



Resolution 1176 (1998)¹

Terms of reference of Assembly committees

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly recalls its [Resolution 1107 \(1997\)](#) on the committee structure of the Assembly.
2. It furthermore recalls the recent establishment of two new committees, namely the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe ([Resolution 1115 \(1997\)](#)) and the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men ([Resolution 1144 \(1998\)](#)).
3. Therefore, considering that it has become necessary to define more clearly and to rationalise the terms of reference of all of its committees and, in certain cases, to revise their titles, the Assembly adopts the terms of reference set out in the appendix to this resolution.

1. See [Doc. 8178](#), report of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, rapporteur: Mr Gjellerod. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly on 4 November 1998.



Appendix

Title: Political Affairs Committee (AS/Pol)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee is the successor to the "General Affairs Committee" established in 1949. The committee's title was changed to "Political Committee" in 1957, and to "Political Affairs Committee" in 1968.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider all political matters which fall within the competence of the Council of Europe and shall, as necessary, report on urgent political crises in Council of Europe member states.
2. The committee shall consider the general policy of the Council of Europe.
3. The committee shall, in particular, consider:
 1. requests for membership of the Council of Europe;
 2. requests for the granting of Observer status with the Council of Europe and with the Parliamentary Assembly;
 3. requests for Special Guest status with the Parliamentary Assembly (in accordance with Rule 55.a of the Rules of Procedure);
 4. any motions to annul previously ratified credentials (in accordance with Rule 6.10 of the Rules of Procedure)
4. Subject to the prerogatives of the Bureau, the committee shall consider:
 1. relations with other international organisations, in particular the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations;
 2. relations with states which are not members of the Council of Europe, including human rights issues in relation to those states.
5. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference.
6. The committee may participate in the work of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

Sub-committees:

Middle East (AS/Pol/ME);

Relations with Non-Member States (AS/Pol/NM).

Title: Committee on Economic Affairs and Development (AS/Ec)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee was established in 1949, as the Committee on Economic Questions. Its title was changed in 1956 to "Economic Committee". The title of the committee was changed in 1968 to "Economic Affairs and Development" in order to clarify that it was the committee responsible for developing countries. This change was also intended to meet the concerns of the authors of a motion for a resolution ([Doc. 2179](#)) to set up a new general committee on the developing countries.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider all matters relating to economic co-operation, growth and development.
2. The committee shall, in particular, consider:
 1. economic development and co-operation across Europe, including employment policies, and the economic and development policies of the European Union, especially as they affect members states of the Council of Europe which are outside the European Union;
 2. world-wide economic co-operation and development;
 3. development co-operation between industrialised and developing countries ("North-South" co-operation);

4. European transport policies.
3. Following special agreements, the committee shall prepare annual reports on the activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). These shall be debated in the Assembly following presentations by the Secretary General of OECD and the President of the EBRD.
4. The committee shall monitor the work of international organisations, including the European Free Trade Area (EFTA), the Central European Free Trade Association, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) and the Bretton Woods Institutions (the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) and other institutions falling within its sphere of interest.
5. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference.

Sub-committees:

International Economic Relations (AS/Ec/IER);

"North-South: Europe's Role" (AS/Ec/NS).

Title: Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee (AS/Soc)

Number of seats: 65

History: Until the summer of 1988, the committee was known as the "Committee on Social and Health Questions". It was renamed at its own request, to reflect its increasing preoccupation with matters relating to children, young people and the family.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider matters relating to social welfare, labour, public health, the family and vulnerable groups of the population.
2. The committee shall monitor, on behalf of the Assembly, the implementation and development of the Social Charter of the Council of Europe.
3. The committee shall, in particular, consider:
 1. ways of improving social cohesion within the member states, and the contribution which social cohesion can make to political stability;
 2. social aspects of employment and unemployment policy, including working hours and the rights of workers;
 3. social policies affecting children and the elderly, and ways of increasing solidarity between the generations;
 4. questions relating to health, including the development of concerted European health policies and the fight against drug trafficking and abuse.
4. The committee meets yearly with the competent committees of the European Parliament and Unicef and shall maintain relations with international organisations active within its sphere of interest, in particular with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The committee shall also maintain relations with relevant non-governmental organisations.
5. The committee shall participate in the work of the European Committee on Social Cohesion (CDCS), which was set up in June 1998 to replace other intergovernmental steering committees in the social sector of the Council of Europe, with a special mandate to implement, among others, the decisions of the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government in the social field. The committee will also continue to participate in the work of the European Health Committee (CDSP).
6. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference.

