

# The Session

**Secretariat of the  
Parliamentary  
Assembly,  
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**The Session** is the information bulletin for plenary sessions of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE). It is published four times a year in the two official languages of the Organisation and is also available on the Assembly's website.



Thursday 28 September 2006

**The final order of  
business will be  
decided by the  
Assembly at the  
opening of the  
session**

## 2 to 6 October 2006

### Monday 2

- Opening statement by Parliamentary Assembly President René van der Linden
- Address by Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader
- The institutional balance at the Council of Europe
- Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

### Tuesday 3

- Debate on general policy on the situation in the Balkans:
  - Address by Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha
  - Address by the Chairperson of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency Sulejman Tihić
- Current situation in Kosovo, statement by Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis

### Wednesday 4

- Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly presented by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers
- Ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by member states of the Council of Europe
- Address by Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány
- The OECD and the world economy, statement by OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría
- The cultural situation of the Kurds

### Thursday 5

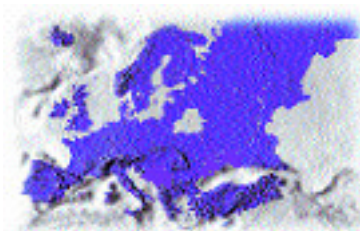
- Possible urgent debate
- Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing
- The image of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees in the media

### Friday 6

- The need to reconcile work and family life
- Europe's interest in the continued economic development of Russia

# The 46

The Council of Europe brings together 46 democracies including 21 central and eastern European countries. Today, the Organisation has almost completed its enlargement but continues to increase its monitoring to ensure that all its members respect the obligations and commitments they entered into when they joined.



Member states: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

# The Parliamentary Assembly

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 630 members (315 representatives and 315 substitutes) from the national parliaments of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe.

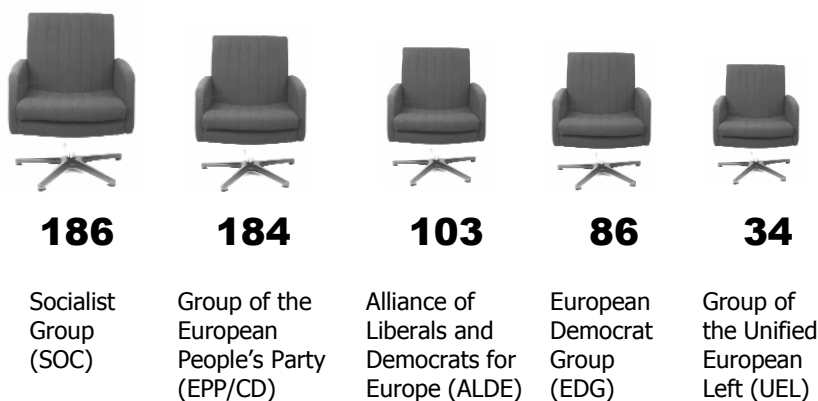
Countries that have joined the Council of Europe since November 1990: Hungary (1990), Poland (1991), Bulgaria (1992), Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Romania (1993), Andorra (1994), Latvia, Albania, Moldova, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Ukraine (1995), the Russian Federation, Croatia (1996), Georgia (1999), Armenia, Azerbaijan (2001), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2002), Serbia and Montenegro (2003), replaced by Serbia (2006), Monaco (2004).

Applications for membership: Montenegro (6 June 2006) and Belarus (12 March 1993).

The Special Guest status of the Belarus parliament was suspended on 13 January 1997.

The parliaments of Canada (1997), Israel (1957) and Mexico (1999) hold observer status with the Assembly.

# The political groups



# The Assembly committees

**83 seats**

- Political Affairs
- Legal Affairs and Human Rights
- Economic Affairs and Development
- Social, Health and Family Affairs
- Migration, Refugees and Population
- Culture, Science and Education
- Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs
- Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
- Honouring of obligations and commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (Monitoring)

**51 seats**

Rules of Procedure and Immunities



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# Monday 2 October 2006

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-7 p.m.)

## ◆ **Opening of the fourth part of the 2006 Ordinary Session**

Parliamentary Assembly President René van der Linden will open the fourth part of the 2006 Ordinary Session and will make an opening statement. The Assembly will begin by examining the credentials of any new members notified by national delegations and will deal with any changes in the membership of committees.

It will also consider any requests for urgent or current affairs debates and then adopt its order of business.<sup>1</sup>

## ◆ **Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly**

*Rapporteur: Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG)*

The progress report covers the discussions held and decisions reached by the Bureau since the last part-session. Reports on the Assembly's observation of the parliamentary and presidential elections in Mexico (2 July 2006), the parliamentary elections in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (5 July 2006) and the parliamentary elections in Montenegro (10 September 2006) will also be presented.

## ◆ **Address by Ivo Sanader, Prime Minister of Croatia**

Following his presentation, Mr Sanader will answer parliamentarians' questions.

