



Resolution 2604 (2025)¹

Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the biennium 2026-2027

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Recalling the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, held in Reykjavik on 16 and 17 May 2023, the Parliamentary Assembly reaffirms the Organisation's key role in Europe's multilateral architecture and in guaranteeing democratic stability across the continent. It believes that, in a rapidly evolving international political environment and against the background of democratic backsliding and the war of aggression against one of its member States, the Council of Europe's contribution to upholding democracy, human rights and the rule of law throughout Europe and beyond, and to securing a fair and lasting peace and accountability, is more relevant than ever before.
2. The Assembly therefore welcomes the member States' political and financial commitment which resulted in an increase of the Organisation's financial resources within the framework of the 2024-2025 biennial budget. Reaffirming its position that member States' financial contribution should match their political ambition expressed at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, the Assembly firmly believes that the Organisation's means and capacities should be further strengthened in order to enable the Council of Europe to effectively deliver on the 4th Summit's priorities, thus fulfilling the political mission that member States have given it. It trusts that the budgetary process for 2026 and 2027 will be guided by these considerations.
3. Within the framework of each Programme and Budget cycle, the Assembly adopts a resolution on its expenditure, in accordance with Committee of Ministers Resolution (53) 38 on the budgetary system of the Consultative Assembly and in line with Article 20 of the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe.
4. [Resolution 2501 \(2023\)](#), adopted within the framework of the 2024-2025 budget of the Council of Europe, laid down the priorities and expenditure of the Assembly for the first biennium of the 2024-2027 Programme and Budget. The present Resolution updates these priorities and the corresponding expenditure for the period from 2026 to 2027.
5. For the period from 2024 to 2027, the Assembly decided to focus its political priorities on contributing to the outcomes of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe. Thanks to the additional resources granted within the framework of the 2024-2025 budgetary exercise (including in terms of secretariat reinforcement), the Assembly was able to actively contribute to the implementation of the Reykjavik Declaration, notably by providing the parliamentary dimension of the Organisation's activities through recommendations, guidelines and targeted co-operation for national parliaments.
6. Accordingly, in line with a thematic approach, the Assembly contributed to the following priorities of the Reykjavik Declaration:
 - 6.1. the consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine: political, legal and human rights aspects of the aggression; the situation of the children of Ukraine, including the launching of a dedicated parliamentary network; missing persons, prisoners of war and civilians in captivity; supporting displaced persons; supporting reconstruction; counteracting the erasure of cultural identity; reparation and reconciliation processes; the role of sanctions in counteracting aggression;

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 23 May 2025 (see [Doc. 16166](#), report of the Committee on Rules, Ethics and Immunities, rapporteur: Mr Christophe Brico).*



- 6.2. upholding democracy and counteracting democratic backsliding: participatory and deliberative processes; the relationship between the parliamentary majority and the opposition; the revised Code of Good Practice on Referendums; targeted support for democratic elections, including through country action plans and joint programmes with the European Union;
 - 6.3. implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights: stepped-up political dialogue with member States, providing a parliamentary dimension to this process;
 - 6.4. youth perspective: establishing the PACE-Youth Participation Mechanism, which provides for the participation of young Europeans in Assembly deliberations as well as for the appointment of “youth rapporteurs” in Assembly general committees;
 - 6.5. the mainstreaming of the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right: the parliamentary contribution to the Reykjavik Process; safeguarding human rights for future generations; cultural heritage and climate change; adoption of the statutory opinion on the draft Council of Europe convention on the protection of the environment through criminal law;
 - 6.6. human rights and new technologies: adoption of the statutory opinion on the draft Council of Europe framework convention on artificial intelligence and human rights, democracy and the rule of law; setting-up of the dedicated Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (within the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights); preparation of reports on artificial intelligence's impact on democracy, migration, gender equality, parliamentary work and international humanitarian law;
 - 6.7. dialogue with civil society representatives from Belarus and the Russian Federation who share the values and principles of the Council of Europe: institutionalising the participation of a representative delegation of democratic forces from Belarus in Assembly activities; launching dialogue with democratic forces from the Russian Federation;
 - 6.8. media and freedom of information: guaranteeing media freedom and the safety of journalists; counteracting propaganda and safeguarding freedom of information; addressing risks and opportunities of the metaverse.
7. Moreover, the Assembly continued to work on transversal issues, such as the promotion of gender equality (including by launching the Vigdís Prize for Women's Empowerment) and the fight against discrimination (including by addressing human rights challenges facing lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people through a unique parliamentary platform). The human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers also remained at the top of the agenda, including the issue of human rights-compliance of asylum procedures; the theme of migration and asylum in election campaigns; as well as the prevention of migrant smuggling under a shared European approach.
8. As regards its statutory role, from 1 January 2024 until 30 April 2025, the Assembly elected 14 judges to the European Court of Human Rights and adopted opinions on three draft conventions and an opinion on an application for membership of the Council of Europe forwarded to it by the Committee of Ministers under Statutory Resolution (51) 30.
9. Pursuing the modernisation of its working methods, the secretariat of the Assembly continued to enhance the functionalities of the PACE-APPS portal and application. Currently, PACE-APPS allows members to better organise their work in the Assembly by providing online access to documents from committees and other Assembly bodies, and to exercise their right of initiative by electronically submitting motions, written declarations and amendments to texts under discussion. This resulted in a significant reduction in printing costs and a decrease in the carbon footprint of the Assembly's activities. Moreover, the secretariat of the Assembly piloted the use of artificial intelligence-powered technologies, in particular for improving transcription processes of plenary debates and preparing summaries of adopted texts.
10. Against this background, in the 2026-2027 biennium the Assembly will further sharpen the focus of its activities in the following areas:
- 10.1. strengthening support to Ukraine by focusing on accountability issues and on the situation of children through the Parliamentary Network on the situation of the children of Ukraine;
 - 10.2. launching initiatives to leverage the parliamentary dimension of the implementation of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, in particular through a parliamentary network;

