



# **Rules of Procedure for CEPT - CERP**

**Edition 1**

**Copenhagen, July 2022**



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## PREFACE

In carrying out its activities the CEPT - CERP will establish close cooperation and consultation with Universal Postal Union (UPU) and relevant European bodies, in particular the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association. The CEPT - CERP should also establish contact with equivalent organizations outside Europe.

## ARTICLE 1 – MEMBER STATUS AND OBSERVERS STATUS

- 1.1 Members of CEPT are members of CEPT - CERP as of right.
- 1.2 The Members have the right to participate in the Plenary Meetings and in the activities of CEPT - CERP and its constituent bodies.
- 1.3 The European Commission and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Secretariat shall have advisory status in CEPT - CERP. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) shall have observer status in CEPT - CERP.
- 1.4 Advisers and observers shall participate in the Plenary Meetings of CEPT - CERP, except where Members decide otherwise, and they may be invited to participate in the meetings and activities of its Working Groups. They may participate in the discussions but are not entitled to vote.
- 1.5 Representatives of relevant intergovernmental organizations as well as organizations concerned with European postal issues may be invited by the relevant Chairperson to participate as observers in meetings of CEPT - CERP and its constituent bodies on an ad hoc basis unless the Plenary Meeting decides otherwise.

## ARTICLE 2 - STRUCTURE

- 2.1. The CEPT - CERP shall have the following structural entities:
  - Plenary
  - Steering Committee
  - Workings Groups
- 2.2. In principle, CEPT - CERP's bodies shall be free to organize themselves.
- 2.3. In principle, the meetings of CEPT - CERP and of its constituent bodies shall be hosted and financed on a voluntary basis by one of their Members, and the costs of attendance at these meetings shall be borne by the Administrations of those attending.

## ARTICLE 3 - PLENARY

The functions of the Plenary shall be, in particular, to:

- 3.1 periodically review the CEPT - CERP mission and strategy.



- 3.2 determine the general policy and make decisions on the management of the work of the CEPT - CERP, including its working methods.
- 3.3 elect its Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons and inform the CEPT Presidency.
- 3.4 propose amendments to the CEPT - CERP Terms of Reference as appropriate for consideration by the CEPT Assembly.
- 3.5 approve the Rules of Procedure of the CEPT - CERP and any subsequent modifications to them and to decide upon disputes arising from their application.
- 3.6 approve CEPT - CERP Work program.
- 3.7 approve and maintain its Working Methods document.
- 3.8 decide on the participation of Advisors and Observers in meetings of the CEPT - CERP.
- 3.9 decide upon the creation or cessation of Working Groups and approve their Terms of Reference.
- 3.10 appoint Chairpersons of the Working Groups.
- 3.11 the Plenary shall meet once a year.

## **ARTICLE 4 - STEERING COMMITTEE**

- 4.1 The CEPT - CERP Chairperson is assisted by a Steering Committee.
- 4.2. The Steering Committee shall be composed of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairpersons and the Secretary of CEPT - CERP, as well as the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of its Working Groups.
- 4.3. The Steering Committee shall meet at the request of the CEPT - CERP Chairperson or one of the other Chairpersons.
- 4.4. The Steering Committee shall have the following duties:
  - It shall coordinate the work of all the Working Groups, with a view to avoid duplication of work and to optimize the Plenary's agenda.
  - It shall meet with a view to exchange information and report it to the Plenary.
  - It shall draft the proposed Plenary agenda, which is finally approved by the Plenary itself.
- 4.5. The Steering Committee shall not have decision making powers unless the Plenary decides to delegate a specific task to it. Unforeseen urgent and/or sensible matters requiring consideration in between two Plenary sessions shall be subject to a consultation among the CEPT - CERP members.



## **ARTICLE 5 – WORKING GROUPS**

- 5.1. The Working Groups shall be composed of representatives of CEPT - CERP members.
- 5.2. Within its Terms of Reference each Working Group shall prepare and regularly update its work program, listing the tasks and a work scheme.
- 5.3. The Working Groups shall report to and submit for approval to the Plenary Meeting draft annual reports and draft general statements.
- 5.4. The Working Groups shall appoint their Vice-Chairperson.
- 5.5. In principle, Working Groups shall be free to organize themselves.
- 5.6. Working Groups may develop and submit Working Proposals to the relevant group of the European Union or Universal Postal Union.