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1. The draft order of business as contained in this document has been updated to reflect modifications to be proposed to the Bureau at its meeting at 8.30 a.m. on Monday 2 October 2006. However the final order of business will only be decided by the Assembly at the opening of the sitting at 3 p.m.

## ◆ **The institutional balance at the Council of Europe**

*Doc. 11017*

*Report of the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities*

*Rapporteur: Peter Schieder (Austria, SOC)*

*Opinion of the Political Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Zsolt Németh (Hungary, EPP/CD)*

Circumstances have changed since the Council of Europe was set up in 1949, according to the Rules Committee: Europe is far more integrated than it was, the nature of international law has changed, and a number of new institutions have been set up within the Council, with changing status and new powers. The existing Statute and subsequent statutory resolutions do not reflect these changes adequately, according to the committee. If the Council of Europe is not to become a "fossil", it is time for far-reaching institutional reforms.

This should include increasing the statutory powers of the Assembly, which are no longer in line with its political weight and its potential as a driving force of the Council of Europe. Originally conceived mainly as a consultative organ, the Assembly today leads the way in negotiating the conditions for new members, monitoring states' behaviour and driving forward new legal instruments. Through its political and media impact, it influences governments directly. The Council's parliamentary body should be more involved in shaping treaties, negotiating with other international organisations and setting the budget. The Assembly should also be able to bring cases before the Human Rights Court, and should be consulted more often and earlier by the Committee of Ministers.

For its part, the Committee of Ministers could be more transparent – providing information on which member states are blocking decisions, for example – and should become more involved in dialogue with the EU and promoting democracy. The Court, which is now recognised as one of the three main "pillars" of the Council, needs its status clarified. The role of the Congress has changed too, and its representative nature should now be recognised. Finally, the opinion of civil society – through the new INGO Conference – should be sought more often.

Contact in the secretariat: Mario Heinrich, tel. 2097.

## ◆ **Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights**

*Doc. 11020*

*Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights*

*Rapporteur: Erik Jurgens (Netherlands, SOC)*

When states ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, they agreed to fully implement the binding judgments of the Strasbourg Court. This can involve paying compensation to individuals whose rights they have infringed, or changing their laws or practice to prevent new or similar violations. This is a complex legal and political process, supervised by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, but ultimately the Court's authority depends on its judgments being fully executed.

In this report, the Legal Affairs Committee decided to look more closely at major structural problems and/or unacceptable delays in implementing Court judgments in particular states. Its rapporteur visited five states, and wrote to the parliamentary delegations of eight others.

While praising Italy, Ukraine and the United Kingdom for their attempts to improve the situation, and welcoming decisive progress on specific cases concerning Latvia, Poland and Turkey, the committee notes with grave concern the continuing existence of "major structural deficiencies which cause a large number of repetitive findings of violations of the Convention" in Italy, Russia and Ukraine. These deficiencies – justice taking too long, or shortcomings in judicial organisation and procedures – represent "a serious danger to the Rule of Law" in these countries, the committee believes.

It also points to specific types of ongoing problem: domestic criminal proceedings cannot be reopened in Italy and to a certain extent in Turkey; there is still no further progress in the *Ilascu* case; systemic overcrowding of detention facilities continues to be a problem in Greece; the abusive practice of "indirect expropriation" endures in Italy; and Romania has reported no fresh progress with reforming its national security law.

The committee calls on governments to act on all these matters, and appeals for more parliamentary oversight of how states implement the Court's judgments. If left too long, non-compliance puts at stake the effectiveness of the entire Convention system, the committee believes, and should be seen as a breach of a state's obligations under the Convention and under the Council of Europe Statute.

Contact in the secretariat: Andrew Drzemczewski, tel. 2326.

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# Tuesday 3 October 2006

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Debate on general policy on the situation in the Balkans**

*Report of the Political Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Mátyás Eörsi (Hungary, ALDE)*

This report is due to be approved by the Political Affairs Committee during its meeting on Monday 2 October at 2 p.m.

**Address by Sali Berisha, Prime Minister of Albania**

**Address by Sulejman Tihić, Chairperson of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

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# Tuesday 3 October 2006

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-7 p.m.)

◆ **Debate on general policy on the situation in the Balkans (possible continuation of debate)**

◆ **Current situation in Kosovo**

*Doc. 11018*

*Report of the Political Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Lord Russell-Johnston (United Kingdom, ALDE)*

The Political Affairs Committee believes that Kosovo's status should be defined as a matter of urgency in order to bring stability to the people of the region. Yet it fears that the outcome of the final status negotiations which have now begun may be deadlock: Serbia shows no sign of moving away from its demand for an autonomous Kosovo under Serbian sovereignty, while Kosovo Albanians are not stepping back from their demand for full independence.

While respecting Serbia's right to territorial integrity, the committee believes that Kosovo's independence – subject to certain conditions – is the solution which is liable to ensure the greatest chances of durable, long-term peace. Serbia – which has already faced a daunting few months – is encouraged to be more flexible and pragmatic, and to re-open discussion within its main institutions on the possible benefits of conditional independence for the Province.

