



AS/Jur/Inf (2026) 01
11 February 2026

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Work programme

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I. Work Programme

A. Reports/Opinions tabled but not yet debated

1. Tracking the proceeds of the crime denounced by Sergei Magnitsky and holding its perpetrators accountable

Rapporteur: Ms Lesia Vasylenko, Ukraine, ALDE (appointed on 02.10.2024)

- Origin: [Doc. 15981](#), Reference 4815 of 24.06.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 24.06.2026
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 - Second part-session (tbc)
- State of work:
 - 09.12.2024: the committee considered an introductory memorandum and held an exchange of views with Mr Andreas Gross, former member of the Parliamentary Assembly and former rapporteur on “Refusing impunity for the killers of Sergei Magnitsky”;
 - 03.03.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
 - Sir William Browder, CEO Hermitage Capital Management, Head of the Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign;
 - Professor Mark Pieth, Founder of the Basel Institute on Governance, founding member of the Financial Action Task Force (online);
 - 06.03.2025: the rapporteur carried out a fact-finding visit to Bern;
 - 13.05.2025: the committee considered a draft report;
 - 24.06.2025: the committee considered a draft report.
 - 27.01.2026: the committee held an exchange of views with Sir William Browder, CEO Hermitage Capital Management, Head of the Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign;
 - 27.01.2026: the committee agreed to change the title of the report, considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution.

B. Reports under preparation

i. Human rights

2. Threats to life and safety of journalists and human rights defenders in Azerbaijan

Rapporteur: Mr Christophe Lacroix, Belgium, SOC (appointed on 28.01.2025) (former rapporteur: Ms Hannah Bardell, United Kingdom, NR (appointed on 11.10.2022, resigned on 01.10.2024))

- Origin: [Doc. 15521](#), Reference 4659 of 24.06.2022
 - Expiry date for adoption: 30.06.2026 (original deadline: 24.06.2024)
 - Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 –Second part-session
 - State of work:
- 22.03.2023: the committee considered an introductory memorandum (in the absence of the rapporteur). It agreed to the declassification of the introductory memorandum, an eventual fact-finding visit, and to hold a hearing (open to the public) to be held jointly with the Committee on Honouring Obligations and Commitments by member States of the Council of Europe and the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media during the April part-session 2023 (the visit and hearing subject to the availability of funds). It also agreed to take into account “Growth in number of political prisoners in Azerbaijan ([Doc. 15646](#), Reference 4702 of 23.01.2023);
- 27.04.2023: the committee held a joint hearing with the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media and the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), with the participation of:
Ms Arzu Geybullayeva, Journalist;
Mr Ulvi Hasanli, Founder and Executive Director of AbzasMedia and
Ms Jeanne Cavelier, Head of Eastern Europe & Central Asia Desk, Reporters without borders;
- 20.06.2023: the committee agreed to declassify the minutes of the above-mentioned joint hearing;
- 04.03.2024: the committee took note of the Bureau’s request to take the following reference into account in the framework of this report: “The need to investigate politically motivated persecution in Azerbaijan” ([Doc. 15852](#));
- 18.04.2024: the committee agreed to request the Bureau to extend the reference until 31.12.2024;
- 01.10.2024: the committee heard a summary of the rapporteur’s work on the report and took note of Ms Bardell’s resignation from her mandate;
- 26.06.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
Ms Arzu Geybullayeva, Azerbaijani journalist,
Mr Ricardo Gutiérrez, Secretary General of the European Federation of Journalists, and
Mr Toby Collis, lawyer, European Human Rights Advocacy Centre, followed by an exchange of views;
- 08.09.2025: the committee heard a statement by the rapporteur and considered an information note.

