

Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order 2017

Ministerial Order of 12 December 2016,
no. MINBUZA-2016.832051, establishing
further rules on foreign travel
by Foreign Service officials and local employees

The Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Having regard to article 2, opening words and (b) of the Foreign Travel Decree and article 8, paragraphs 8 and 9, article 36, article 67, paragraph 9, opening words and (b), article 76, paragraph 2 and article 121 of the Foreign Service Regulations;

In agreement with the federations of civil service associations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

Orders:

Part 1 Definitions

Article 1 Definitions

The following definitions apply in this Order:

- a. Ministry: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- b. RDBZ: Foreign Service Regulations;
- c. DBZV 2007: Foreign Service Allowances and Facilities System Regulations 2007;
- d. Rrlok 2005: Legal Status (Local Staff) Regulations 2005;
- e. a mission: a representation of the Kingdom abroad, as referred to in article 7, paragraph 2 of the RDBZ;
- f. Foreign Service official: a person as referred to in article 5, paragraph 2 (a) of the RDBZ who has been appointed to the Foreign Service;
- g. Ministry official: a Foreign Service official working in the Netherlands;
- h. official posted abroad: a Foreign Service official posted to a mission in accordance with article 8, paragraph 2 of the RDBZ;

- i. local employee: a person employed under a civil-law contract of employment at one of the Kingdom's missions abroad pursuant to article 114 of the RDBZ;
- j. duty station: the location of the mission at which an official posted abroad or a local employee is employed;
- k. HDPO: the Director of the Ministry's Human Resources Department;
- l. official travel: travel undertaken in full or in part outside the Netherlands on the instructions of the competent authority in connection with the performance of duties;
- m. travel for the purposes of training: travel undertaken in full or in part outside the Netherlands as referred to in article 67, paragraph 9 of the RDBZ or article 6.11 of the Rrlok 2005;
- n. travel for the purposes of transfer: travel in connection with a transfer as referred to in article 57 of the DBZV 2007;
- o. travel for the purposes of leave: annual travel for the purposes of leave as referred to in article 24 of the DBZV 2007, travel for the purposes of occupational healthcare as referred to in article 28 of the DBZV 2007, travel for the purposes of reunification with a partner as referred to in article 46 of the DBZV 2007, travel for the purposes of family reunification as referred to in article 53 of the DBZV 2007, and travel for the purposes of recuperation for persons working at a duty station where extreme circumstances exist;
- p. foreign travel: official travel, travel for the purposes of training, travel for the purposes of transfer and travel for the purposes of leave.

Part 2 Ministry officials

Article 2 General

This Order applies in addition to the provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations to Ministry officials undertaking official travel or travel for the purposes of training.

Article 3 Class of travel for the purposes of training

If, having regard to article 1a, paragraph 1 and article 1b, paragraph 1 of the Foreign Travel Regulations, the competent authority grants a Ministry official permission to travel by train or

air for the purposes of training, the person concerned is entitled to travel at the State's expense by train in second class or by air in economy class or equivalent.

Article 4 Supplementary allowance for the costs of official travel or travel for the purposes of training

1. A Ministry official who travels abroad frequently or for long periods on official business or for the purposes of training is eligible for a supplementary allowance for the extra costs arising from such travel.
2. For official travel or travel for the purposes of training with a total duration in an uninterrupted period of 12 months of:
 - a. at least 40 days, including days spent in transit, the allowance is: €330 gross;
 - b. at least 60 days, including days spent in transit, the allowance is: €550 gross;
 - c. at least 80 days, including days spent in transit, the allowance is: €770 gross.
3. Any extended period of travel for private purposes will not be taken into account in for the purposes of paragraph 2.
4. Claims for the allowances referred to in paragraph 1 must be submitted within three months of the end of the 12-month period chosen by the person concerned as referred to in paragraph 2.