While a mutually negotiated solution is best, if long-term deadlock leads to continuing insecurity and instability, the committee believes an internationally-imposed solution may have to be envisaged as a last and extreme resort. Whatever solution is found, it must ensure that minorities are specially protected – the situation of Kosovo's Serbs is of primary concern – and that human rights principles are upheld throughout the Province.

**Statement by Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

Contact in the secretariat: Eliza Pieter, tel. 3137.

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## Wednesday 4 October 2006

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly presented by Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers**

Following his presentation, Mr Lavrov will answer parliamentarians' questions.

◆ **Ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by member states of the Council of Europe**

*Doc. 10961*

*Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights*

*Rapporteur: Boriss Cilevičs (Latvia, SOC)*

The protection of national minorities has been one of the Council of Europe's greatest successes. This work – largely inspired by the Assembly – has helped to prevent social tensions and promote the diversity of Europe's cultures and languages. One key to that success has been the Framework Convention on National Minorities, the world's first multilateral treaty in this field, which allows states to designate national minorities on their territory, whose religion, language, traditions and culture they agree to protect in various ways.

Yet eight of the Council's member states (Andorra, Belgium, France, Greece, Iceland, Luxembourg, Monaco and Turkey) have not ratified the Convention, despite the Assembly's recent urging to do so, arguing that their constitutions do not allow them to recognise the existence of national minorities, or that none exist on their territory, or that other instruments concerned with non-discrimination protect minorities better.

This report aims to evaluate these different points of view, and proposes ways to encourage ratification by the eight states concerned. It also suggests that it could be time for a fresh look at the Framework Convention itself.

Contact in the secretariat: Günter Schirmer, tel. 2809.

◆ **Address by Ferenc Gyurcsány, Prime Minister of Hungary**

Following his presentation, Mr Gyurcsány will answer parliamentarians' questions.



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# Wednesday 4 October 2006

Afternoon (3 p.m.-7.30 p.m.)

◆ **Ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by member states of the Council of Europe (possible continuation of debate)**

◆ **The OECD and the world economy**

*Doc. 11012 prov.*

*Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development  
Rapporteur: Ignacio Cosidó (Spain, EPP/CD)*

*Contribution from the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee  
Spokesperson: Sinikka Hurskainen (Finland, SOC)*

*Contribution from the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population  
Spokesperson: Rudy Salles (France, ALDE)*

*Contribution from the Committee on Culture, Science and Education  
Spokesperson: Baroness Hooper (United Kingdom, EDG)*

*Contribution from the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs  
Spokesperson: John Dupraz (Switzerland, ALDE)*

Since 1962 PACE has acted as the parliamentary forum for the 30-nation Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, inviting parliamentarians from OECD member countries which are not members of the Council of Europe (Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States) to join its members in an annual enlarged debate, which the European Parliament may also attend as an observer.

In this report, the Economic Affairs Committee welcomes the resilience of the world economy in the face of higher energy prices, incipient inflation and trade imbalances. But more must be done to liberalise international trade – in particular through the resumption and successful and speedy conclusion of the Doha Round – and to head off the impact of higher energy costs through developing renewable resources. The widening gap between rich and poor countries must be tackled through more – and more effective – aid. Corruption must be resolutely fought, and civil society involvement encouraged.

Europe's response to the challenge of globalisation should not be "a race for the lowering of social standards" but finding intelligent solutions that bring efficiencies acceptable to all. In the meantime, the EU should push on with implementing the Lisbon 2000 agenda.

The committee concludes with the reminder that economic and social development is intimately bound up with democracy, political liberty and human rights – the values which the Council of Europe holds dear.

**Statement by Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD**

Contact in the secretariat: Simon Newman, tel. 2618.

## ◆ **The cultural situation of the Kurds**

*Doc. 11006*

*Report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education*

*Rapporteur: Lord Russell-Johnston (United Kingdom, ALDE)*

According to the Culture Committee, an estimated 25 to 30 million Kurds live mainly in the mountainous region where Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey meet, constituting one of the largest "stateless nations" in the world. Their cultural situation varies considerably: in Iraq, they have enjoyed a state of near-independence since the 1991 war, in Iran they have no rights other than cultural, whereas in Syria they have no rights at all.

In Turkey, their situation has changed: they were unrecognised for many decades, but in 2004 some programmes in Kurdish were broadcast on Turkish national television for the first time. Books, records and concerts in Kurdish are no longer forbidden. The Culture Committee calls on Turkey, as a Council of Europe member state, to address the "Kurdish issue" in a comprehensive manner and not only from a security point of view. Kurdish language and culture is a richness to be preserved, not a threat to be combated, it points out.

Kurdish languages should be protected, education in Kurdish – where it is a child's mother tongue – should be permitted in addition to the official language, universities should be encouraged to teach Kurdish language and literature, and Kurdish cultural associations supported. There should also be an end to the "unreasonably high administrative hurdles" faced by Kurds organising cultural activities. Finally, Kurdish speakers should have access to modern mass-media facilities.

