



Doc. 14579
21 June 2018

Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (27 April-24 June 2018)

Progress report

Bureau of the Assembly

Rapporteur: Mr Alfred HEER, Switzerland, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

1. Introduction

At its meeting on 27 April, the Bureau appointed me as rapporteur for this report, which covers its activities over the period from the last Bureau meeting of the second part-session of 2018 (Friday 27 April) to the first Bureau meeting of the third part-session of 2018 (Monday 25 June).

The following chapters include the decisions taken at the Bureau meetings of 27 April in Strasbourg and 31 May in Zagreb. Chapter 2 presents a list of decisions, which have either already been ratified by the Standing Committee on 1 June or which do not require ratification. Chapter 4 lists the decisions taken on 31 May that require ratification at the opening of the third part-session of the Assembly.

An addendum to this report will be issued after the Bureau meeting of 25 June, which will also include decisions to be ratified on the same day. Another addendum will be issued after the Bureau meeting of 29 June. It will include only the decisions to be ratified by the Assembly on the same day, notably the references and transmissions, which will have been approved by the Bureau.

The Bureau will hold its next meetings in Strasbourg on Monday 25 June at 8 am and Friday 29 June at 8:30 am, then on Monday 3 September in Paris. The next meeting of the Standing Committee will be held in Helsinki on 23 November 2018.

2. Activities of the Bureau since the last part-session and decisions not requiring ratification by the Assembly

2.1. Standing Committee (Zagreb, 1 June 2018)

On 27 April and 31 May, the Bureau took note of the draft agenda.

2.2. Third part-session of 2018 (Strasbourg, 25-29 June)

2.2.1. Draft agenda

On 27 April, the Bureau drew up the preliminary draft agenda. On 31 May, it drew up the draft agenda.

2.3. Election observation

2.3.1. Montenegro: presidential election (15 April 2018)

On 31 May, the Bureau approved the report of the ad hoc committee.



2.3.2. Turkey: early presidential and parliamentary elections (24 June 2018)

On 27 April, the Bureau approved the list of members of the Ad hoc Committee to observe these elections provided that the respective declarations on conflict of interest were submitted prior to the mission and appointed Ms Olena Sotnyk (Ukraine, ALDE) as Chairperson of the Ad hoc Committee.

On 31 May, the Bureau took note of the invitation to observe these elections and of the statement of the pre-electoral mission, and approved the revised list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe them (Appendix 1).

On 8 June, on the basis of a written consultation, the Bureau decided, upon proposal by the EPP/CD Group, to integrate two non-registered members (who have asked for this) within the EPP/CD quota in the Ad hoc Committee.

2.3.3. Bosnia and Herzegovina: general election (7 October 2018)

On 31 May, the Bureau, subject to receiving an invitation, decided to observe this election and to constitute an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 31 members (EPP/CD-10; SOC-10; EC-5; ALDE-3; UEL-2; FDG-1) as well as the two co-Rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee and agreed to organise a pre-electoral mission.

2.3.4. Georgia: presidential election (October 2018 – date to be confirmed)

On 31 May, the Bureau took note of the invitation to observe this election, decided to observe it and to constitute an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 31 members (EPP/CD-10; SOC-10; EC-5; ALDE-3; UEL-2; FDG-1) as well as the two co-Rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee and agreed to organise a pre-electoral mission.

2.4. Honorary President

On 31 May, the Bureau decided to grant the title of Honorary President to Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Assembly 2014-2016.

2.5. References and transmissions to committees

2.5.1. References and transmissions to committees

On 31 May, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions, which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee:

- [Doc. 14517](#), motion for a resolution, New forms of public debate on the ethical aspects of rapid advances in science and technology, reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report*;
- [Doc. 14518](#), motion for a resolution, Time to act: Europe's political response to fighting the manipulation of sports competitions, reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report*;
- [Doc. 14537](#), motion for a resolution, Impact of labor migration on left-behind children, reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report*;
- [Doc. 14538](#), motion for a resolution, Political prisoners in Azerbaijan, reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*.

2.5.2. Modification of a reference

On 31 May, the Bureau approved the following modification of a reference, which was subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee:

- Reference 4353, Bureau decision – Democracy hacked? How to respond?, Reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion*.

2.5.3. Extension of references

On 27 April, the Bureau approved the following extensions of references, which do not require ratification:

- [Doc. 13978](#), motion for a resolution, The functioning of democratic institutions in Poland, Ref. 4206 of 27 May 2016 – validity: 27 May 2018: extension until 25 January 2019;
- [Doc. 14039](#), motion for a resolution, The provision of elderly and palliative care in Europe (new title: The provision of palliative care in Europe), Ref. 4213 of 20 June 2016 – validity: 20 June 2018: extension until 31 December 2018;
- [Doc. 14041](#), motion for a resolution, Safeguarding and enhancing Europe's intangible heritage, Ref 4215 of 20 June 2016 – validity: 20 June 2018: extension until 31 January 2019;
- [Doc. 14042](#), motion for a resolution, Reshaping the role of education for “digital citizens” (new title: The role of education in the digital era: from “digital natives” to “digital citizens”), Ref. 4216 of 20 June 2016 – validity: 20 June 2018: extension until 31 January 2019;
- [Doc. 14072](#), motion for a resolution, Setting minimum standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections, Ref. 4222 of 24 June 2016 – validity: 24 June 2018: extension until 24 December 2018.

On 31 May, the Bureau approved the following extensions of references, which do not require ratification:

- [Doc. 13280](#), motion for a recommendation – Coordinated strategies for effective Internet governance, (new title: Internet governance and human rights), Reference 4000 of 30 September 2013 – Extension until 31 March 2019;
- [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”?, Reference 4188 of 4 March 2016 – Extension until 31 December 2018;
- [Doc. 14026](#), motion for a resolution – The value of cultural heritage in a democratic society, Reference 4228 of 24 June 2016 – Extension until 31 January 2019;
- [Doc. 14184](#), motion for a resolution – Are social media contributing to limiting freedom of expression? (new title: Social media: social threads or threats to fundamental freedoms?), Reference 4264 of 23 January 2017 – Extension until 31 March 2019.

2.6. Communications

On 27 April, the Bureau took note of the communication by the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and held an exchange of views (partly *in camera*).

On 31 May, the Bureau took note of communications by the President of the Assembly, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2.7. European Conference of Presidents of Parliament 2018 (Ankara, 13-14 September 2018)

On 27 April, the Bureau took note that, in agreement with the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, due to the early presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey, the Conference was postponed to a later date.

2.8. Issues raised by committees

2.8.1. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

On 27 April, the Bureau authorised Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez (Switzerland, SOC) to conduct a fact-finding visit to Burkina Faso, at no cost for the Assembly (exact date to be confirmed), in the context of the preparation of his report on “Development aid: a tool for preventing migration crises”.