Part 3 Officials posted abroad and local employees

Article 5 General

1. The provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and of the Foreign Travel Regulations apply *mutatis mutandis* to foreign travel by officials posted abroad and local employees:
 - a. with the exception of articles 1a, 1b and 1c of the Foreign Travel Regulations, and
 - b. in so far as the DBZV 2007 does not provide otherwise for officials posted abroad, and
 - c. in so far as the Rrlok 2005 or a mission version as referred to in article 123, paragraph 1 of the RDBZ does not provide otherwise for local employees.
2. This Order applies to foreign travel by officials posted abroad and local employees in addition to the regulations referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 6 Foreign travel by public transport

1. Foreign travel by officials posted abroad and by local employees will be by public transport unless this is not possible, the distance by public transport is more than 500 kilometres measured from departure station to destination station, the journey time by public transport is more than six hours or, in the competent authority's opinion, travel by public transport would be unreasonably arduous in the light of local circumstances even if the distance and journey time are shorter.
2. The person concerned is entitled to travel abroad by train at the State's expense, in so far as a ticket is available for that class, in:
 - a. first class or equivalent in the case of official travel and travel for the purposes of transfer or travel for the purposes of leave;
 - b. second class or equivalent in the case of travel for the purposes of training.
3. The person concerned will be issued with a ticket. With the prior permission of the competent authority, the person concerned may purchase a ticket himself and be reimbursed for the actual cost incurred up to the amount of the ticket to which he was entitled.

Article 7 Foreign travel by air

1. The competent authority decides, in the light of local circumstances, whether officials posted abroad and local employees who cannot or, having regard to article 6, paragraph 1, need not travel by public transport may travel in an official vehicle, their own vehicle or by air.
2. The person concerned is entitled to travel by air at the State's expense in business class or equivalent if the total flying time is six hours or more and a ticket for the journey is available in that class, if the travel is:
 - a. official travel;
 - b. for the purposes of transfer;
 - c. for the purposes of occupational healthcare if travel in business class or equivalent is, in the competent authority's opinion, desirable for medical reasons; or
 - d. for the purposes of recuperation from a duty station classified in zone 14 or higher or from another duty station designated by the Secretary-General or HDPO subject to the conditions set therefor.

3. In cases other than those referred to in paragraph 2, the person concerned is entitled to travel at the State's expense in economy class or equivalent.
4. Notwithstanding paragraph 3, the person concerned is entitled to travel at the State's expense for the purposes of annual leave as referred to in article 24 of the DBZV 2007, for the purposes of occupational healthcare as referred to in article 28 of the DBZV 2007 or from Australia or New Zealand for the purposes of training in economy class plus or equivalent or in economy class or equivalent with an optional one-night stopover during the journey. In the case of a one-night stopover as referred to in the first sentence, the person concerned will receive an allowance to cover accommodation expenses in accordance with schedule I to article 3, paragraph 1 of the Foreign Travel Regulations.
5. If the foreign travel comprises more than one flight, the total flying time of the longest flight will be taken into account for the purposes of paragraph 2.
6. The person concerned will be issued with a ticket. With the prior written permission of the competent authority, the person concerned may purchase a ticket himself and be reimbursed for the actual cost incurred, up to the cost of the ticket to which he was entitled under paragraphs 2, 3 and 4.
7. With due regard for paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, the ticket issued to the person concerned, or the cost reimbursed, will be for a direct flight where available for the journey. If the flying time of a direct flight is more than six hours, the competent authority may, with due regard for paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, depart from this if the cost of an indirect flight is at least €350 less than that of a direct flight and the journey time is at most four hours longer than that of a direct flight.
8. The competent authority may allow a person flying in economy class or equivalent, of his own accord or at the reasoned request of the person concerned, to claim the cost of using a business lounge at an airport if there are special reasons for doing so.
9. The party concerned must apply for tickets or, with the prior written permission of the competent authority, purchase tickets himself, for travel for the purposes of annual leave as referred to in article 24 of the DBZV 2007, travel for the purposes of reunification with a partner as referred to in article 46 of the DBZV 2007 and travel for the purposes of family reunification as referred to in article 53 of the DBZV 2007 at least 12 weeks before the travel commences. If this is not possible, the party concerned will inform the competent authority in writing of the underlying reasons on a timely basis.

Part 4 Ministry officials, officials posted abroad and local employees

Article 8 Scope of application

Unless stated otherwise, this part applies in addition to the provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations to foreign travel by Ministry officials, officials posted abroad and local employees.

Article 9 Extra days of travel in the interests of the service

1. A person travelling on official business or for the purposes of training may, if necessary in the competent authority's opinion, arrive at the destination up to 24 hours earlier than necessary for the duties to be performed or training to be attended, in order to acclimatise.
2. If, in the event of travel on official business or for the purposes of training, an alternative travel arrangement would lead to significant savings for the service, any additional days of travel this entails are deemed to be in the interests of the service, provided that the person concerned agrees to any such extended period of travel and continues to perform his duties during the extended period of travel or takes leave in so far as he should be working during the extended period of travel.
3. Should a situation as referred to in paragraph 1 or 2 arise, the additional accommodation and other subsistence costs will be reimbursed in accordance with the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations.