Contact in the secretariat: Joao Ary, tel. 4401.

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## Thursday 5 October 2006

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

### ◆ Possible urgent debate

Three requests for urgent debates have been received, on "Recent developments in Lebanon in the context of the situation in the Middle East", on "The need for a European response to the mass arrival of irregular migrants on Europe's southern shores" and on "The Council of Europe budget for 2007: an alarming standstill". There is also a request for a current affairs debate on "Slovakia". The Assembly will decide on these requests at the opening of the session on Monday 2 October 2006.

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## Thursday 5 October 2006

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-6.30 p.m.)

◆ **Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing**

*Doc. 10925*

*Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population*

*Rapporteur: Mats Einarsson (Sweden, UEL)*

In the recent history of Europe, millions of people have been forcibly expelled, transferred or exchanged because of their ethnicity or political or religious beliefs, or when new state borders were drawn. At its worst, this has been because of a deliberate policy of "ethnic cleansing".

Few corners of Europe have been spared this scourge, once viewed as a way of bringing durable peace to a region but nowadays considered in international law as a crime against humanity. Some 60 to 80 million Europeans are thought to have been forced to leave their homeland in this way, many never to return. Central and eastern Europe was particularly badly affected, and in recent years millions have been forcibly displaced during conflicts in the Balkans and the Caucasus.

To commemorate the victims and to ensure that history is not repeated, the committee proposes the establishment of a "European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing", under the auspices of the Council of Europe. Such a centre – whose mandate would cover the geographical area of the Council of Europe, with a particular focus on the 20<sup>th</sup> century – should not deal with the deportation of Jews during the Second World War, because of its unique character, and should not be concerned with the issue of compensation for lost property.

Through historical research, by educating younger generations and by linking up national initiatives and institutions, such a centre could help contribute to reconciliation and – in the words of the rapporteur – help to heal some old wounds in the collective memory of the continent.

Contact in the secretariat: Halvor Lervik, tel. 2121.

♦ **The image of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees in the media**

*Doc. 11011*

*Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population*

*Rapporteur: Tana de Zulueta (Italy, SOC)*

The portrayal of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers on Europe's television and in its newspapers can have a major impact on public attitudes towards them. In the view of the Migration Committee, it is the media's responsibility to reflect also the positive contribution made by these groups, which have enriched Europe both culturally and economically.

While there should be no undue restrictions on freedom of expression, the committee suggests that reporters refrain from revealing the ethnic origin or nationality of migrants who are arrested or convicted of crimes if this information is irrelevant to the story, and proposes a "media watch" to track examples of xenophobia in the media. Media professionals should themselves draw up guidelines to avoid the stereotyping of migrants, with "conscience clauses" in journalists' contracts allowing them to refuse to work on reports that breach their ethical principles.

Finally, there should be funding for programmes for and by migrants and refugees – including in their own languages – and for films dealing with issues relevant to migrants. Migrant faces and views should be appearing on mainstream television and at peak viewing times.

Contact in the secretariat: Mark Neville, tel. 2341.

**The Joint Committee, which is the organ of co-ordination between the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly, meets at 6.30 p.m. or at the end of the sitting in Room 5. Items on the draft agenda include the situation in the Balkans, implementing the decisions of the Third Summit, institutional balance at the Council of Europe, and the Organisation's budgetary prospects for 2007.**

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## Friday 6 October 2006

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

### ◆ **The need to reconcile work and family life**

*Doc. 11019*

*Report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men*

*Rapporteur: Antigoni Pericleous Papadopoulos (Cyprus, ALDE)*

The Equal Opportunities Committee begins by pointing out that women are affected most by the problems of trying to reconcile work and family life, since they carry most of the responsibility for running the home, bringing up young children and looking after elderly dependants. Driven home by a long-hours work culture incompatible with family life, or because men unfairly continue to bring home higher wages, or because facilities for minding children or supporting older people are so inadequate, many women are forced to work part-time or stop working altogether.

Specific measures that states could take to reconcile work and family life include more and better child-minding facilities, equal wages for men and women, paid maternity, paternity and parental leave and guaranteed day-nursery places for those who want them. Both incentives and coercion should be used to persuade employers to introduce family-friendly policies and practices.

All of this will help to bring women into work, and could provide an answer to the challenges posed by an ageing population, according to the committee, creating a "win-win" situation for all.

Contact in the secretariat: Sylvie Affholder, tel. 3551.

◆ **Europe's interest in the continued economic development of Russia**

*Doc. 11026*

*Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development*

*Rapporteur: Kimmo Sasi (Finland, EPP/CD)*

*Opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights*

*Rapporteur: Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger (Germany, ALDE)*

The Russian Federation – the largest and most populous country in the Council of Europe, with immense resources – has struggled hard to stabilise its economic and political system since the early 1990s. Its development efforts, undertaken while gradually embracing European democratic values and a market-oriented economy, have been tested through a series of difficulties, particularly during the August 1998 financial crisis. Whilst continued reforms have brought a widely appreciated macro-economic and political stability, high growth, better living standards and confidence in the future, many development challenges remain in order for Russia to fully exploit its potential.