Sub-committees:

Children (AS/Soc/Enf);

European Social Charter and Employment (AS/Soc/Charte);

Health (AS/Soc/Health).

Title: Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (AS/Jur)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee was known until the end of 1989 as the "Legal Affairs Committee".

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider all legal and human rights matters referred to it and which fall within the competence of the Council of Europe. In particular, it shall consider:
 1. human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in the member states of the Council of Europe;
 2. judicial institutions (including ombudspersons), the police and the mass media in the member states of the Council of Europe;
 3. the rights of national and other minorities;
 4. questions of discrimination;
 5. all matters concerning the European Convention on Human Rights and its protocols, the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and other international instruments;
 6. criminal law and criminology, the treatment of offenders and conditions of detention.
2. The committee shall examine the law and legal practice and the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms of applicant states to assess compliance with Council of Europe standards.
3. The committee shall examine all candidatures for judges of the European Court of Human Rights, before the election of judges by the Assembly.
4. The committee shall:
 1. participate in the work of the Council of Europe's intergovernmental steering committees on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ), the Mass Media (CDMM), Crime Problems (CDPC) and Human Rights (CDDH);
 2. participate in the work of the Commission on Democracy through Law (Venice Commission);
 3. follow the work of international organisations dealing with legal matters, including the Hague Conference on Private International Law, Unidroit and Uncitral;
 4. participate in the International Judicial Conference.
5. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference.
6. The committee may participate in the work of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

Sub-committee: - Human Rights (AS/Jur/DH).

Title: Committee on Culture and Education (AS/Cult)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee was appointed in 1949 as the "Committee on Cultural and Scientific Questions". By [Resolution 326 \(1966\)](#), which established a separate committee on science and technology, the committee was renamed the "Cultural Committee". In 1968, the committee was again renamed, to become the "Committee on Culture and Education".

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider all matters relating to co-operation in Europe in cultural and educational matters, and cultural co-operation between Europe and other parts of the world.
2. The committee shall, in particular, consider:
 1. the promotion of cultural co-operation and exchange between the member states;
 2. issues relating to freedom of expression and the role of the artist, and censorship;
 3. the preservation of Europe's cultural heritage;

4. the development of respect for, and tolerance of, differing cultures, including minority cultures, within the member states;
 5. education and youth policy;
 6. sport;
 7. the media, including, in particular, questions of media ethics.
3. The committee shall follow the work of the European Youth Centres and the European Youth Foundation.
 4. The committee shall participate in the work of the following intergovernmental steering committees of the Council of Europe:
 - Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC);*
 - Education Committee (CC-ED);*
 - Higher Education and Research Committee (CC-HER);*
 - Culture Committee (CC-CULT);*
 - Cultural Heritage Committee (CC-PAT);*
 - Committee for the Development of Sport (CDDS);*
 - European Steering Committee for Intergovernmental Co-operation in the Youth Field (CDEJ);*
 - Steering Committee on the Mass Media (CDMM).*
 5. The committee shall maintain relations with non-governmental organisations and international organisations, particularly Unesco.
 6. The committee shall, on behalf of the Assembly, decide on the annual Council of Europe Museum Prize.
 7. The committee shall designate a general rapporteur on the cultural heritage.
 8. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference.
 9. The committee may participate in the work of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

Sub-committees:

- Cultural Heritage (AS/Cult/AA);*
- Youth and Sport (AS/Cult/JS);*
- Media (AS/Cult/Media).*

Title: Committee on Science and Technology (AS/Science)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee was appointed as a general committee in 1966, with specific terms of reference ([Resolution 326](#)).