3. Ensuring better protection of whistle-blowers in Europe

Rapporteur: Ms Anna-Kristiina Mikkonen, Finland, SOC (appointed on 21.05.2024)

- Origin: [Doc. 15919](#), Reference 4801 of 15.04.2024
 - Expiry date for adoption: 31.01.2027 (original deadline: 15.04.2026)
 - Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
 - State of work:
- 10.09.2024: the committee considered an introductory memorandum. It agreed to the rapporteur’s request to hold an exchange of views with former Assembly rapporteur on this subject, Mr Sylvain Waserman;
- 09.12.2024: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
Ms Anna Myers, Executive Director, Whistleblowing International Network, United Kingdom;
Ms Vigilenca Abazi, Assistant Professor of European Law, University of Maastricht;
- 03-04.04.2025: the rapporteur carried out a fact-finding visit to Brussels;
- 01.12.2025: the committee heard a statement by the rapporteur, took note that the rapporteur had published a statement, and agreed to hold a hearing with experts jointly with the General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistle-blowers, subject to the availability of funds.

4. Fighting back against transnational repression

Rapporteur: Mr Constantinos Efstathiou, Cyprus, SOC (appointed on 28.01.2025)

- Origin: [Doc.16017](#), Reference 4829 of 30.09.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 30.09.2026
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 - Third part-session (tbc)
- State of work:
 - 09.04.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to hold a hearing with experts during its next meeting, subject to the availability of funds;
 - 13.05.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
 - Mr Stephen Reimer, Associate Fellow, Royal United Services Institute and Adjunct Professor with the Paris School of International Affairs within SciencesPo Paris;
 - Mr Alex Tinsley, Barrister at Doughty Street Chambers, member of Lawyers Against Transnational Repression;
 - Ms Saipira Furstenberg, Independent Research Consultant (online);
 - 01.12.2025: the committee held an exchange of views with Mr Alex Sobel MP and Lord Murray of Blidworth, members of the Joint Committee on Human Rights of the Parliament of the United Kingdom;
 - 28.01.2026: the committee authorised the rapporteur to carry out a fact-finding visit to Lyon (France), subject to the availability of funds.

5. Improving the selection/election procedure of CPT members

Rapporteur: Ms Octavie Modert, Luxembourg, EPP/CD (appointed on 03.03.2025)

- Origin: [Doc.16038](#), Reference 4838 of 29.11.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 29.11.2026
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 – November Standing Committee (tbc)
- State of work:
 - 24.06.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum;
 - 01.12.2025: the committee held an exchange of views with Mr Alan Mitchell, President of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

6. Regulating foreign influence: best practices and European standards

Rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD (appointed on 13.05.2025)

- Origin: [Doc.16103](#), Reference 4855 of 07.04.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 07.04.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 – Third part-session (tbc)
- State of work:
 - 26.06.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum;
 - 08.09.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
 - Mr Charles Baubion, Team Leader for Information Integrity and Foreign Interference, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development;
 - Mr András Kristóf Kádár, attorney-at-law and Co-chair of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee; Ms Katarína Batková, Executive Director at VIA IURIS (Slovak Republic) (online);
 - 01.12.2025: the committee considered a preliminary draft report.

7. Safeguarding human rights in the artificial intelligence-driven public sector

Rapporteur: Ms Gala Veldhoen, The Netherlands, SOC (appointed on 24.06.2025)

- Origin: [Doc.16148](#), Reference 4874 of 11.04.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 11.04.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:
 - 02.10.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum;
 - 01.12.2025: the committee held an exchange of views with Mr Alex Sobel MP and Lord Murray of Blidworth, members of the Joint Committee on Human Rights of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

8. Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights – 13th report

Rapporteur: Mr Sergiy Vlasenko, Ukraine, EPP/CD (appointed on 24.06.2025)

- Origin: Bureau decision, Reference 4878 of 11.04.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 30.06.2027 (original deadline: 11.04.2027)
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:
30.09.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum

9. Justice delayed: the unfinished implementation of the Daphne Caruana Galizia case

Rapporteur: Baroness Shami Chakrabarti, United Kingdom, SOC (appointed on 01.12.2025)

- Origin: [Doc. 16223](#), Reference 4902 of 29.09.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 29.09.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

10. European Convention on Human Rights: 75 years and beyond

Rapporteur: Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC (appointed on 01.12.2025)

- Origin: Bureau Decision, Reference 4920 of 21.11.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 21.11.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:
14-15.01.2026: the rapporteur participated in the extraordinary meeting of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) held in Strasbourg;
26.01.2026: the committee heard a statement by the rapporteur.