10.3. contributing to the implementation of the New Pact for Democracy in Europe including by providing its parliamentary dimension, stepping up co-operation activities in the field of democratic elections, enhancing dialogue with civil society, including with representatives of democratic forces from Belarus and the Russian Federation who share the Council of Europe's values and principles, as well as implementing the PACE-Youth Participation Mechanism;

10.4. building upon the role of parliamentarians as legislators, supporting the promotion and domestic implementation of key conventions, including the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (CETS No. 225);

10.5. stepping up support for the Reykjavik Process for the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right, including through the Parliamentary Network for a healthy environment;

10.6. further strengthening the Assembly's integrity framework, including by implementing [Resolution 2596 \(2025\)](#) "Respect for the rule of law and the fight against corruption within the Council of Europe".

11. To support the implementation of readjusted political priorities, the Assembly will optimise the structure, flexibility and agility of its bodies, for example by sunsetting or putting on hold, if appropriate, certain sub-committees, and by further developing, using the operational savings thus generated, different structures and working methods, such as limited-period networks or activities to follow up reports.

12. Moreover, the Assembly will resume the modernisation of its working methods, including through digital transformation and the use of artificial intelligence-powered technologies, which will continue to generate efficiency gains. These include:

12.1. enhancing efficient processes for the organisation of part-sessions, thanks to online tools (PACE-APPS) and the automation of processes relating to the preparation of verbatim records of plenary sittings with the support of artificial intelligence-powered tools; resources will be redeployed to strengthen the staffing capacity in key areas such as communication and co-operation, to enable more outreach and visibility of the Assembly and Council of Europe work within national parliaments and towards related stakeholders;

12.2. the continuation of the development of the PACE-APPS portal and app, and the deployment of artificial intelligence-powered tools currently being developed for the needs of the Council of Europe Secretariat. These measures will further reduce operational costs (including the printing and translation of documents); the savings generated will be reinvested into co-operation and capacity-building activities for national parliaments, in particular to support their own use of artificial intelligence-powered technologies and tools in their activities.

13. Alongside these efficiency gains, the Assembly has identified the need for additional staffing resources in order to meet the heightened demands upon its structures. This will enable it to add a robust parliamentary dimension at international and national levels to meet the new and emerging challenges of today's context as targeted by the New Pact for Democracy in Europe and the Reykjavik priorities. The additional resources outlined in the appendix to this Resolution will thus be dedicated to ensuring a strong parliamentary contribution to the New Pact for Democracy in Europe, enhancing the Assembly's interaction with young people in all its work, launching a new parliamentary network to support the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, implementing a robust integrity framework within the Assembly and designing and implementing a co-operation strategy with parliaments at the national level on the use of artificial intelligence in parliamentary activities.

14. Lastly, the Assembly welcomes the strengthening of the legal and financial bases of political groups during 2024 and 2025, notably through the adoption of a new rule on the status of group secretaries and assistants to bring their legal status and terms of employment into accordance with the new Council of Europe Staff Regulations. It equally welcomes the strengthening of the financial basis to enable the good functioning of the political groups and expects that the corresponding amount in its budgetary proposal for 2026 and 2027 will be adjusted to inflation, in line with the existing methodology and rules, to maintain this new stability of functioning.

