

Administrative Rules of the Congress

revised by the Bureau of the Congress on 10 February 2017, in accordance with Rule 20.3 of the Rules and Procedures¹

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¹ **Rule 20 – functions of the Bureau of the Congress**

3. The Bureau, on the proposal of the Secretary General of the Congress, may adopt administrative rules, in conformity with the Council of Europe's rules. Rules adopted by the Bureau under this provision must be made available to delegates in draft and will come into force at the time of the next meeting of the Bureau unless representations are made to the Bureau by at least five delegates from two national delegations that the rules should not be brought into force. If such representations are made, at the latest 7 days prior to the Bureau meeting, the Bureau must reconsider the matter but may then decide to adapt the rules with or without amendment.

Administrative Rule No. 1 – Practical arrangements for the election of the President of the Congress and the election of the presidents and the vice-presidents of the chambers in the hemicycle and the Chamber's session room

(complements Rules 12, 14, 15, 39, 40 of the Rules and Procedures)

I – Election of the President of the Congress

1. Candidatures to the Presidency of the Congress shall be addressed in writing to the Secretary General of the Congress; they must be dated and signed by the candidate and also contain the surnames and first names followed by the signatures of a minimum of twenty representatives from at least four national delegations (Rule 14.2 of the Rules and Procedures). The Secretary General shall verify whether the candidatures are in conformity to Rules 12 and 14.2 of the Rules and Procedures.

2. In addition to their letter of candidature, candidates must submit to the Congress Secretary General a *curriculum vitae* (CV) on a maximum of two pages, drafted by their own means in at least one of the two official languages of the Congress (French or English).

3. Within the hour following the expiry of the deadline for lodging candidatures, that is twenty-three hours before the opening of the session, the Secretary General of the Congress shall draw up the list of candidates for the Presidency and make it public. This list shall present the candidates in English alphabetical order of their surnames, indicating for each candidate their surname, first name, country and whether or not they belong to one of the political groups within the Congress. The list of candidates, their letters of candidature and their CVs in the languages in which they have been provided shall be published on the Congress website and e-mailed to Congress members and delegation secretaries. The Secretary General shall also make copies (black and white) of these documents available at the document counter near the hemicycle.

4. In addition, if candidates so wish, they may also present by their own means their letter of candidature and/or their CVs drafted in one or more other languages, as well as a document not exceeding four pages presenting the reasons for their candidature, drafted in any language of their choice. The Secretary General shall provide them with space at the document counter to present this documentation.

5. Congress political groups may campaign for their candidate(s) by their own means but, when a ballot is open, they must conform strictly to Rule 39.2 of the Rules and Procedures.

6. The provisional president informs the delegates of the name(s) of the candidate(s).

7. Immediately before the ballot, the candidate(s) shall be invited to make a short address of not more than three minutes each (Rule 39.1 of the Rules and Procedures).

8. After the candidates' addresses, the provisional president shall inform members concerning the conduct of the ballot and, if the ballot is not carried out electronically, the times of suspension of the sitting.

Electronic ballot

9. Where possible the election shall be carried out electronically. The results will be displayed automatically on the screens. The provisional president will nevertheless confirm the results orally.

Traditional ballot

10. Two tellers shall be drawn by lot from among the representatives and duly mandated substitutes whose credentials have been ratified by the Congress. They must be present in the hemicycle when the lots are drawn. They may not be candidates.

11. The tellers shall supervise the conduct of the ballot and the counting performed by the Congress Secretariat staff members appointed by the Secretary General of the Congress, from the time the ballot is declared open until the record of the count is signed.

12. The ballot shall be conducted in the antechamber of the hemicycle behind the presidential rostrum, at the indicated time.

13. Delegates shall be invited to enter the antechamber via one side of the rostrum and to leave it via the other side after voting. For the proper conduct of the ballot, the provisional president shall call the members in groups in English alphabetical order of their surnames.

14. Ballot papers and envelopes are made available to delegates. Only those ballot papers may be used for the vote. The ballot indicates the name, surname, country of each candidate and whether or not they belong to a political group within the Congress. Delegates go into one of the booths in order to place the ballot paper for the candidate of their choice in the envelope.

15. In order to verify identity and voting rights, all voters shall present to the persons from the Congress Secretariat appointed to conduct the ballot, either their Congress badge with a photograph, or a national identity document with a photograph.

15. Delegates shall then sign the voting register and place the envelope with their ballot paper in the ballot box. The ballot box and the registers shall each remain under the constant supervision of the Secretariat staff appointed for the ballot.