11. The enforced disappearance of newborns, infants and children

Rapporteur: to be appointed

- Origin: [Doc. 16285](#), Reference 4925 of 26.01.2026
- Expiry date for adoption: 26.01.2028
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work

12. Protecting the freedom of expression of members of parliaments

Rapporteur: to be appointed

- Origin: [Doc. 16290](#), Reference 4926 of 26.01.2026
- Expiry date for adoption: 26.01.2028
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work

13. Towards the universal abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances

Rapporteur: Ms Gala Veldhoen (Netherlands, SOC) (appointed on 26.01.2026)

- Origin: [Doc. 16301](#), Reference 4931 of 26.01.2026
- Expiry date for adoption: 26.01.2028
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 – Second part-session (tbc)
- State of work:

ii. Reinforcement of the Rule of Law

14. Updating the Venice Commission Rule of Law Checklist: a contribution by the Assembly

Rapporteur: Ms Arusyak Julhakyan, Armenia, EPP/CD (appointed on 30.09.2025) (former rapporteur: Ms Klotilda Bushka, Albania, SOC (appointed on 28.01.2025, resigned on 29.09.2025))

- Origin: [Doc.16059](#), Reference 4836 of 04.10.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 04.10.2026
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 –May Standing Committee (tbc)
- State of work:
 - 03.03.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to the rapporteur's request to declassify it and to hold a hearing with experts at a future meeting, subject to the availability of funds;
 - 08.09.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
Mr Iain Cameron, member of the Venice Commission in respect of Sweden (online);
Ms Erinda Ballanca, People's Advocate of Albania, and
Professor Laurent Pech, Dean of Law and Head of the Sutherland School of Law at the University College Dublin;
 - 28.01.2026: the committee heard a statement by the rapporteur.

15. The need to modernise international Humanitarian Law

Rapporteur: Mr Vladimir Vardanyan, Armenia, EPP/CD (appointed on 24.06.2025)

- Origin: [Doc.16122](#), Reference 4862 of 07.04.2025
[+ [Doc. 16125](#), Reference 4872 of 11.04.2025 on "Ensuring lawful and ethical use of artificial intelligence warfare" to be taken into account]
- Expiry date for adoption: 07.04.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:
 - 08.09.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum;
 - 02.10.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of Mr Marco Sassòli, Professor of International Law at the University of Geneva, Commissioner and member of the Executive Committee of the International Commission of Jurists;
Mr Stuart Casey-Maslen, Special Advisor to the IHL in Focus Project, Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights,
and Ms Nataliia Hendel, Senior researcher, Institute of Information, Security and Law of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine (online);
 - 29.01.2026: the committee authorised the rapporteur to carry out a fact-finding visit to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva (Switzerland), subject to the availability of funds.

16. Threats to the International Criminal Court

Rapporteur: Mr Tekke Panman, EPP/CD (appointed on 24.06.2025)

- Origin: [Doc.16124](#), Reference 4864 of 07.04.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 07.04.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 – Fourth part-session (tbc)
- State of work:
 - 30.09.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum and authorised the rapporteur to conduct a fact-finding visit to the ICC in The Hague, subject to the availability of funds;
 - 27-28.11.2025: the rapporteur carried out a fact-finding visit to the ICC in The Hague;
 - 01.12.2025: the committee authorised the rapporteur to conduct a second fact-finding visit to The Hague, subject to the availability of funds.

17. How to ensure that the Russian Federation implements the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, including paying the compensation awarded

Rapporteur: Mr Tony Vaughan, United Kingdom, SOC (appointed on 08.09.2025)

- Origin: [Doc. 16149](#), Reference 4880 of 23.05.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 23.05.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

01.12.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to the rapporteur's request to declassify it;

02.12.2025: the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights held a hearing on this topic with the participation of Mr Rupert Skilbeck, Director of REDRESS, London, and Mr Toby Collis, lawyer, European Human Rights Advocacy Centre, London;

29.01.2026: the committee took note of the rapporteur's upcoming meetings in London.