Appendix – Expenditure needs of the Assembly

1. Staff expenditure

1. The budget of the Parliamentary Assembly covers basic salaries, allowances (both non-recurrent and periodical) and social insurance for staff of the secretariat of the Assembly.
2. In accordance with the 2024-2025 Programme and Budget, as adjusted for 2025, as of 1 January 2025, the secretariat of the Assembly has 84 jobs (including 47 A-grade jobs, 36 B-grade jobs and 1 specially appointed official, that of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly). It is underlined that, thanks to additional resources granted to the Assembly secretariat for the 2024-2025 biennium, 3 A-grade jobs of committee secretaries and 1 B-grade job of committee assistant have been created. Moreover, the Assembly secretariat benefits from the expertise of two seconded officials: an experienced lawyer from the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights and an experienced national civil servant from the French National Assembly.
3. The Assembly secretariat is organised around two directorates, namely “Democracy and Rule of Law” (Directorate I) and “Inclusive and Sustainable Societies and Co-operation” (Directorate II), the Table Office, the Information Management and Events Department and the Administration and Central Services Department.
4. With a view to fully permitting a robust parliamentary dimension to the implementation of the Reykjavik Declaration, the readjusted political priorities, as laid down in the present Resolution, call for a reinforcement of the secretariat. Thanks to gains in efficiency, the secretariat of the Assembly intends to redeploy resources allocated to the organisation of part-sessions to priority sectors, namely communication, visibility and co-operation. The new activities relating to the implementation of the New Pact for Democracy in Europe, the enhancement of the Assembly’s interaction with young people in all its work (including through the implementation of the PACE-Youth Participation Mechanism), the setting-up of a parliamentary network supporting the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, the strengthening of the Assembly’s integrity framework, as well as the launching of new co-operation activities which require specific expertise (use of artificial intelligence in parliamentary practices) will require additional resources, namely two administrator (A-grade) jobs and two support staff (B-grade, including one junior professional officer) jobs.

2. Operational expenditure

5. Thanks to the modernisation efforts, the Assembly secretariat has managed to considerably reduce the operational expenditure relating to the organisation of part-sessions. Gains generated thanks to efficiency have been reinvested into the upgrading of information technology (IT) tools.
6. For the 2026-2027 period, in line with its readjusted political priorities and to respond to the needs in an adaptable and flexible manner, the Assembly intends to sunset or pause, where appropriate, certain sub-committees; different structures and working methods, such as limited-period networks or follow-up to reports, will be further developed using the operational savings thus generated.
7. Moreover, thanks to gains generated by the development of IT tools and the integration of artificial intelligence-powered technology, new co-operation activities will be launched to allow parliaments to study and share good practices in the use of artificial intelligence in parliamentary activities.
8. Thanks to inflation adjustment of the envelope for operational activities, the secretariat of the Assembly has managed to cope with the increase in travel and subsistence expenses of parliamentarians and staff accompanying them.
9. To further optimise costs, the secretariat is considering, whenever possible, auditioning experts online. This allows the Assembly to benefit from top-level international expertise while at the same time improving cost-effectiveness and reducing the carbon impact, especially when experts have to travel long distances to attend an Assembly meeting in person.
10. During 2024 and 2025, the Assembly continued to develop its targeted co-operation activities. In particular, as a result of the reorganisation of the Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity of the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe, the secretariat of the Assembly integrated, as from 1 January 2024, the co-operation activities in the field of democratic elections. Thus, at the moment of the adoption of the present Resolution, the Assembly is implementing five projects in the field of elections, in particular in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, with a budget of more than €4 million, funded by extra-budgetary resources. During 2026 and 2027, these activities will continue and

expand further in line with new requests from member States; they also form part of the Council of Europe's "electoral cycle", which aims to ensure a coherent and "end-to-end" co-ordination of all election-related activities throughout the Secretariat of the Organisation.

11. Ongoing parliamentary co-operation projects will be further strengthened, notably to support the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, address the situation of the children of Ukraine, support the activities of parliamentary platforms and networks (Parliamentary Platform for the rights of LGBTI persons in Europe, Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence, the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, the Parliamentary Network for a healthy environment) and engage with and support dialogue with the democratic forces and civil society from Belarus and from the Russian Federation that share the Council of Europe's values and principles. New initiatives will be launched in the field of artificial intelligence and sport. Whenever possible, country-specific parliamentary co-operation activities will be integrated into action plans.

12. The Assembly will continue to observe parliamentary and presidential elections in countries under its monitoring procedure or engaged in post-monitoring dialogue, in close collaboration with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and the Assembly's international partners (the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR), the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Parliament) within the framework of international election observation missions.

13. The Assembly secretariat will continue to support its political groups through a budgetary allowance, calculated on a lump-sum basis for each group that covers administrative assistance plus an additional per capita allowance which varies depending on the number of members of each group. Following on from the harmonisation of the legal status and terms of employment of group secretaries and assistants to better align them with the new Council of Europe Staff Regulations, the budgetary envelope dedicated to the functioning of political groups should be regularly adjusted to inflation, in line with existing rules and methodology.