



The Congress sessions

What are the Congress sessions?

- **Congress members come together to debate and vote** on the work that they have been carrying out in their committees, through missions in the field, through reflection groups, hearings or conferences.
- **Members have an opportunity to meet their peers** within national delegations, political groups or simply network with other members.
- **Young people have been invited to participate in Congress sessions as youth delegates** (one person per member State) since October 2014.



Where the session takes place

The Hemicycle



- The **Congress** holds two sessions a year
- The **Parliamentary Assembly** holds four sessions a year

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

Le Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux du Conseil de l'Europe



When and where the session takes place



- The Congress holds **two sessions**- one in the Spring and one in the Autumn
- On that occasion, the **Chamber of Local Authorities** and the **Chamber of Regions** also hold their chamber sessions.

The Congress of Local and Regional
Authorities of the Council of Europe

Le Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et
régionaux du Conseil de l'Europe



Session format

- Most sessions last **2.5 days** (usually from Tuesday to Thursday) and are comprised of 4 plenary sittings and 1 session of the chambers, held in parallel.
- The **Congress Bureau**, the executive organ of the Congress, meets on the eve of the session (plenary and chamber format) and, if required, also on the morning of the last day of the session.
- On the eve of the session there are also **political group meetings**.



Seating

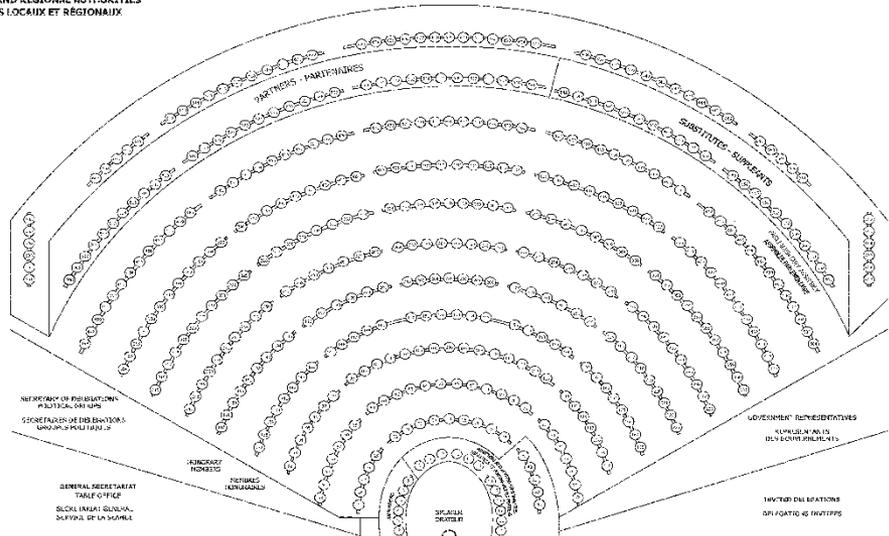
- **Congress sessions are public** - a public gallery overlooking the hemicycle is accessible from the ground floor of the Palais.
- **The President chairs** from the raised podium at the front of the hemicycle, seated with the Secretary General and the Director.
- **Congress members are seated alphabetically**, not in delegations, nor political parties (see example of seating plan - next slide).



Seating The Hemicycle Plan

THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES
LE CONGRÈS DES POUVOIRS LOCAUX ET RÉGIONAUX
37th / 37^e SESSION
20-21 OCTOBER 2019 STRASBOURG

ARMENIA	75
AUSTRIA	26
BELGIUM	26
BELARUS	76
BULGARIA	76
CANADA	76
CYPRUS	21
CZECH REPUBLIC	21
FINLAND	21
FRANCE	21
GERMANY	21
GREECE	21
HUNGARY	21
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SWEDEN	21
SWITZERLAND	21
TURKEY	21
UKRAINE	21
UNITED KINGDOM	21
USA	21
YUGOSLAVIA	21



ALBANIA	10
ALGERIA	10
ANDORRA	10
ARMENIA	10
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BELARUS	10
BULGARIA	10
CANADA	10
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UNITED KINGDOM	11
USA	11
YUGOSLAVIA	11

Les membres du Congrès ont droit à une allocation de 100 euros par jour de voyage et de séjour dans les régions. Les membres non résidents à l'extérieur de l'Union européenne ont également droit à une allocation de 100 euros par jour de voyage et de séjour dans les régions. 1. Turkish Capital: Metropolitan Council - Representatives: 1000 euros.



Seating



- **Invited speakers** sit in the front row to the right of the Presidential chair. They speak from the lectern.
- **Rapporteurs** sit to the left of the Presidency, on the opposite side to the speakers together with the Secretary of the committee responsible for preparing the report being examined.
- **Congress Partners, Observers** and other regular participants have assigned seats.
- **Youth delegates** sit together to the left of the Presidential chair.



Different items on a session agenda



Elections



Ceremonies (eg Dosta!)

- Debates focusing on reports drafted by the committees or the Bureau, with the adoption of a draft text (see next slide).
- Thematic debates on a current or urgent issue, or as preparation for a future report.
- Free debates as requested by members.
- Exchanges of views with institutional or VIP guests.
- There are also elections (for presidents, members of the Bureau or Secretary General) and ceremonies.



Congress reports and texts for adoption



Reports may be comprised of several parts:

- An explanatory memorandum and one or more draft texts:
 - a draft resolution
 - a draft recommendation
 - a draft opinion
 - a draft declaration

Members may table amendments to draft texts up to 7 days before the text is to be voted on.



Voting in the session



- Only representatives to the Congress, or substitutes who have been mandated to replace them, can vote.
- Youth delegates, partners and observers are not entitled to vote.
- Members vote on texts and also in elections.



Speaking in the session



- Only representatives to the Congress, or substitutes who have been mandated to replace them, youth delegates, partners or observers are entitled to speak in the session.
- All requests for the floor must be made officially (via the Congress database, Congress Connect).



Languages and communication

- The official languages of the Congress are **English** and **French**, the working languages are **German and Italian**.
- Turkish and Greek are usually provided at the expense of the delegations themselves.



During the session you can **tweet** under selected items on the agenda and the tweets will appear on the screens.