17. Before closing the ballot, the provisional president shall verify that no one else wishes to vote. No delegate will be allowed to enter the polling station once the provisional president has declared the voting closed.

18. Votes shall be counted behind closed doors immediately after the vote. Counting is done under the supervision of the two tellers by the Congress Secretariat staff members appointed by the Secretary General of the Congress. A record of the count shall be drawn up immediately upon completion of counting and for each ballot. It shall indicate the number of valid votes, blank votes, spoiled votes and the number of votes gained by each candidate. This record shall be signed by the tellers and the Secretariat members who counted the votes. This record shall be taken to the provisional presidency by the Secretariat members. The result shall be strictly confidential until announced by the provisional president at the resumption of the sitting.

19. Only ballot papers clearly indicating the delegate's intention to vote for a candidate shall be considered valid. Ballots marked with another name, torn or bearing deletions or handwritten annotations (other than to indicate the choice of candidates by ticking the boxes in a single-ballot vote), and any ballot other than the one made available by the Congress Secretariat when the vote is held, shall be counted as spoiled. Empty envelopes shall be counted as blank ballots.

20. The result of the election shall be announced by the provisional president. If a new election is to be held (Rule 15.5 of the Rules and Procedures), he/she shall provide information on the conduct of the new ballot and shall announce the time of suspension and resumption of the sitting.

21. After the result of the election has been announced, this shall be published immediately on the Congress website.

22. In the event of doubt or disagreement about a delegate's right to vote, or dispute over an electoral question concerning the election of the President of the Congress, the Secretary General of the Congress shall have sole authority to interpret the Rules and Procedure and the administrative rules.

II – Election of the chamber presidents

23. Similar procedures to those for the election of the President of the Congress shall apply when electing the presidents and vice-presidents of the chambers, whether for the chamber meeting in the hemicycle or the chamber meeting in another room.

24. Candidatures for the presidency of a chamber must be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary of the chamber, be dated and signed by the candidate and also contain the surnames and first names followed by the signatures of a minimum of ten delegates sitting with full capacity in that chamber from at least four national delegations (Rule 14.3 of the Rules and Procedure). The Executive Secretary shall verify whether the candidatures are in conformity to Rules 12 and 14.3 of the Rules and Procedure.

25. In addition to their letter of candidature, candidates must submit to the Executive Secretary of the chamber a *curriculum vitae* (CV) on a maximum of two pages, drafted by their own means in at least one of the two official languages of the Congress (French or English).

26. Furthermore, immediately before the ballot, the candidate(s) shall be invited to make a short address of not more than three minutes each (Rule 39.1 of the Rules and Procedure).

27. Within the hour following the expiry of the deadline for lodging candidatures (not later than one hour before the opening of the chamber sitting during which the election will be held), the Executive Secretary of the chamber shall draw up the list of candidates for the presidency and make it public. This list shall present the candidates in English alphabetical order of surnames, indicating for each candidate their surname, first name, country and whether or not they belong to a political group within the Congress. The list of candidates, their letters of candidature and their CVs in the languages in which they have been provided shall be published on the Congress website and e-mailed to chamber members (for the Chamber of Regions, those with the right to vote) and delegation secretaries. The Executive Secretary of each chamber shall also have copies (black and white) of these documents made available at the document counter near the hemicycle for the chamber meeting there, and in front of the meeting room for the other chamber.

28. In addition, if candidates so wish, they may also present by their own means their letter of candidature and/or their CVs drafted in one or more other languages, as well as a document not exceeding four pages presenting the reasons for their candidature, drafted in any language of their choice. The Executive Secretary of each chamber shall provide them with space to present this documentation at the document counter for the chamber meeting in the hemicycle, and in front of the meeting room for the other chamber.

29. After the candidates' addresses, the provisional president shall inform members concerning the conduct of the ballot and, if the ballot is not carried out electronically, the times of suspension of the sitting.

Electronic ballot

30. Where possible the election shall be carried out electronically. The results will be displayed automatically on the screens. The provisional president will nevertheless confirm the results orally.

Traditional ballot

31. Two tellers shall be drawn by lot from among the members of the chamber whose credentials have been ratified, are not candidates for the presidency of the chamber nor for the vice-presidency, and, for the Chamber of Regions, who have voting rights, and are present when the lots are drawn. As with the election of the President of the Congress, these tellers shall supervise the proper conduct of the ballot and the counting, conducted by the Congress Secretariat staff members appointed by the

Secretary General of the Congress, from the time the ballot is declared open until the record of the count is signed.

