

The Bureau of the Congress

CG-BUR(2025)66-DECrev
 15 September 2025

Meeting of the Bureau of the Congress Strasbourg, France Friday 12 September 2025

Abridged report – List of items discussed and decisions taken

1. The President of the Congress, Mr Marc COOLS, opened the meeting. The list of participants is set out in Appendix 1.
2. The Bureau adopted the 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 information concerning the arrest and detention on 5 August 2025 of the Congress youth delegate in respect of Türkiye, Enes Hocaogullari, the fact-finding visit to Ankara conducted by a Congress delegation on 4-5 September 2025, and the release of Enes Hocaogullari from detention pending trial on 8 September 2025, and took note of the fact that the criminal proceedings brought against him on the basis of his speech made during the Congress plenary debate on dismissals of mayors in Türkiye, held on 27 March 2025, are still pending. It welcomed the rapid response of Congress national delegations and the secretariat to this unprecedented situation. It underlined the broader context, noting that high numbers of opposition mayors in Türkiye were either in detention or had been suspended. It decided to hold a debate on Attacks on freedom of expression in political assemblies at the next session of the Congress, and to appoint as co-rapporteurs Ms Véronique Bertholle, France (L, SOC/G/PD) and Mr Peter Drenth, Netherlands (R, EPP/CCE) who had taken part in the fact-finding visit of 4-5 September 2025 together with the President.
6. The Bureau pursued its discussion on the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine and took note of the update on recent developments and of information relating to the high-level dialogue. It invited the Social Inclusion Committee to consider drawing up terms of reference for a future report on the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees from Ukraine.

It adopted the draft declaration "Ukraine: Towards a Just Peace" as amended and set out in document CG-BUR(2024)66-55rev, to be submitted to the plenary for adoption at its 49th session in October 2025.
7. The Bureau took note of the information on the budget of the Congress.
8. The Bureau approved the changes in the composition of the national delegations set out in documents CG-BUR(2025)66-46 and CG-BUR(2025)66-46ADD. It held a discussion on the situation of delegations, in particular from federal States, in which the outcome of appointments procedures within federal entities may lead to a proposal to appoint a national delegation that would not meet the political balance criterion set out in the Congress Charter and Rules and Procedures, and agreed to come back to this question at its next meeting.
9. The Bureau adopted a draft resolution amending the Congress Rules and Procedures and the Code of Conduct of Congress members, as amended and set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-53rev, to be submitted to the plenary for adoption at its 49th session in October 2025.

10. The Bureau adopted a draft resolution on the reform of the European Local Democracy Week, as set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-54, to be submitted to the plenary for adoption at its 49th session in October 2025.

11. The Bureau approved the draft agenda of the 49th Session of the Congress as set out in document CG(2024)49-OJ, while asking the three Presidents and secretariat to give more visibility to the debate on the reform of European Local Democracy Week if possible. It approved the timetable and deadlines for elections during the session and the side-events as set out in document CG-BUR(2024)66-47REV.

It took note of the schedule of meetings as set out in document CG(2024)49-01 and of the list of youth delegates as set out in document CG-BUR(2024)66-60.

12. The Bureau took note of the activities of the committees and approved the terms of reference for the activities of the Monitoring Committee as set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-59.

It approved the proposal to accept the invitation to hold the next meeting of the Monitoring Committee in Oslo on 30 June 2026.

13. The Bureau took note of the information regarding local and regional elections and decided to accept the invitations to observe local elections in Portugal, Estonia, Kosovo* and North Macedonia.

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

15. The Bureau pursued its discussion on the situation in Cyprus, Georgia and Türkiye, and took note of recent developments. It took note that fact-finding visits will be carried out in Georgia in late September 2025 and in Türkiye in January 2026.

The Bureau took note that the non-governmental organisations from Belarus referred to in document CG(2025)66-56 would be removed from the list of Congress guest observers.

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

17. The Bureau took note of the candidacy of Mr Stewart Dickson, United Kingdom (R, ILDG), in his capacity as Congress representative in the Venice Commission council for Democratic Elections, to serve as vice-president of that body. It decided to propose Mr James Moloney, Ireland (L, ILDG), to serve as a member of the jury of the Council of Europe Development Bank's Award for Social Cohesion and authorised the President to propose Mr Kristoffer Tamsons, Sweden (R, EPP/CCE), in the event of Mr Moloney's unavailability for this function.