Article 10 Costs of laundry

1. A Ministry official or local employee who travels on official business or for the purposes of training for at least seven days, including days spent in transit, is eligible for reimbursement of the costs necessarily incurred to launder clothes expected to be worn again during the trip.
2. An extended period of travel for private purposes as referred to in article 6a of the Foreign Travel Regulations is not taken into account for the purposes of paragraph 1.

Article 11 Medication

A person travelling abroad is eligible for reimbursement of the costs of vaccination and medication prescribed by the occupational health service in so far as such costs are not reimbursed under health insurance or otherwise.

Article 12 Competent authority

The budget holder to whose budget the costs of the foreign travel are to be charged is the competent authority for the purposes of this Order.

Part 5 Official travel of officials posted to a mission from another ministry

Article 13

The provisions of this Order regarding official travel by officials posted abroad are applicable *mutatis mutandis* to official travel by officials appointed under the General Civil Service Regulations who are posted to a mission under article 8, paragraph 3 or 4 of the RDBZ.

Part 6 Final provisions

Article 14 Amendment of the DBZV 2007

The phrase ‘article 5 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order’ in article 24, paragraph 1, article 28, paragraph 3, article 41, paragraph 1, article 46, paragraph 1, article 53, paragraph 2 and article 57, paragraph 1 of the DBZV 2007 is replaced with the phrase ‘articles 6 and 7 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order 2017’.

Article 15 Amendment of the Rrlok 2005

Part 5 of chapter 4 of the Rrlok 2005 will read as follows:

Part 5. Official travel and travel for the purposes of training

Article 4.12. Official trips and travel for the purposes of training

1. An instruction to undertake an official trip or travel for the purposes of training is given by the head of mission.
2. The Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order 2017 applies to official trips and travel for the purposes of training.
3. If the head of mission grants an employee permission to use his own vehicle for official trips or travel for the purposes of training, the employee will receive an allowance therefor. The amount of the allowance is stipulated in the mission version.

Article 16 Entry into force and transitional provisions

1. The Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order is hereby revoked.
2. This Order enters into force on 1 January 2017.
3. This Order may be cited as: Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order 2017.

This Order will be published with the notes in the Government Gazette.

The Hague, 12 December 2016

Ronald van Roeden
Deputy Secretary-General
For the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Notes

General

Foreign travel is essential to the operations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ('the Ministry').

The Ministry's travel policy is laid down in the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order of 16 March 2012 (Government Gazette 2016, no. 6524), which applies to Ministry officials employed at the Ministry in The Hague, officials posted to a mission abroad and local employees engaged by the Ministry and other ministries.

The Order needs to be amended as of 1 January 2017 since the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations are being amended as of that date in order to further harmonise foreign travel policy throughout the central government sector. The amendments will introduce government-wide standards regarding the class of travel, membership of loyalty programmes and extensions for private purposes of foreign official travel and travel for the purposes of training. Not all aspects of foreign travel are being fully harmonised. For the sake of clarity, it has been decided not to make fundamental amendments to the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order as of 1 January 2017 but to replace it with the present Order.

The Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations based on it apply to all officials in the central government sector ('central government officials') apart from those who are employed abroad under the Foreign Service Regulations ('RDBZ'). Under article 2, opening words and (b) of the Foreign Travel Decree, the rules laid down by or pursuant to the RDBZ apply to those officials. This exception applies both to officials posted abroad who are in the service of the Ministry in accordance with the RDBZ and to central government officials of other ministries who work at one of the Kingdom's missions abroad ('mission') under article 8, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the RDBZ. The Foreign Travel Decree applies only to central government officials and therefore not to officials at the Ministry of Defence. The aforementioned rules laid down by or pursuant to the RDBZ therefore do not apply to personnel from the Ministry of Defence working at a mission.

The Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations based on it apply only to foreign official travel, not to foreign travel for the purposes of training, transfer or leave. Furthermore, the Foreign Travel Decree does not apply to local employees at a mission.

Under article 59, paragraph 9 of the General Civil Service Regulations ('ARAR') and article 67, paragraph 9 of the RDBZ, the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations apply *mutatis mutandis* to foreign travel by central government officials for the purposes of training, on the understanding that the further rules of the Minister for Housing and the Central Government Sector regarding class of travel apply to officials appointed under the ARAR and that the further rules of the Minister of Foreign Affairs apply to officials appointed under the RDBZ. The Minister for Housing and the Central Government Sector will include the further rules for officials to whom the ARAR applies in the Foreign Travel Regulations as of 1 January 2017.