2.8.2. Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

On 27 April, the Bureau authorised Ms Theodora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD) to carry out a fact-finding visit to Jordan, in June 2018 (exact date to be confirmed), in the framework of the preparation of her report on “The situation in Syria and its effects upon surrounding countries”.

2.8.3. Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

On 31 May, the Bureau authorised Mr Serhii Kiral (Ukraine, EC), in his capacity as Rapporteur on “Drug-resistant tuberculosis in Europe”, to attend a high-level UN meeting on the fight against tuberculosis, which will take place in September 2018 in New York.

2.8.4. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

On 31 May, the Bureau took note of the explanatory note to the declaration of interests of members of the Assembly.

2.9. Request from Sir Graham Watson to consult the archives of the Assembly during Lord Russell-Johnston’s Presidency (1999 to 2002) for his Biography

On 27 April, the Bureau consented to the archives of the Private Office during Lord Russell-Johnston’s Presidency (1999 to 2002) being opened to Sir Graham Watson to allow consultation and quotation from correspondence and visits files.

2.10. Composition of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and the Committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights

2.10.1. Composition of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

On 27 April, the Bureau on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, appointed Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir, Iceland. The Assembly ratified this nomination the same day.

2.10.2. Monitoring Committee

On 31 May, the Bureau on the basis of a proposal by the EC Group, appointed Mr Robert Goodwill (United Kingdom). The Standing Committee ratified this nomination on the following day.

2.10.3. Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights

On 31 May, the Bureau on the basis of a proposal by the ALDE Group, appointed Mr Olivier Becht (France). The Standing Committee ratified this nomination on the following day.

2.11. Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2018

On 27 April, the Bureau approved, on the basis of a proposal by the Monitoring Committee, the appointment of Mr Aleksander Pociąg (Poland, EPP/CD) to the Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission, as set out in Appendix 2.

2.12. Meetings elsewhere than Strasbourg and Paris

On 27 April, the Bureau

- authorised the sub-committee on Diasporas of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons to participate in the Annual Diaspora Forum to be held on 18 May 2018 in Geneva (Switzerland);
- authorised the ad hoc sub-committee of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy to participate in a Conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, Shared responsibility” to be held in Dubrovnik (Croatia) on 6 November 2018.

On 31 May, the Bureau

- authorised the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations by Member States of the Council of Europe “Monitoring Committee” to hold a meeting in Tbilisi on 17-18 September 2018;
- authorised the Sub-Committee on Education, Youth and Sport of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media with the Sub-Committee on Children of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development to hold a joint meeting in Tbilisi on 17-18 October 2018.

3. Activities of the Standing Committee (Zagreb, 1 June 2018)

The Standing Committee

- heard welcome addresses by Mr Gordan Jandroković, Speaker of the Croatian Parliament;
- held an exchange of views with Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;
- ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Hungary, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom;
- approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;
- took note of the draft agenda of the third part-session of the Assembly (25-29 June 2018);
- ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;
- took note of the report of the Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau on the “observation of the presidential election in Montenegro (15 April 2018)”;
- adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:
 - [Resolution 2221 \(2018\)](#) Counter-narratives to terrorism;
 - [Resolution 2222 \(2018\)](#) Promoting diversity and equality in politics;
 - [Resolution 2223 \(2018\)](#) Detainees with disabilities in Europe;
 - [Recommendation 2131 \(2018\)](#) Counter-narratives to terrorism;
 - [Recommendation 2132 \(2018\)](#) Detainees with disabilities in Europe;
- decided to hold its next meeting in Helsinki on 23 November 2018.

4. Decisions of the Bureau requiring ratification by the Assembly

4.1. Election observation

4.1.1. Guidelines for the observation of elections by the Parliamentary Assembly and Code of conduct for International Election Observation Missions (IEOM)

On 31 May, the Bureau amended and unanimously adopted the Guidelines for the observation of elections by the Parliamentary Assembly together with the Code of conduct for International Election Observation Missions (IEOM) (as appended to the Guidelines) (Appendix 3).

4.2. Rules on access to and movement within the Council of Europe premises during Assembly sessions and meetings of Assembly committees and sub-committees

On 31 May, the Bureau:

- amended and unanimously adopted the Rules on access to and movement within the Council of Europe premises during Assembly sessions and meetings of Assembly committees and sub-committees (Appendix 4);
- decided that they shall supersede the previous rules and decisions, namely:
- the general regulations on security and rules on access to and movement and security within Council of Europe premises during Assembly sessions, adopted by the Bureau of the Assembly on 8 November 1995;
- the ruling on access of members of the public to the Palais of the Council of Europe during Parliamentary Assembly sessions (adopted by the Standing Committee on 28 June 1984 and amended by the Bureau on 8 November 1995 and 6 September 2006);
- the Standing Committee decision on access for government representatives to Assembly committees, adopted on 25 November 1987;

while the Rules and criteria on the use of the Chamber and meeting rooms, approved by the Bureau of the Assembly on 13 December 1968, shall remain in force;

- decided to invite the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs to give further consideration to the question of the possible creation of a transparency register of interest representatives.

4.3. 2018 World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 19-21 November)

On 31 May, the Bureau took note of the concept paper and decided to set up an ad hoc committee of the Bureau to participate in the Forum.

4.4. References and transmissions to committees

4.4.1. Lapse of a reference (Rule 26.4 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure)

On 31 May, the Bureau approved the following lapse of a reference:

- [Doc. 14117](#), motion for a resolution, Freedom of choice and personal lifestyle – Reference 4242 of 14 October 2016.

The Assembly is invited to ratify these Bureau decisions.

Appendix 1 – Revised list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe the early presidential and parliamentary elections in Turkey (24 June 2018)

Chairperson / Présidente: Ms / M^{me} Olena SOTNYK (Ukraine, ALDE / ADLE)

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

- Ms / M^{me} Jennifer DE TEMMERMAN, France (Non-registered / Non-inscrit)¹
- Ms / M^{me} Nicole DURANTON, France *
- Mr / M. Giuseppe GALATI, Italy / Italie
- Ms / M^{me} Iryna GERASHCHENKO, Ukraine
- Mr / M. Matern von MARSCHALL, Germany / Allemagne
- Ms / M^{me} María Concepción de SANTA ANA, Spain / Espagne
- Mr / M. Bertrand SORRE, France (Non-registered / Non-inscrit)¹
- Mr / M. Attila TILKI, Hungary / Hongrie

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

- Ms / M^{me} Maryvonne BLONDIN, France *
- Mrs / M^{me} Edite ESTRELA, Portugal
- Mr / M. Sabir HAJIYEV, Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan
- Mr / M. Florian KRONBICHLER, Italy / Italie
- Ms / M^{me} Tabea RÖSSNER, Germany / Allemagne
- Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche
- Mr / M. André VALLINI, France