18. Corruption as a threat to democracy and the rule of law in Europe: the emergency of the situation in Spain

Rapporteur: Mr Tekke Panman, Netherlands, EPP/CD (appointed on 30.09.2025)

- Origin: [Doc. 16194](#), Reference 4893 of 27.06.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 27.06.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

19. Accountability for the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine

Rapporteur: Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC (appointed on 30.09.2025)

- Origin: Bureau Decision, Reference 4897 of 27.06.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 27.06.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

01.12.2025: the committee heard a statement by the rapporteur.

16.12.2025: the rapporteur participated in the Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of the Convention establishing an International Claims Commission for Ukraine held in The Hague;

28.01.2026: the committee considered an introductory memorandum, agreed to hold two hearings with experts and authorised the rapporteur to carry out a fact-finding visit to the Hague and to Kyiv, subject to the availability of funds.

iii. Other matters

20. Use of artificial intelligence by parliaments: risks and opportunities

Rapporteur: Mr Daniel Milewski, Poland, ECPA (appointed on 24.06.2025)

- Origin: [Doc. 16123](#), Reference 4863 of 07.04.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 07.04.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

01.12.2025: the committee considered an introductory memorandum.

26.01.2026: the committee agreed to the rapporteur's request to declassify his introductory memorandum.

21. Ensuring accountability for the downing of Azerbaijan Airlines flight 8243 and preventing risks of military targeting of civil aircrafts

Rapporteur: to be appointed

- Origin: [Doc. 16234](#), Reference 4904 of 29.09.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 29.09.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

01.12.2025: the committee held an exchange of views and, in the light of the latest developments related to this matter, agreed to come back to this issue at a future meeting.

C. Reports on which the committee is seized for opinion

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy:

22. Review of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic

Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Serhii Kalchenko, Ukraine, ECPA (appointed on 25.01.2024)

Rapporteur: Ms Marietta Karamanli, France, SOC

- Origin: Bureau decision, Reference 4768 of 09.10.2023
- Expiry date for adoption: 09.10.2026 (original deadline: 09.10.2025)
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

23. The situation in Belarus

Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Ivan Račan, Croatia, SOC (appointed on 30.09.2025) (former rapporteur for opinion: Mr Pieter Omtzigt, Netherlands, EPP/CD (appointed on 03.03.2025, resigned on 18.06.2025))

Rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD (former rapporteur: Mr Kimmo Kiljunen, Finland, SOC)

- Origin: Bureau decision, Reference 4789 of 26.01.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 26.01.2026
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

24. Bürgenstock summit on peace in Ukraine: paving the way

Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Olena Khomenko, Ukraine, ECPA (appointed on 09.12.2024)

Rapporteur: Mr Damien Cottier, Switzerland, ALDE (appointed on 09.10.2024)

- Origin: [Doc. 16015](#), Reference 4821 of 28.06.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 28.06.2026
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media:

25. Media concentration and threats to media pluralism and independence

Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Gala Veldhoen, Netherlands, SOC (appointed on 24.06.2024)

Rapporteur: Ms Valentina Grippo, Italy, ALDE (appointed on 27.05.2024)

- Origin: [Doc. 15916](#) Reference 4798 of 15.04.2024
- Expiry date for adoption: 15.04.2026
- presentation to the Assembly foreseen: 2026 – Fourth part-session (tbc)
- State of work:

Committee on Rules, Ethics and Immunities

26. Follow-up to the 4th round of GRECO recommendations relating to parliamentarians

Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Laura Castel, Spain, UEL (appointed on 08.09.2025)

Rapporteur: Mr Yunus Emre, Türkiye, SOC (appointed on 05.09.2025)

- Origin: [Doc. 16157](#), Reference 4881 of 23.05.2025
- Expiry date for adoption: 23.05.2027
- Presentation to the Assembly foreseen: tbc
- State of work:

II. General Rapporteurships

1. General Rapporteur on the abolition of the death penalty: Ms Gala Veldhoen, Netherlands, SOC (first term: appointed on 02.10.2024)

- **Term of office:** two years, renewable once.

