



The Scottish Parliament  
/ Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# International Relations: Parliamentary travel

## By correspondence

Reference: SPCB (2025) Paper 9

## Executive summary

1. Section 2, paragraph 59, of the Code of Conduct requires Members to register and “*provide details of visits outside the United Kingdom in certain circumstances.*” However, some overseas visits are excluded from this requirement to register. In accordance with paragraphs 62 and 64 of Section 2 of the Code of Conduct, the travel and other costs of a visit which are wholly met by the SPCB, or are approved by the SPCB prior to the visit, is exempt from registration as an overseas visit in the Register of Interests of Members of the Scottish Parliament.
2. As the overseas visit outlined in this paper is being taken forward by the Parliament’s International Relations Office, the SPCB is invited to confirm the travel as parliamentary in nature, thus exempting inclusion in Members’ Register of Interests. Upon approval, the International Relations Office will inform Members that registration of this travel in the Register of Interests is not required.

## Issues and options

### Visit to Løgting, Faroese Parliament

3. Our engagement with the Løgting, Faroese Parliament, has significantly increased over the last few years, through the visit by the Faroese Speaker to the Scottish Parliament in 2023, a bilateral meeting during the Nordic Council Session in Oslo 2023, and the Faroese Flag Day Reception in 2024. We have received various invitations to visit the Faroe Islands from the Speaker of the Parliament, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture.

4. International Relations Office (IRO) officials have identified various areas for knowledge exchanges including parliamentary procedures, cross committee collaboration, fishing, renewable energy, transportation links, tourism and connectivity, to name a few.
5. Deputy Presiding Officer Liam McArthur MSP will lead a delegation to visit the Løgting and relevant external organisations to discuss these areas. The visit will take place 7-10 April, including travel days, and he will be joined by Audrey Nicoll MSP, Convener of the Criminal Justice Committee, and Rhoda Grant MSP, Member of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee.

## **Governance**

6. There is a requirement within the International Strategy, which it agreed in September 2021, for the IRO to outline to the SPCB why the visit is in person (as opposed to virtual) and the travel options and environmental impact considered by the delegation.
7. Due to the wide range and number of planned meetings, online discussions would not be able to accommodate the same information exchanges. IRO have also received continuous feedback from Members having been on outward visits stating the importance and value of informal networking opportunities with their counterparts, which cannot be facilitated online.
8. The only viable travel option between Scotland and the Faroe Islands is by air. The individual CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint for flying economy class (return) to Vagar from Edinburgh is 488.1CO<sub>2</sub>e KG. Business class was not considered due to the short flight times.
9. The estimated cost for the parliamentary visit to the Faroe Islands is £8,000 which covers travel, accommodation, meals and appropriate incidental expenses for three MSPs and one accompanying official. This cost is being met out of the International Relations Office's budget, spread over two financial years, which has already been approved as part of the overall SPCB budget.

## **Publication Scheme**

10. This paper will be published in line with the SPCB's Publication Scheme.

## **Decision**

11. The SPCB is invited to consider the above travel and, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, approve the details of the travel provided.
  
12. The IRO will then notify the Members concerned they do not need to register this travel.

### **International Relations Office**

February 2025