

The Bureau of the Congress

CG-BUR(2026)73-DEC
11 September 2026

Meeting of the Bureau of the Congress Strasbourg Friday 11 September 2026

Abridged report – List of items discussed and decisions taken

1. The President opened the Bureau meeting. The list of participants is set out in Appendix 1.
2. The Bureau adopted the revised agenda as set out in Appendix 2.
3. The Bureau took note of the communication by the President of the Congress.
4. The Bureau took note of the communication by the Secretary General of the Congress.
5. The Bureau took note of the comments received during written consultations in July and August, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-62, and approved the draft resolution on the Congress Priorities 2026-2031, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-50rev, and the Congress Priorities 2026-2031 as appended to the draft resolution, with one amendment, to be submitted to the plenary for adoption at its 51st Session in October 2026.
6. The Bureau pursued its discussion on the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. It reiterated its solidarity with Ukraine and took note of the information provided regarding the contribution of the Congress to reforms envisaged in the fields of decentralisation and multilevel governance. It approved a draft declaration on the intensifying attacks of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, as presented in document CG-BUR(2026)73-65, to be submitted to the plenary for adoption at its 51st Session in October 2026, and appointed Cecilia DALMAN EEK (Sweden, R, SOC/G/PD) and Mihkel JUHKAMI (Estonia, L, EPP/CCE) as Bureau rapporteurs on the draft declaration.
7. The Bureau took note of the continued active contribution of the Congress to the New Democratic Pact for Europe, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-51 and took note of information on future events planned. It approved the terms of reference of the ad hoc working group on the New Democratic Pact for Europe and its composition, as set out in Appendix 3, and took note that it would be convened for a joint meeting with the Congress Bureau on Monday 26 October 2026, the day before the 51st Session of the Congress, in the afternoon.
8. The Bureau took note of the information on the budget of the Congress set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-61 (restricted).
9. The Bureau took note of the state of play as regards the renewal of delegations not renewed at the 50th Session in March 2026 in accordance with Rule 3.6 of the Congress Rules and Procedures, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-53.

As regards the current delegations, it took note of the modifications to the composition of the national delegations as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-52.
10. The Bureau took note of the information on the election procedure for the Secretary General of the Congress set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-64 (item examined in restricted *in camera* format and in the absence of the incumbent).

11. The Bureau took note of the schedule of meetings for the 51st Session as set out in document CG(2026)51-01. It approved the draft agenda of the Session as set out in document CG(2026)51-OJ.

It approved the side events as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-54.

The Bureau took note of the information provided regarding speaking arrangements for plenary and chamber debates, following the discussion held at its previous meeting, and decided to pursue these discussions at its next meeting.

12. The Bureau took note of the workplans and activities of the committees and approved new terms of reference for an activity of the Social Inclusion Committee, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-55.

13. The Bureau to take note of the missions, meetings and statements of the Standing Rapporteurs on human rights set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-60.

14. The Bureau took note of the information regarding Congress activities in respect of the observation of local and regional elections. It took note of the invitations received to observe the elections of the deputies to the People's Assembly of Gagauzia (Republic of Moldova) in November 2026, the municipal and regional elections in the Slovak Republic in October 2026, the local elections in Slovenia in November 2026 and the cantonal elections in Zurich (Switzerland) in April 2027. The Bureau agreed to accept the invitation to carry out an election observation missions in Gagauzia (Republic of Moldova), and took note that another mission could be accepted, subject to the availability of funds.

15. The Bureau took note of the co-operation activities of the Congress in member States and neighbouring regions.

16. The Bureau took note of the information on the situation of local democracy in Albania.

The Bureau took note of the information on the monitoring visit carried out to Georgia in the week of 22 June 2026.

The Bureau held an exchange of views on the situation of Congress Vice-President Sinem Dedetaş, held in detention in Türkiye since July 2026, and on the situation of local and regional democracy in Türkiye.

The Bureau took note of the work carried out with representatives of the democratic forces of Belarus and of the appointment by the Coordinating Council of a new deputation in respect of the Belarusian democratic forces.

17. The Bureau took note of the letter addressed to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly for the appointment of a local democratic delegate member to its Platform for Dialogue with Russian democratic forces.