32. For the chamber meeting in the hemicycle, the ballot shall be conducted in the antechamber of the hemicycle located behind the presidential rostrum. For the other chamber, it shall be conducted somewhere close to the meeting room. The practical arrangements are similar to those indicated for the election of the President of the Congress (paragraphs 13-19).

33. In the event of doubt or disagreement about a member's right to vote, or dispute over an electoral question concerning the election of the chamber presidents, the Executive Secretary shall have sole authority to interpret the Rules and Procedure and the Administrative Rules.

34. The result of the election shall be announced by the provisional president. If a new election is to be held (Rule 15.5 of the Rules and Procedure), the provisional president shall inform the delegates of the conduct of the new ballot and shall announce the time of resumption of the sitting

35. After the result of the election has been announced, this shall be published immediately on the Congress website.

III – Elections of the seven vice-presidents of the chambers

36. Candidatures for the vice-presidencies of a chamber must be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary of the chamber, and dated and signed by the candidate (Rule 14.3 of the Rules and Procedure). The Executive Secretary shall verify whether the candidatures are in conformity with Rules 12 and 14.4 of the Rules and Procedure.

37. In addition to their letter of candidature, candidates must submit to the Executive Secretary of the chamber a *curriculum vitae* (CV) on a maximum of two pages, drafted by their own means in at least one of the two official languages of the Congress (French or English).

38. If candidates so wish, they may also present by their own means their letter of candidature and/or their CVs drafted in other language(s), as well as a document not exceeding four pages presenting the reasons for his/her candidacy, drafted in the language(s) of their choice.

39. The Executive Secretary of the chamber shall draw up the list of candidates and shall make the documents relating to the election public (paragraphs 27-28).

40. The election procedure of presidents of chambers shall apply to the election of the seven vice-presidents except for the use of a single ballot paper bearing more than one name. The chamber's business can continue during the ballot.

41. After having read out the list of candidates, immediately before the ballot, the president shall give the floor to the candidates, in English alphabetical order of surnames, for a short address of not more than three minutes each (Rule 39.1 of the Rules and Procedures). When all the candidates have introduced themselves, the president shall inform the delegates concerning the conduct of the ballot.

42. The tellers appointed for the election of the chamber presidents shall remain in office for the election of the vice-presidents.

43. Once the ballot has been declared open, the delegates shall be invited to move to the antechamber of the hemicycle for the chamber meeting there or, for the other chamber, the place chosen for the conduct of the ballot. The voting operations shall be conducted as in paragraphs 15-21. Delegates shall be provided with envelopes and with ballot papers bearing the surname and first name of each candidate, in English alphabetical order of surnames, their country and whether or not they belong to a political group within the Congress. In the ballot booth, delegates must place a cross in the boxes which correspond to their preferred candidates (no fewer than 4 and no more than 7) (Rule 15.6 of the Rules and Procedures).

44. In the event of doubt or disagreement about a delegate's right to vote, or dispute over an electoral question concerning the election of the vice-presidents, the Executive Secretary shall have sole authority to interpret the Rules and Procedures and the Administrative Rules.

45. The result of the election shall be announced by the presidency of the chamber after receiving the record of the count, and the result shall then be published without delay on the Congress website.

46. The composition of the chambers bureaux and that of the Congress Bureau shall be published on the Congress website and made available at the document counter and outside the chamber meeting room.

Administrative Rule No. 2 – Practical arrangements for elections in the committees

(complements Rules 18, 39, 47, 53 of the Rules and Procedures)

1. Candidatures for the chair and vice-chairs of a committee are sent in writing to the secretary of the committee, who shall ascertain that the candidatures received comply with Rules 18.1 and 47 of the Rules and Procedures. Letters of candidature must be written in at least one of the official languages of the Congress (French or English) and must indicate the candidate's surname, first name, country, chamber and membership or otherwise of a political group within the Congress, with signature and date.
2. In addition to their letter of candidature, candidates must send the committee secretary a *curriculum vitae* (CV) of not more than two pages, drafted by their own means in at least one of the two official languages of the Congress (French or English).
3. The committee secretary shall draw up the list of candidates for the chair and the list of candidates for the vice-chairs of the committee in English alphabetical order of surnames, indicating surnames, first names, country, chamber and membership or otherwise of a political group of the Congress.
4. At the latest four hours before the opening of the committee meeting during which the election is to be held, the committee secretary shall make public the list of candidates, letters of candidature and candidates' CVs in the language(s) in which they have been provided: these documents are published on the Congress website and emailed to all committee members and delegation secretaries. The committee secretary shall also ensure that they are made available outside the committee's meeting room as well as at the document counter near the hemicycle.
5. Congress political groups may campaign for their candidate(s) by their own means, but at the time of the ballot must conform strictly to Rule 39.2 of the Rules and Procedures.