The General Rapporteur on abolition of the death penalty is mandated to intervene in matters relating to the abolition of the death penalty in different contexts (member and observer states, partners for democracy, states applying for such a status). He or she shall report periodically to the committee on the information collected and the action taken.

Responsibilities:

The role of the general rapporteur is to:

- follow activities and maintain working relations with different Council of Europe bodies dealing with issues relating to the abolition of the death penalty (including the Committee of Ministers, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee for the Prevention of Torture and relevant departments of the Council of Europe Secretariat);
- follow activities and maintain working relations with Council of Europe observer states, partners for democracy and other states applying for such status, seeking advice as necessary from international organisations working in the field;
- represent the committee on behalf of the Assembly when relevant and appropriate;
- in appropriate cases make statements and launch appeals on behalf of the committee;
- follow up previous resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly on death penalty issues, including [Resolution 1807](#) (2011) on “The death penalty in Council of Europe member and observer states: a violation of human rights”, [Resolution 1560](#) (2007) on “Promotion by Council of Europe member states of an international moratorium on the death penalty”, [Recommendation 1760](#) (2006) on “Position of the Parliamentary Assembly as regards the Council of Europe member and observer states which have not abolished the death penalty”; [Recommendation 1627](#) (2003) and [Resolution 1349](#) (2003) on “Abolition of the death penalty in Council of Europe observer states”, and continue to promote the Assembly’s decisions which appear in these texts.

Activities to date:

- 14.10.2020: the committee considered a revised introductory memorandum and agreed to declassify it.
- 07.12.2021: the committee considered a revised information note, agreed to declassify it and held a hearing with the participation of:
Ms Chiara Sangiorgio, Policy Adviser/Death Penalty, Amnesty International, London, and
Mr Gilberto Jeronimo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg;
- 30.11.2023: the committee considered a revised information note and agreed to its declassification;
- 01.12.2023: the committee agreed to hold a hearing on the abolition of the death penalty in observer and “partner for democracy” States, during the January part-session (open to the public if the experts agree), subject to the availability of funds and subject to time constraints in meeting slots allocated to the committee;
- 25.01.2024: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
Mr Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan, Director General, Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM), Paris;
Ms Robin Maher, Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC), Washington (online);
Ms Bronwyn Dudley, Program Manager, World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, Paris;
- 24.06.2025: the committee considered a revised information note presented by the general rapporteur and agreed to her request to declassify it;
- 9-10.10.2025: the general rapporteur participated in an event organised by the Moroccan *Conseil National des Droits de l’Homme* in Rabat, on the occasion of the World Day Against the Death Penalty. She had various meetings, including with the Minister of Justice of Morocco, Mr Abdellatif Ouahbi, and the Coordinator of the Moroccan parliamentary network against the death penalty, Ms Loubna Sghiri.

2. **General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistleblowers:**

Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD (re-appointed for a second term on 27.06.2024; first term: appointed on 20.06.2023)

- **Term of office:** two years, renewable once.

The General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistleblowers is mandated to intervene in matters relating to cases of intimidation of, and reprisals against, human rights defenders as well as of serious impediments to their work in Council of Europe member States and other European States (such as, for example, killings, attacks on their physical and psychological integrity, arbitrary arrests, judicial and administrative harassment, public defamation or restrictions to freedom of movement). A 'human rights defender' is a person or a group of persons (non-governmental organisation/entity) who, individually or together with others, acts peacefully to promote and protect human rights. This term may refer to lawyers, journalists, NGO activists or other individuals and groups (see, in this connection, the 1999 UN [Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms](#)). It may also include whistleblowers, namely persons reporting illegal activities or abuses of rights that may harm the public interest.

The general rapporteur shall report periodically, at least annually, to the committee on information collected and any action taken.

Responsibilities:

The role of the general rapporteur is to:

- follow activities and maintain working relations, when need arises, with different Council of Europe institutions and bodies which deal with (issues relating to) human rights defenders, including the Committee of Ministers, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretary General and the Conference of INGOs;
- follow activities and maintain, when appropriate, working relations with bodies and agencies of the United Nations (including its Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders), the European Union, with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), other international governmental and non-governmental organisations;
- represent the committee on behalf of the Assembly *vis-à-vis* any of the above mentioned bodies and groups, when relevant and appropriate;
- in specific cases, make statements and launch appeals on his/her own behalf or propose to do so to the committee;
- follow up previous resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly on issues related to human rights defenders and the protection of whistleblowers.

