

Guidelines for the drafting of recommendations, resolutions and declarations

Adopted by the Standing Committee on 18 June 2026

The Standing Committee is issuing these guidelines in relation to, and with a view to complementing the provisions concerned of CINGO's [Rules of Procedure](#) (RoPs), in order to assist drafting bodies (committees, Standing Committee) and the General Assembly when preparing / discussing recommendations, resolutions and declarations.¹

The RoPs provide that in the context of its work, CINGO's General Assembly can adopt "common positions on fundamental issues": these can take the form of either resolutions or – where they are addressed to other Council of Europe bodies or other national and international institutions – recommendations (art. 13(f)). Proposals for such texts shall be indicated on the agenda of the General Assembly (art. 17(d)) and shall be communicated to the Standing Committee, which is responsible for preparing the draft agenda of the General Assembly, overseeing the work and ensuring the quality and overall coherence (art.40). Drafts are then to be published in English and French on the Conference website, normally at least two weeks before their consideration (art. 19). It should be noted that art. 61(b) refers also to a third category of texts that can be prepared by committees for the consideration of the General Assembly, namely declarations.

Purposes

It stems from the above and general international terminology that:

- a resolution can be seen as a text embodying a decision by the General Assembly for itself. It would concern a question of substance which the Conference or its members are empowered to put into effect on their own, or an expression of view for which they alone are responsible, or a decision on a procedural or execution-related matter of particular importance;
- a recommendation is a text by the General Assembly addressed to others, the implementation of which is beyond the competence of CINGO, but within that of the addressee, e.g. the Committee of Ministers regarding action to be taken at Council of Europe level or governments regarding national policies etc.

¹ Such guidance documents have also been issued by other bodies, such as the Parliamentary Assembly's "[Guidelines for consideration of motions for resolutions and recommendations](#)" and "[Guidelines for the adoption of declarations](#)"

- a declaration conveys CINGO's stance on a given issue or situation, or for the future it wants to create. Any calls for desirable action to be taken (as in a recommendation) are drafted in less specific terms and express a general objective or wish rather than specific action to achieve this. Such a declaration can be proposed as a standalone text or in the form of a draft Resolution for adoption.

Content and structure

A resolution or recommendation begins with a preamble composed of a series of recitals stating the motives and reasons for issuing the text including contextual information; findings of any supporting work that the draft is based on; reference documents such as earlier CINGO work or relevant Council of Europe standards / documents / work, further international standards and work (e.g. by the United Nations) and related to the subject of the proposed text.

The preamble is not just a mere compilation of all earlier work and documents. Especially where it is aimed at prompting desirable policy-related or other action (typically in the case of a recommendation), careful drafting will show the drafters' awareness and understanding of the contextual situation and demonstrate the pertinence of the proposals, as well as establish the continuity and added value of the proposal relative to the existing situation. It will also provide useful information to readers interested in the Conference or the Council of Europe's work. The preamble should not exceed one A4 page in total, even much less in case of a formal CINGO resolution with a decision related to its functioning and procedures.

The second part, which can be quite short, sums up the core motivations of the proposed text and spells out who it is addressed to (member organisations in the case of a resolution, the Council of Europe or other national and international institutions in the case of a recommendation). In the case of a text formalising a decision for CINGO itself, it would contain the elements of the decision (substantive elements of the resolution).

The third part is the operative list of concrete steps that are being agreed (resolution) or expected/recommended (recommendation). Drafters should devote time to performing a test of feasibility, consistency of wording and action, added value, adequacy of length, and expectations should remain realistic:

- in particular, the purpose of a resolution or recommendation has to match the competences and mandates of those they are addressed to and have due regard to political agendas and strategic and other important documents such as priorities of the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, the quadrennial Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe, new initiatives and documents of the Secretary General;
- moreover, in terms of effectiveness, it will often be the fewer the better for the number of recommended actions. A few carefully conceived and drafted recommended actions can have more impact than a one or more pages full of ambitious policy elements combining strategic, institutional, legal, awareness-raising and other elements, both general and specific. Where the content of the document is by nature lengthy, for example due to the complexity of the subject matter, an appendix can be added to detail the substance whilst keeping the recommended action(s) concise. It should be remembered that it is important here to retain the interest of the intended recipients of the text, and to ensure clear messages are conveyed.

If relevant to the substance, the final provisions can propose follow-up steps, e.g.:

- call to keep CINGO informed of any follow-up action (in case of a recommendation);
- self-commitment to review the situation in the future or to examine the effects of a change in working methods (in case of a resolution);
- readiness for an exchange of views or for sharing CINGO's related future work. In line with the paragraph above, a more concise document at the outset will facilitate any follow-up, subsequent work and scrutiny for CINGO itself.

Where a resolution is used to endorse/approve a declaration, it would be concise and not warrant a complex drafting structure.