

Rules of procedure of the Chamber of Local Authorities (2000)

Caption: Rules of procedure of the Chamber of Local Authorities of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), adopted by the Chamber in 2000.

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Chapter I – Sessions of the Chamber of Local Authorities

Rule 1

1. The session of the Chamber of Local Authorities shall immediately precede or follow the session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. On the proposal of the Bureau of the Congress, the Chamber of Local Authorities may hold other sessions with the prior consent of the Committee of Ministers.
2. The Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities may submit to the Bureau of the Congress proposals concerning the holding of an extraordinary session of the Chamber.

Chapter II – Membership of the Chamber of Local Authorities

Rule 2

1. The appointment of members of the Chamber of Local Authorities and the length of their term of office shall be governed by Articles 2 and 3 and the first transitional provision of the Charter of the CLRAE as well as by Rules 2, 3 and 4 of the Rules of procedure of the CLRAE.
2. Substitutes to the CLRAE sitting in the Chamber of Local Authorities shall be members of the Chamber on a par with representatives. Rule 5 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall not apply to the Chamber of Local Authorities.

Chapter III – Observers to the Chamber of Local Authorities

Rule 3 – Observers

1. Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Article 5 of the Charter of the Congress and Rule 8 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable to this matter.
2. The Chamber may grant observer status to other organisations requesting it.
3. Requests for observer status shall be addressed to the Bureau of the Chamber. After carrying out a preliminary examination of the request, the Bureau shall make a recommendation to the Chamber. The Chamber shall reach its decision by a two-thirds majority of votes cast. Whenever the Chamber does not meet in Plenary, the decision shall be referred to the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee.
4. The Bureau of the Chamber may invite one or more representatives of organisations holding observer status with the CLRAE or the Chamber to attend the proceedings of all or part of a given meeting.
5. The committees or working groups of the Chamber may, after informing the Bureau of the Chamber, invite one or more representatives of organisations holding observer status with the CLRAE or the Chamber to attend the proceedings of all or part of a given meeting.

Chapter IV – Special Guests

Rule 4

Paragraph 2 of Rule 9 of the Rules of procedure of the CLRAE shall be applicable *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter V – President and Bureau of the Chamber

Rule 5 – Provisional president

Rule 10 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 6 – Election of the President

1. The election of the President of the Chamber shall take place during the opening sitting of each ordinary session for which the national delegations are renewed. The President shall remain in office for two ordinary sessions.

The President may stand for a second consecutive term of office. In no case may the same person serve as President for more than two consecutive terms.

2. Any member of the Chamber having the status of representative may stand for election. Candidatures must be notified in writing to the Secretariat of the Chamber, at the latest one hour before the scheduled opening of the ballot.

3. The President of the Chamber shall be elected by secret ballot. Two tellers chosen by lot shall count the votes cast.

4. The candidate who has obtained the absolute majority of the votes cast in the first ballot shall be declared elected. If no candidate has obtained this majority, the candidate obtaining a relative majority of votes cast in the second ballot shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie, lots shall be drawn.

5. As soon as the President of the Chamber is elected, the provisional President shall stand down.

Rule 7 – Vice-Presidents of the Chamber

1. After electing its President, the Chamber shall choose from among its members its seven Vice- Presidents.

The Vice-Presidents shall remain in office for two ordinary sessions.

2. Candidatures must be notified in writing to the Secretariat of the Chamber, at the latest one hour before the scheduled opening of the ballot.

3. The election of the Vice-Presidents shall take place on the same voting paper ¹. The seven candidates obtaining the most votes shall be declared elected. No other candidate from the same national delegation shall be considered when determining the candidates who have obtained the most votes. No national delegation may have more than one member in the Bureau of the Chamber.

The order of precedence of the Vice-Presidents shall be determined by the order in which they were elected. In the event of a tie, lots shall be drawn.

4. The election of the Vice-Presidents shall take place even if the number of candidates does not exceed the number of posts to be filled.

Rule 8 – Chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee

1. In order to ensure continuity of the work of the Chamber of Local Authorities, the members of this Chamber who sit on the Standing Committee of the CLRAE may meet as a chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee, but only during the plenary meetings of the Standing Committee ².

2. The chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee may approve draft resolutions, recommendations and opinions on behalf of the Chamber, and discharge any other tasks assigned to it under these Rules of procedure.

