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# The Session

THE INFORMATION GUIDE FOR PLENARY SESSIONS OF PACE

## PROVISIONAL VERSION

### 4-8 October 2010

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- Address by German Deputy Chancellor and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle
- Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly, presented by Antonio Milošoski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers

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- Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to Estonia, Greece and Portugal
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- The functioning of democratic institutions in Ukraine
- The need to avoid duplication of the work of the Council of Europe by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

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- Human rights and business
- The activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2009-2010, and statement by OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría
- Celebration of the 60th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights
- The activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2009: facilitating economic integration in Europe, and statement by EBRD Vice-President Jan Fischer
- The strategy, governance and functioning of the Council of Europe Development Bank, and statement by the Vice-Governor of the Bank Apolonio Ruiz Ligeró

#### Thursday 7

- Possible urgent debate: the recent rise in national security discourse in Europe – the case of Roma **or** Noise and light pollution
- Address by Nikola Gruevski, Prime Minister of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
- Guaranteeing the right to education for children with illnesses or disabilities, and statement by Hayrünnisa Gül, patron of the Turkish "Education enables" campaign
- Children without parental care: the urgent need for action
- Women's access to lawful medical care: the problem of unregulated use of conscientious objection

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- National procedures for the selection of candidates for the European Court of Human Rights
- Gender-related claims for asylum
- Fostering the socio-economic potential of the Baltic Sea region

# The 47

The Council of Europe brings together 47 democracies including 22 central and eastern European countries. Today, the Organisation has almost completed its enlargement but continues 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, Montenegro, 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 636 members (318 representatives and 318 substitutes) from the national parliaments of the 47 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), Montenegro (2007).

Applications for membership: 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



**214**

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD)



**183**

Socialist Group (SOC)



**97**

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)



**95**

European Democrat Group (EDG)



**31**

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL)

# The Assembly committees

**84 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)

**27 seats**

- Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs



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# Monday 4 October 2010

☞ Morning (11.30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

## ◆ **Opening of the fourth part of the 2010 Ordinary Session**

Parliamentary Assembly President Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu will open the fourth part of the 2010 Ordinary Session and make an opening statement.

The Assembly will begin by examining credentials, including of any new members notified by national delegations, and will deal with any changes in the membership of committees. It is also due to elect a Vice-President of the Assembly with respect to the Czech Republic.

The Assembly will then consider any requests for urgent or current affairs debates, before adopting its agenda.<sup>1</sup> At time of going to press, there had been one such request, for an urgent debate on "The recent rise in national security discourse in Europe: the case of Roma", submitted by the Assembly's Political Affairs Committee.

## ◆ **Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and the Standing Committee**

*Rapporteur: David Wilshire (United Kingdom, EDG)*

The progress report covers the discussions held and decisions reached by the Bureau and the Standing Committee since the last part-session.

Egidijus Vareikis (Lithuania, EPP/CD) will also present a report on the Assembly's observation of the constitutional referendum in Moldova (5 September 2010).

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1. The draft agenda set out here has been updated to reflect modifications to be proposed to the Bureau during its meeting at 8 a.m. on Monday 4 October. A definitive version of this document (with colour cover) will be published once the Assembly has approved its agenda later on Monday morning.

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## **Monday 4 October 2010**

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-5 p.m.)

◆ **Address by Guido Westerwelle, Deputy Federal Chancellor and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany**

Following his address, Mr Westerwelle will answer oral questions from members of the Assembly.

◆ **Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly presented by Antonio Milošoski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers**

Following his presentation, Mr Milošoski will answer oral questions from members of the Assembly.

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# Tuesday 5 October 2010

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

## ◆ Election of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly

*Doc. 12356*

*Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.*

The Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly is elected by the Assembly for a five-year term of office. The term of office of the current Secretary General, Mateo Sorinas Balfegó, comes to an end on 31 January 2011.

Two candidates have been submitted by the Committee of Ministers, in alphabetical order:

- Jan Kleijssen, currently Director of Standard-Setting at the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe, proposed by ten members of the Assembly and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands;
- Wojciech Sawicki, currently Director General in the secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, proposed by ten members of the Assembly and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland.