Election of the chair of the committee

6. A committee shall elect its chair and vice-chairs at the meeting held during the renewal session and at the one held two years thereafter (Rule 47.1 of the Rules and Procedures). Until the chair of a committee is elected, the oldest member present shall provisionally chair the committee, and no discussion may be held unless its subject matter is concerned with the election of the chair (Rule 53.4 of the Rules and Procedures).
7. Where there is only one candidate for the committee chair, if a full committee member or duly mandated replacement, wishes to request a secret ballot, he/she may ask for the floor to put forward such a request immediately after the announcement of the single candidature and before the candidate has been declared chair without proceeding to a ballot (Rule 47.4 of the Rules and Procedures).
8. In order to be admissible, such a request must be accompanied by a written request containing the surnames, first names and signatures of at least ten full members or duly mandated replacement (in accordance with Rule 47.4 of the Rules and Procedures), from at least four national delegations, who must be present in the room at the time the admissibility of the request is verified. The written request shall be transmitted to the oldest member in the chair. The committee secretary shall verify the status and the presence of the members supporting the request.
9. After these verifications, if the request is admissible, the oldest member in the chair shall announce a secret ballot to be held under the same procedure as when there is more than one candidate, but with a single ballot paper bearing three multiple choice boxes: "for", "against", "abstention" (Rule 47.4 of the Rules and Procedures).

10. If the request is inadmissible, the oldest member in the chair shall declare the candidate chair without proceeding to a ballot (Rule 47.4 of the Rules and Procedures).
11. Before the requested ballot is opened, the oldest member shall give the candidate the floor for not more than three minutes (Rule 39.1 of the Rules and Procedures).
12. The oldest member shall announce the result of the ballot to the committee. If, after this ballot, the single candidate is not elected in accordance with Rule 47.6, a new election must be held. In this case, the meeting shall be suspended for one hour, and the new candidatures shall reach the committee secretary not later than fifteen minutes before it resumes.
13. Where there is more than one candidate, the committee shall vote by secret ballot (Rule 47.5 of the Rules and Procedures). The oldest member shall read out the list of candidates then give them the floor in English alphabetical order of surnames for not more than three minutes each (Rule 39.1 of the Rules and Procedures).
14. Two tellers shall be drawn by lot from among the full committee members present who are not standing for the chair or vice-chair. The tellers remain in office for the election of the committee chair and vice-chairs. They supervise the conduct of the ballot and the counting of votes conducted by the members of the Congress Secretariat whom the Secretary General of the Congress appoints, from the opening of the ballot until the record of the count is signed.
15. The oldest member shall inform the delegates about the conduct of the ballot then announce that it is open. The ballot shall be held in a specified location near the meeting room. Delegates shall be provided with a ballot paper and envelopes. Only these ballot papers may be used for the vote. The ballot paper shows each candidate's surname, first name, country, chamber and whether or not he/she belongs to a Congress political group. Delegates shall enter one of the booths with ballot papers and an envelope to place the ballot of their choice in the envelope.
16. In order to verify identity and voting rights, all voters shall show the members of the Congress secretariat appointed to conduct the ballot, either their Congress badge with a photograph, or a national identity document with a photograph (Rule 47.1 of the Rules and Procedures).
17. Members whose right to vote has been verified shall sign the voting register and place the envelope containing their ballot paper in the ballot box near the voting registers. The box and the registers remain under the constant supervision of the members of the Congress secretariat appointed for the ballot.
18. Before announcing the close of voting, the oldest member shall invite any members who may not have voted to do so. Nobody else will be allowed to enter the polling station after he/she has declared the ballot closed.
19. The votes are counted behind closed doors by the two members of the Congress secretariat appointed by the Secretary General of the Congress, under the supervision of the two tellers. A record shall be drawn up immediately upon completion of the count for each ballot. It shall indicate the number of valid, blank and spoilt ballot papers, and the number of votes gained by each candidate. The record must be signed by the tellers and members of the secretariat who shall bring it to the oldest member in the chair. The result shall be strictly confidential until announced by the oldest member at the resumption of the sitting.
20. Only ballot papers from which the voter's intention to vote for one of the candidates can be clearly determined shall be considered valid. Ballot papers marked with another name, torn or bearing deletions or handwritten annotations (other than to indicate the choice of candidates by ticking the boxes in a single-ballot vote), and any ballot paper other than the one made available by the Congress secretariat when the vote is held, shall be counted as spoiled. Empty envelopes shall be counted as blank ballots.