European Conservatives Group (EC) / Groupe des conservateurs européens (CE)

- Lord David BLENCATHRA, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni *
- Sir Christopher CHOPE, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
- Rt. Hon. Dame Cheryl GILLAN, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
- Mr / M. Jaak MADISON, Estonia / Estonie

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) / Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)

- Mr / M. Andrea RIGONI, Italy / Italie
- Ms / M^{me} Olena SOTNYK, Ukraine*
- Ms / M^{me} Petra STIENEN, Netherlands / Pays-Bas

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)

- Ms / M^{me} Rósa Björk BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR, Iceland / Islande
- Mr / M. Nikolaj VILLUMSEN, Denmark / Danemark *

Free Democrats Group (FDG) / Groupe des démocrates libres (GDL)

- Ms / M^{me} Adele GAMBARO, Italy / Italie*

Rapporteur of Monitoring Committee / rapporteur de la commission de suivi

- Mr / M. Nigel EVANS, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
- Ms / M^{me} Marianne MIKKO, Estonia / Estonie*

1. Members not belonging to a Political Group (NR) / Membres n'appartenant à aucun groupe politique (NI)

Venice Commission / Commission de Venise

- M^{me} / Ms Mirjana LAZAROVA TRAJKOVSKA, former member of the Venice Commission / ancienne membre de la Commission de Venise

* Member of the pre-electoral mission / membre de la mission pré-électorale

Appendix 2 – Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2018

Body	who represents the Assembly	reference	2018
I. Council of Europe bodies			
European Commission for Democracy through Law Venice Commission	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau to attend the sessions of the Commission	Article 2.4 of the Venice Commission Statute (Res CM (2002) 3)	Members: Ms Kyriakides, EPP/CD appointment by the President Mr Vlasenko – EPP/CD (AS/Jur) Substitute: Ms Rojhan Gustafsson – SOC (AS/Jur)
Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission	Representatives of AS/Pol, AS/Jur and AS/Mon approved by the Bureau of the Assembly	Bureau decision of 10 March 2003	Members: Lord Balfe – EC (AS/Jur) Mr Cozmanciuc – EPP/CD (AS/Pol) Mr Kox – UEL (AS/Mon) Substitutes: Ms Beselia – SOC (AS/Jur) Mr Xuclà ² – ALDE (AS/Pol) Mr Pocij – EPP/CD (AS/Mon)
European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity North-South Centre	Two members of the Executive Council – appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly	Article 4.2 (b) of the North-South Centre revised Statute (Res CM (2011) 6)	Members: Ms Günay – EC (AS/Soc) Mr Leite Ramos – EPP/CD (AS/Cult) Substitutes: Mr Gonçalves – EPP/CD (AS/Cult) Mr Schennach – SOC (AS/Soc)
European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance ECRI	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau (representatives of the following three committees: AS/Pol, AS/Ega and AS/Cult)	Article 5 of the ECRI Statute (Res CM (2002) 8)	Members: Mr Sorre – NR (AS/Cult) Mr Corlăţean – SOC (AS/Pol) Mr Thiéry – ALDE (AS/Ega) Substitutes: Mr Davies – EC (AS/Ega)
Group of States against Corruption GRECO	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau	CM decision of 717th meeting in 2000 in accordance with Article 7.2 of the Statute of the GRECO	Member: Mr Logvynskyi- EPP/CD (AS/Jur) Substitute: Ms Sotnyk – ALDE (AS/Jur)
Committee for Works of Art	Two members appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly (at present AS/Cult Committee member and Museum Prize rapporteur)	CM decision of 482nd meeting in 1992	Members: Lady Eccles – EC (AS/Cult) Ms Gambaro – FDG (AS/Cult)
MONEYVAL	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau	Article 4.1 of Resolution CM/Res (2010) 12	Member: Mr Corlăţean – SOC (AS/Jur) Substitute: Mr van de Ven – ALDE (AS/Jur)
Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau	STCE n°221 CM(2017)32, Chapter V, Article 23.1	Mr Schennach – SOC (AS/Cult)
II. Other			

2. Mr Xuclà's participation in the Assembly's institutional representation delegations has been suspended for two years, following the decision taken by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs on 15 May 2018 (AS/Pro (2018) CB 04).

Body	who represents the Assembly	reference	2018
EUROPA NOSTRA Pan-European Federation for Heritage	One member (and substitute) to be nominated by the Assembly – to attend the Federation Council meetings as observer	Article 21.4 of the Statute of Europa Nostra	Mr Gryffroy – NR (AS/Cult)

Appendix 3 – Guidelines for the observation of elections by the Parliamentary Assembly and Code of conduct for International Election Observation Missions (IEOM)

A. A. Elections to be observed

1. For the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (hereafter, the Assembly), the observation of elections plays an important role in the assessment of the democratic governance and the overall political situation of the country in question. In practical terms this entails the observation of elections or referenda in any state where any of the following circumstances apply: it has applied for membership of the Council of Europe; its parliament has requested or enjoys special guest status or partner for democracy status with the Assembly; it is subject to the monitoring procedure or to the post-monitoring dialogue. If the Assembly receives an invitation, the Bureau may also decide to observe elections/referenda in other states when exceptional circumstances have been brought to its attention.

2. Observation of parliamentary and presidential elections as well as of referenda in an applicant state or a state under the monitoring procedure, or post-monitoring dialogue, and parliamentary elections in states where the parliament enjoys special guest status or partner for democracy status, is an inalienable right of the Assembly³. A state's lack of cooperation with the Assembly, or its refusal to accept an election observation mission from the Assembly may give rise to a debate at the part-session or Standing Committee meeting following the elections in question. It may result in the freezing of the application procedure, the withdrawal of special guest status or partner for democracy status or the challenging of the credentials of the national delegation concerned.

3. The observation of regional and local elections is the responsibility of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress). If the Assembly receives an invitation to observe such elections and the Bureau decides to observe them, the Assembly ad hoc committee shall be part of any election observation mission the Congress may deploy. A report on these elections by the Congress, sent to the President, should be referred, via the Bureau, to the Monitoring Committee.

B. Ad hoc committees

4. Once the Bureau has decided to observe an election, it sets up an ad hoc committee consisting in general of up to 40 members following proposals by the political groups, on the basis of the D'Hondt system, on the understanding, however, that each political group shall be represented.

5. The ad hoc committees include *ex-officio* any country-specific rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee or of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy already appointed. Rapporteurs are not included in the quotas allocated to the political groups and shall not be appointed chairpersons of the ad hoc committees. The rapporteurs have a special responsibility to participate during the whole mission due to their specific competence that is of utmost importance for the mission as a whole.