The Economic Affairs Committee calls for closer strategic co-operation between Russia and other European countries around shared values and mutual interests in fostering more harmonious development through improved governance across all the country's sectors and regions.

Short- to medium-term development objectives should include strengthening the rule of law, streamlining the regulatory system, improving administration, halting the demographic decline, promoting human development, modernising the economy, clarifying the role of state within it, and stimulating economic activity in the Siberian and Far Eastern regions. Additional revenues accumulated through trade in Russia's natural resources should serve to underpin structural reforms and provide the basis for future quality growth. It is in Russia's long-term interest to ensure reliable energy supplies in Europe, the committee points out.

Contact in the secretariat: Aiste Ramanauskaite, tel. 3117.

◆ **Closure of the fourth part of the 2006 Ordinary Session**

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# Practical information

## 1. Meetings of committees and political groups

The list of meetings held by the committees and the other organs of the Assembly (Bureau, political groups, etc.) appears in the notice paper (*bulletin*) published before each sitting.

Unless a committee decides otherwise, committee meetings are not public.

Monday and Wednesday mornings are reserved for political group meetings.

## 2. Languages

The official languages of the Assembly are English and French. German, Italian and Russian are working languages. Speeches made in plenary session in any of these five languages are interpreted simultaneously into the other official and working languages. Members may, however, speak in languages other than English, French, German, Italian and Russian, provided that their delegation arranges for interpretation into one of the official or working languages. During sittings this is generally the case for Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese and Greek.

## 3. Assembly documents

The following documents are available in French and English at the document counter (on the first floor, to the right of the top of the main staircase, near lift No. IV).

### Official documents

The main official documents are:

**Reports:** All items on the agenda are debated on the basis of a report by one of the Assembly's committees (with the exception of current affairs debates, elections, appointments, statements by guest speakers and communications from and questions to the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe).

Committee reports comprise one or more draft texts for adoption (recommendations, opinions, resolutions) and an explanatory memorandum prepared by the rapporteur. Only draft texts can be amended and adopted by the Assembly.

**Amendments:** Amendments to draft texts must be tabled in keeping with the relevant rules of procedure, particularly Rule 34 (see section 4 below). They are distributed at the document counter. They must be signed by at least five Representatives or Substitutes, unless they are being submitted on behalf of a committee seized for report or opinion.

**Order of business:** For each part-session the Bureau prepares a draft order of business listing the sittings at which the agenda items will be examined. **The draft order of**



**business** is made available to members of the Assembly two weeks before the opening of the part-session. The Assembly is required to adopt the draft order of business (Rule 25.7 of the Rules of Procedure). A member may propose an amendment to the draft order of business drawn up by the Bureau. The adoption of such a motion requires a majority of the votes cast (Rule 25.8). Once adopted, the order of business can be altered only by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Once it has been approved by the Assembly at the first sitting of the part-session, the order of business is published (Rule 25) and made available to the members at the document counter.

Minutes of proceedings: Generally, after each sitting of the Assembly, the **minutes of proceedings** are produced. They list the Assembly's decisions and record speakers' names, the results of votes on texts and amendments, and points of order raised. At the start of the sitting the President submits the minutes of proceedings of earlier sittings to the Assembly for approval. If the minutes of proceedings are objected to, their approval may be postponed to the following sitting, at which the President may put to the Assembly any necessary modification (see Rule 29 of the Rules of Procedure).

Report of debates: A **provisional report of debates** is issued after each sitting. The French version of the provisional report (pink pages) contains the full text of all speeches made in French and a summary in French of speeches made in other languages. The English version (yellow pages) contains the full text of speeches in English and summaries in English of speeches in other languages. Speeches in German or Italian are also reported verbatim in a separate publication (green pages). Speakers may make corrections to the provisional report of debates within 24 hours of publication.

Representatives and Substitutes who were entered on the list of speakers and present in the Chamber but were unable to speak because of lack of time may hand in their typewritten texts for inclusion in the report of debates. They should do so within 24 hours of the end of the debate concerned at the Table Office (Room 1083).

Adopted texts: The texts adopted by the Assembly are also published after each sitting, separately in English (yellow pages) and French (pink pages).

The texts adopted by the Assembly are:

- Recommendations (proposals addressed by the Assembly to the Committee of Ministers, for implementation by that Committee or the governments);
- Opinions (addressed to the Committee of Ministers);
- Resolutions (embodying a decision by the Assembly on a question of substance which it is empowered to put into effect, a point of view for which it alone is responsible, or a question of form, transmission, execution or procedure);

The other official documents (Rule 22 of the Rules of Procedure) are:

- reports, communications, requests for an opinion or further consideration transmitted by the Committee of Ministers;
- questions addressed to the Committee of Ministers;
- communications from the Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- reports of international organisations;
- written declarations.