In consequence, the present Order regulates:

for all Foreign Service officials:

- the class of travel for foreign travel for the purposes of training (articles 3, 6 and 7);

for Ministry officials:

- a number of matters supplementing the provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations (articles 4, 9, 10, 11 and 12);

for Ministry officials posted to a mission:

- all matters relating to foreign official travel and travel for the purposes of transfer, training, leave and recuperation (articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12);

for central government officials posted to a mission other than Foreign Service officials:

- all matters relating to foreign official travel (article 13);

for local employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs working at a mission:

- all matters relating to foreign official travel and travel for training purposes (articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 15).

The present Order should be applied wherever possible *mutatis mutandis* to all foreign travel by officials posted to a mission other than Foreign Service officials. For officials seconded to a mission by a minister in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs ('attachés'), this follows from article 8, paragraph 8 of the RDBZ, which provides that the seconding minister, in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, sets the pay and allowances relating to the secondment in accordance with the rules laid down by or pursuant to the RDBZ. For officials temporarily placed by a minister at the disposal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and then attached by the latter to a mission, this follows from article 8, paragraph 9 of the RDBZ, which provides that the Minister of Foreign Affairs can declare the provisions of the RDBZ applicable *mutatis mutandis* to such officials.

Under article 115, paragraph 2 of the RDBZ, the present Order applies *mutatis mutandis* to local employees of ministries other than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This ensures that everyone working at a mission is treated equally as far as possible with regard to foreign travel, in accordance with the decisions taken by the Cabinet and the secretaries-general.

The present Order has been aligned as far as possible with the amendments made to the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations as of 1 January 2017 as part of the government-wide harmonisation of policy on foreign official travel and travel for the purposes of training.

As the harmonisation is largely in line with the Ministry's travel policy, there are very few changes for the Ministry's staff. The main change is that staff travelling on official business and for the purposes of transfer may in future fly business class only if the flying time is at least six hours, whereas the minimum flying time had previously been five hours. However, staff may now also fly business class on flights of at least six hours within a country. Policy on the class of travel for the purposes of leave and training from New Zealand and Australia has also been slightly broadened. The policy therefore remains justifiable, sustainable and as administratively as simple as possible, with the Ministry acting as a good and responsible employer towards officials and local employees alike and taking account of their health and productivity in the same way in the design of its travel policy.

The main points of the travel policy as of 1 January 2017 are:

1. Uniform rules are in place regarding the foreign travel of: Ministry officials who work at the Ministry in The Hague ('Ministry officials'); officials posted to a mission ('Ministry officials posted abroad'), attachés and officials from other ministries attached to a mission pursuant to the RDBZ; and local employees of the Ministry ('local employees') and other ministries.
2. This Order recognises four categories of foreign travel: official travel, and travel for the purposes of transfer, leave and training.
3. As a rule, travel to and from the Netherlands over a distance of 500 kilometres or less and with a journey time by train of no more than six hours is undertaken by train in first class. The same applies to foreign travel that is entirely outside the Netherlands in so far as reasonable in the light of all local circumstances (e.g. public transport network, security, hygiene and comfort).

4. Foreign official travel and travel for the purposes of transfer by air with a flying time of up to six hours per flight is to be undertaken in economy class. Flights with a flying time of six hours or more may be flown in business class (even if the flight is entirely within one country).
5. Travel for the purposes of training or leave is to be undertaken by train in second class or by air in economy class. Annual travel for the purposes of leave, travel for the purposes of occupational healthcare and travel for the purposes of training from Australia or New Zealand to the Netherlands may be in economy class plus (or equivalent) or economy class with one night's stopover en route at the State's expense on account of the length of the journey. Travel for the purposes of recuperation from a duty station in zone 14 or higher can be in business class if the flight is longer than six hours in view of the high frequency of journeys and the very demanding conditions at those duty stations. Travel for the purposes of recuperation from duty stations in zone 13 or lower may also be in business class if the Secretary-General or the Director of the Human Resources Department ('HDPO') so decides. If the competent authority considers it desirable for medical reasons, travel for the purpose of leave for medical reasons may be in business class regardless of the length of the flight.
6. Tickets are provided in the most economical way for the State, regardless of the class of travel, taking reasonable account of the interests of the party concerned in being able to enjoy a safe, fast and comfortable journey. If a ticket is available for a direct flight, a ticket for an indirect flight may be offered only if the cost is at least €350 lower per stopover and stopovers do not increase the journey time by more than four hours.
7. An employee may voluntarily opt for a ticket in a lower class or with more stopovers than he is entitled to.
8. Foreign travel may be extended at the destination for private purposes for up to 72 hours with the prior approval of the competent authority, with all additional travel and subsistence costs being paid by the person concerned.
9. Benefits obtained from loyalty programmes – offered by airlines for example – for foreign travel may be used for subsequent foreign journeys only to save the Ministry expense that it would otherwise have had to incur for those journeys.
10. The competent authority within the meaning of this Order is the budget holder to whose budget the travel and subsistence costs of the journey are charged.