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round of voting. If this is not obtained, a second round of voting will take place on Wednesday 6 October from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., for which a relative majority of votes will be sufficient.

## ◆ Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to Estonia, Greece and Portugal

*Doc. 12346*

*Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.*

According to the European Convention on Human Rights, judges are elected by the Parliamentary Assembly from a list of three candidates nominated by the High Contracting Party concerned.

To assist it in making its decision, the Assembly invites its sub-committee on the election of judges to make confidential recommendations based on personal interviews with all the candidates and assessments of their CVs. The document containing these recommendations is made available only to members of the Assembly.

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round of voting. If this is not obtained, a second round of voting will take place on Wednesday 6 October from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., for which a relative majority of votes will be sufficient.

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

◆ **The fight against extremism: achievements, deficiencies and failures**

*Doc. 12265*

*Report of the Political Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Pedro Agramunt Font de Mora (Spain, EPP/CD)*

*Doc. 12337*

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

*Rapporteur: Pietro Marcenaro (Italy, SOC)*

Extremism in various forms is on the rise in Europe, according to the Political Affairs Committee: racism and xenophobia have led to the rise of political parties inspired by racist ideas, while even mainstream parties have resorted to racist discourse to keep voters. More worrying still is hate speech from public figures. Other forms of extremism include Islamic fundamentalism, which has fed deadly attacks, and the activities of extremist groups based in Europe such as the People's Mujahedin of Iran, or terrorist organisations such as the PKK or ETA.

Countering this complex and evolving phenomenon is not easy, the committee acknowledges, but extremists who advocate violence must be met with firm resolve. That said, anti-extremism laws introduced in some Council of Europe member states are themselves doubtful: if the crimes set out in these laws are too general or vague, they can be applied arbitrarily.

Council of Europe member states must begin by tackling the root causes of extremism: ending discrimination, fighting racism and islamophobia, promoting intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, fighting terrorism fairly. Extremists only flourish where there are legitimate grievances. But there are more practical steps to be taken too: ending the flow of money to extremist groups, watching for extremist propaganda on the internet, and well-drafted laws on hate speech. Political parties could also consider setting up "ethics committees" to sanction their members who are racist or xenophobic.

Contact in the secretariat: Despina Chatzivassiliou, tel. 3075.

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## Tuesday 5 October 2010

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Election of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly (continued)**

*Doc. 12356*

*Voting takes place from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.*

◆ **Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to Estonia, Greece and Portugal (continued)**

*Doc. 12346*

*Voting takes place from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.*

◆ **Child abuse in institutions: ensure full protection of victims**

*Doc. 12358*

*Report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Marlene Rupprecht (Germany, SOC)*

Children are some of society's most vulnerable members, yet it has become clear that in recent decades many have faced sexual, physical and emotional abuse in various institutions such as schools, care homes or young offenders' institutions across Europe. But there has also been a lack of committed action to deal with these terrible offences, according to the Social Affairs Committee, and it is now up to authorities and institutions to take a hard look at what went wrong in order to prevent future abuse.

Strong laws to protect kids are the first step: child abuse should be prosecuted even when victims do not bring charges, and abusers should not be able to escape simply because too much time has passed. Next, there should be careful licensing and ongoing outside scrutiny of such institutions, and staff working with children should be vetted by the police. Finally, institutions themselves should put in place strong internal procedures to minimise the risk of abuse, train staff in spotting and dealing with it, and encourage children to know and uphold their rights.

National inquiries into past offences can play a role, to bring justice to victims and ensure they receive some form of compensation, as well as therapeutic help. More broadly, all stakeholders need to be involved in developing comprehensive strategies to keep children safe. Governments and parliaments, in particular, should give their full support to the Council of Europe campaign to stop sexual violence against children, to be launched in Rome in November.

Contact in the secretariat: Maren Lambrecht-Feigl, tel. 4778.