21. The oldest member shall announce the result of the ballot. If a new election is to be held (Rules 47.5 and 47.6 of the Rules and Procedures), he/she shall give information on the conduct of the new ballot and shall announce the times of suspension and resumption of the sitting.

22. After the result of the election has been announced, this shall be published immediately on the Congress website.

23. In the event of doubt or disagreement about a member's right to vote, or dispute over an electoral question concerning the election of the committee chair, the committee secretary shall have sole authority to interpret the Rules and Procedures and the Administrative Rules.

24. The oldest member shall hand over the chair to the committee chairperson-elect, who shall immediately proceed with the election of the five vice-chairs (Rule 47.7 of the Rules and Procedures).

Election of the five vice-chairs

25. After reading out the list of candidates for the vice-chairs, the committee chair shall give each one the floor, for no longer than three minutes, in English alphabetical order of surnames (Rule 39.1 of the Rules and Procedures).

26. After giving practical information on the voting, the chair shall declare the secret ballot open (Rule 47.7 of the Rules and Procedures). The tellers appointed for the election of the committee chair shall remain in office for the election of the vice-chairs.

27. The election shall be held with a single ballot paper containing the surnames and first names of all candidates, set out in English alphabetical order of surnames, country, chamber and political group, if any, within the Congress. Members shall enter one of the ballot booths with an envelope and a ballot paper and mark a cross in the boxes beside the names of the candidates of their choice (three at least, five at the most) (Rule 47.7 of the Rules and Procedures).

28. As with the election of the committee chair, the members of the secretariat appointed for this ballot then verify the members' identity and right to vote. Those duly entitled to vote shall sign the register of voters and place their ballot paper in the ballot box.

29. Before closing the ballot, the chair shall invite any members who may not yet have voted to do so. Nobody else will be allowed to enter the polling station after the chair has declared the ballot closed.

30. The remainder of the procedure is similar to the one for the election of the committee chair (paragraphs 19 and 20). After the counting is completed, the chair shall announce the results of the elections (Rule 47.7 of the Rules and Procedures)

31. In the event of doubt or disagreement about a member's right to vote, or dispute over an electoral question concerning the election of the committee vice-chairs, the committee secretary shall have sole authority to interpret the Rules and Procedures and the Administrative Rules.

32. The result of the elections of the committee chair and vice-chairs shall immediately be published on the Congress website and made available at the hemicycle document counter: the list shall indicate the chair and the five vice-chairs of the committee in order of precedence, their surnames, first names, country, chamber and political group, if any, within the Congress.

Administrative Rule No. 3 – Access and allocation of seats in the hemicycle and in the chambers, discipline and order in the meeting rooms and public gallery and provision of documents

Access and allocation of seats

- 1 A seating plan of the meeting rooms (hemicycle and chamber meeting room) shall be available at the entrance, showing the allocation of seats according to the different categories of persons listed below.
- 2 With the exception of the persons listed below, no-one may enter the meeting rooms without the permission of the Secretary General of the Congress.
 - Representatives or substitutes duly mandated, in their assigned (numbered) seat,
 - Substitutes not representing a representative,
 - Former Congress Presidents,
 - Honorary members,
 - Delegation secretaries,
 - Secretaries of political groups of the Congress,
 - Guest speakers and accompanying persons,
 - Designated representatives of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union,
 - Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe,
 - Representatives of member states' national governments or parliaments,
 - Representatives of non-member states which hold observer status with the Council of Europe,
 - Representatives of organisations holding observer status with the Congress,
 - Representatives of associations of local and regional authorities of member states consulted for the appointment of national delegations (Article 3.1 of the Congress Charter),
 - Advisors and personal assistants of members of the Congress (maximum of two per member),
 - Congress Secretariat,
 - Former Secretaries General of the Congress
 - Authorised members of the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe,

Persons authorised to enter must sit in the seats indicated to them.

- 3 Only persons in possession of a badge issued on the authority of the Congress Secretary General shall be admitted to the public galleries, notably:
 - Representatives of non-governmental organisations which hold participatory status with the Council of Europe,
 - Representatives of European and international associations which do not have observer status.

Discipline in the chamber and the galleries

- 4 Persons admitted to the public galleries must not disturb the proceedings or show overt approval or disapproval of a speaker, a subject of discussion or a decision by the President, or express any preference during an election.
- 5 The President may order the removal of any person infringing this rule.

Provision of documents

Congress official documents

6. All Congress documents concerning the items on the agenda of the Congress and its chambers, which have been prepared by the Congress Secretariat, are official documents of the Congress. They shall bear the logo and the header of the Congress.