Four matters that had been regulated by the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order were not included in the present Order as they are regulated as from 1 January 2017 in the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations, which apply to employees working for the Ministry or apply to them *mutatis mutandis* on the basis of the present Order

and/or the RDBZ. They relate to the provisions regarding the hardship clause (article 14 of the Foreign Travel Decree), the deadline for submitting claims (article 16 of the Foreign Travel Decree), the timely application for or purchase of tickets (article 4a of the Foreign Travel Regulations) and the extension of travel for private purposes (article 6a of the Foreign Travel Regulations). This has no material consequences for the persons concerned.

The information on Rijksportaal, including the brochures '*Op reis voor BZ*' and '*Arbeidsvoorwaarden en Rechtspositie BZ*' (both in Dutch), will be revised to reflect these changes.

Notes on individual articles

Article 1

Article 1 distinguishes four categories of travel for the purposes of this Order that take place wholly or partially outside the Netherlands at the Ministry's expense. The first category is official travel. For the purposes of this Order it is understood to mean foreign travel undertaken on the instructions of a line manager in connection with the performance of duties. This includes travel to a foreign country from the Netherlands, travel from a foreign country to the Netherlands and travel that takes place entirely in one or more foreign countries. The second category is travel in connection with the transfer of officials posted abroad and their families. The third category is travel for the purposes of training. This includes travel to participate in job- or career-related training, such as a consular course organised by the Consular Affairs and Visa Policy Department (DCV) or a financial course organised by the Financial and Economic Affairs Department (FEZ). These are courses intended almost entirely for the purposes of knowledge acquisition (for the course leaders, the travel is classified as official travel). Travel to attend a conference, such as an ambassadors' conference, is official travel. A conference is principally for the purposes of consultation and only secondarily for knowledge acquisition. The final category is travel for the purposes of leave. This includes not only annual leave and travel for reunification with a partner or family but also travel for occupational healthcare and travel for recuperation permitted by the Secretary-General or HDPO for those posted to a duty station with extreme hardship, such as Baghdad and Kabul. This categorisation is important chiefly to determine the class of travel, but also has a bearing on the lump-sum allowance for extra expenses and the laundry allowance.

Articles 2 and 3

Under article 2 of the Foreign Travel Decree, official travel by Ministry officials is subject to the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations. Under article 67, paragraph 9 of the RDBZ, the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations apply *mutatis mutandis* to travel by Ministry officials for the purposes of training. In addition, under article 2 of the present Order, articles 7 to 13 of this Order also apply to them. They relate to the supplementary allowance for the costs incurred by those who travel abroad from the Netherlands for 40 days or more per year, the travel route, extra days of travel in the interests of the service, medication and the competent authority.

For officials subject to the ARAR, the class of travel for the purposes of training is laid down in the Foreign Travel Regulations. The basis for this is article 59, paragraph 9 of the ARAR. Under article 1a, paragraph 3 and article 1c, paragraph 2 of the Foreign Travel Regulations, train travel for the purposes of training is always in second class and air travel for the purposes of training is always in economy class or equivalent. Article 3, paragraph 1 of the present Order includes a similar provision regarding the class of travel for training purposes for Foreign Service officials based in the Netherlands. The basis for this is article 67, paragraph 9 of the RDBZ. Articles 6 and 7 of the present Order contain similar provisions for officials posted abroad and local employees.

Article 4

The Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order had previously entitled Ministry officials who spent 40 days or more per year travelling abroad to a lump-sum supplementary allowance for the extra costs arising from such travel. This entitlement has been reproduced in unamended form in article 4 of the present Order.