18. The Bureau took note of the information regarding the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE).

19. The Bureau took note of the call for candidates and the proposed candidacies for the 2026 North-South Prize set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-56 and decided to nominate Oleksandra MATVIICHUK, Human Rights Lawyer and Head of the Centre for Civil Liberties, Ukraine, for the North, and Nighat DAD, Digital Rights Lawyer and Founder of the Digital Rights Foundation, Pakistan, for the South.

20. The Bureau took note of the information on the World Forum on Democracy 2026 to be held in Strasbourg from 2 to 3 November 2026

21. The Bureau took note of the information on the work of the Parliamentary Assembly.

22. The Bureau took note of the Committee of Ministers' replies to the Congress Recommendation 534 (2026) "Addressing the housing crisis in European cities through social housing innovations" and

Recommendation 536 (2026) “An additional protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the environment”.

23. The Bureau took note of the calendar of Bureau meetings and sessions in 2026 and 2027, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-57 and CG-BUR(2026)73-58, and of Congress statutory meetings up to February 2027, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-59.

24. The Bureau adopted the present abridged report of the meeting, as set out in document CG-BUR(2026)73-DEC.

Appendix 1 – List of participants

Members of the Bureau

Gunn Marit HELGESEN, Norway (R, EPP/CCE), President of the Congress
Konstantinos KOUKAS, Greece (L, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities
Cecilia DALMAN EEK, Sweden (R, SOC/G/PD), President of the Chamber of Regions
Harald SONDEREGGER, Austria (R, EPP/CCE)
Belinda GOTTARDI, Italy (L, SOC/G/PD)
Randi MONDORF, Denmark (R, GILD)
Mihkel JUHKAMI, Estonia (L, PPE/CCE)
Stephen SULTANA, Malta (R, SOC/G/PD)
Oksana DERKACH, Ukraine (L, EPP/CCE)
Stefan FASSBINDER, Germany (L, SOC/V/DP)
Andrew BOFF, United Kingdom (R, ECR)
Richard VERES, Czechia (L, PEF)

Outgoing President

Marc COOLS, Belgium (L, ILDG)

Committee Chairs

Emil BROBERG, Austria (L, EPP/CCE), 1st Vice-Chair of the Governance Committee

Presidents of Congress political groups

Anders KNAPE, Sweden (L, EPP/CCE)
Bryony RUDKIN, United Kingdom (L, SOC/G/PD)
Stewart DICKSON, United Kingdom (L, ILDG)
Svitlana BOHATYRCHUK KRYVKO, Ukraine (R, ECR)
Anna MAGYAR, Hungary (R, PEF)

Secretariat

Mathieu MORI, Secretary General of the Congress
Claudia LUCIANI, Director of the Congress
Stéphanie POIREL, Executive Secretary of the Chamber of Local Authorities
Sarah BURTON, Head of the Table Office and Secretary of the Bureau
Katyana VASILEVA, Assistant to the Table Office
Sanja LESKOVAC, Assistant to the Table Office

Appendix 2 – Agenda

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|------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1. | Opening of the meeting | | |
| 2. | Adoption of the agenda | CG-BUR(2026)73-OJ
CG-BUR(2026)72-DEC | <i>Dec.
Info.</i> |
| 3. | Communication by the President of the Congress | | |
| | Missions and meetings of the President of the Congress | CG-BUR(2026)73-48 | <i>Info.</i> |
| 4. | Communication by the Secretary General of the Congress | | |
| | Missions and meetings of the Secretary General of the Congress | CG-BUR(2026)73-49 | <i>Info.</i> |
| 5. | Congress Priorities 2026-2031 | | |
| | Rapporteurs:
Konstantinos KOUKAS, Greece (L, PPE/CCE)
Cecilia DALMAN EEK, Sweeden (R, SOC/V/DP) | CG-BUR(2026)73-50rev
CG-BUR(2026)73-62 | <i>Dec.
Info.</i> |
| 6. | Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine | | |
| 6.1 | Recent developments | | <i>Info.</i> |
| 6.2 | Preliminary draft declaration "Intensifying attacks of the Russian Federation against Ukraine" | CG-BUR(2026)73-65 | <i>Dec.</i> |
| 7. | New Democratic Pact for Europe | CG-BUR(2026)73-51
CG-BUR(2026)73-63 | <i>Info.
Dec.</i> |
| 8. | Budget of the Congress | CG-BUR(2026)73-61 | <i>Info.</i> |
| 9. | National delegations | | |
| | Rapporteurs:
Andrew BOFF, United Kingdom (R, ECR)
Mélanie LEPOULTIER, France (L, ILDG) | | |
| 9.1 | Changes in the composition of national delegations | 7.09 CG-BUR(2026)73-52 | <i>Dec.</i> |
| 9.2 | Renewal of delegations not renewed at the 50th Session | 9.09 CG-BUR(2026)73-53 | <i>Dec.</i> |
| 10. | [AT 12:45pm] | | |
| | Election of the Secretary General of the Congress (October 2027) | CG-BUR(2026)73-64
Letter | <i>Info.</i> |