7. As well as being published on the Congress website, they shall be made available to delegates at the document counter located on the 1st floor of the Palais beside the hemicycle, under the responsibility of the Congress Secretary General.

8. All official documents concerning the items on the agenda of the chamber not meeting in the hemicycle shall also be made available in front of its meeting room.

9. In addition to the official documents of the Congress and the chambers, the Secretary General of the Congress may decide to make available to delegates at the document counter certain public documents issued by other Council of Europe bodies.

10. Registration forms for speaking during debates are made available to delegates at the entrance to the hemicycle or the chamber's meeting room. They are placed on the tables where the delegates sign the attendance registers before entering the meeting room. During sittings, copies are also available from the Table Office secretariat next to the presidential rostrum or the chair.

11. Motions for amendments are made available on the day when they are debated, at the document counter and, in the case of those relating to the chamber not convened in the hemicycle, in front of its meeting room.

Non-official documents

12. All documents not issued by a Council of Europe organ or authority acting in its official capacity, or by an external body called upon to do so by such an organ or authority, shall be regarded as non-official documents.

13. In particular, these are documents presented on a personal basis by Congress delegates, unsolicited communications from governments or other authorities of non-member states, communications from non-governmental organisations, press articles, etc.

14. These documents shall not be presented or reproduced on paper bearing the Congress header. The Council of Europe Secretariat staff placed at the disposal of the Congress, whether the Congress secretariat or general services, shall not arrange for the circulation of non-official documents.

15. However, the President of the Congress may if he/she thinks fit, and if appropriate after consulting the members of the Bureau and/or the political groups, authorise the release at the document counter of a non-official document of which he/she has received a supply. In these matters, authority may be delegated to the Secretary General of the Congress or to the Executive Secretaries of the chambers.

Committee documents

16. Official documents relating to committee meetings shall be made available to their members in front of the meeting room under the supervision of the committee secretaries. Such provision of non-official documents and their distribution during its meeting are subject to the prior authorisation of the committee chair. In these matters, authority may be delegated to the committee secretary.

Administrative Rule No. 4 – Rights and privileges of honorary members

(complements Rule 8 of the Rules and Procedures)

When the Congress Bureau decides to confer the title of honorary member upon former delegates to the Congress (or its predecessor bodies), in accordance with Rule 8 of the Rules and Procedures of the Congress:

1. These honorary members shall be invited to attend Congress sessions (sittings of the Congress and its chambers) and Statutory Forum meetings, at their own expense.
2. Honorary members shall not have access to Congress Bureau meetings, nor to meetings of the committees.
3. During sessions, they shall sit in the designated seats reserved for honorary members in the hemicycle. The honorary members shall only be entitled to take the floor when expressly invited to do so by the Chair of the sitting in relation to a specific item on the agenda.
4. Honorary members may be invited, in that capacity, to attend specific events or conferences held by the Congress or its chambers, at their own expense.
5. By accepting the title of honorary member, a former Congress member shall automatically commit himself/herself to subscribe to the aims and basic principles of the Council of Europe, as set out in Rule 6.5 of the Congress Rules and Procedures for Congress delegates.
6. Honorary members shall receive a medal which will be awarded by the President of the Congress at a ceremony held during a plenary sitting of the Congress.
7. Honorary members who are re-appointed to their national delegations shall have their honorary status suspended for the duration of their membership of the Congress.

Administrative Rule No. 5 – Thematic spokespersons of the Congress and members appointed to follow the activities of other bodies or other organisations

(complements Rule 59 of the Rules and Procedures)

1. The Congress Bureau shall appoint thematic spokespersons for specific subjects on which they wish to have qualified representatives, having regard to their experience and specific knowledge of the subjects concerned.
2. The bureaux of the chambers and the committees may also appoint thematic spokespersons. However, such appointments shall be submitted to the Congress Bureau for formal approval.
3. When finally approving the appointments, the Bureau of the Congress shall ensure, as far as possible, a fair representation of:
 - chambers,
 - political groups,
 - gender,
 - geographical origins.
4. The Bureau will also pay special attention to the language skills (good knowledge of at least one of the two official languages of the Congress (English and French)) and to the availability of the persons proposed.
5. The Congress Secretary General shall submit for information to the Bureau, on an annual basis, the list of all appointed spokespersons.
6. Each thematic spokesperson is appointed for one specific theme only and for a maximum two-year renewable mandate. The Congress Bureau will re-examine all appointments at its first or second meeting following its renewal.
7. Whenever necessary, in between meetings of the Congress Bureau, the President of the Congress, in consultation with the presidents of the chambers, shall decide on any urgent appointments of spokespersons.
8. The Congress Bureau shall apply the same criteria and the same procedure when appointing delegates to represent the Congress in Council of Europe bodies and other organisations which ask the Congress to follow their work or to participate in meetings and events organised by them.