## Other documents

Before each sitting a **notice paper** is produced, setting out the orders of the day. It also contains other information relevant to the proceedings, including:

- time limits for tabling amendments;
- time limits for lists of speakers;
- procedural notices, for example concerning elections;
- information about meetings of committees and other Assembly bodies;
- information about changes in the membership of committees.

For each part-session the following lists are published:

- List of Representatives
- List of Substitutes
- List of national delegations
- List of the Secretariat officials, giving office locations and contact telephone numbers for the part-session.

The latest edition of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly was published in April 2006 and is available in a bilingual version (English/French), with an update of June 2006.

## **4. Tabling amendments**

Members who wish to table amendments or sub-amendments to the draft texts before the Assembly should submit them to the Table Office (Room 1083). Amendments and sub-amendments must be **signed by at least five Representatives or Substitutes**, unless they have been submitted on behalf of the committee submitting the report or an opinion.

Under the provisions on the organisation of debates (page 88 and ff. of the Rules of Procedure), the **time limits for tabling amendments** are the following (where appropriate the Bureau may decide to change these limits, in particular for urgent debates or debates on general policy):

- for debates on the afternoon of Monday 2 October: Monday 2 October at 12 noon;
- for debates on Tuesday 3 October: Monday 2 October at 4 p.m.;
- for all other debates (except urgent debates, unforeseen debates or as otherwise indicated on the order of business): 23 and a half hours before the opening of the sitting at which the debate is to begin.

Sub-amendments must be tabled at least two hours before the opening of the sitting at which the debate is to begin.

The procedure for tabling, examining and voting on amendments and sub-amendments is set out in Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure.

## **5. Motions for resolutions and recommendations**

Motions for resolutions and recommendations must be signed by ten or more Representatives or Substitutes from at least five national delegations (Rule 23.2). The President decides which motions are admissible.

Any motion considered admissible is printed and distributed as soon as possible. The Bureau then decides whether it should be referred to one or more committees, or forwarded to one or more

committees for information, or that no further action should be taken. The Bureau's decision must then be ratified by the Assembly or the Standing Committee.

For Motions tabled during a part-session, the Bureau has decided that only those Motions which have been tabled by **12 noon on Tuesday of the Part-Sessions** will be examined by the Bureau meeting after the Part-Session.

A document may be referred to only one committee for report but to any other committee for opinion (Rule 24.2). The opinion of the latter concerns the report of the former committee. The report concerned must therefore be made available to the committee whose opinion has been sought in good time for it to prepare its opinion. Committee opinions may be presented orally or in writing. An opinion presented in writing must contain a chapter at the beginning entitled "Conclusions of the committee" and an explanatory memorandum by the rapporteur (Rule 49.3 of the Rules of Procedure).

## **6. Written declarations**

Written declarations may be tabled provided that they:

- do not exceed 200 words;
- are on subjects within the competence of the Council of Europe;
- are signed by at least twenty Representatives or Substitutes belonging to four national delegations and two political groups.

They are neither referred to a committee nor debated in the Assembly (Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure).

Any representative or Substitute may add his signature to such a declaration, in which case the declaration will be distributed again two weeks after the end of the part-session, with the names of all the members who signed it.

A written declaration which has not received any new signatures before the opening of the following part-session is closed to further signature.

## **7. Opinions of the Assembly (to the Committee of Ministers)**

According to the Statute of the Council of Europe, or to other texts of a statutory character, the Committee of Ministers seeks the Assembly's opinion on such matters as the accession of new member states, draft conventions or the Council of Europe's budget. These requests for opinions are debated in the Assembly, following which the Assembly votes on the opinion to be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers (Rule 57).

## **8. Changes in the membership of national delegations or committees**

Members of the Assembly are appointed for the whole Ordinary Session. Following parliamentary elections, the national parliament concerned or other competent authority shall make appointments to the Assembly within six months of the elections (Rule 10.2 and 3).

Should any seat on a national delegation fall vacant in the course of a session as a result of death or resignation, the president of the national parliament concerned, or the Minister for Foreign Affairs, presents the credentials of the member who is to fill the vacant seat to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, who submits them to the Assembly or the Standing Committee for ratification at the first sitting or meeting following their receipt (Rule 6.4).

The chairperson of a national delegation informs the President of the Assembly of any proposed change(s) in committee membership concerning that delegation's members. The President of the Assembly submits the proposed change(s) to the Assembly, the Standing Committee or, failing that, the Bureau for ratification (Rule 43.6).

## **9. Requests for debates under urgent procedure or current affairs debates**

At the request of the Committee of Ministers, of the committee concerned, or of twenty or more Representatives or Substitutes, a debate may be held on an item which has not been placed on the Assembly's agenda. Requests for debates under urgent procedure must be addressed to the President of the Assembly. The President submits them to the Bureau, which makes a proposal to the Assembly. The adoption of urgent procedure requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast (Rule 50).

