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Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (14 October 2016)

Progress report

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1. Decisions of the Bureau of 14 October 2016 requiring ratification by the Assembly

1.1. References and transmissions to committees

1.1.1. References to committees

The Bureau considered and approved the following references:

- [Doc. 13956](#), motion for a resolution, Private and family life: achieving equality regardless of sexual orientation: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;
- [Doc. 13965](#), motion for a resolution Compatibility of Sharia law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the “Cairo Declaration”? (Ref. 4188 of 4 March 2016 – validity: 4 March 2018): reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report* and to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy and to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for opinion*;
- [Doc. 14100](#), motion for a resolution, Deliberate destruction and illegal trafficking of cultural heritage: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report*;
- [Doc. 14101](#), motion for a resolution, The need to enable the Committee of Ministers to give answers to the Assembly even in the absence of consensus: reference to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *for report*;
- [Doc. 14106](#), motion for a resolution, Growing hate speech and role of the political leaders in fighting hate crime: follow-up to ECRI Recommendations: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;
- [Doc. 14107](#), motion for a recommendation, Detainees with severe disabilities in Europe: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion*;
- [Doc. 14109](#), motion for a resolution Investor protection and human rights, reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on “Human rights compatibility of investor–State arbitration in international investment protection agreements” (Doc. 13691 – Ref. 4115)*;
- [Doc. 14110](#), motion for a resolution, Venice Commission's “Rule of Law Checklist”: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*;



- [Doc. 14115](#), motion for a resolution, Addressing forced marriage: legal provisions and promising practices: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*, and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for opinion*;
- [Doc. 14117](#), motion for a resolution, Freedom of choice and personal lifestyle: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report*;
- [Doc. 14118](#), motion for a resolution, The challenge of the demographic boom expected in Africa: what is Europe's implication?: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced persons *to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on "A comprehensive humanitarian and political response to the migration and refugee crisis in Europe"* ([Doc. 14005](#) – Ref. 4203);
- [Doc. 14134](#), motion for a resolution, Discrimination in access to employment: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;
- [Doc. 14154](#), Draft protocol amending the Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons (ETS No. 167): reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*;
- Bureau decision, [Resolution 2061 \(2015\)](#), The evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*;
- Bureau decision, Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD): reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*;
- Bureau decision, The situation in Aleppo: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report, to the Standing Committee (25 November 2016)*.

1.1.2. No further action

- [Doc. 14053](#), motion for a resolution, Human rights in the relations between the European Union and Cuba: no further action;

1.2. Election observation

1.2.1. Georgia: second round of the parliamentary elections (30 October 2016, date to be confirmed)

The Bureau decided to observe the second round of these elections. It constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 5 members, one representative of each political group, and of the corapporteurs of the monitoring committee.

1.3. Composition of committees

1.3.1. Monitoring committee

On the basis of proposals by the ALDE Group, the Bureau nominated Mrs Kristyna Zelienkova (Czech Republic) and Mr Alfred Heer (Switzerland).

1.4. Issues raised by committees

1.4.1. Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

The Bureau took note of the revised proposals on the modernisation of the Europe Prize (Appendix).

The Assembly is invited to ratify these Bureau decisions.

Appendix – Revised proposals on the modernisation of the Europe Prize

Aims and modalities of the modernisation of the Europe Prize

At its meeting on 8 July 2016 the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize considered and approved revised proposals on the modernisation of the Europe Prize, which were approved by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development at its meeting on 21 September 2016. These proposals aim at enhancing the attractiveness, relevance and visibility of the Europe Prize, while leaving its fundamental principles unchanged. They cover the criteria for awarding the Prize, enhanced relations between the Secretariat and the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize, improved visibility for the Prize and a simplification of the online application system, as well as of the processing of applications by the Secretariat.

1. Criteria for the Europe Prize

The criteria for the award of the Europe Prize are regrouped into the following four categories:¹

1. twinning activities, contacts with municipalities abroad, co-operation and partnerships (including personal exchanges, in particular youth work, as well as cultural activities);
2. European events (including participation in European Local Democracy Week), Europe Day (5 May) and propagation of the European idea;
3. European and international solidarity;
4. membership of organisations of local authorities.

The undertakings as regards the events linked to the awards stay the same.²

Simultaneous awards of more than one distinction to one municipality are excluded.

The on-line application system will be simplified according to the new criteria. In addition, every municipality will have the possibility of adding one paragraph summarising its application, in order to highlight why the municipality believes it should be awarded one of the distinctions. Applications are due on 15 January of every year.

2. Co-operation and visibility

For historical reasons, the Europe Prize is not evenly distributed across Europe, nor as well-known in all 47 Council of Europe member States. With a view to increasing the visibility of the Europe Prize across all countries and regions thereof, the decision is taken to:

1. inform under-represented countries about the Europe Prize, including through contacts with the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities' delegations (at parliamentary and Secretariat level);
2. contact different associations of local authorities, in order to enhance co-operation and communication with:
 - UCLG, a Global Network of Cities based in Barcelona (representing over 240 000 towns and cities);
 - EUROCIITIES, a network set up by mayors, based in Brussels;

1. The criteria for the award of the Europe Prize have remained unchanged for many years:

- Membership of organisations of local authorities;
- Twinning activities;
- Contacts with municipalities abroad;
- Personal exchanges;
- European events;
- Europe Day (5 May);
- Propagation of the European idea;
- European solidarity.

2. Municipalities must undertake to send a representative to Strasbourg to take part in the award ceremony if awarded the European Diploma; and if awarded the Flag of Honour or the Plaque of Honour, to organise a public ceremony, with active participation by young people, for its presentation by a (honorary) member of the Parliamentary Assembly. If awarded the Europe Prize (the highest distinction), municipalities are required to organise a public ceremony, with the active participation of the local population, for its presentation by the Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize.

- CEMR (the Council of European Municipalities and Regions), a non-profit-making association founded in 1951 with participatory status with the Council of Europe (the largest association of local and regional authorities in Europe), based in Brussels,

as well as with national associations of local authorities of under-represented countries;

3. intensify co-operation with the Association of Towns Awarded the Europe Prize, which now brings together 76 winning cities and organises a yearly event on a topical subject;³

4. intensify co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, in particular with regard to European Local Democracy Week.

3. Attractiveness and relevance

The highest distinction, the Europe Prize, currently comes with a bursary of 10 000 Euros to allow young people from the winning municipality to visit the European institutions in Strasbourg. Subject to the availability of funds, it is proposed to increase this bursary to 20 000 Euros to take into account the higher prices of travel and allow a greater number of young people to benefit.⁴

3. The Association is currently working on its own reform, see Klaipeda Declaration of 2-4 June 2016.

4. The bursary was last increased in 2005, from 7.600 to 10.000 Euros. However, in practice, some municipalities have received only 5.000 Euros each, as the Europe Prize was awarded to two municipalities jointly in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2015.