Terms of reference (adapted from Assembly [Resolution 326](#) of 1966)

1. The committee shall:
 - 1.1. consider science and technology policy in Europe, including the ethical and social aspects of developments in these fields;
 - 1.2. consider industrial policy, and in particular the relationship between pure research and industry;
 - 1.3. consider developments in European energy policy, and, in particular, energy co-operation;
 - 1.4. encourage European co-operation in science and technology;
 - 1.5. maintain relations and co-operate with parliamentary, inter-parliamentary, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations in the field of science and technology;

1.6. participate in the work of the intergovernmental Steering Committee on Bioethics (CDBI) of the Council of Europe.

2. The committee may organise conferences and other events in areas covered by these terms of reference.

Sub-committees:

Technology Policy and Energy (AS/Science/Tech);

Science Policy and Ethics (AS/Science/Pol).

Title: Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities (AS/Loc)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee was established in 1949 as the "Committee on Local Authorities". The subject of regional planning was added in 1968. The environment was added to the committee's title in 1986.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider issues related to the protection and management of the environment, and the concept of sustainable development, in particular by:
 1. fostering international co-operation in this field, and contributing to the implementation of existing conventions;
 2. following and providing guidance to the intergovernmental sector's activities.
2. The committee shall consider issues relating to regional planning, water resources management, and transport policy, as well as other policies that contribute to coherent and sustainable planning of the European territory. The committee shall foster cross-border and interregional co-operation.
3. The committee shall consider issues relating to local democracy, regionalisation, regional and local self-government, and in particular the application of the subsidiarity principle.
4. The committee shall follow the activities of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), and shall present reports on these activities to the Assembly whenever it deems it necessary. The committee shall be represented in Congress activities which fall within its terms of reference. Furthermore, the committee shall also follow the activities of other European bodies that deal with local and regional authority issues.
5. The committee shall, on behalf of the Assembly, select the candidates for, and the winners of, the Europe Prize.
6. The committee shall be represented in intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe such as:
 - Committee for the Activities of the Council of Europe in the field of Biological and Landscape Diversity (CO-DBP);*
 - Council for the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (STRA-CO);*
 - Group of Specialists: "Tourism and Environment" (PE-S-TO);*
 - Group of Specialists on Coastal Protection (PE-S-CO);*
 - Select Committee of Experts on Transfrontier Co-operation (LR-R-CT);*
 - Working Party on Mountain Regions and Rural Areas (GT-RMER).*
7. The committee may organise conferences and other events in areas covered by these terms of reference.

Sub-committees:

Environment (AS/Loc/Env);

Regional Planning (AS/Loc/Am);

Local and Regional Authorities (AS/Loc/Reg).

Additional sub-committee:

Europe Prize (AS/Loc/Prix).

Title: Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography (AS/Mig)

Number of seats: 65

History: The committee was first appointed as a general committee in 1958. It was originally named the "Committee on Population and Refugees". In 1979 ([Resolution 685](#)), the committee was given its present title in order to reflect its growing concern with general migration problems.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider:
 1. questions relating to migration and refugees in Europe and in other parts of the world, including the problem of asylum seekers;
 2. population trends in Europe and in other parts of the world, and the social and economic effects of those trends;
 3. community relations in multicultural societies, including the situation and integration of migrant workers and their social, economic and political rights;
 4. humanitarian issues.
2. The committee shall follow the activities of, and maintain relations with, international bodies concerned with migration, refugees and demography, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Organisation for Migration and the Social Development Fund of the Council of Europe.
3. The committee shall participate in the work of the following intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe:

European Population Committee (CDPO);
European Committee on Migration (CDMG);
Specialist Group on Roma/Gypsies (MG-S-ROM).
4. The committee may organise conferences and other events in areas covered by these terms of reference.

Sub-committees:

Migration (AS/Mig/Mig);
Refugees (AS/Mig/Ref);
Demography (AS/Mig/Dem).

Title: Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities (AS/Pro)

Number of seats: 45

History: The committee was established in 1949. It is proposed to add the words "and Immunities" to its title.