6. The Bureau may also decide to send a pre-electoral mission around one month before the observation mission. The pre-electoral delegation consists of one representative per political group, and the country-specific rapporteurs mentioned in paragraph 5.

7. The Bureau may also decide to conduct a post-electoral mission if the post-electoral context so requires (e.g.: results disputed, elections marred by irregularities, post-electoral political and/or institutional crisis). The membership of the post-electoral delegation is generally identical to that of the pre-electoral delegation.

8. The Bureau may also decide to establish an ad hoc Committee, in the form of an Election Assessment Mission, normally composed of one member from each political group, but never less than three members, in order to guarantee a minimum political and geographical balance. The Election Assessment Mission will report its findings in the form of a memorandum by its Chairperson to the Bureau. No pre-electoral mission will be conducted. In the event that three members cannot be identified for an assessment mission, the mission shall be cancelled.

9. When there is an election with two rounds, the composition of the delegation for the observation of the second round should, in general, be identical to that of the pre-electoral delegation.

3. However, this should not be seen as an obligation for the Assembly.

10. In accordance with article 15 of the co-operation agreement signed on 4 October 2004 between the Assembly and the Venice Commission, one or more representatives of the Venice Commission may be invited to join the Assembly's election observation mission as legal adviser(s).

11. The election observation delegation is composed of the members of the ad hoc committee, representative(s) of the Venice Commission and the members of the Assembly and Venice Commission secretariats. The chairperson of the ad hoc committee is the "Head of Delegation".

12. Once the Bureau has decided to set up an ad hoc committee, the Assembly's secretariat contacts the secretariats of the political groups and asks each group to appoint the members and substitutes of the observation mission. Each political group sends its list of members and substitutes to the secretariat of the Assembly no later than 2 working days prior to the meeting of the Bureau where the list of the ad hoc committee will be approved.

13. Political groups should bear in mind that appointments to an ad hoc committee should respect: the principle of gender balance having regard to gender membership of their respective groups; fair geographical representation and be based on the candidate's linguistic capability to participate meaningfully in the work of the mission, given that on the spot, and as far as possible, the Council of Europe provides interpretation to and from English or French only⁴. Members of ad hoc committees may not observe elections in their own country. Political groups should not appoint members who took part in non-official missions conducted for the purpose of observing elections or in connection with elections in the country concerned and which were sponsored by or undertaken at the invitation of a State, a parliamentary, governmental or non-governmental organisation, association, foundation or any other natural or legal person.

14. While every effort should be made to ensure the political balance of ad hoc committees observing elections, in the event that certain political groups fail to come up with sufficient candidates while other groups have waiting lists, the principle of a political equilibrium may be foregone in the interests of having a strong presence of the Assembly during the election observation. In such circumstances, a notification by the Secretary General of the Assembly will suffice.⁵

15. The Bureau approves the composition of the ad hoc committee and appoints its chairperson from among the members (with the exception of the *ex-officio* rapporteurs – see paragraph 5 above). The Chairperson shall be neither a national of a neighbouring country nor a member of a friendship group in his/her national parliament of the country where elections are being observed. The Chairperson should have participated in at least two election observation missions of the Assembly.

16. If a pre-electoral mission is decided, the nominated chairperson is considered as the representative of his/her political group in the pre-electoral mission. The secretariats of the other political groups shall communicate the names of their representatives for the pre-electoral mission.

17. The chairmanship of ad hoc committees shall rotate between political groups to ensure an overall political balance over a calendar year. The same political group shall not chair two consecutive election observation missions in a given country.

18. At internal meetings of the ad hoc committees, in addition to the members, the only persons authorised to participate are the members of the Council of Europe secretariat. In exceptional cases, ad hoc committee members may be accompanied at internal meetings of ad hoc committees by interpreters, subject to prior approval by the Head of Delegation.

C. Conflict of interest and code of conduct of members

19. Members of ad hoc committees for the observation of elections shall abide by the provisions of the Code of Conduct for members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe as well as the Code of Conduct for International Election Observation Missions (IEOM). Additionally, the provisions of the Code of Conduct for rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to chairpersons of ad hoc committees. Any alleged violation of the above-mentioned provisions will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraphs 18 to 27 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliamentary Assembly.

4. Furthermore it should be noted that English is the de facto working language of international election observation missions.

5. Political groups should appoint members who can definitely participate in the election observation mission; last-minute cancellations should remain exceptional because replacements are often impossible to find.

20. All candidates for membership of an ad hoc committee, at the time of putting forward their candidacy, shall make a written declaration of any actual or potential conflict of interest concerning them or members of their families, whether related directly or indirectly and/or with whom they are in regular contact, in connection with the country concerned by an election observation (see appendix 2).

21. All members of an ad hoc committee shall sign a written declaration confirming their knowledge and obligation to respect the Code of conduct for International Election Observation Missions. The aforementioned declarations shall be made available to the Bureau when it approves the composition of an ad hoc committee. Failure to sign such declarations shall disqualify the member concerned from being appointed to an ad hoc committee.

D. Elections as a process

22. An election and its observation do not concern the polling day only, but a process involving several stages, all of which need to be analysed and evaluated in order to assess the entire electoral process⁶.

23. The process starts with the assessment of the electoral legislation. The quality and predictability of the electoral legislation is a major criterion to assess an election. This assessment relies in particular on legal opinions that the Venice Commission has adopted on the legislation in question. The application of electoral legislation in good faith is also a criterion for evaluating an election.

24. The second stage starts with the date when an election is called. In normal circumstances, involving regular elections that date should be reasonably distant from the polling day in order to allow all political stakeholders to prepare for an electoral contest. The third stage starts with the opening of the electoral campaign. The fourth stage is the polling day, which includes the opening of the polling stations, the voting itself, the closing of the polling stations, the vote counting and the tabulation. The final stage is the declaration of results of the election, followed by a period where complaints may be lodged.

E. Co-operation in the field with the Assembly's partner organisations

25. Usually, the Assembly observes elections as part of an International Election Observation Mission (IEOM), which may include the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the European Parliament and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. The modalities of cooperation within the IEOM shall be established by an Agreement between the organisations concerned. The Head of Delegation of the Assembly represents it at meetings of Heads of delegation within the framework of the IEOM.

26. Co-operation with other international organisations within the framework of the IEOM should be continuous during the observation process, including for the organisation of the programme of the mission, in order to ensure, in so far as possible, that assessments of the elections do not differ. To ensure good and smooth co-operation, Heads of delegations should cooperate as early and regularly as possible in the course of the observation missions. In the case of a pre-electoral mission, the Assembly delegation shall meet with the OSCE/ODIHR mission in the country (if already deployed).

27. In case the OSCE/ODIHR long term observation mission is prevented from being deployed, the Assembly should abstain from sending its own mission.