11.	51st Session of the Congress, 27-29 October 2026		
11.1	Schedule of meetings	10.09 CG(2026)51-01	<i>Info.</i>
11.2	Approval of the draft agenda	10.09 CG(2026)51-OJ	<i>Dec.</i>
11.3	Speaking arrangements for plenary and chamber debates		
11.4	Side events	10.09 CG-BUR(2026)73-54	<i>Dec.</i>
12.	Activities of the committees		
	Approval of terms of reference for committee activities	CG-BUR(2026)73-55 Workplan MON Workplan GOV Workplan SOC	<i>Dec.</i> <i>Info.</i> <i>Info.</i> <i>Info.</i>
13.	Standing Rapporteurs on human rights		
	Missions, meetings and statements	CG-BUR(2026)73-60	<i>Info.</i>
14.	Local and regional elections	Calendar 2026 Calendar 2027 10.09 Invitation Gagauzia (Republic of Moldova) Invitation Slovak Republic Invitation Slovenia Invitation Zürich (Switzerland)	<i>Info.</i> <i>Info.</i> <i>Dec.</i> <i>Dec.</i> <i>Dec.</i> <i>Dec.</i>
15.	Co-operation activities of the Congress in member States and neighbouring regions		<i>Info.</i>
16.	Local and regional democracy		
16.1	Albania		<i>Info.</i>
16.2	Georgia		<i>Info.</i>
16.3	Türkiye	News 29.07	<i>Info.</i>
16.4	Democratic forces of Belarus		<i>Info.</i>
17.	Russian democratic forces in exile	Letter	<i>Info.</i>
18.	ELoGE (European Label of Governance Excellence)	News 03.07 News 28.08 Report 2025	<i>Info.</i> <i>Info.</i> <i>Info.</i>

19. North-South Prize

Candidacies for the 2026 North-South Prize

[Call for nominations](#)
[CG-BUR\(2026\)73-56](#)*Info.*
*Dec.***20. World Forum for Democracy 2026**[Concept note](#)
[Programme overview](#)*Info.*
*Info.***21. Parliamentary Assembly**[Communication from the President of the Committee of Ministers on the activities of the Committee of Ministers](#)*Info.***22. Intergovernmental sector**

Committee of Ministers' replies to texts adopted by the Congress

[CM/Cong\(2026\)Rec534-final](#)
[CM/Cong\(2026\)Rec536-final](#)*Info.*
*Info.***23. Congress sessions and Bureau meetings**

23.1 Calendars of Bureaux and sessions in 2026 and 2027

[CG-BUR\(2026\)73-57](#)
[CG-BUR\(2026\)73-58](#)*Info.*
Info.

23.2 Congress meetings till end February 2027

[CG-BUR\(2026\)73-59](#)*Info.***24. Other business***Info.***25. Adoption of the abridged report of the meeting**

CG-BUR(2026)73-DEC

*Dec.***Close of the meeting****Date and place of next meetings:**

- Strasbourg, France, Monday 26 and Thursday 29 October 2026
- Strasbourg, France, Tuesday 8 December 2026
- Bar, Montenegro, Wednesday 10 February 2027

to contact the Congress Bureau Secretariat

→ congress.bureau@coe.int

Appendix 3 – Ad hoc Working Group on the New Democratic Pact for Europe (Sept 2026-Oct 2028)