Terms of reference:

The committee shall:

1. examine proposed amendments to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, in accordance with Rule 60 of the Rules of Procedure, and ensure that the Rules remain consonant with the practice of the Assembly;
2. ensure that the Assembly's Rules of Procedure are applied properly in practice; and report to the Assembly on the interpretation of the Rules;
3. report to the Assembly on any contested credentials of Representatives and Substitutes, in accordance with Rule 6.7 of the Rules of Procedure, and give its opinion on any requests for annulment of previous ratifications of credentials in accordance with Rule 6.10 of the Rules of Procedure;
4. report to the Bureau on any contested credentials of members of Special Guest delegations, in accordance with Rule 55.a.7 of the Rules of Procedure;
5. consider questions relating to the privileges and immunities of members of the Assembly, including requests for waiver of immunity referred to the committee under Rule 59 of the Rules of Procedure;

6. keep under review the Assembly's committee structure and the functioning of the Assembly's system of committees; and report on proposals for the establishment of new committees.

Title: Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AS/Agr)

Number of seats: 45

History: The committee was first appointed in 1951, as a special committee. It became a general committee in 1956.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall consider the strategic aspects of European agriculture and rural development. In particular, it shall consider:
 1. the reform of agriculture in greater Europe;
 2. issues relating to forestry and to fisheries;
 3. issues relating to food (including the agro-food industry) and related issues of consumer protection;
 4. rural development issues.
2. The committee shall maintain close relations with the European and relevant international organisations, including the institutions of the European Union, and the United Nations specialised agencies in this field, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The committee shall provide a report on the agricultural work of the OECD as a contribution to the Assembly's annual debate on the activities of the OECD.
3. The committee shall maintain relations with relevant non-governmental organisations.
4. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference.

Sub-committees:

Fisheries (AS/Agr/Fish);

Food (AS/Agr/Food).

Title: Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations (AS/Parl)

Number of seats: 45

History: The committee is the successor to a Working Party on Parliamentary and Public Relations, established in 1956 ([Resolution 104](#)).

Terms of reference:

Note: adapted from the original terms of reference ([Resolution 104](#) of 1956, with subsequent amendments) and with modifications from Order No. 452 (1990), Order No. 489 (1993) and [Resolution 1136 \(1997\)](#). The text which follows is a consolidated and shortened version of the original resolutions.

1. The committee shall consider ways in which the Assembly's work is brought to the attention of national parliaments and the general public. To this end, it shall:
 - 1.1. develop close links between the Parliamentary Assembly and national parliaments;
 - 1.2. select Assembly texts for transmission to national parliaments and co-operate with the national delegations in presenting the results of the Assembly's work to their own parliaments and to the public;
 - 1.3. in collaboration with the national delegations, provide the Assembly each year with a progress report on action taken in national parliaments as a result of the Assembly's work and of measures taken to increase public awareness of the Assembly's work.
2. The committee shall develop interparliamentary co-operation on the adaptation of the functioning of representative democracy to new challenges and meeting the technical assistance requirements of the new democracies in Europe.

3. The committee shall develop relations with non-governmental organisations, examine the incidental impact of the role of the media in the functioning of democracy and develop activities which aim to foster public awareness of the Assembly's work.
4. The committee may carry out comparative studies into matters covered by these terms of reference, and may organise conferences and other events.

Sub-committees:

Participatory Democracy (AS/Parl/Dem);

Relations with NGOs (AS/Parl/ONG);

50th Anniversary of the Council of Europe (AS/Parl/50th).

Title: Committee on the Budget (AS/Bud)

Number of seats: 45

History: The committee was first appointed in 1954, as the "Committee on the Budget". In 1974, the committee's remit was enlarged to include the Intergovernmental Work Programme of the Council of Europe, which had previously been monitored by a special committee, first appointed in 1968.

Terms of reference:

1. The committee shall report on all budgetary and administrative matters referred to it by the Assembly. It shall consider, in particular, the Council of Europe's draft budget concerning the Assembly's ongoing activities, as well as the budgetary and financial aspects of future activities proposed by the Assembly.
2. The committee shall receive annually, on behalf of the Assembly, the audited accounts of the Council.
3. The committee shall examine questions related to the Assembly's budgetary powers, and shall report to the Assembly on these subjects.
4. The committee shall follow closely the work towards the harmonisation of conditions of service in the European international organisations and the establishment of a European civil service.