## ◆ **The functioning of democratic institutions in Ukraine**

*Doc. 12357*

*Report of the Monitoring Committee*

*Co-rapporteurs: Mailis Reps (Estonia, ALDE) and Renate Wohlwend (Liechtenstein, EPP/CD)*

The Monitoring Committee begins by welcoming the intention of the new coalition government in Ukraine to carry out what it calls an "ambitious and far-reaching package of reforms" which would enable Ukraine to honour its remaining commitments to the Council of Europe. But it is also concerned about the hasty manner in which these complex reforms are being carried out: they will only get the wide political consensus and public support they need if parliamentary procedures and democratic principles are strictly respected. Any new laws should also be systematically reviewed by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission.

Ukraine still has work to do in several important areas: it needs a new electoral system, improvements to the Prosecutor's office and justice system are overdue, and a stalled anti-corruption law should finally be brought in, as well as a new legal framework for civil society. But if the country is to have lasting political stability in the longer term, the committee points out, government and opposition must agree on constitutional change: a clear separation of powers, as well as a proper system of checks and balances between the executive, legislature and judiciary. Only this will allow Ukraine to carry out the reforms it needs to honour its commitments to the Council of Europe.

Finally, the committee expresses its serious concern at allegations that democratic freedoms – such as freedom of assembly, expression and the media – have come under pressure in recent months. Any regression in respect for and protection of these rights would be unacceptable, it warns.

Contact in the secretariat: Bas Klein, tel. 4992.

## ◆ **The need to avoid duplication of the work of the Council of Europe by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights**

*Doc. 12272*

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

*Rapporteur: Boriss Cilevičs (Latvia, SOC)*

Four years ago, the Assembly expressed its concern that the new EU Agency for Fundamental Rights might duplicate the work of the Council of Europe. Despite safeguards, the risk of confusion and unnecessary overlap still exists in principle – at least as long as the EU has not acceded to the European Convention on Human Rights. That step has now become indispensable, in the committee's view.

However, things have changed in the intervening years. The two bodies have established new ways of working together, and it has become clear that each uses different tools which complement each other: the Agency collects data and carries out analyses, while the Council sets standards and monitors. But this fruitful co-operation will only continue, the committee warns, as long as the Agency uses the Council's *acquis* on human rights in Europe as its main point of reference. The committee also points out that the Agency's remit has grown following the Lisbon Treaty, and the European Commission now has a commissioner whose remit includes "fundamental rights".

It will continue to be mainly up to EU member states to make sure duplication does not occur, by avoiding work already done by the Council of Europe, by faithfully sticking to the agreed co-operation arrangements, and by consulting the Council early on its strategy. For its part, the Committee of Ministers needs to keep reminding the Agency about the dangers of duplication by meeting its top managers regularly, by keeping Council data flowing to the Agency and by making sure staff members from both bodies are in close contact.

Contact in the secretariat: Agnieszka Szklanna, tel. 4141.



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# Wednesday 6 October 2010

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Election of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly  
(possible second round)**

*Doc. 12356*

*Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.*

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round of voting. If this is not obtained, a second round of voting takes place, for which a relative majority of votes will be sufficient.

◆ **Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights with  
respect to Estonia, Greece and Portugal (possible second round)**

*Doc. 12346*

*Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.*

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round of voting. If this is not obtained, a second round of voting takes place, for which a relative majority of votes will be sufficient.

◆ **Human rights and business**

*Doc. 12361*

*Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights  
Rapporteur: Holger Haibach (Germany, EPP/CD)*

*Opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development  
Rapporteur: Tuur Elzinga (Netherlands, UEL)*

With globalisation, large multinational companies have faced charges that they are violating human rights, especially in developing countries: child labour in the textile industry, environmental disasters caused by the oil industry, or breaches of the right to privacy by telecommunication companies are all recent examples. Yet such alleged abuses often take place outside Europe, and bringing them before European courts is usually difficult.