F. Conduct and practical organisation of the observation

General aspects:

28. The practical organisation of observation missions is ensured by the Assembly secretariat in consultation with the Head of Delegation. Members of the Assembly and the Venice Commission secretariats advise the Head of Delegation and other members of the ad hoc committee in fulfilment of their responsibilities.

6. As described in various Assembly and Venice Commission documents, *see inter alia*: the code of Good Practice in electoral matters (CDL-AD(2002)23rev), the report on the timeline and inventory of political criteria for assessing an election (CDL-AD(2010)037).

29. The national parliament of the country observed shall be invited to provide assistance with regard to the organisation of the programme of the pre-electoral and post-electoral missions, as well as the accreditations and visas for all members of the delegation, in due time, including for the observation of out-of-country voting and early voting if necessary. The relevant authorities shall ensure the freedom of movement and security of all members of the delegation throughout the territory.

30. The financing of the participation of members of ad hoc committees in the work of these committees shall be borne by the respective national parliaments of the members.

Pre-electoral missions:

31. The pre-electoral mission, if so decided by the Bureau, consists of two to three days of on-site meetings, usually in the capital city. Depending on the circumstances, meetings and visits elsewhere may be organised.

32. The main aims of a pre-electoral mission are to assess: the election legislation and its application, including the availability of appeals; the political situation; the arrangements for the election campaign; and coverage of the election campaign by the media, the administration of the election and the work of the election authorities. For this purpose the delegation shall meet with the OSCE/ODIHR mission – if one is present – and representatives of the international community; representatives of media and NGOs; the leaders of the main political parties and/or the presidential candidates; and, with representatives of the national authorities involved in the electoral process.

Election Observation missions:

33. In general, a mission lasts four to five days including: internal briefings of the delegation and joint briefings with any partner organisations; observation of the opening of polling stations, voting, vote counting and reporting of results; debriefing of the delegation following polling day and the press conference.

34. Members of the delegation shall refrain from engaging in public statements, interviews, press conferences or communications via social networks which could contradict the final assessment made by the ad hoc committee. They shall also refrain from engaging in public activities which could appear to interfere in the electoral process or could be considered as partisan, including meetings with national authorities and/or political actors outside the official programme of the election observation mission. The above provisions apply at all stages of the process from the moment of appointment to the ad hoc committee until the statement of the election observation mission is published. The same applies to post-electoral missions.

35. Members of the delegation may ask questions of election officials, political party representatives and other observers inside polling stations and may answer questions about their own activities, as long as they do not obstruct the election process. In answering questions they should not seek to influence the election process. They may ask and answer questions of voters but shall not ask them how they voted. They may bring irregularities, fraud or significant problems to the attention of relevant election management bodies, unless this is prohibited by law, and shall do so in a non-obstructive manner.

36. The Head of Delegation shall ensure that the delegation will cover as wide as possible a geographical area of the country when observing the elections. Members of the delegation shall be ready to accept deployment outside of the capital city of the country where the elections are being observed. When applicable, and so decided by the Head of delegation, members of the delegation could also be requested, in their countries of residence, to observe out-of-country voting.

37. Members are entirely free to carry out their observation as they see fit on polling day within their area of deployment: they should not disclose their itinerary nor the polling stations they intend to visit. However, for security reasons, some areas or regions may be restricted. Members should follow security measures and recommendations put in place by OSCE/ODIHR security officers and/or the Council of Europe Security department. Members must not incur unnecessary or unjustified risks for themselves or for others

38. Members of the delegation shall plan their travel arrangements in a way that will allow them to participate in the briefings in their entirety, to observe on polling day (opening, voting, vote count and tabulation of results) and to participate in the delegation debriefing on the morning following the elections. It is understood that those members who are unable to attend the debriefing in the capital because they were deployed outside it, may report their conclusions by phone or by e-mail. Heads of delegation shall make their travel arrangements taking into account the press conference which usually takes place in the afternoon of the day following polling day.

Post-electoral missions:

39. The organisation of post-electoral missions, if so decided by the Bureau, is similar to that of pre-electoral missions, due account being taken of the post-electoral context and developments.

G. Election observation reports and statements*Pre-electoral missions:*

40. Following a pre-electoral mission and before leaving the country, the members of the pre-electoral mission shall publish a statement based on the reports and relevant documents of the Council of Europe and information received from different interlocutors. The statement should cover, amongst others, the following aspects: legal framework; political context; election administration; voters, party and candidates registration; election campaign, campaign financing and media, gender equality and non-discrimination. No press conference shall be organised following such a mission.

Election observation missions:

41. In the framework of an International Election Observation Mission, a joint preliminary statement is issued and presented during a joint press conference which takes place on the day following polling day. This statement is discussed and prepared jointly by all Heads of delegations in the field. When preparing the Assembly's contribution to the joint statement, the Head of delegation shall take into account key aspects raised by members of the delegation, including during the debriefing following polling day.

42. If the Assembly's usual partner organisations in IEOMs do not deploy an observation mission, the ad hoc committee shall issue a statement covering the pre-electoral period and the polling day. It shall be based on the findings and statement of the pre-electoral mission (if applicable), on the information received during the meetings held during the mission, as well as on relevant documents of the Council of Europe and other reliable sources. Such a statement whose draft is prepared under the authority of the Head of delegation, shall be discussed and approved at the debriefing of the delegation immediately following the polling day.

43. Following the election observation mission, the Head of delegation shall draft a report which is submitted to the Bureau for adoption and subsequently to the Assembly or to the Standing Committee as part of the progress report of the Bureau.

44. This report shall be based on the information received during the meetings held during the IEOM with various interlocutors, in line with the press release and preliminary findings and conclusions of the IEOM. It should take into account the comments and assessments of members of the delegation regarding polling day made during the delegation's debriefing following polling day, as well as relevant Council of Europe documents and other reliable sources (e.g. OSCE/ODIHR). All members of the ad hoc committee shall be consulted on the draft before it is issued within a deadline fixed by the Head of delegation.

45. The final report should also cover the following aspects: polling day and results; complaints and appeals.

Post-electoral missions:

46. Following a post-electoral mission, and before leaving the country, the members of the post-electoral mission may publish a statement on their findings focusing on the post-electoral issues and based on reports and relevant documents of the Council of Europe and information received from different interlocutors and other reliable sources. No press conference shall be organised following the mission.

(Appendix 1 – Code of conduct for International Election Observation Missions (IEOM))

1. The International Election Observation Mission is composed of delegations coming from the following organisations: OSCE/ ODIHR, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament. The rules of conduct and behaviour defined within the present code shall be respected by members of the IEOM. The work of each IEOM starts at the opening of the first joint meeting and ends at the closure of the post-electoral press conference.