Terms of Reference

1. The Ad hoc Working Group on the New Democratic Pact for Europe shall be entrusted with drawing up any draft written contributions to the Pact of a transversal nature for submission to the Congress, and their follow-up. Its activities shall not replace work already being carried out by the Congress committees in the framework of their specific terms of reference.
2. Members of the working group shall be appointed on the basis of the functions they hold within the Congress. The working group shall be composed of the Congress and Chamber Presidents; the Bureau rapporteurs on the New Democratic Pact, who shall also serve as rapporteurs for the working group; the committee chairs; the presidents of the political groups; the standing rapporteurs on human rights; the thematic spokespersons; the Congress representatives in the Venice Commission Council for Democratic Elections; and up to three youth delegates. In the event that they are unable to attend a meeting, members may be replaced by their first vice-chair, first vice-president or deputy, if such a function exists.
3. The working group shall be chaired by the President of the Congress. In her absence, meetings shall be chaired by a Congress Vice-President, by order of precedence. In the absence of the President and of any vice-presidents, the longest-serving Congress member present shall chair the meeting.
4. Meetings of the working group shall be convened by the President of the Congress. Its meetings shall be public unless otherwise specified.
5. The terms of reference of the working group shall expire at the opening of the 55th (partial renewal) session of the Congress, in October 2028, unless the Bureau decides otherwise.

Composition

Congress and Chamber Presidents

Congress President	Gunn Marit HELGESEN, Norway (R, EPP/CCE)
President, Chamber of Local Authorities	Konstantinos KOUKAS, Greece (L, EPP/CCE)
President, Chamber of Regions	Cecilia DALMAN EEK, Sweden (R, SOC/G/PD)

Bureau Rapporteurs on the New Democratic Pact for Europe

Bureau Rapporteur	Konstantinos KOUKAS, Greece (L, EPP/CCE)
Bureau Rapporteur	Jani KOKKO, Finland (L, SOC/G/PD)

Committee Chairs (may be replaced by their first vice-chair if absent)

Monitoring Committee	Kristoffer TAMSONS, Sweden (R, EPP/CCE)
Governance Committee	Bernadette GEIEREGGER, Austria (L, EPP/CCE)
Social Inclusion Committee	Nazia REHMAN, United Kingdom (R, SOC/G/PD)

Presidents of political groups (may be replaced by their first vice-president if absent)

EPP/CCE group	Anders KNAPE, Sweden (L, EPP/CCE)
SOC/G/PD group	Bryony RUDKIN, United Kingdom (L, SOC/G/PD)
ILDG group	Stewart DICKSON, United Kingdom (L, ILDG)
ECR group	Svitlana BOHATYRCHUK KRYVKO, Ukraine (R, ECR)
PfE group	Anna MAGYAR, Hungary (R, PfE)

Standing Rapporteurs on Human Rights

Standing Rapporteur	Peter DRENT, Netherlands (R, EPP/CCE)
Deputy Standing Rapporteur	Martine DIESCHBURG-NICKELS, Luxembourg (L, ILDG)
Deputy Standing Rapporteur	Gudrun MOSLER-TÖRNSTRÖM, Austria (R, SOC/G/PD)

Thematic Spokespersons (may be replaced by their deputy if absent)

European Local Democracy Action	Marcin GOLASZEWSKI, Poland (L, EPP/CCE)
Gender Equality	Aisling MORAN, Ireland (L, SOC/G/PD)
Youth	Emmi LINTONEN, Finland (R, SOC/G/PD)

Ethics and Prevention of Corruption
Environment and Climate Change
Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence
Migration and Integration

Asa AGREN WIKSTROM, Sweden (R, EPP/CCE)
Meropi YDRAIOU, Greece (L, EPP/CCE)
Markus KLEEMANN, Germany (L, EPP/CCE)
Heather BRANNAN-MCVEY, United Kingdom (L,
SOC/G/PD)

Congress representatives in the Venice Commission Council for Democratic Elections (may be replaced by their deputy if absent)

Congress representative
Congress representative

Stewart DICKSON, United Kingdom (R, ILDG)
Marcin GOLASZEWSKI, Poland (L, EPP/CCE)

Youth delegates

Up to three youth delegates (to be appointed)