Council of Europe member states should start by investing ethically, refusing to work with corporations associated with abuses, and insist that firms fully respect human rights standards when they carry out government contracts – especially if the work involves classic state functions which have been “privatised”, such as law enforcement or military activities. More generally, they should introduce laws to protect individuals from corporate abuses of human rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Committee of Ministers, for its part, could prepare studies – and eventually a recommendation to Europe’s governments – on corporate responsibility in the area of human rights. It could even set up a system for assessing the social responsibility of businesses, leading to a Council of Europe “label” for the best. In the meantime, the Council of Europe should co-operate with other international organisations already working in this field, and develop partnerships with the business community to promote its standards.

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

## ◆ **The activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2009-2010**

*Doc. 12340 Prov.*

*Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development  
Rapporteur: Juan Moscoso del Prado Hernández (Spain, SOC)*

*Contribution from the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee  
Spokesperson: Luca Volontè (Italy, EPP/CD)*

*Contribution from the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population  
Spokesperson: Hermine Naghdalyan (Armenia, ALDE)*

*Contribution from the Committee on Culture, Science and Education  
Spokesperson: Jan Kazmierczak (Poland, EPP/CD)*

*Contribution from the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs  
Spokesperson: Axel E. Fischer (Germany, EPP/CD)*

Since 1962 the Assembly has acted as the parliamentary forum for the 33-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, Chile, Israel, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States), as well as the European Parliament, to join its members in an enlarged debate on an annual report.

In this latest provisional report, the enlarged Economic Affairs Committee welcomes the four new members of the organisation (Chile, Estonia, Israel and Slovenia) and the progress made by Russia towards full membership, as well as the "enhanced engagement" of Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa, which could lead to accession talks for them. Only countries fully respecting democracy, human rights and the rule of law should be invited to join the organisation, it recalls. On the global economy, the committee welcomes the steady, if unspectacular growth expected in 2011 and the OECD's assessment of a "relatively auspicious" outlook, but warns that the recovery is weakest and most erratic in the euro area, which should tackle its debt and stick more rigorously to its own rules. World trade has bounced back, albeit led by non-OECD countries, but public finances are in a poor state, with debt levels in some countries unprecedented in peacetime.

The financial crisis has also dented confidence in free markets and capitalism, the committee points out. Better financial oversight and more transparency in risk management will help, and lessons must be learned on improving corporate governance too. Meanwhile, governments must not neglect to help the jobless, especially young people, to keep recovery on track. Finally, the committee welcomes the OECD's co-operation with the Council of Europe on updating its convention enabling states to better share information on tax matters, which should help to counter tax evasion and minimise avoidance.

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

Contact in the secretariat: Geza Mezei, tel. 2143.

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## Wednesday 6 October 2010

Afternoon (3 p.m.-7 p.m.)

◆ **Celebration of the 60th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights**

The President of the Assembly, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, and the President of the European Court of Human Rights, Jean-Paul Costa, will each make a short statement, followed by one speaker from each of the Assembly's political groups.

◆ **The activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2009: facilitating economic integration in Europe**

*Doc. 12349*

*Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development*

*Rapporteur: Hermine Naghdalyan (Armenia, ALDE)*

The financial and economic crisis of 2009 was a huge challenge to Europe – not least for its development institutions, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The Bank acted swiftly and effectively, according to the Economic Affairs Committee, injecting money when it was needed most despite major uncertainties over the state of affairs in central and eastern Europe. Its investments in 2009 were unprecedented in scale – a record 5.5 billion euros was paid out, much of it to banks – and were targeted at the countries suffering most from the crisis, helping to stabilise the macro-economic situation, and reassuring investors at a critical moment.

Anyone who thought that the Bank had largely accomplished its mission of supporting transition to open and democratic market economies has had to think again. The Bank itself made a net loss of 746 million euros in 2009, seen as largely unavoidable from a short-term perspective given its shrinking equity operations and provision for potential bad loans, and decided to seek a temporary 50 per cent increase in its capital from 20 billion to 30 billion euros, a decision the committee fully supports.

Looking forward, the Bank should continue its increased lending to help recovery while leading the way in learning lessons from the crisis. The start of projects in the EBRD's newest country of operation, Turkey, is welcome, but it could also boost lending to its eight poorest countries, in the Caucasus and central Asia, as well as EU candidate countries in south-eastern Europe. Projects supporting energy security, the environment and small firms should all continue to be priorities.