A Ministry official who, in a 12-month period, spends 40 days or more, but fewer than 60 days, on foreign trips from the Netherlands lasting one or more days for the purposes of official business and/or training, including days spent in transit, will receive a gross allowance of €330. Anyone spending between 60 and 80 days on such trips will receive €550 gross. From 80 days, the allowance is €770 gross.

Days spent travelling abroad are understood to include the period beginning on the day of departure from the Netherlands and ending on the day of arrival back in the Netherlands. Only those days, including the days spent in transit, spent on travel in the interests of the service are taken into account. This means that extra days of travel in the interests of the service as referred to in article 10 are included, but not extra days of travel for private purposes at the person concerned's own expense as referred to in article 6a of the Foreign Travel Regulations. These lump-sum allowances are intended to fully or partially cover non-claimable expenses, such as wear and tear on luggage, childcare costs, kennel fees or the costs of contracting out necessary maintenance work on the house or garden during periods of absence that would otherwise be carried out by the person concerned. The person concerned may specify the 12-month period to which the claim refers, which may also include parts of calendar months. Officials posted abroad can fund such expenses from their foreign service allowance. Where necessary, the competent authority (in this case the head of mission) may grant a similar allowance to a local employee, taking account of local salary levels.

Article 5

Under article 5, paragraph 1, the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations apply *mutatis mutandis* to foreign travel by officials posted abroad and local employees, except articles 1a, 1b and 1c of the Foreign Travel Regulations on train and air travel. This exception has been made because these articles take insufficient account of the greater variety of foreign travel for those who work abroad. Different provisions may also be included in the Foreign Service Allowances and Facilities System Regulations 2007, the Legal Status (Local Staff) Regulations 2005 or a mission version.

Furthermore, under article 5, paragraph 2 certain provisions of the present Order apply in addition to the provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations to officials posted abroad and local employees. These additional provisions relate to the travel route, extra days of travel in the interests of the service, medication and the competent authority and, for local employees, laundry costs.

Article 6

An important aspect of the policy on both domestic and foreign travel by central government officials is that public transport must be used wherever possible. Article 1a of the Foreign Travel Regulations, for example, lays down that foreign official travel and travel for the purposes of training must, as a rule, be undertaken by train if the distance by train is less than 500 kilometres and the journey time is less than six hours. However, the quality of public transport outside the Netherlands is in many instances poorer than in the Netherlands, sometimes markedly so. Public transport is often unavailable on certain routes or is so irregular, uncomfortable, unhygienic or unsafe that officials cannot be required to use it. A decision may also be made not to use public transport if to do so would be inappropriate in terms of creating a good impression. A choice must then be made between travelling by private vehicle, an official vehicle or flying.

Article 6 therefore lays down that officials posted abroad and local employees must use public transport for all foreign travel wherever possible if the distance by public transport is not more than 500 kilometres, the journey time is not more than six hours and the use of public transport is, in the competent authority's opinion, reasonable in the light of local circumstances.

If public transport cannot be used and use of a private vehicle or official car is, in the competent authority's opinion, not possible or desirable, under article 6 the person concerned may travel by air.

For foreign travel by train, the person concerned is entitled to a first class or equivalent ticket where available for the journey, at the State's expense, if the journey is for official business or for the purposes of transfer or leave. An official may also voluntarily opt to travel in a lower class. If the travel is for the purposes of training, the person concerned is entitled to a second class or equivalent ticket.

As a rule, the employer will issue the ticket to the person concerned. With the prior permission of the competent authority, however, the person concerned may buy his own ticket and have the cost reimbursed up to the amount of the ticket to which he was entitled. This option recommends itself in particular where tickets are cheaper when purchased by the competent authority than when purchased by the person concerned. **[Noot AVT: Andersom lijkt logischer]**

Article 7

Under article 7, the competent authority may allow officials posted abroad and local employees to travel by air if the journey cannot or, in the light of article 6, paragraph 1, need not be made by public transport and the use of an official vehicle or private vehicle is not a reasonable option. This provision is aligned as closely as possible with article 1c of the Foreign Travel Regulations.

If a flight lasts six hours or more, the person concerned may fly business class or equivalent, where available for that flight. From now on this also applies to travel within a single country. Tickets for official travel and travel for the purposes of transfer will be issued or reimbursed in economy class or equivalent if the flight lasts less than six hours. An official may voluntarily opt to fly in a lower class.

In the case of indirect flights, stopovers and waiting time are not included in the six hours, as this refers only to the actual flying time as stated by the airline when the ticket was purchased.