Activities to date:

- 12.10.2023: the committee examined an information note, agreed to declassify it and held an exchange of views with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Dunja Mijatović;
- 01.12.2023: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
Mr Sergei Cristo, Whistleblower;
Ms Anna Myers, Executive Director of the Whistleblowing International Network (WIN), United Kingdom;
Mr Jean-Philippe Foegle, Expert on whistleblowers and researcher and doctoral student in public and European law;
- 28.01.2025: the committee considered an information note prepared by the General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistleblowers in Europe and agreed to declassify it.
- 10.04.2025: the committee held a hearing with the participation of:
Ms Iva Marković, Co-founder of The Right to Water Initiative and Program Director at Polekol (Serbia);
Ms Kersty McCourt, Human Rights lawyer and Senior Advocacy Advisor at Civil Liberties Union for Europe (Belgium);
Ms Luca Dudits, Executive Board member and Communications Officer at Háttér Society (Hungary).

3. General Rapporteur for Political Prisoners: Ms Azadeh Rojhan, Sweden, SOC (first term: appointed on 28 January 2025)

- **Term of office:** two years, renewable once.

The General Rapporteur for Political Prisoners is mandated to intervene in matters relating to alleged cases of politically motivated arrests and criminal prosecutions in Europe and in other countries having an observer or cooperative status with the Council of Europe or the Parliamentary Assembly.

Definition:

A “political prisoner” is a person who is deprived of his or her liberty in circumstances fulfilling one or more of the criteria reaffirmed in Assembly [Resolution 1900 \(2012\)](#), namely:

- a. if the detention has been imposed in violation of one of the fundamental guarantees set out in the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols (ECHR), in particular freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression and information, freedom of assembly and association;
- b. if the detention has been imposed for purely political reasons without connection to any offence;
- c. if, for political motives, the length of the detention or its conditions are clearly out of proportion to the offence the person has been found guilty of or is suspected of;
- d. if, for political motives, he or she is detained in a discriminatory manner as compared to other persons; or,
- e. if the detention is the result of proceedings which were clearly unfair and this appears to be connected with political motives of the authorities.” (SG/Inf(2001)34, paragraph 10).

The finding by the European Court of Human Rights, in favour of a person deprived of his or her liberty, of a violation of Articles 5 in conjunction with Article 18 of the European Convention of Human Rights is a strong indication that such a person is a “political prisoner”.

Responsibilities:

The role of the general rapporteur is to:

- follow activities and maintain working relations, when need arises, with different Council of Europe institutions and bodies which deal with issues relating to political prisoners, including the Committee of Ministers, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretary General and the Conference of INGOs;
- follow activities and maintain, when appropriate, working relations with bodies and agencies of the United Nations (including its Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions), the European Union, with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in particular the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s Special Representative on Political Prisoners, and with other international governmental and non-governmental organisations;
- represent the committee on behalf of the Assembly *vis-à-vis* any of the above-mentioned bodies and groups, when relevant and appropriate;
- in appropriate cases, make statements and launch appeals on his/her own behalf or propose to do so to the committee;
- in appropriate cases, engage in communication with alleged political prisoners or their families and their lawyers;
- follow up previous resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly on issues related to alleged cases of political prisoners.

The general rapporteur shall report periodically, at least annually, to the committee on information collected and any action taken.

Activities to date:

07.04.2025: the committee considered an information note on the situation of political prisoners in Russia and Belarus and agreed to the general rapporteur's request to declassify it, and to hold a hearing with experts during the fourth part-session, subject to the availability of funds.