**Statement by Jan Fischer, Vice-President of the EBRD**

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

◆ **The strategy, governance and functioning of the Council of Europe Development Bank**

*Doc. 12352*

*Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development*

*Rapporteur: Tuur Elzinga (Netherlands, UEL)*

Against the backdrop of last year's economic crisis, the vital role of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) has come to the fore: it is a unique tool of its forty member states for promoting socio-economic cohesion and solidarity in European society, never more so than when these are under threat. The Bank's lending was only mildly affected by the crisis, and only one CEB borrower missed some payments due, a strong record in difficult circumstances.

Yet the crisis hit the Bank's target countries in central, eastern and southeastern Europe hard: their social needs have risen dramatically, whereas borrowing opportunities have diminished. The Economic Affairs Committee believes this is a good time to further strengthen the link between the Bank's activities and Council of Europe values, as the two institutions seek to reform themselves. The Bank's activities should properly reflect its mission to support social projects including those which underpin democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Moreover, to be able to keep money flowing to the most vulnerable countries – some inside, but most outside the EU – whilst carefully managing risk, the Bank needs a substantial capital increase.

There is also room for streamlining its governance, and increased co-operation with other international partners in order to share costs, risk, good practice and experience. In other words, the committee suggests, the Bank should seize the opportunity of the current strategic review to make its work more relevant, focused and visible.

**Statement by Apolonio Ruiz Ligeró, Vice-Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank**

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

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## Thursday 7 October 2010

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

♦ **Possible urgent debate: the recent rise in national security discourse in Europe – the case of Roma**

*Report of the Committee on Political Affairs Committee*

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

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

At time of going to press, there had been one request for an urgent debate, on “The recent rise in national security discourse in Europe: the case of Roma”, submitted by the Assembly’s Political Affairs Committee.

At its meeting in Rome on 8 September, the Bureau decided to recommend to the Assembly the holding of this debate, and to refer the matter to the Political Affairs Committee for report, and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population for opinion.

If the Assembly agrees to this request when it adopts its agenda on the first day of the session, the report is due to be approved by the Political Affairs Committee during its meeting at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday 5 October.

**or**

♦ **Noise and light pollution**

*Doc. 12179*

*Report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs*

*Rapporteur: Rafael Huseynov (Azerbaijan, ALDE)*

Too much artificial noise and light, a problem which particularly affects industrialised and densely-populated Europe, is more than just a nuisance: it can damage human health and is environmentally harmful. Noise pollution comes chiefly from cars, aeroplanes, machines and factories, but also from events such as demonstrations or loud concerts. It disturbs and distresses animals, and can contribute to sleep disorders, nervous fatigue and aggression in humans. Excessive light at night is also harmful to the human metabolism, threatens urban biodiversity and wastes energy, causing secondary harm to the environment through needless power generation and distribution.

The Environment Committee suggests a number of measures Council of Europe member states can take. They can enforce existing WHO and EU standards, setting limits for noise and light, measuring their incidence and studying their effects more carefully. Local councils could set out both noise and light-reduction plans.

Government policies to reduce and modify road traffic would make a big difference, as would building regulations which enforce limits on sound and light. Acoustics should be part of the training of engineers and architects, who should be encouraged to use new materials and technologies to maximise natural light, and restrict artificial light to only when it is needed. But above all, the committee proposes introducing threshold levels for noise and light, and imposing penalties when those levels are exceeded.

Contact in the secretariat: Agnès Nollinger, tel. 2288.

◆ **Address by Nikola Gruevski, Prime Minister of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”**

Following his address, Mr Gruevski will answer oral questions from members of the Assembly.

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## Thursday 7 October 2010

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-7.30 p.m.)