2. Members of IEOM shall follow the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers, being a part of the "Declaration of principles for international election observation"⁷. It includes the following general rules of conduct:

- Respect the sovereignty of the host country and international human rights instruments
- Respect the laws of the country and the authority of electoral bodies
- Maintain strict political impartiality at all times
- Respect the integrity of the IEOM
- Do not interfere in election processes
- Maintain accuracy of observations and professionalism in drawing conclusions
- Refrain from making comments to the public or the media before the IEOM speaks collectively
- Cooperate with other election observers
- Maintain proper personal behaviour.

3. Members of the IEOM shall respect the sovereignty, the laws and regulations of the host country, including showing sensitivity for the host-country's culture and customs, and maintain a respectful attitude toward election management bodies charged with administering the electoral process and other relevant national authorities.

4. Members of the IEOM shall respect and protect the integrity of the international election observation mission. Members of the IEOM must maintain strict political impartiality at all times in the host country. They must not express or exhibit any bias or preference in relation to national authorities, political parties or candidates or in relation to any contentious issues in the election process. They must not wear or display any partisan symbols, colours, banners or accept anything of value from political competitors.

5. Members of the IEOM shall refrain from engaging in public activities which could appear to interfere in the electoral process or could be considered as partisan, including meetings with national authorities and/or political actors outside the official programme of the IEOM.

6. Members of the IEOM shall declare any actual or potential conflicts concerning any economic, commercial or financial interests on a professional, personal or family level in the country concerned. They shall also declare their membership of friendship groups within their national parliaments with the country concerned.

7. Members of the IEOM shall respect in the conduct of their duties within the IEOM the *modus operandi* for election observation endorsed by their respective organisations.

8. Members of the IEOM shall participate fully in the work of the IEOM: they shall arrive in the country where elections are taking place sufficiently in advance in order to follow the entire programme and attend all required meetings, briefings and debriefings.

9. Members of the IEOM shall respect the deployment plan and all other arrangements and instructions provided. On election day, they shall attend polling stations, observe the opening, voting, closing and counting of ballots, and inform their respective delegations of their conclusions based on their personal observations or clear facts and evidence.

10. Members of the IEOM may ask questions of election officials, political party representatives and other observers inside polling stations and may answer questions about their own activities, as long as they do not obstruct the election process. In answering questions they should not seek to influence the election process. They may ask and answer questions of voters but shall not ask them how they voted. They may bring irregularities, fraud or significant problems to the attention of relevant election management bodies, unless this is prohibited by law, and shall do so in a non-obstructive manner.

11. The IEOM members' judgments must be based on the highest standards for accuracy of information and impartiality of analysis, distinguishing subjective factors from objective evidence, significant from insignificant factors and identifying patterns that could have an impact on the integrity of the election process.

7. Commemorated on 27 October 2005, at the United Nations, New York

12. Members of the IEOM must refrain, until after the press conference, from engaging in public statements or comments to the media, interviews, press conferences or communications via social networks, other than general remarks regarding the nature, role and activities of the observation mission.

13. Members of the IEOM shall maintain proper personal behaviour, exercise sound judgment in personal interactions and observe the highest level of professional conduct at all times. They should not take unnecessary or undue risks for themselves and/or others and should follow safety and security recommendations.

14. In the event of a breach of the present code of conduct, the member concerned shall be subject to the rules and procedures of the organisation in whose delegation he/she is participating in the International Election Observation Mission.

(Appendix 2 – Declaration of interests of candidates for election observation missions of the Parliamentary Assembly)

Ad hoc committee to observe the parliamentary / presidential elections in on.....

I. I hereby declare the following interests in connection with the country concerned by this election observation, or which might influence the performance of my duties in the Parliamentary Assembly as member of this election observation mission.

1. I declare that I have an actual or potential conflict of interest in connection with the country concerned by this election observation or which might influence the performance of my duties as member of this election observation mission. This declaration concerns me directly, as well as the members of my family, directly or indirectly related, and/or with whom I am in regular contact:

Please strike out this section if not applicable.

Otherwise, please specify the nature of the actual or potential conflict of interest:

.....

2. I declare that I have accepted, in the last twenty four months, the following gifts or other benefits and hospitality⁸, of a value in excess of 200 €, from the authorities of the country concerned, or from a legal or natural person with links to the country concerned by this election observation:

Please strike out this section if not applicable.

Otherwise, please describe the gift and indicate the donor's identity (name, function, address/country):

.....

3. I declare that I have performed, in the last twenty four months, the following occasional activities, mandates or missions, as consultant, advisor, expert, lobbyist, lecturer, etc. in connection with the country concerned by this election observation, or which might influence the performance of my duties as member of this election observation mission:

Please strike out this section if not applicable.

8. Benefits (such as travel, transportation, accommodation, meals, social, sporting or cultural events, etc.) the costs of which are borne by the authorities are excluded from the declaration requirement on condition that these benefits are expressly mentioned in the official programme of the meeting (e.g. Standing Committee, committee or sub-committee or ad hoc committee or sub-committee), visit or mission (for example by the President of the Assembly, a rapporteur or Assembly representative)

Otherwise, please indicate the activities concerned:

.....
.....

I declare that I am a member of the following friendship groups or interparliamentary relations groups in connection with the country concerned by this election observation:

Please strike out this section if not applicable.

Otherwise, please indicate the name of the group(s):

.....
.....

4. I declare that in the last ten years I took part in the following non-official missions conducted for the purpose of observing elections or in connection with elections in the country concerned by this election observation:

Please strike out this section if not applicable.

Otherwise, please indicate the name of the State, the parliamentary, governmental or non-governmental organisation, association, foundation or other natural or legal person which invited or sponsored you:

.....
.....

II. I hereby declare that I have no actual or potential economic, commercial, financial or other interests on a professional, personal or family level in connection with the country concerned by this election observation, or which might influence the performance of my duties in the Parliamentary Assembly as member of this election observation mission. This declaration concerns me directly, as well as the members of my family, directly or indirectly related, and/or with whom I am in regular contact.

Please strike out this section if not applicable.

III. I confirm that I have taken notice of and undertake to respect the Code of conduct for International Election Observation Missions.

I note that this declaration will be made available to the Bureau of the Assembly when it approves the composition of the ad hoc committee.

Name

Date

Signature:

Appendix 4 – Rules on access to and movement and security within the Council of Europe during sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly and meetings of Assembly committees and sub-committees

The following rules shall apply to all premises where Assembly sessions and Assembly committee meetings are held, in particular in the Palais de l'Europe and the Council of Europe Office in Paris, unless otherwise specified.