## **ARTICLE 6 – PRINCIPLES FOR APPOINTING CHAIRPERSONS AND VICECHAIRPERSONS**

- 6.1 Only members' representatives are entitled to be nominated as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of CEPT - CERP or its Working Groups.
- 6.2 The primary considerations for choosing Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons are the experience and qualifications of the persons concerned.
- 6.3 As far as possible there should be an equitable geographical distribution of appointments.
- 6.4 The Chairpersons and Vice Chairpersons of any group shall not represent the same Member.
- 6.5 Appointments shall normally be for a maximum of three years with the possibility of reappointment for one further consecutive term. However, in special circumstances, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons can be designated for a third mandate, if so decided by a majority of CEPT - CERP members. Appointment to Vice-Chairpersonship shall not imply automatic succession to the Chairpersonship.
- 6.6 A Vice Chairperson shall assume the responsibilities and role of the Chairperson, when the Chairperson is unavailable.

## **ARTICLE 7 – PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICECHAIRPERSON OF PLENARY**

- 7.1. At the Plenary meeting prior to the one at which the appointments under 6.5 are made, volunteers will be sought from at least three different Member countries to form an Election Committee. The Election Committee's role shall be to oversee the election procedure.
- 7.2. Three months before the Plenary dealing with the appointments, the Secretariat will write to all Members inviting nominations. The nominations, which the individuals



concerned must have accepted, must be sent to the Secretariat by a specified date. In the event of the Secretariat receiving no nominations, it shall be the duty of the Election Committee to elicit nominations. The Secretariat will send to all Members details of the nominations received one month in advance of the Plenary meeting. The Secretariat will consult with the Election Committee at each stage.

- 7.3. A formal vote will be taken at the Plenary meeting. The successful candidate must secure the votes of the majority of the members present or represented by proxy
- 7.4. During the Plenary meeting, where the appointment is to be made, the CEPT - CERP Chairperson, if there is more than one candidate, shall seek a decision by means of a secret ballot, in accordance with *Articles 14.3 to 14.6 and Article 15*. If there are only two candidates and they receive the same number of votes, there shall be a second round of voting, after sufficient time for consultation between the two rounds. If in this case too, the two candidates receive the same number of votes and if no candidate volunteers to withdraw, the elected candidate is randomly selected by means of a lottery draw.
- 7.5. If there are more than two candidates and no candidate is elected in the first round, there shall be multiple rounds. In every subsequent round except from the last round, if no candidate is elected, the candidate who receives the lowest number of votes shall not participate in the next round.
- 7.6. If in any subsequent round referred to in paragraph (2) two or more candidates receive equal lowest number of votes, the candidate who is randomly selected by means of a lottery draw shall not participate in the next round.
- 7.7. If at the end of a round, one or more candidate(s) withdraw(s), the voting procedure continues with all other candidates, including the one(s) who received the lowest number of votes in the round.
- 7.8. If in the final round between two (2) candidates, both of them get the same number of votes, there shall be sufficient time available to allow for consultations. If no candidate volunteers to withdraw, the elected candidate is randomly selected by means of a lottery draw.

## ARTICLE 8 – WORKING PROPOSALS, DECLARATIONS AND COMMON POSITIONS

- 8.1 Working Proposals may be developed by the CEPT - CERP Working Groups may be submitted to the relevant group of the European Union or Universal Postal Union.

Working Proposals reflects the views of the members of the CEPT - CERP Working Groups on a specific topic, and they do not create legally binding obligations on Members.

Working Proposals may only be submitted based on consensus among Members represented at the meeting.

Working Proposals submitted to the European Union or the Universal Postal Union according to the above, should include the sentence: *"This document has been developed and agreed within the framework of CEPT/CERP [group responsible]"*.



- 8.2. Declarations express the position of CEPT - CERP on any relevant issue related to a specific UPU or EU topic.

Declarations must be submitted to the CEPT - CERP Plenary for its approval by the Working Groups, Steering Committee, or any member country.

- 8.3. Common Positions is a Declaration related to a specific UPU Congress topic. Common Positions may only be submitted to the CEPT - CERP Plenary in the year of a UPU Congress.

- 8.4. Declarations and Common Positions are documents of intent and does not create legally binding obligations on Members.

## ARTICLE 9 – DOCUMENTATION

- 9.1. Deliverables developed by CEPT - CERP shall include:

- European Common Proposals,
- CEPT - CERP general statement,
- Work program,
- Working Group Annual Reports

- 9.2. European Common Proposals are submissions to CEPT - CERP, approved by CEPT Members and developed by a mechanism specified in the Working Methods document.

- 9.3. CEPT - CERP General Statements: express the position of CEPT - CERP on any relevant issue. CEPT - CERP General Statements must be submitted to the CEPT - CERP Plenary for its approval by the Working Groups, Steering Committee or any member country.

- 9.4. Work program are the activities scheduled by the different CEPT - CERP bodies for the next cycle.

- 9.5. Working Group Annual report is the activity that the different groups have carried out during the year and that shall be presented to the Plenary of the CEPT – CERP.

## ARTICLE 10 – MEETINGS OF THE PLENARY AND WORKING GROUPS

- 10.1. Two kinds of meetings are possible: ordinary and extraordinary.