Administrative Rule No. 6 – Meetings held outside of the Council of Europe seat²

(complements Rule 13 of the Rules and Procedures)

1. The Congress Bureau may decide to hold some of its meetings outside of the Council of Europe seat. The Bureau may also authorise a request from a committee or any other Congress body (except for the Congress itself (cf. Rule 13 of the Rules and Procedures), to meet outside of the Council of Europe seat.
2. Prior to taking such a decision, the Bureau shall examine any written invitation sent to the President of Congress, to the chairs of committees and/or to the Secretary General of the Congress.
3. The Bureau shall assess the appropriateness and validity of the invitation.
4. The Bureau shall in particular ensure that these meetings do not interfere with election campaigns in the host country.
5. The host authorities of the meeting shall commit to providing, free of charge:
 - one or several meeting room(s) compatible with the needs of the Congress,
 - rooms and equipment for the Secretariat in the meeting place,
 - if needed, a welcome team and help with transportation.
6. The practical arrangements shall be compiled in a document or agreement. The Secretary General of the Congress will ensure that budgetary neutrality over the annual accounting period is maintained when organising these meetings.

² The phrase "Council of Europe seat" refers to the headquarters of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and the office in Paris.

Administrative Rule No. 7 – Use of Congress visual identity and online information material

1. For communication purposes, the Congress uses the logo of the Council of Europe together with a visual of the Congress with specific references: in English, *The Congress* and in French, *Le Congrès*. This set (logo and visual) is the central element of the Congress' visual identity.
2. This visual identity is the property of the Congress. Its use by the public is subject to authorisation. This authorisation is granted for any use of the visual identity in accordance with the values and principles of the Council of Europe. It is not to be used, under any circumstances, for commercial purposes. Each application will be considered individually in order to ascertain whether the conditions of use are met. Authorisation does not confer any entitlement to exclusivity.
3. Requests for authorisation should be sent to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe by email: congress.web@coe.int.
4. Individual members of the Congress, national delegations to the Congress as well as political groups of the Congress and all internal entities of the Congress, may make full use of the Congress visual identity, without prior authorisation, provided it is reproduced in its entirety, without graphic adaptation or modification of proportions. They must clearly indicate their name or title directly below the visual identity in order to avoid confusion between any position put forward in their document and the official political expression of the Congress as an assembly.
5. In addition, all information material available on the Congress website is subject to the Disclaimer of the Council of Europe (Appendix)
6. The Secretary General of the Congress oversees the application of this rule.

Appendix to administrative rule No. 7

Disclaimer

The Council of Europe portal and the websites which are linked to it are intended to provide public access to information on the aims, activities and achievements of the Council of Europe in general.

The Council of Europe declines to accept any responsibility for the content of those sites. The information which they contain

- is solely of a general nature and does not refer to the specific situation of any individual or legal entity
- is not necessarily complete, exhaustive, accurate or up to date
- occasionally refers to external sites over which the Council of Europe has no control and in respect of which it declines to accept any responsibility
- does not constitute a professional or legal opinion.

It is not possible to guarantee that a document available on line faithfully reproduces an officially adopted text, because it does not constitute an official publication.

While it cannot guarantee that there are no errors on its site, the Council of Europe does endeavour, where appropriate, to correct those that are drawn to its attention.

The Council of Europe reserves the right to deny, at its sole discretion, any user whatsoever access to the Site or to a part thereof.

Protection of personal data

The Council of Europe is committed to respect for private life. Its policy on protection of personal data is founded on Secretary General's Regulation of 17 April 1989 outlining a data protection system for personal data files in the Council of Europe.

Most pages of the Council of Europe site require no personal information except in certain cases to allow requests for on-line services to be met. In such cases, the information is processed in accordance with the **confidentiality** policy described below.

Confidentiality

Where a user connects to the site, certain of his/her particulars, such as Internet digital address (IP), navigation round the site, software used, time spent and other like data are stored on the Council of Europe servers. These items do not specifically identify the user. The information is only put to internal use, for purposes of analysing the traffic on the site.

Any personal information, such as name, electronic or postal address or other information, which may be supplied when completing the forms stored on this site, is not made available to the public, or disclosed or sold to third parties. The Council of Europe retains the data only for as long as needed for their processing and for the purpose to which consent has implicitly been given. Beyond that, the information is not re-used.