### ◆ **Guaranteeing the right to education for children with illnesses or disabilities**

*Doc. 12262*

*Report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Lokman Ayva (Turkey, EPP/CD)*

Kids who are ill or disabled have the same right as everyone else to receive a high-quality education which will maximise their potential – and that may mean extra resources or expertise to meet their special needs. But in the view of the Social Affairs Committee, arrangements for such children should above all be *inclusive*. This means they should be educated – wherever possible – at mainstream schools, an arrangement which is better both for them and their peers, who will be encouraged to develop greater tolerance and an increased acceptance of “difference”. Where separate special schools or facilities really are necessary, they should be conceived as “resource centres” that are linked to local communities as much as possible.

Autonomy and independence – and access to the same opportunities and syllabuses as all children – should be the watchwords for teaching children with special needs in these inclusive settings. Governments will not only need to furnish special equipment and training, but will also have to transform public awareness and attitudes. Everyone – policy-makers, teachers, families and communities – will need to be involved, and education services may need to develop action plans to reform existing systems, with new standards and methodologies as well as extra funding. Partnership, networking and joint learning by all stakeholders will benefit not just sick or disabled children themselves, the committee suggests, but society as a whole.

### **Statement by Hayrünnisa Gül, patron of the Turkish “Education enables” campaign**

Contact in the secretariat: Silvia Arzilli, tel. 4898.

### ◆ **Children without parental care: urgent need for action**

*Doc. 12345*

*Report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Pieter Omtzigt (Netherlands, EPP/CD)*

For any child, its original family is usually the best place for it to receive the love, support and guidance it needs to grow happily. But when that is not possible, a stable home in another family-type setting is often preferable to residential care in larger institutions, especially for younger children, according to recent UN guidelines fully endorsed by the Social Affairs Committee.

A lot has been done to meet the needs of parentless children in recent years, the committee acknowledges, but globalisation and economic crisis have created a new generation of children that have been either trafficked or left behind by migrating parents, leading to several new challenges. Meanwhile, the process of “de-institutionalising” childcare is still too slow.

States should push forward with a new sense of urgency on national strategies to “de-institutionalise” childcare, drawing on recent EU research and UN guidelines, for example by restructuring care homes

to create smaller, family-type units or moving children into family environments such as foster care. Better help for families to care for their own children, through well-targeted social services, should be another important element in any strategy.

Since 2006, the Council of Europe's existing programme "Building a Europe for and with children" has been an excellent opportunity to encourage action on this front, gather data and promote good practice.

Contact in the secretariat: Maren Lambrecht-Feigl, tel. 4778.

◆ **Women's access to lawful medical care: the problem of unregulated use of conscientious objection**

*Doc. 12347*

*Report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee*

*Rapporteur: Christine McCafferty (United Kingdom, SOC)*

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

*Rapporteur: Ingrida Circene (Latvia, EPP/CD)*

Conscientious objection in the health field occurs when health professionals such as doctors or nurses refuse to provide certain services based on religious, moral or philosophical objections – for example, as the rapporteur points out, to provide certain family-planning services, safe abortion services where legal, or pain-relief by life-shortening means for terminally-ill patients. While recognising the right of an individual to conscientiously object in this way, the Social Affairs Committee is deeply concerned about the increasing and largely unregulated occurrence of this practice, especially in the field of reproductive health care, in many Council of Europe member states.

The committee proposes a series of guidelines to balance the right of an individual not to perform a certain medical procedure with the right of each patient to access lawful medical care in a timely manner. Conscientious objection should be an individual right only, open to the person who would have to be directly involved in a given procedure, and not to public institutions such as hospitals or clinics. Those who invoke conscientious objection should be obliged to provide information to patients about all treatment options available, and should refer patients in good time to other professionals who will provide appropriate treatment. Finally, in cases of emergency – such as danger to the patient's life – or when referral to another provider is not possible, a healthcare provider should be obliged, despite his or her conscientious objection, to administer treatment to which a patient is legally entitled.

European governments should create a clear set of regulations spelling out these matters, and set up a mechanism to oversee and monitor their application, including an effective complaints mechanism.

Contact in the secretariat: Tanja Kleinsorge, tel. 2906.