At least twenty members, or one political group or national delegation may request a current affairs debate (Rule 52) on a subject which is not on the Assembly's agenda. The request must be made to the President of the Assembly at least a week before the start of the part-session. The Bureau decides whether or not to grant the request, subject to approval by the Assembly. A current affairs debate may not exceed one and a half hours. The debate shall be opened by one of the members who requested it, chosen by the Bureau. The first speaker has ten minutes speaking time, other speakers five. A current affairs debate does not give rise to a vote, though the Bureau of the Assembly may subsequently propose that the subject be referred to the appropriate committee for report.

## **10. Electronic voting, notification of Substitutes, list of speakers, and quorum**

All votes in the Assembly, except elections, take place by electronic voting.

### **Voting cards**

Voting cards issued to all members are simultaneously used for identification and voting.

Distribution of voting cards is ensured by the Protocol Service of the Council of Europe. In principle, this distribution is organised via secretaries of each national delegation. Members who do not have their card (in case a card has been lost or forgotten, or when the Parliamentary Assembly database does not contain the member's photo) should present themselves at the Protocol desk at the main entrance of the Palais de l'Europe in order to receive their card. Protocol staff, before delivering a new card, will invite the member to present his or her identification document. If a third and consecutive card is issued to the same member during the same calendar year for whatever reason, loss or otherwise, the national delegation will be required to pay the cost (6 euros per card).

Voting cards as distributed by the Protocol Service do not give an automatic right to vote. In order to enjoy such a right, the member's card has to be validated. This operation will be carried out by the Assembly Secretariat.

## Notification of Substitutes

In principle all Representatives at the opening of the first sitting (on Monday, at 3 p.m.) have their cards validated, but not Substitutes unless the Secretariat of the Assembly is properly informed about substitutions. Therefore secretaries of national delegations have the duty to inform the Secretariat of the Assembly about all cases of substitution. If this is not done, Substitutes attending the sitting do not have speaking and voting rights.

Notice of substitutions has to be given before the opening of the sitting concerned (if possible by the previous day and at the latest before 8.30 a.m. for a morning sitting and before 1 p.m. for an afternoon sitting). This notification, including the names of Substitutes, the names of Representatives to be substituted and the length of substitution, must be given in writing for each sitting to the Secretariat of the Assembly (Jocelyne Gibert, Room 1076, fax during session weeks +33 3 88 41 27 27, fax outside session weeks +33 3 88 41 27 33).

If the Substitute is replacing the Representative for one or more consecutive sittings, the substitution for each sitting must be notified. Substitutions are never carried automatically over to the following sitting.

When the correct notification has been given, Substitutes will have their voting cards validated. At the same time, cards of Representatives who are to be replaced by Substitutes will become invalid, preventing them from speaking in the debate and voting, including in elections.

## Register of attendance

Members shall continue to sign the register of attendance before entering the Chamber for a sitting (Rules 11.2 and 39.1). A duly designated Substitute will find his or her name in the register next to the name of the Representative for whom he or she is substituting. If, in the register of attendance, no name is found next to the Representative's name, it means that no substitution was notified for the Representative for that particular sitting and therefore the Representative is authorised to speak in the debate and vote.

All members of the Assembly – Representatives and Substitutes as well as Observers – have access to the Chamber at any time of the sitting, regardless of their speaking and voting rights. Therefore, all Members, even those who are not authorised to speak in the debate or vote, are invited to sign the register of attendance if they attend the sitting.

## Speakers' register

Members who wish to speak in a debate must enter their names on the list of speakers. They may do this by post in advance of the part-session, or in person during the part-session at the Table Office (Room 1083). The list is closed one hour before the scheduled end of the previous sitting, except in the case of the first sitting of a part-session when the deadline is two hours before the start of the sitting. It should be noted that in any one part-session members may enter their names on the list for a maximum of **five debates** but may take the floor **not more than three times** (this limit does not apply to members appointed as political group spokespersons or as rapporteurs). A substitute whose name has not been notified to the secretariat before a sitting cannot participate in the debate.

The order of speakers on the list for each debate is determined according to criteria set by the Bureau and can be found on pages 92 to 96 of the Rules of Procedure.

**Speaking time** is limited to a maximum of 8 minutes for committee rapporteurs and 3 minutes for rapporteurs for opinion. Other speakers on the list normally have a maximum of 5 minutes. At the start of each sitting the President announces the speaking arrangements.

Only authorised members – i.e. Representatives or their duly appointed Substitutes – may speak in debates or submit questions for oral reply to the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers or to guest speakers. The list of speakers is verified accordingly.

### **Questions to invited guest speakers**

For most invited guest speakers, the draft order of business indicates whether there is the possibility for members to ask questions. Where there is that possibility, members are encouraged to register their names with the Table Office as soon as the draft order of business is published and the name of the guest speaker appears. For guest speakers other than the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, members are invited to submit the subject of their question. For the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, the name of the member wishing to ask a question is only registered on the list if accompanied by the full written text of the question. The names of persons wishing to ask a question are published and listed in chronological order.