III. Bureaux of the Committee and of the Sub-Committees

Plenary Committee

Chairperson: Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross (Estonia, ALDE)
1st Vice-Chairperson: Mr Gustaf Göthberg (Sweden, EPP/CD)
2nd Vice-Chairperson: Mr Tony Vaughan (United Kingdom, SOC)
3rd Vice-Chairperson: Mr Daniel Milewski (Poland, ECPA)

Sub-Committee on Human Rights

Chairperson: Ms Wanda Nowicka (Poland, SOC)
Vice-Chairperson: Ms Arusyak Julhakyán (Armenia, EPP/CD)

Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights

Chairperson: Ms Belén Hoyo (Spain, EPP/CD)
Vice-Chairperson: Mr Ivan Račan (Croatia, SOC)

IV. Representation of the Committee in 2026

Representatives appointed by the Bureau for 2026

- i. European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission):
Mr Titus Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) – Member
Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, ECPA) – Substitute
- ii. Council for Democratic Elections :
Mr Pablo Hispán (Spain, EPP/CD) – Member
Ms Bisera Kostadinovska-Stojchevska (North Macedonia, SOC) – Substitute
- iii. Group of States against Corruption (GRECO):
to be appointed – Member
Ms Oana Murariu (Romania, ALDE) – Substitute
- iv. Moneyval:
Ms Nadejda Iordanova (Bulgaria, NR) – Member
Ms Atidzhe Alieva-Veli (Bulgaria, ECPA) – Substitute

V. Secretariat of the Committee

Head of the Committee Secretariat: Mr Guillem CANO PALOMARES
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Deputy to the Head of the Secretariat: ...

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Secretary: Mr Rafal SOKOL
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Appendix: Terms of reference of the Committee and its Sub-Committees

A. General terms of reference applicable to all Assembly committees

(Extract from Appendix to Resolution 1842 (2011), The terms of reference of Parliamentary Assembly committees – Implementation of Resolution 1822 (2011) on the reform of the Parliamentary Assembly, adopted on 7 October 2011)

The Assembly decides to revise the general terms of reference applicable to all its committees as follow:

1. Committees may examine any matter within their specific terms of reference (Rule 43.1 of the Rules of Procedure) and, possibly, table information reports on these matters (Rule 48.6).
2. Committees shall only prepare reports for debate in the Assembly:
 - 2.1. on matters referred to them (Rule 25);
 - 2.2. when so instructed by texts adopted by the Assembly (taking account of Rule 24.1.b);
 - 2.3. when stipulated by the Assembly's Rules of Procedure;
 - 2.4. when mandated to do so by their specific terms of reference;
3. The committees ensure the appropriate follow-up to resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Assembly in the fields covered by their specific terms of reference.
4. Committees may organise conferences and other events on matters within their specific terms of reference and which are linked to their work programme, subject to availability of funds.
5. Committees shall establish and maintain working relations with:
 - 5.1. the competent bodies (committees, etc.) of national parliaments of member States;
 - 5.2. the competent bodies (committees, etc.) of European parliamentary assemblies (European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEI) and others) and of the Interparliamentary Union (IPU);
 - 5.3. subject to decision by the Bureau of the Assembly, the competent bodies (committees, etc.) of national parliaments holding special guest, observer or partner for democracy status;
 - 5.4. subject to decision by the Bureau of the Assembly, the competent bodies (committees, etc.) of national parliaments of non-member States.
6. Committees shall follow the activities of the Committee of Ministers in the fields covered by their specific terms of reference.
7. Committees shall follow the activities of, and maintain working relations with:
 - 7.1. the relevant rapporteur groups, working groups and liaison committees of the Ministers' Deputies and rapporteurs of the Ministers' Deputies;
 - 7.2. the relevant Council of Europe structures and bodies such as the European Court of Human Rights, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Council of Europe partial agreements, the Council of Europe monitoring bodies and the relevant Council of Europe expert committees.
8. Committees are entitled to be represented in the Assembly's delegations to the relevant European conferences of specialised ministers and to follow their activities.

9. Committees shall follow the activities of, and maintain working relations with, the European and international organisations and bodies which carry out activities in the fields covered by their specific terms of reference, in particular the European Union, the OSCE, the United Nations and their agencies and institutions.

10. Committees are entitled to develop and maintain working relations with the European and international non-governmental organisations which carry out activities in the fields covered by their specific terms of reference.