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# Friday 8 October 2010

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **National procedures for the selection of candidates for the European Court of Human Rights**

*Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights  
Rapporteur: Renate Wohlwend (Liechtenstein, EPP/CD)*

This report is due to be approved by the Legal Affairs Committee during its meeting at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday 5 October.

◆ **Gender-related claims for asylum**

*Doc. 12350  
Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population  
Rapporteur: Andrej Zernovski ("the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", ALDE)*

*Doc. 12359  
Opinion of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men  
Rapporteur: Carina Hägg (Sweden, SOC)*

Some 52 per cent of all refugees in Europe are women or girls, and many of them seek asylum because of persecution that is specific to them being female, such as sexual exploitation, forced marriage, honour crimes and forced abortion, pregnancy or sterilisation. In conflict situations, women may be subjected to rape as a weapon of war. Yet, according to the Migration Committee, states do not always take into account the gender dimension when assessing asylum claims. Indeed, womens' persecution is all too often viewed through the lens of male experience. A woman facing a male interviewer, for instance, may be reluctant to speak freely, or lack the independence or resources to tell her full story.

Council of Europe member states must be sensitive to gender-related claims, ensuring for example that women are automatically assisted by female counsellors and interpreters, and that husbands or other male relatives do not take over the process of filling in their claims. Interviewing officials need to be fully briefed on gender-based violence or persecution in countries of origin, and trained to spot signs of it. Trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation, should be taken fully into account when dealing with asylum claims, as should female genital mutilation.

Finally, governments should assess the gender dimension of their current asylum policies, gather statistics on these claims, and publish national precedents in this area to raise awareness.

Contact in the secretariat: Isild Heurtin, tel. 4100.

◆ **Fostering the socio-economic potential of the Baltic Sea region**

*Doc. 12264*

*Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development*

*Rapporteur: Antti Kaikkonen (Finland, ALDE)*

*Doc. 12348*

*Opinion of the Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs*

*Rapporteur: Aleksei Lotman (Estonia, UEL)*

The nine states gathered around the Baltic Sea – eight of them now in the European Union together with Russia – have been co-operating since at least the 1950s, aware of their common resources, economic interdependence and shared concerns. A number of regional structures set up in the 1990s have boosted that process, while the recent financial turmoil has highlighted the need for even greater joint strategic vision.

The Economic Affairs Committee welcomes the EU's Baltic Sea strategy, launched in 2009, and especially the channelling of cash to projects which improve environmental sustainability, competitiveness, transport infrastructure and communication in the region. A close and constructive dialogue between the EU and Russia in the region will be critical for success, the committee believes, and the EU should involve Russia as much as possible in its strategy, especially over policies affecting the Kaliningrad exclave. The rationale for the North Stream gas pipeline is debatable, however, and consultation was insufficient. Energy and transport projects in the region should go beyond bilateral agreements and be driven by solidarity and the shared interests of all the Baltic countries, the committee believes. Germany, Denmark, Finland and Sweden, in particular, possess a wealth of experience between them which could be more widely shared.

If done right, the committee suggests, Baltic co-operation could even become a model for other regional groupings such as Black Sea or Mediterranean countries.

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

◆ **Closure of the fourth part of the 2010 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.) is published on the Assembly's website before each sitting.

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

Meetings of political groups take place on Monday morning and late afternoon as well as Wednesday morning.

## 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, Greek and Turkish.

## 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 or 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 33 (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.

**Agenda:** For each part-session the Bureau prepares a draft agenda listing the sittings at which the items will be examined. **The draft agenda** 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 agenda (Rule 26.4 of the Rules of Procedure). A member may propose an

amendment to the draft agenda drawn up by the Bureau. The adoption of such a motion requires a majority of the votes cast (Rule 26.5). Once adopted, the agenda 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 agenda is published (Rule 26) and made available to the members at the document counter.

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 23 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

Twice a day a **"notice paper"** is produced, setting out the agenda for the sittings of the day. It also contains other useful information relevant to the proceedings and procedure.

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 October 2010 in two parts, the Rules and complementary texts in one part, and the Statute of the Council of Europe in another part. They are available in bilingual versions (English/French).