18. The Bureau took note of the proposed candidacies for the 2025 North-South Prize set out in document CG-BUR(2024)66-49 and decided to nominate Mr Gergely Karácsony, Mayor of Budapest (Hungary), for the North, and the Cités Unies France (CUF) association representing the south and the north.

19. The Bureau took note of the information on the World Forum on Democracy to be held in Strasbourg from 5 to 7 November 2025 and of the call for candidates to participate in the Forum.

20. The Bureau took note of the communication on the activities of the Committee of Ministers presented to the Parliamentary Assembly on 24 June 2025 by Mr Ian Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Malta.

21. The Bureau took note of the Committee of Ministers' replies to Congress Recommendation 518 (2024) "Recurring issues based on assessments resulting from Congress monitoring of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and election observation missions (reference period 2021-2024)" and

* All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Recommendation 529 (2025) "Water resources under stress: towards better local and regional governance".

22. The Bureau took note of the Calendar of Bureau meetings and sessions in 2025, as set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-50 and the Calendar of Bureau meetings and sessions in 2026, as set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-51. It took note of the proposed dates of sessions in 2027, as set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-52.

23. The Bureau adopted the present abridged report of the meeting, as set out in document CG-BUR(2025)66-DECrev.

Appendix 1 – List of participants

Members of the Bureau

Marc COOLS, Belgium (L, ILDG), President of the Congress
Cecilia DALMAN EEK, (R, SOC/G/PD), President of the Chamber of Regions
Bernd VÖHRINGER, Germany (L, EPP/CCE), President of the Chamber of Local Authorities
Gunn Marit HELGESEN, Norway (R, EPP/CCE)
Xavier CADORET, France (L, SOC/G/PD)
David ERAY, Switzerland (R, EPP/CCE)
Jani KOKKO, Finland (L, SOC/G/PD)
Randi MONDORF, Denmark (R, GILD/ILDG)
Martine DIESCHBURG-NICKELS, Luxembourg (L, ILDG)
Harald SONDEREGGER, Austria (R, EPP/CCE)
Sevdia UGREKHELIDZE, Georgia (L, EPP/CCE)
Andrew BOFF, United Kingdom (R, ECR)
Oksana DERKACH, Ukraine (L, EPP/CCE)
Güneş PEHLIVAN, Türkiye (R, SOC/G/PD)
Konstantinos KOUKAS, Greece (L, EPP/CCE)

Chairs of committees

Nazia REHMAN, United Kingdom (R, SOC/G/PD), Chair of the Social Inclusion 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, CRE/ECR)

Secretariat

Mathieu MORI, Secretary General of the Congress
Claudia LUCIANI, Director of the Congress
Daniel POPESCU, Executive Secretary of the Chamber of Regions
Stéphanie POIREL, Executive Secretary of the Chamber of Local Authorities
Sarah BURTON, Head of the Table Office and Secretary of the Bureau
Euan RODDIN, Head of the Statutory Activities Division
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(2025)66-OJ
CG-BUR(2025)65-DEC | <i>Dec.</i>
<i>Info.</i> |
| 3. | Communication by the President of the Congress | | |
| | Missions and meetings of the President of the Congress | CG-BUR(2025)66-44 | <i>Info.</i> |
| 4. | Communication by the Secretary General of the Congress | | |
| | Missions and meetings of the Secretary General of the Congress | CG-BUR(2025)66-45 | <i>Info.</i> |
| 5. | Arrest and detention of the Congress youth delegate in respect of Türkiye | News ; News ; News ;
8.09 News | <i>Info.</i>
<i>Info.</i> |
| 6. | Ukraine | | |
| 6.1 | High-Level Dialogue | | <i>Info.</i> |
| 6.2 | Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine – Recent developments | | <i>Info.</i> |
| 6.3 | Preliminary draft declaration "Ukraine: Towards a Just Peace" | CG-BUR(2025)66-55 | <i>Dec.</i> |
| | Rapporteurs:
Martine DIESCHBURG-NICKELS, Luxembourg (L, ILDG)
Gunn-Marit HELGESEN, Norway (R, EPP/CCE) | | |
| 7. | Budget of the Congress | | <i>Info.</i> |
| 8. | National delegations | | |
| | Changes in the composition of national delegations | CG-BUR(2025)66-46
10.09 CG-BUR(2025)66-46ADD | <i>Dec.</i>
<i>Dec.</i> |
| | Rapporteurs:
Andrew BOFF, United Kingdom (R, ECR)
Martine DIESCHBURG-NICKELS, Luxembourg (L, ILDG) | | |
| 9. | Proposed amendments to the Congress Rules and Procedures and to the Code of Conduct for Congress members | | |
| | Preliminary draft resolution amending the Congress Rules and Procedures and the Code of Conduct of Congress members | CG-BUR(2025)66-53 | <i>Dec.</i> |
| | Rapporteurs:
Xavier CADORET, France (L, SOC/G/PD)
Gunn Marit HELGESEN, Norway (R, EPP/CCE) | | |