I. Access to the Council of Europe and movement within Council of Europe premises

1. Access to Council of Europe premises and in particular to the Palais de l'Europe is governed by general rules issued by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director General of Administration. During Parliamentary Assembly sessions, however, the specific rules below apply. The same rules apply to other Council of Europe premises, in the case of meetings of committees and sub-committees.
2. The general rules on security as well as subsidiary rules issued by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Director General of Administration apply to the control of access to Council of Europe premises and to movement within those premises, and govern matters relating to the issuance and wearing of access badges, security checks, restrictions on movement, the carrying of weapons and the protection of personalities on official visits.
3. Responsibility for enforcing safety and security measures lies with the staff mandated to this effect by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in accordance with Rule No. 1388 of 21 February 2017 on the framework of accountability in matters of security. During Assembly sessions, this duty will be performed in close co-operation with the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.
4. Access badges are issued to members of the Assembly, members of observer, partner for democracy and special guest delegations, secretaries of national delegations and third parties in accordance with the rules laid down by the Director General of Administration, in agreement with the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly. The wearing of badges is compulsory.
5. Any request by a parliamentarian to be accompanied by a bodyguard will be submitted to the President of the Assembly. Such bodyguard will not, however, be allowed access to the Chamber or the meeting rooms.
6. The carrying of weapons and the presence of armed bodyguards within Council of Europe premises is prohibited. Any request for an exemption, in exceptional circumstances, must be submitted in writing to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, who decides in agreement with the President of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Palais de l'Europe

7. Areas of movement and right of access to different places of work (Chamber, meeting rooms, offices of national delegations, offices of Permanent Representations, etc.) and other areas (cafeteria, restaurants, etc.) will be determined by the issuing of distinctive badges for each category of people. The badge must be used exclusively by the person to whom it has been allocated, in strict respect of the areas to which it gives access. The person concerned is solely responsible for the use of the badge attributed to him/her.
8. All badge requests emanating from a parliamentarian, a delegation, a political group or a committee should be referred exclusively to the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly. The Council of Europe's Protocol will not proceed with any request for the issuance of a badge for Assembly members, their families or their relatives.
9. No parliamentarian may invite more than four family members or two other people per day, irrespective of their capacity (friend or relative, voter from the parliamentarian's constituency, representative of an interest group). When it comes to organising events/side events, only individual members of the Assembly, national delegations, political groups or committees may make badge requests. No more than 30 persons can be invited to a side event.
10. The maximum period for which badges may be issued is one day, except in the case of parliamentary assistants and national parliamentary officials drafted in as reinforcements for parliamentary delegations and political groups, as well as the official guests of the political groups.
11. Requests should be submitted by the Wednesday before the part-session, and in any case not later than 72 hours before the desired date, by means of a form indicating in particular the identity of the requestor, the identity of the guest and his/her relationship with the requestor, and the precise time at which access is to begin and end.

12. Any requests for groups of visitors will be submitted to the Council of Europe Visitors' Service.

Office of the Council of Europe in Paris

13. At the time of committee and sub-committee meetings, access is granted to:

- committee members and their substitutes,
- other members of the Assembly, observers, partners for democracy, special guests and delegations / representations of parliaments of non-member states members of the Council of Europe with the agreement of the Bureau, in those committees where they are allowed;
- secretaries of national delegations, subject to a maximum of two secretaries per national delegation, i.e. one maximum official for each constituent assembly of the national parliament (for countries with bicameral parliaments), or one secretary per observer, partner for democracy or special guest delegation (whose name must appear in the Assembly list), carers accompanying parliamentarians with reduced mobility, secretaries of political groups, in those committees where they are allowed,
- members of the Committee of Ministers or any other minister of the government of a member State, Permanent Representatives/Ministers' Deputies (including chargés d'affaires duly notified to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe) or their first deputies, it being understood that only Permanent Representations of member States of the Council of Europe may be represented (no access neither for other representatives of diplomatic missions of member or non-member states nor for representatives of international organisations, unless specifically authorised by the committee concerned),
- the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Deputy Secretary General;
- the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and the staff of the secretariat of the committee concerned,
- other members of the staff of the secretariat of the Assembly (except in the case of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights).

14. An access badge will be issued to experts and persons invited by the chairperson of the committee / sub-committee (see below chapter IV) whose name will have been communicated to the secretariat of the Paris Office 24 hours at least before the meeting. For a meeting open to the public, in part or in full, the list of participants should be communicated at least 72 hours before the meeting. Anyone whose name has not been communicated in the forms and deadlines provided will be denied access to the premises.

II. Access to the Chamber

15. Article 23.1 of the Assembly Rules of Procedure shall be applied in such a way as to permit access to the Chamber by the following categories of individuals:

i. Members of national delegations

- representatives and substitutes from national delegations, members of observer, partner for democracy and special guest delegations;
- members of delegations of parliaments of Council of Europe non-member States covered by an agreement of the Bureau;
- members of delegations of parliaments which participate in the annual debates on OECD activities.

ii. Government representatives and representatives of the Committee of Ministers (Rule 57 of the Rules of Procedure)

- representative to the Committee of Ministers and minister of the government of a member State;
- Permanent Representatives and their deputies;
- representatives of non-member States who enjoy observer status with the Council of Europe or whose parliaments enjoy observer, partner for democracy or special guest status with the Parliamentary Assembly;

- representatives of non-member States whose parliaments participate in the annual debates on OECD activities.

iii. Secretariat

- Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and staff of the secretariat of the Assembly;
- Secretary General of the Council of Europe and Deputy Secretary General; members of the Private Office of the Secretary General;
- secretaries of national delegations and of observer, partner for democracy and special guest delegations;
- secretaries of political groups;
- directors general and directors of the Council of Europe;
- the Head of the Protocol Department and his/her deputy;
- any other staff whose duties require their presence there.

iv. Other persons

- personalities invited by the President or by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly;
- the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the President of the European Court of Human Rights.

16. Requests for access should be submitted to the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly. He/she may grant other Council of Europe staff members access to the Chamber upon request (Protocol staff, press officers from the Directorate of Communication) or upon request for a specific debate (members of the secretariat of the Committee of Ministers when the communication from the Committee of Ministers is being delivered, or members of the secretariat of the Commissioner for Human Rights when the Commissioner is presenting the annual activity report). The Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly may also grant access to the Chamber to persons accompanying a personality invited by the President of the Assembly or by himself/herself.

III. Access to the Chamber gallery

17. Only persons wearing a badge that has been duly issued for this purpose by the Safety and Security Service of the Council of Europe will be admitted to the galleries. Priority shall be given to access requests signed by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.

18. Members of the public who are admitted to the galleries must be appropriately dressed, remain seated and keep silent. Anyone expressing approval or disapproval will be removed immediately by the security agents.