11. Committees shall promote the ratification and the implementation by Council of Europe member States of relevant conventions covered by their specific terms of reference.

B. Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (AS/Jur)

i. Background information

Number of seats: 81

The Committee was established in 1949 with the title “Legal and Administrative Questions” and known from 1956 until the end of 1989 as the “Legal Affairs Committee”, when the title was changed to the “Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights”.

ii. Specific terms of reference

(Extract from Appendix to Resolution 1842 (2011), The terms of reference of Parliamentary Assembly committees – Implementation of Resolution 1822 (2011) on the reform of the Parliamentary Assembly, as amended by Resolution 2002 (2014), § 9.10)¹

[...]

2. Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (AS/Jur)

2.1. The Committee shall consider all legal and human rights matters (including proposals for and the preparation of statutory opinions on draft Council of Europe conventions) which fall within the competence of the Council of Europe.

2.2. The Committee shall in particular consider:

2.2.1. all matters concerning the human rights treaties and mechanisms of the Council of Europe, notably the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) and its protocols, the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (ETS No. 126), and other international instruments;

2.2.2. other issues concerning the state of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in Europe, as well as in the observer States and in the States whose parliaments enjoy observer or partner for democracy status, including allegations of serious human rights violations of a systemic or otherwise widespread nature;

2.2.3. the functioning of national and international judicial institutions (as well as ombudspersons and national human rights institutions), the police, detention centres and prisons in the member States of the Council of Europe;

2.2.4. national and international criminal law and criminology; the treatment of offenders and conditions of detention (including pre-trial detention); alternatives to imprisonment;

2.2.5. legal and human rights issues relating to the fight against terrorism.

¹ On 26 January 2015 the AS/Jur’s Sub-Committee on the election of judges was replaced by a new general Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights (AS/Cdh): see <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/Committees/as-cdh/as-cdh-main-EN.asp>.

2.3. The Committee shall give an opinion on the law, legal practice and the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms of applicant States for membership of the Council of Europe, and of States whose parliaments seek to acquire partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly, to assess compliance with Council of Europe standards.

2.4. The Committee shall promote Council of Europe standard-setting legal instruments in the field of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law in non-member States.

2.5. The Committee shall be in charge of interviewing all candidates for the post of Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, before his or her election by the Assembly. It shall also examine the curricula vitae of candidates to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT).

2.6. The Committee shall follow the activities of the European Ombudsmen Conference.

2.7. The Committee shall share the Assembly representation in the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and in its Council for Democratic Elections.

2.8. The Committee shall represent the Assembly in the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and shall participate in the work of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ).

2.9. The Committee shall represent the Assembly in, and follow the work of, the relevant expert committees of the Council of Europe.

[...]

C. Terms of reference of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights (AS/Jur/DH)

(Approved by the Committee on 29 January 2015)

1. The Sub-Committee shall consider any matter falling within the terms of reference of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights relating specifically to the state of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In particular, the Sub-Committee shall monitor relevant human rights developments in Council of Europe member, observer and applicant States, as well as States whose parliaments enjoy Partner for Democracy status with the Assembly. It shall also follow activities of and maintain working relations with relevant Council of Europe bodies.

2. Moreover, the Sub-Committee shall review and make recommendations to the Committee on lists of candidates for membership of the European Committee on the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment (CPT) submitted by States Parties to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture.

D. Terms of reference of the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (AS/Jur/AI)

(Approved by the Committee on 13 December 2018)

1. Having regard to paragraph 2.2.2. of the terms of reference of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, the Sub-Committee shall consider issues relating to the maintenance of Council of Europe standards on human rights and the rule of law – notably those deriving from the European Convention on Human Rights – in connection with the implementation of new technologies, in particular machine learning and other forms of artificial intelligence, including in the fields of privacy, criminal justice and legal liability for actions taken by systems involving artificial intelligence.

2. The Sub-committee shall seek to identify areas in which greater regulation and co-operation at European and international level are required, including by taking account of work undertaken by the national parliaments of member and observer states and those with partnership for democracy status. It shall follow, with a view to contributing where appropriate, Council of Europe work in this area being undertaken at inter-governmental area.