10.	European Local Democracy Week (ELDW)		
	Preliminary draft resolution on the reform of the European Local Democracy Week	9.09 CG-BUR(2025)66-54	<i>Dec.</i>
	Rapporteur: Konstantinos KOUKAS (L, EPP/CCE)		
11.	49th Session of the Congress, 28-30 October 2025		
11.1	Elections during the session	Timetable of elections	<i>Info.</i>
11.2	Schedule of meetings	CG(2025)49-01	<i>Info.</i>
11.3	Approval of the preliminary draft agenda	10.09 CG(2025)49_OJ	<i>Dec.</i>
11.4	Side events	CG-BUR(2025)66-47REV	<i>Dec.</i>
11.5	Youth delegates	CG-BUR(2025)66-60	<i>Info.</i>
12.	Activities of the committees	Invitation letter CG-BUR(2025)66-59	<i>Dec.</i> <i>Dec.</i>
13.	Local and regional elections	Invitation letters	<i>Dec.</i>
14.	Co-operation activities of the Congress in member States and neighbouring regions		<i>Info.</i>
15.	Local and regional democracy		
15.1	Cyprus		<i>Info.</i>
15.2	Georgia		<i>Info.</i>
15.3	Türkiye	Confidential 10.09 CG-BUR(2025)66-61	<i>Info.</i>
15.4	Belarus	10.09 CG-BUR(2025)66-56	<i>Info.</i>
16.	ELoGE (European Label of Governance Excellence)	CG-BUR(2025)66-57	<i>Info.</i>
17.	Standing rapporteurs of the Congress on human rights, thematic spokespersons and representatives in external bodies	CG-BUR(2025)66-48 CG-BUR(2025)66-58	<i>Dec.</i> <i>Info.</i>
18.	North-South Prize		
	Candidacies for the 2025 North-South Prize	CG-BUR(2025)66-49	<i>Dec.</i>
19.	World Forum for Democracy 2025	link	<i>Info.</i>

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| 20. | Parliamentary Assembly | Communication on the activities of the Committee of Ministers | <i>Info.</i> |
| 21. Intergovernmental sector | | | |
| | Committee of Ministers' replies to texts adopted by the Congress | CM/Cong(2025)Rec518-final
CM/Cong(2025)Rec529-final | <i>Info.</i>
<i>Info.</i> |
| 22. Congress sessions and Bureau meetings | | | |
| | Calendars of Bureaux and sessions in 2025, 2026 and 2027 | CG-BUR(2025)66-50
CG-BUR(2025)66-51
CG-BUR(2025)66-52 | <i>Info.</i>
<i>Info.</i>
<i>Dec.</i> |
| 23. Other business | | | |
| 24. Adoption of the abridged report of the meeting | | | |
| | | CG-BUR(2025)66-DEC | <i>Dec.</i> |

Close of the meeting

Date and place of next meetings:

- Strasbourg, Monday 27 October and Thursday 30 October 2025
- Paris, Monday 15 December 2025

to contact the Congress Bureau Secretariat

→ congress.bureau@coe.int