



EUROPEAN RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AGENCY (REA)

REA.A - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions & Support to Experts
A.2 - MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships

Brussels
REA.A.2/JBV

NOTE FOR THE FILE

Subject: MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships: The Implementation of Suspensions and Part-Time Work under Horizon Europe

Under Horizon Europe, requests for suspensions of the fellowship or for part-time implementation of MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships (be it for personal, family or professional reasons) will no longer be treated as formal amendments to the grant agreement, as was the case under Horizon 2020.¹ Instead, beneficiaries should – following consultation with the REA Project Officer – encode periods of suspension or part-time implementation in the Mobility Declaration (under “Working Time Commitment”) and should ensure that the following eligibility rules and requirements below are respected:

Generic Suspensions

(i.e. working time 0%, for more than 30 consecutive days and not periods which are classified as “long-term leave” – see below)

- That no Units of the project are implemented during the period of suspension
- That the cumulative duration of suspensions does not exceed 30% of the “normal” project duration (excluding non-academic placements and periods of Long-Term Leave such as for maternity, paternity, special leave or sick leave – see below).

Part-Time Implementation

That the researcher:

- Agrees on the part-time implementation together with the supervisor and beneficiary
- Continues to work at the premises of the host institution during all periods of time charged to the project

¹ Although an amendment to adjust the end date of the reporting period will still be required (see below). Note that suspensions of the grant agreement (Article 31) should not be required under MSCA-PF, since the project duration is linked directly to the fellowship duration. Therefore it is the fellowship that should be suspended, as outlined in this note.

- Works a minimum of 50% of their time (full-time equivalent) on the MSCA-PF project² and that this is accurately encoded in the Mobility Declaration
- Works part-time on a daily, weekly or fortnightly basis (note that periods of absence of more than 30 days require a suspension³)
- For Global Fellowships: Does not work part-time during the outgoing phase.

Additionally, for **professional part-time** (i.e. the researcher will combine their MSCA-PF project with another paid activity), that:

- Reliable time records are kept – either on paper or in a computer-based time recording system – which demonstrate the actual time spent by the researcher on the MSCA-PF project
- The researcher does not undertake the same research in more than one project
- There is no double-charging of costs between two projects
- The researcher does not benefit from two MSCA grants at the same time
- The researcher's total professional time commitment does not exceed 100% Full-Time Equivalent
- The part-time implementation does not jeopardise the research and training activities of the MSCA project.

Project Officers at REA should be consulted and can provide guidance on implementation. However, the responsibility for ensuring that periods of suspension or part-time respect the eligibility criteria rests with the recruiting beneficiary. The submission of the Mobility Declaration once these changes have been encoded should therefore be taken as its acceptance (pre-approval) unless it is explicitly rejected for revision.

Since these changes have an impact on the project duration, and since the Mobility Declaration will not calculate or amend the new end date of the project, they will need to be reflected in an amendment to adjust the end date of the reporting period (AT 26) so that the new end date of the project is accurately reflected in the Portal.

However, this amendment should not be requested straight away, particularly since multiple periods of suspension and part-time implementation can be reflected in just one amendment. Beneficiaries should therefore aim to minimise the number of amendments requested, with the only requirement being that the amendment to change the end date of the reporting period must be submitted at least two months before the (original) end date of the reporting period specified in the grant agreement. Amendments after the end of the project are not permitted.

The Long-Term Leave Allowance

Under Horizon Europe, the MSCA Work Programme has introduced a Long-Term Leave Allowance **to contribute to the personnel costs incurred by beneficiaries in case of the researchers' leave of longer than 30 consecutive days**, including maternity, paternity, parental, sick or special leave.

² Following prior discussion with REA, exceptions can be made to this rule for serious medical reasons which affect the researcher's capacity to implement the action as planned.

³ Therefore projects cannot be implemented part-time on a *monthly* basis (i.e. one month on, one month off).

Such periods should be discussed with the REA Project Officer and encoded in the Mobility Declaration separately and by selecting the specific reason for the long-term leave from the drop-down menu (e.g. “suspension for sick leave”) under “Working Time Commitment”. The percentage to be indicated in the Mobility Declaration should reflect the amount – expressed as a percentage of the combined living allowance (corrected by the country correction coefficient) *and* mobility allowance for the period in question – that the beneficiary is required under national legislation to cover as a contribution towards the social security costs arising from the researcher’s leave.⁴ This may change over time (e.g. 20% for month 1 of the long-term leave, 10% for months 2 and 3, etc.), therefore each change should be encoded as a separate period.

Note that periods of long-term leave when the full costs of the researcher are covered by the national social security system should be encoded as long-term leave with a contribution percentage of 0%. During such periods, no costs can be charged to the project.

Further guidance on how to complete the Mobility Declaration for MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships is available [here](#).

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⁴ For example, if the beneficiary is having to pay a social security contribution of €1400 in the first month, and the gross amount of the living allowance (after the country correction coefficient) plus the mobility allowance for that one month is 7,000 EUR, then the beneficiary should encode a percentage of 20%.