The term 'total flying time' as used in paragraphs 2 and 5 refers to the time actually spent in the air according to the information on the ticket. The flying time is calculated using the time of departure and the time of arrival at the destination airport. In the case of indirect flights, stopovers and waiting time are not included in the total flying time. Time spent at the airport before and after the flight, for example to check in or retrieve baggage, is also not included. This differs from the term 'journey time', as used in the final sentence of paragraph 7. That sentence allows the competent authority, under certain conditions, to decide that the person concerned must take an indirect flight. One of the conditions is that the journey time may not be more than four hours longer. The journey time is the time between the moment of departure from the first airport and the moment of arrival at the final destination airport. The journey time therefore includes stopovers or waiting time at an intermediate airport. If a trip as a whole comprises several flights (e.g. with a return flight or a round trip with several destinations) the flying time is based on the longest flight. Flights lasting up to six hours are direct unless direct flights are not available because tickets cannot be purchased for the required dates. On longer flights, an indirect flight with one or more intermediate landings may be taken if the ticket is significantly cheaper and available, provided the price difference between a direct flight and an indirect flight is at least €350 per intermediate landing and the journey time of the indirect flight is not more than four hours longer than that of a direct flight.

Economy class tickets will be issued for all travel for the purposes of training or leave.

Economy class tickets will also be issued for travel for the purposes of occupational healthcare unless the competent authority decides on medical grounds that a business class ticket should be issued. The competent authority will base his decision on the advice of the in-house medical officer or another doctor.

On account of the extremely long journey time, officials posted to Australia and New Zealand travelling for the purposes of annual leave, occupational healthcare or training may opt to buy an economy class plus ticket or equivalent or to fly economy class with the option of a one-night stopover. The costs of the overnight accommodation will be reimbursed on the basis of the rates for accommodation and other costs in schedule I of the Foreign Travel Regulations. This option previously did not apply to travel for the purposes of training; until 1 January 2017 it applied only to travel for annual leave.

At duty stations subject to conditions of extreme hardship in zone 14 or higher (such as Kabul and Baghdad), for which the Secretary-General or HDPO has stipulated an intensive recuperation schedule, a business class ticket will be issued for travel for the purposes of recuperation if the flight is six hours or longer. All travel for the purposes of recuperation from duty stations in zone 13 or below will be in economy class unless the Secretary-General or HDPO decides otherwise on account of special local circumstances.

For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that in special cases the competent authority can apply article 14 of the Foreign Travel Decree (the hardship clause) *mutatis mutandis* to permit the person concerned to take flights other than those mentioned above in a higher class (e.g. economy plus or even business class), for example in view of the official's health or if the official is travelling on a trade mission with non-officials who are flying business class and it is important for them to remain in contact with each other during the flight.

Where flights are taken in economy class or equivalent, the competent authority may give permission to use a business lounge at an airport and reimburse the costs if there are special reasons for doing so, such as the airport offering very little comfort or if there are special security risks.

The competent authority will issue tickets for flights. An official may buy a ticket himself and have the cost reimbursed on submission of the required documentary evidence only with the prior written permission of the competent authority. By means of an EU tender procedure, the

ministries have contracted out the purchase of airline tickets from, to or via the Netherlands and tickets must be purchased through the contracted travel agent. The person concerned may therefore purchase his own tickets only in special circumstances, for example if he wishes to use loyalty points earned from earlier foreign travel.

Article 8

The provisions of articles 9 to 13 supplement the provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations and, unless stated otherwise in one of those articles, apply to Ministry officials, officials posted abroad and local employees.

Article 9

The provisions of article 12 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order on extending, in the interests of the service, travel on official business or for the purposes of training by an official or local employee have been included in unamended form in article 9 of the present Order.

In so far as necessary to acclimatise to a different climate or culture and/or to recuperate after an arduous outward journey, a period of up to 24 hours for acclimatisation at the destination may be permitted in the case of official travel or travel for the purposes of training. It will be up to the competent authority to decide whether this is appropriate. Prior to the official travel or travel for the purposes of training, the point at which the person concerned will be obliged to actually begin performing his duties or attending the training will be determined in order to establish what period of 24 hours qualifies for this provision.

The 24 hours for acclimatisation referred to in this article may not be added to the extension of up to 72 hours for private purposes prior to the official element of the trip. Anyone who has already been at the destination for 24 hours, even if it is for private purposes, should already be sufficiently acclimatised. This is laid down in article 6a, paragraph 2 of the Foreign Travel Regulations.