#### **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 90 of the Rules of Procedure and forward), 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 4 October: Monday 4 October at 12 noon;
- for debates on Tuesday 5 October: Monday 4 October at 4 p.m.;
- for all other debates (except urgent debates, unforeseen debates or as otherwise indicated on the agenda): 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 one hour before the scheduled end of the sitting preceding that in which the debate begins.

The procedure for tabling, examining and voting on amendments and sub-amendments is set out in Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure.

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

A motion for a recommendation or resolution, not exceeding 300 words, must be signed by at least 20 Representatives or Substitutes belonging to at least five national delegations (Rule 24.2). 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.

For motions tabled during a part-session, the Bureau has decided that only those motions which have been tabled by **12 noon on the Tuesday of a part-session** 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 25.2). 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 48.3 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 52 of the Rules of Procedure).

Any Representative or Substitute may add his or her signature to a written declaration up to the close of the next part-session, after which no further signatures may be added. The declaration shall be issued with the names of all members who have signed it.

## **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 56).

## **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. If the national parliament cannot make all such appointments in time for the opening of a new Ordinary Session, it may decide, for a period of not more than six months after the election, to be represented in the Assembly by members of the existing delegation (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 42.6).

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

At the request of the Committee of Ministers, of the committee concerned, of one or more political groups, 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 draft 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 49.4).

An urgent debate is based on a written report and gives rise to a vote, whereas a current affairs debate is not based on a report.

At least twenty members, or one political group or national delegation may request a current affairs debate (Rule 51) on a subject which is not on the Assembly's draft agenda. The request must be made in writing to the President of the Assembly in time for the last meeting of the Bureau before the opening of the part-session. The possible choice between several requests is made by the Bureau, a decision which needs to be endorsed 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. Although there is no vote on any text, 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.

## **11. Voting cards**

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

Distribution of voting cards is ensured by the Badge 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 welcome Protocol desk at the main entrance of the Palais de l'Europe in order to receive their card. Staff of the Badge Service, 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 Badge 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.

## **12. Notification of Substitutes**

In principle, all Representatives at the opening of the first sitting (on Monday, at 11.30 a.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). For the first sitting on Monday at 11.30 a.m., the deadline is 10 a.m. 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 (Beejul Tanna, Room 1074, 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.

### **13. 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 only 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.

### **14. 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 one and a half hours before the start of the sitting (i.e. at 10 a.m.). 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 in the Rules of Procedure.

**Speaking time** is limited to a total of 13 minutes for committee rapporteurs (to present the report and to reply to the debate). Rapporteurs for opinion, to present the opinion or to reply to the debate, shall have the same speaking time to present their opinions as the speakers registered for the debate concerned. Other speakers on the list normally have a maximum of 5 minutes, although this may be reduced depending on the number of speakers on the list. 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 Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers or to guest speakers. The list of speakers is verified accordingly.



## **15. Questions to invited guest speakers**

For most invited guest speakers, the draft agenda 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 agenda is published and the name of the guest speaker appears, unless the draft agenda specifies that there is only one question from each political group. For most 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 written question is registered if accompanied by the full written text of the question. In this context, a deadline is specified in the draft agenda. The written questions to the Chairperson are published as an Assembly document.

In accordance with established practice, the Bureau has agreed that written questions will receive a written reply from the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers. These replies will be published in the report of the sitting. The Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers has indicated that he or she is prepared to give an oral reply to spontaneous questions at the end of his address. Rule 57.2 of the Rules of Procedure states, however, that "No Representative or Substitute may table more than one question for oral answer at any one part-session." Members may therefore register on one of the two lists by completing and returning the appropriate form (either "written question for oral reply" or "spontaneous question").

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.

## **16. 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 Presidential dais; 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 38.9 indicates that a member cannot modify his or her vote after the voting is closed.

The names of Assembly members who participate in votes, as well as how they voted in each case, are published on the Assembly's website.

## **17. 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 40.3).

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.

## **18. 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.

## **19. 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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## 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 Klébér: 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.