- 10.2. Ordinary meetings are convened at the established dates and in order to fulfil the normal working program.

- 10.3. Extraordinary meetings are special ones convened for the resolution of unforeseen problems or issues where an CEPT - CERP position is very important or urgent. The agenda for an extraordinary meeting is fixed before the meeting and cannot be amended during the meeting.

- 10.4. Meetings shall be convened by the Chairpersons. Extraordinary meetings shall be convened at the request of at least five Members.



- 10.5 The Plenary shall meet at least once a year.
- 10.6 Meetings of the CEPT - CERP shall be hosted on a voluntary basis by Members or organizations.
- 10.7 At least one month before the date of the meeting an official invitation and the draft agenda shall be sent to the lists of official e-mail addresses of Members and the relevant distribution list.
- 10.8 Documents to be considered at a meeting should be available in electronic form to Members and participants at least two weeks prior to the meeting. No formal decision can be taken on issues raised in documents placed on the Office website less than two weeks before the meeting, except by the unanimous agreement of all Members participating in the meeting.
- 10.9 Meeting hosts are not required to provide paper copies of documents.
- 10.10 It is for each Member, Counsellor, and Observer to decide upon the composition of its delegation. Organizations who participate as Observers may be requested to limit their delegations to one or two persons.
- 10.11 Minutes shall record all the essential decisions taken during the meeting and if required the different positions expressed and shall be approved by the participants of the meeting.

## **ARTICLE 11 – LANGUAGES**

- 11.1. The languages used in Plenary Meetings shall be English, French and German if at least one country asks for them 3 months before the plenary. If not, the working language will be English.
- 11.2. In principle, the language used in Working Groups and Task Forces meetings shall be English.

## **ARTICLE 12 – CONDUCT OF MEETING AND VOTING**

- 12.1 As a general rule the CEPT - CERP will act by consensus, otherwise by a simple majority of votes cast, except where specific alternative provisions have been agreed. For the adoption of ECP the procedures of the Working Methods (Part 3) apply.
- 12.2 Consensus is defined as the general agreement, characterized by the absence of opposition.
- 12.3 Only Members have the right to vote.
- 12.4 The vote of each Member shall be cast in alphabetical order according to the French names of countries whose Members are present or represented by proxy.
- 12.5 Abstentions are not taken into account in calculating the majority.





- 12.6 If the number of abstentions is equal to, or more than, half the number of votes cast, the question discussed must be taken up again at a later meeting, at which this rule will not apply.
- 12.7 A secret ballot shall be used if decided by the Chairperson or requested by at least two Members.

## **ARTICLE 13 – QUORUM AND PROXY VOTING**

- 13.1. In any CEPT - CERP meeting the quorum required for voting shall be at least half the total country members of CEPT present or represented by proxy that have appointed a representative in CEPT - CERP.
- 13.2. If the quorum cannot be reached, the vote shall be postponed until the next meeting; in that case, the quorum rules shall not apply.
- 13.3. The quorum for a vote taken by correspondence, including by electronic means must be reached by the date specified in the voting papers pertaining to it.
- 13.4. A member unable to participate in a vote may cast a vote by proxy, subject to a prior written notification to the Chairperson. No member may hold more than one proxy on a particular vote.

## **ARTICLE 14 – RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Relations with UPU**

- 14.1. As a restricted Union of UPU, CEPT shall participate as an observer in the work of UPU.
- 14.2. CEPT - CERP shall prepare the UPU Congress by:
- considering the proposals from its members, from other UPU members and from UPU bodies;
  - working out Common Positions;
  - establishing contacts, if needed, with other Restricted Unions and with non-CEPT Administrations.
- 14.3. CEPT - CERP shall be represented in UPU meetings by:
- The CEPT - CERP Chairperson;
  - The Vice-Chairpersons and/or other persons appointed by the CEPT - CERP Chairperson.
- 14.4. Contributions made on behalf of CEPT shall reflect the level of coordination reached by CEPT - CERP.
- 14.5. The CEPT - CERP Secretariat in coordination with CEPT Presidency shall inform UPU of the participation of CEPT in any particular meeting.



## **Relations with the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).**

- 14.6. The relationship with the EU and EFTA shall be set up according to the Memorandums of Understanding established with the European Commission and the EFTA Secretariat.

## **Relations with other bodies concerned with postal issues.**

- 14.7. The Chairpersons of CEPT - CERP and its constituent bodies may establish all necessary relations with bodies concerned with postal issues.

## **ARTICLE 15 – AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

- 15.1. Draft amendments to the Rules of procedure shall be submitted to the Plenary Meeting with two months' notice at the least.
- 15.2. Approval of amendments to the Rules of procedure shall require a two-thirds majority of the CEPT country members that have appointed a representative in CEPT - CERP.
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