For the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, a precise deadline is normally specified in the draft order of business. The written questions for oral answer by the Chairperson are then published in a Doc. of the Assembly. For the other guest speakers, there is no formal deadline as such as the questions are “spontaneous”. However, members have an interest in registering their names as early as possible as there is usually not enough time to answer all questions.

### **Electronic voting**

While they are sitting in the Chamber, members are invited to keep their voting cards inserted in the voting terminals. However, when they leave, they should take their cards with them.

Voting cards should be inserted correctly into the terminals (the photo side of the member’s card is facing the President’s table; then the card is pushed down until a “click” is heard). A card correctly inserted is signalled by its number being displayed on a small screen in the voting terminal. Any malfunctioning or error message displayed on the voting terminal screen should be immediately reported to the Secretariat present in the Chamber.

The opening of a vote by the President is confirmed by a small green light on the voting terminal.

After the opening of a vote, members should vote by putting their hands into the small booth of the voting terminal and by pressing one of the three voting buttons (stickers which are on the top of voting terminals are put there only for information in order to indicate the positions of the “for”, “abstention” and “against” buttons). The chosen vote is confirmed by a coloured light on the terminal: green (“for”), white (“abstention”) or red (“against”).

Rule 39.8 indicates that a member cannot modify his or her vote after the voting is closed.

The names of Assembly members who participate in votes are published on the Assembly’s website.

### **Quorum**

The Assembly may deliberate, decide the orders of the day, approve the minutes of proceedings, decide upon procedural motions, and agree to adjourn, whatever the number of Representatives present.

All votes other than votes by roll-call shall be valid whatever the number of members voting, unless, before the voting has begun, the President has been requested to ascertain whether there is a quorum. At least one sixth of the Representatives authorised to vote, belonging to at least five national delegations, must vote in favour of the request. To ascertain whether there is a

quorum, the President invites Representatives to mark their presence in the Chamber using the electronic voting system.

The quorum is one third of the number of Representatives of the Assembly authorised to vote (Rule 41.3).

A vote by roll-call shall not be valid unless one third of the Representatives authorised to vote took part. The President may decide to ascertain whether there is a quorum before proceeding to a vote by roll-call.

In the absence of a quorum, the vote shall be postponed until the next sitting or, on a motion from the Chair, until a subsequent sitting.

### **Majorities required**

A majority of two-thirds of the votes cast is required for the adoption of a draft recommendation or a draft opinion to the Committee of Ministers, for the adoption of urgent procedure, for an alteration to the order of business, for the setting up of a committee and for the fixing of the date for the opening or resumption of Ordinary Sessions. For the adoption of a draft resolution and for any other decision, a majority of the votes cast is required, in the case of a tie the question being rejected.

### **Mobile phones**

Members are reminded that mobile phones must be switched off at all times in the Chamber and during committee meetings.

# Directory

## Secretariat of the Assembly

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## Table Office

(Speakers' lists, questions and amendments)

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## Secretary General

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## Directorate of Communication

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Audiovisual Service, tel. 3500.

## Protocol

Director of Protocol  
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## Services

### Internet access

Free Wi-Fi access is available in most areas of the Palais building. Terminals with free broadband access are also available in the lobby of the debating chamber and outside the second floor meeting rooms. The Assembly's website and the Council of Europe portal, including other language portals, can be accessed here.

### Badges

Wearing badges is compulsory for admittance to the Chamber. Voting cards are used as ID badges. Contact the Protocol desk in the entrance hall.

### Bars and restaurants

Parliamentarians' Bar: 1st floor, opposite the Chamber, open from 8.30 a.m. to the end of the sitting. Restaurant Bleu: ground floor, for official meals (tel. 3704 for reservations). Palais cafeteria: ground floor, open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Palais self-service: ground floor, lunch from 12 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### Bank

Société Générale, in the entrance hall, open from 8.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., tel. 7060. A cash dispenser is located opposite the cafeteria (ground floor).

### Bus

Free shuttle service departing from Allée Spach to the railway station via downtown (and vice versa). Badges must be shown. Time schedules are available at the reception desk.

### Bookshop

Librairie Kléber: In the entrance hall, open from 9.30 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. and from 1.30 p.m. to 5.45 p.m., tel. 3712.

### Philatelic agency

Council of Europe stamps and, since 1949, philatelic envelopes commemorating every session of the Parliamentary Assembly, tel. 03 88 35 08 88.

### Post office

La Poste: in the entrance hall, open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., tel. 3463.

### Medical centre

Entrance hall, open from 8.30 a.m. to the end of the sitting, tel. 2442.

### Newsagent

Just off the entrance hall, open from 7.30 a.m. to 7.00 p.m., tel. 3549.

### City of Strasbourg information desk

The City of Strasbourg is represented at the reception desk in the entrance hall, providing lists of hotels, restaurants and local events, flight/train times etc, tel. 3838. For accommodation or transport, call 03 88 52 28 38.

### Travel agent

Carlson Wagonlit: Palais, ground floor, near the Restaurant. Open from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and from 1.30 p.m. to 5.00 p.m., tel. 3714.