The competent authority may suggest alternative travel arrangements that may involve a longer travelling time (perhaps on the advice of the travel agent) if this would lead to a substantial cost saving. It will be up to the competent authority to decide whether this is

reasonable. The total travel and subsistence costs associated with the normal travel arrangements must be compared with the total travel and subsistence costs associated with the alternative travel arrangements. The saving must in principle be at least €500. Any such extension to official travel will require the agreement of the person concerned, who will be reimbursed for the extra accommodation and other subsistence costs in accordance with the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations. During the extended period, the person concerned will be required to perform his duties (such as writing reports) on working days. He may opt to take leave during this period.

Article 10

Article 10 allows an official who travels from the Netherlands on official business or for the purposes of training for a period of at least seven days, including days spent in transit, to submit a claim for expenses incurred for the laundering of clothing he expects to wear again during the trip. This provision also applies to local employees. This had previously been regulated under article 9 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order.

This provision is intended to prevent the person concerned having to take large amounts of clothing for longer periods of official travel.

Only those days spent on travel in the interests of the service, including days spent in transit, are taken into account. This means that any extra days of travel in the interests of the service as referred to in article 10 will be included, but not any extra days of travel for private purposes as referred to in article 6a of the Foreign Travel Regulations.

The person concerned will be required to furnish a receipt for the laundry expenses incurred. If the competent authority has any doubts as to the need for the expenses incurred – if, for example, considerable expense has been incurred just prior to the return journey – the person concerned may be requested to submit an itemised bill showing what clothing was laundered when. Officials posted abroad can fund these expenses from their foreign service allowance.

Article 11

Article 11 stipulates that those who travel abroad are eligible for reimbursement of the costs of vaccination and of medicines prescribed by the occupational health service (at the Ministry or the mission). Only costs that are not covered by health insurance or otherwise will be reimbursed. The costs of medicines that are generally found in a household medicine cabinet – such as mosquito repellent – will no longer be reimbursed.

Article 12

In accordance with article 3 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order, article 12 grants competence to apply this Order to the budget holder for the travel in question so that decision-making and budgetary responsibility for foreign travel is borne by one and the same person. The budget holder has final responsibility and is in the best position to assess all the facts and circumstances of the travel to be undertaken and take a good decision.

3W's travel manager will advise budget holders on the correct application of the Foreign Travel Decree, the Foreign Travel Regulations and the present Order. One of the travel manager's duties is to support and advise travellers and budget holders with a view to better, smarter and cheaper travel. The travel manager also provides management information to allow line managers to subsequently assess whether travel undertaken and tickets issued comply with these regulations. If not, the budget holder may be required to account for this to the Ministry management. The Inspection, Risk Analysis and Advisory Unit (ISB) may also consider this aspect and include it in its report when conducting an assessment of the organisation in question.

Article 13

Article 13 stipulates that the provisions of this Order regarding foreign travel undertaken by a Ministry official posted to a mission apply *mutatis mutandis* to foreign travel undertaken by officials appointed under the ARAR who are posted to a mission. Article 5, paragraph 1 therefore applies *mutatis mutandis* to foreign travel undertaken by those officials. It states that the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations apply *mutatis mutandis* to official travel by those officials except for the provisions on the class of train and air travel (articles 1a, 1b and 1c of the Foreign Travel Regulations), that the class of travel is determined in accordance with articles 6 and 7, and that the provisions established by the

present Order that are additional to the provisions of the Foreign Travel Decree and the Foreign Travel Regulations apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 14

This article replaces several references in the DBZV 2007 to ‘article 5 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order’ (regarding the class of travel) with references to the corresponding ‘articles 6 and 7 of the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order 2017’.

Article 15

As the present Order also applies to local employees, part 5 of chapter 4 of the Rrlok 2005 regarding official trips can be significantly abridged. The provisions that the head of mission can issue an instruction to undertake an official trip or travel for the purposes of training, that the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order 2017 applies to such travel and that employees using their own vehicle are eligible for an allowance to an amount stipulated in the mission version are sufficient.

Article 16

This article stipulates that the Foreign Travel (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Order is revoked with effect from 1 January 2017 and that the present Order enters into force as of that date. As there have been no major changes, no transitional arrangements have been made. Tickets purchased before that date will not be exchanged if the person concerned is entitled to a lower or higher flight class under the present Order.

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For the Minister of Foreign Affairs