8.00 to 17.30 on Fridays which do not precede Strasbourg part-sessions.

(2) Under no circumstances may children be brought or collected during mealtimes or during the rest period. The secretariat of the crèche and nursery sections must be informed of any late arrivals or absences by 9.00.

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<sup>1</sup> Any absence shorter than the duration of the mission shall not give rise to a refund.

- (3) In the event of repeated failure to observe this timetable, the Management Committee reserves the right, after notifying the parents, to withdraw the child's place.

#### Article 7

- (1) When children arrive, they must be handed over personally to a member of staff responsible for their age group. Such a member of staff must also be made aware of a child's departure.
- (2) If a person who is not his/her parent is coming to collect a child, the staff of the crèche and nursery sections must be informed accordingly in advance by the person legally responsible for the child. Should any doubt arise, the management reserves the right to require a duly dated and signed authorisation.

#### Article 8

Parents are responsible for ensuring that, on arrival, children and their clothes are clean enough for them to mix with the other children. They must have any changes of clothing required for the day and clothes appropriate for the season (boots, sunhat, etc.).

It is strictly forbidden for children to wear jewellery.

#### Article 9

- (1) Children should have their breakfast and evening meal at home. The crèche and nursery sections provide lunch and light snacks in the morning and afternoon.
- (2) Parents shall be required to provide details of any dietary restrictions prescribed by an allergy specialist, indicating the type of allergy and any measures that must be taken.

No special meals will be prepared, with the exception of special meals prescribed by an allergy specialist for children who have food allergies or intolerances.

- (3) It is forbidden to bring any food to the crèches or nursery sections, except in the special cases referred to in Article 7 of the Medical Rules.

#### Article 10

The nursery sections aim to develop a programme that meets the needs of the children attending those sections, as reflected, in particular, in the employment of nursery school teachers rather than childcare workers and in the use of appropriate materials. Accordingly, at the beginning of the school year, or when a child is admitted to a nursery section, parents receive a list of school materials that they must obtain as soon as possible (schoolbag, notebook for messages, etc.). These materials are essential to the conduct of nursery section activities. Parents are therefore required to obtain the materials in question and keep them in good condition.

#### **IV. MEDICAL PROVISIONS**

##### Article 11

The Medical Rules, which form an integral part of these rules, shall be drawn up by Parliament's managing department.

#### **V. INCLUSION POLICY**

##### Article 12

The crèche applies an inclusion policy with regard to children with disabilities in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular by establishing a personalised reception protocol where necessary.

#### **VI. WITHDRAWAL OF CHILDREN**

##### Article 13

- (1) If a child is to be withdrawn, written notice must be sent one month in advance to Parliament's managing department. In that event, the parental contribution shall remain payable until the child's last day of attendance.

If notice is given late, the parental contribution shall remain payable for one month following the notification date. If Parliament's managing department receives no written notice by the deadline, the parental contribution shall remain payable for one month after the child's withdrawal. The notice period may not be covered by a medical certificate.

- (2) In the event of withdrawal of a child, regardless of the duration of attendance, a new registration request for this same child cannot be accepted before a period of four months.

#### **VII. EXPULSION OF CHILDREN**

##### Article 14

- (1) Acting on the advice of the paediatrician and Parliament's managing department, the Management Committee reserves the right to expel any child whose behaviour might be prejudicial to the other children.
- (2) In the event of failure to meet obligations under these rules or to observe the timetables, inappropriate behaviour on the part of a parent, false declarations or any other action which might disrupt the smooth running of the crèche or nursery sections, the Management Committee may take appropriate measures, including withdrawal of the child's place. The child's place may also be withdrawn if the other parent has deliberately failed to comply with the conditions set out in Article 2(1) of these rules.

24.10.2023

- (3) If a child is absent frequently and/or for extended periods without good reason over a period of two months, the Management Committee, acting on a proposal from Parliament's managing department, may decide to expel the child.

## **VIII. ADOPTION - APPLICATION - MODIFICATION**

### Article 15

These rules adopted by the Management Committee replace those adopted on 26 April 2023 and shall enter into force on 6 December 2023.

Parents shall be notified of any modifications to these rules 15 working days before they come into force.

## **IX. APPROVAL**

### Article 16

Parents whose children are admitted to the crèche or nursery sections are required to comply with these rules and the Medical Rules. Signing of the registration form shall be taken to signify knowledge, acceptance and approval of all of the terms and conditions set out in those rules.