Conversely, the Council of Europe accepts no responsibility as regards the security of the information in question – this policy covers all Council of Europe websites

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Specific instructions on photos of the Council of Europe buildings

All use of photos relating to:

- **the Palais de l'Europe**

is subject to the architect's identity "Henry Bernard" being mentioned in addition to the Council of Europe photo credit

- **the Human Rights Building**

is subject to the architect's prior consent being sought from the design office “Richard Rodgers Partnership” in London, and “Atelier Claude Bucher Architectes” in Strasbourg.

- **the EDQM**

is subject to the architect's identity “Art & Build Architectes” in Brussels and “Denu & Paradon Architectes” in Strasbourg being mentioned in addition to the Council of Europe photo credit.

- **the AGORA**

is subject to the architect's identity “Art & Build Architectes” in Brussels and “Denu & Paradon Architectes” in Strasbourg being mentioned in addition to the Council of Europe photo credit.

Archived web sites

The above-mentioned clauses pertaining to Disclaimers, Protection of personal data, Confidentiality, Reproduction of material © Council of Europe, © Photo credit - “All reproduction and representation rights reserved” and “Specific instructions on photos of the Council of Europe buildings” apply in full to websites archived by the Council of Europe and to websites archived by third parties at the behest of the Council of Europe.

Failure to comply with these mandatory conditions will render the offender and any other person responsible, liable to the criminal and civil penalties provided for in law.

Administrative Rule No. 8 – Access to and declassification of Congress documents

(complements Rule 97 of the Rules and Procedures)

The Bureau of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, with respect to the Congress's statutory role as defined in Statutory Resolution (CM/Res(2015)9) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and for the better dissemination of the Congress's work and activities to its members, its main interlocutors and the public in general,

1. taking into account the following texts:

- Statute of the Council of Europe;
- Resolution (2000)2 on the Council of Europe's information strategy;
- Resolution (2001)6 on access to Council of Europe documents reaffirming the principle that "transparency is the rule and confidentiality the exception";
- the relevant texts adopted in this field by the Council of Europe for its member States, particularly the Declaration on the freedom of expression and information of 29 April 1982, Recommendation No. R(81)19 on access to information held by public authorities and Recommendation No. R(2000)13 on a European policy on access to archives;
- decision CM/Del/Dec(98)641 item 1.3 on access to Council of Europe documents;
- decision CG/BUR(25)26 on the publication of documents and decisions of the Bureau of the Congress taken by the Bureau of the Congress at its meeting on 17 January 2014;
- Rules and Procedures revised by the Congress in Resolution 409 (2016);

2. adopts the following provisions regarding access and declassification of Congress documents:³

Public documents

- a. Public documents are not subject to any particular classification. They are immediately published or made accessible and comprise:
- i. the working documents of the plenary sessions of the Congress, of the sessions of the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions, of Statutory Forum meetings and committee meetings (except those held *in camera*) and working groups (except those held *in camera*);
 - ii. the draft minutes of the Congress working structures whose meetings are public;

Documents whose accessibility is deferred

- b. The following documents are only made public after a certain time-period:
- i. documents classified as "confidential" which are declassified ten years after being produced. Such documents are marked "confidential" and bear the footnote: "This document has been classified as "confidential" and will be declassified 10 years after its production";

³ including confidential (and restricted)³ documents of the past Congress working structures (Standing Committee, committees, working groups...)

- ii. documents treated as confidential, though not marked “confidential”, which are made accessible:
 - **immediately** after the meeting at which they are examined; they bear the footnote: "This document is confidential until after its examination by ... [structure concerned]"; or
 - **after their adoption** during or after a meeting held *in camera*, unless otherwise decided by the president of the structure concerned; these are the decisions and/or minutes of the meetings of the Bureau of the Congress, of the Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities, of the Bureau of the Chamber of Regions and of the Group of Independent Experts. Where the decision has been taken not to make these documents accessible immediately after adoption they shall follow the provisions of paragraph 2.b.i. or of the one below; or
 - **after two years**, following an *ad hoc* decision by the President of the structure concerned in the course of a meeting held *in camera*. Such documents bear the footnote: "This document will remain confidential for two years after its examination by ... [structure concerned]".
- 3. This administrative rule also covers the documents of the Congress’s predecessor bodies which are declassified, unless otherwise decided on an *ad hoc* basis by the Secretary General, in consultation with the President of the Congress.
- 4. This rule is implemented in strict compliance with the rules on the protection of personal data.