Sub-committee: - European Civil Service (AS/Bud/FPE).

Title: Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (AS/Eq)

Number of seats: 45

History: Established by [Resolution 1144 \(1998\)](#).

Terms of reference (drawn from [Resolution 1144](#)):

"The committee shall be responsible for:

1. considering equal opportunities questions, including the situation in Council of Europe member states, and reporting directly to the Assembly on them, together with draft texts for adoption;
2. considering activities having an impact on policies and/or legislation to promote equal opportunities for women and men in the member states of the Council of Europe;
3. supervising the implementation of commitments undertaken by Council of Europe member states in the Platform for Action adopted by the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and reporting periodically on this issue to the Assembly;
4. following up the compliance of Council of Europe member states with the recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly relating to equal opportunities;
5. promoting equal opportunities for women and men by organising seminars, conferences and parliamentary hearings on equal opportunities issues, with a view in particular to encouraging member states to promote equal opportunities in politics;
6. promoting co-operation between parliamentary bodies of Council of Europe member states in the field of equal opportunities and maintaining relations with the European network for parliamentary committees responsible for equal opportunities for women and men;

7. co-operating with intergovernmental steering committees of the Council of Europe and with other committees of the Parliamentary Assembly;
8. maintaining relations and co-operating with inter-parliamentary, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations in the field of equal opportunities, subject to the agreement of the Bureau;
9. examining the equal opportunities policy within the Secretariat of the Council of Europe and commenting on the annual report of the Secretary General concerning its implementation.

Sub-Committees:

Violence (AS/Eq/V);

Institutional instruments (AS/Eq/Inst)."

Title: Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) (AS/Mon)

Number of seats: 65

History: Established by [Resolution 1115 \(1997\)](#).

Terms of reference (drawn from [Resolution 1115](#)):

1. The Committee is responsible for seeking to ensure:
 1. the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by member states under the terms of the Council of Europe Statute, the European Convention on Human Rights and all other conventions concluded within the Organisation to which they are parties;
 2. the honouring of the commitments entered into by the authorities of member states on their accession to the Council of Europe.
2. An application to initiate a monitoring procedure may originate from:
 1. the general committees of the Assembly and from the Monitoring Committee by reasoned written application to the Bureau;
 2. not less than ten members of the Assembly representing at least two national delegations and two political groups, through the tabling of a motion for a resolution or recommendation;
 3. the Bureau of the Assembly.
3. Applications (other than those made by the Monitoring Committee itself) are to be considered by the Monitoring Committee which, after the appointment of two co-rapporteurs and after carrying out the necessary investigations, will prepare a written opinion for the Bureau. In the light of the committee's opinion, the Bureau will take a decision whether to initiate a monitoring procedure and if so will refer the matter, subject to ratification by the Assembly, to the Monitoring Committee for report. At the same time or subsequently, the Bureau, subject to ratification by the Assembly, will decide, when strictly necessary, on the committee(s) to which the matter is possibly referred for an opinion. A negative decision by the Bureau needs to be confirmed by the Assembly. The Monitoring Committee may also be instructed to carry out a monitoring procedure by decision pursuant to a text adopted by the Assembly or the Standing Committee.
4. Except in special circumstances, a monitoring procedure should not commence until six months after a member state's accession to the Council of Europe.
5. In accordance with Rule 46, the Monitoring Committee may set up sub-committees on the monitoring of specific obligations and commitments of member states or groups of member states.
6. The committee's conclusions should contain a summary of its position and give rise to an official Assembly document including a draft resolution and/or recommendation as appropriate (see Rule 47).
7. The committee will state in its reports whether the monitoring procedure in respect of a given country is to be considered completed.
8. Memoranda and drafts by the Monitoring Committee, unless the Bureau decides otherwise, will be treated as confidential until the competent authorities of the country concerned have had reasonable time (up to three months) to submit their comments and until these have been discussed in the Monitoring Committee.

9. The Monitoring Committee may establish contacts with the subsidiary bodies of the Committee of Ministers which are competent to monitor member states' obligations and commitments, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), and the relevant international institutions.
10. The committee may organise conferences and other events on subjects within its terms of reference."