IV. Access to the meeting rooms of committees

19. Rule 48 of the Assembly Rules of Procedure shall be applied as follows:

- Committee meetings shall be held in private.
- A committee may decide, at the latest at the time of adopting the meeting agenda, that part of the meeting or a specific item will be open to the public, and to divide the agenda into items that are open to the public and others that are not; only items concerning a hearing or an exchange of views with experts, ministers or members of a national parliament or government, representatives of an international organisation or representatives of civil society may be open to the public.
- A committee may decide to hold all or part of a meeting in camera, i.e. with only members of the committee or its secretariat being present. The decision shall be taken by the Chair of the committee and shall appear in the draft agenda sent to members, or by the committee itself, at the latest at the time of adopting the agenda for the meeting in question. Where appropriate, checks may be carried out to ensure that only authorised persons are admitted to the meeting room.

- The Monitoring Committee and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights shall meet in camera, except in the case of joint meetings with other committees or hearings or exchanges of views if the committee so decides. Only their respective members shall take part.

20. The following persons have access to committee meetings (unless the Rules of Procedure stipulate otherwise):

- committee members and their substitutes;
- other members of the Assembly, observers, partners for democracy, special guests and delegations / representations of parliaments of non-member states members of the Council of Europe with the agreement of the Bureau, in those committees where they are allowed;
- secretaries of national delegations, subject to a maximum of two secretaries per national delegation, i.e. one maximum official for each constituent assembly of the national parliament (for countries with bicameral parliaments), or one secretary per observer, partner for democracy or special guest delegation (whose name must appear in the Assembly list), carers accompanying parliamentarians with reduced mobility, in those committees where they are allowed;
- secretaries of political groups, in those committees where they are allowed;
- members of the Committee of Ministers or any other minister of the government of a member State;
- Permanent Representatives/Ministers' Deputies (including chargés d'affaires duly notified to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe) or their first deputies, it being understood that only Permanent Representations of member States of the Council of Europe may be represented (no access neither for other representatives of diplomatic missions of member or non-member states nor for representatives of international organisations, unless specifically authorised by the committee concerned);
- the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Deputy Secretary General;
- the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and the staff of the secretariat of the committee concerned;
- other members of the staff of the secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly (except in the case of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights);
- at the invitation of the Chair of the committee, for a specific agenda item, where appropriate: directors general and directors of the Council of Europe; secretaries of Council of Europe bodies (Committee of Ministers, Commissioner for Human Rights, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, European Court of Human Rights) and steering committees and expert committees of the Council of Europe; the Private Office of the Secretary General; permanent representatives or ambassadors of Assembly observer States; representatives of other international organisations with which the Parliamentary Assembly has a co-operation agreement; subject to a maximum of one person per committee or body; guests and experts for a hearing.

21. Committee documents shall be distributed to committee members only.

22. The above rules shall also apply to Assembly committee meetings which are held at venues other than the Council of Europe.

V. Parliamentarians' Bar

23. During Assembly part-sessions, the Parliamentarians' Bar shall be reserved, as a matter of priority, for parliamentarians, their guests and persons who have access to the Chamber.

VI. Use of electronic means of communication during sittings and meetings

24. Assembly members and individuals attending or participating in sittings or meetings shall exercise discretion when using mobile telephones and other electronic means of communication and shall refrain from any behaviour that might interfere with the smooth conduct of business. Anyone who fails to comply with these instructions will be asked to leave the Chamber or meeting room.

25. Committee meetings must not be filmed or recorded, even partially, by those attending or participating in the meetings.

VII. Press and media

26. During Assembly sessions, requests for press and media accreditation shall be handled by the Directorate of Communication of the Council of Europe. Journalists and representatives of the press and media are required to comply strictly with the instructions issued by the Directorate of Communication of the Council of Europe and the Assembly's Communication Division. The wearing of badges is compulsory.

27. Media activities must not:

- compromise security
- interfere with the maintenance of order, the proper conduct of activities or the free movement of individuals
- compromise people's dignity and interfere with their privacy
- cause damage to physical property and equipment
- hinder television recording by the Assembly.

28. Journalists and representatives of the press and media will not be allowed into the Assembly Chamber, except for photographers accredited by the Directorate of Communication of the Council of Europe.

29. All plenary debates and speeches are recorded and broadcast by the Council of Europe's audiovisual department. There shall be no filming in the Assembly Chamber. Filming is permitted only from the galleries.

30. Photographs may be taken and video or audio recordings made in a committee room only if the meeting is open to the press. In the case of meetings which are not open to the press, the committee chair may give permission for such activities before the meeting starts or at the end of the meeting.

31. Interviews must be conducted in the lobby areas to the side of the Assembly Chamber, in front of the committee meeting rooms, in the main hall of the Palais de l'Europe, in the press working room or in the offices of national delegations.

32. Press briefings will be held in the designated locations, as indicated by the Assembly's Communication Division. Only duly accredited journalists may attend.

33. Press conferences should preferably be held at times other than during plenary sittings and committee meetings. They should focus on subjects which fall within the Assembly's mandate or otherwise fall within the scope of Council of Europe action. Authorisations are not given for press conferences where the subject for discussion could impair the good name or prejudice the impartiality of the Council of Europe, or otherwise run counter to its fundamental objectives. Press conferences will take place in the prescribed place, as indicated by the Assembly's Communication Division (usually Room 1 in the Palais de l'Europe when the Assembly is in session). Only duly accredited journalists may ask questions.

34. Filming is permitted in the context of the parliamentary business and activities of the Assembly, only in the aforementioned locations. Filming in the offices of a national delegation is subject to prior approval by the chairperson of the delegation concerned. Filming in any other location requires the prior approval of the Secretary General of the Assembly, issued via the Assembly's Communication Division.

35. The Directorate of Communication may refuse or cancel the accreditation of journalists affiliated to press organisations whose activities conflict with the principles of the Council of Europe, or which use their accreditation for reprehensible purposes or act in a way which contravenes the ethical principles or standards of journalism or the above-mentioned rules.

36. During periods when the Assembly is not in session, especially in the case of meetings of the Standing Committee and other Assembly committees which are held in venues other than the Palais de l'Europe, the Assembly's Communication Division will determine the specific rules governing access and activities of journalists and representatives of the press and the media.

VIII. Enforcement measures

37. Any persons who are found or are observed to be without good reason in an area which they were not authorised to enter, or whose behaviour compromises the smooth conduct of Assembly business, may, at the request of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly or the Secretary General of the Assembly, be removed and permanently prohibited from entering the Council of Europe, including the Palais de l'Europe.

38. The President of the Parliamentary Assembly or the Secretary General of the Assembly may ask the Directorate General of Administration/Directorate of General Services to deny access to the Palais de l'Europe or any other Council of Europe building, in particular the Council of Europe Office in Paris, to any individuals in respect of whom he/she has been informed or has good reason to believe that their behaviour is liable to disrupt the activities of the Assembly or its committees.

39. Guidance on all matters covered by these rules and situations which may arise from their application may be sought from the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.