3. The chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee may deliberate and make decisions when one third of its members are present. However, it may not vote on a report as a whole unless the majority of its members are present.

Rule 9 – Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities

1. The Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities shall be composed of the President and the seven Vice-Presidents of the Chamber.

2. The Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities shall perform such tasks as are entrusted to it by the Chamber, the Congress, the Bureau of the Congress, the Standing Committee of the Congress or the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee.

3. The Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities shall in exceptional cases set up working groups responsible for questions falling within the competence of the Chamber, in accordance with Article 10 paragraph 1 of the Charter of the CLRAE and Rule 20 of these Rules of procedure.

4. The Bureau of the Chamber of Local Authorities may meet only during the meetings of the Bureau of the Congress ³. In general, meetings of the Bureau shall be held in camera. However, the Bureau may decide to invite observers or members of special guest delegations to parts of its meetings and organise hearings for individuals and organisations.

Chapter VI – Duties of the Chair, discipline and order

Rule 10 – Duties of the Chair

1. Paragraphs 1, 4 and 5 of Rule 16 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable.

2. The President of the Chamber shall carry out the policy decided by the Chamber and maintain contact with international organisations as part of the general external relations policy of the Council of Europe. The President may delegate part of his or her duties in this respect to the Vice-Presidents of the Chamber.

3. Whilst in the Chair, the President shall not take part in debates.

Rule 11 – Public order in the conference room and galleries

Rule 17 of the CLRAE's Rules of procedure shall be applicable.

Chapter VII – Agenda and order of business

Rule 12 – Settlement of the agenda

The Bureau of the Chamber shall settle the agenda for each session, taking due account of the powers of the Bureau of the Congress in co-ordinating both Chambers and preparing the plenary session of the CLRAE. ⁴

Rule 13 – Urgent procedure

1. The Chamber, its Bureau and its President may ask the CLRAE for urgent procedure.

2. At the request of the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee or of ten members belonging to at least two national delegations, a question may be added to the agenda of the Chamber at its first sitting after the Bureau has given its opinion.

3. A request for urgent procedure shall be tabled two working days before the session at the latest.

4. In connection with a request for urgent procedure the following only shall be heard: a representative of the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee or of the group of members which tabled the proposal, one speaker “against” and a representative of the Bureau of the Chamber speaking on behalf of the Bureau.

5. The adoption of urgent procedure shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

6. A request for urgent procedure which has been accepted by the Chamber of Local Authorities shall be referred to the relevant committee of the Chamber or the competent working group, which shall report back before the end of the session.

Rule 14 – Order of business

Rule 20 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter VIII – Holding of sittings and rules governing the proceedings

Rule 15

1. Rules 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27 (except its paragraph 3), 28, 29 (except its paragraph 2), 30 and 31 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

2. The minutes of the proceedings of the last sitting of the Chamber shall be submitted to the next meeting of its Bureau or of the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee for approval.

Rule 16 – Quorum

1.

a. Paragraphs 1, 3, 5 and 6 of Rule 32 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Chamber.

b. The Chamber may take no decision other than those specified in Rule 32 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress, unless one-third of its members are present.

c. A vote by roll-call may not be valid, nor the result be made public, unless at least one third of the members of the Chamber took part in it. This provision shall not apply in the case foreseen in Rule 32 paragraph 1 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress.

Rule 17 – Majorities required

The majorities required are as follows:

a. For approval of a draft recommendation or opinion, before its adoption by the Standing Committee, two-thirds of the votes cast.

b. For elections, the majorities specified in Rules 6 and 7 above.

c. For other decisions, a majority of the votes cast, provided that the present Rules of procedure does not specify otherwise for specific cases.

Chapter IX – Written declarations

Rule 18 – Written declarations

Rule 34 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter X – Committees of the Chamber of Local Authorities

Rule 19 – Committees of the Chamber of Local Authorities

The Rules of procedure of the Congress on the statutory Committees shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the committees of the Chamber of Local Authorities.

Chapter XI – Working groups

Rule 20 – Constitution of working groups

1. In accordance with Article 10.1 of the Charter of the Congress, when the Bureau of the CLRAE decides that a question falls within the exclusive competence of the Chamber of Local Authorities, the Bureau of the Chamber may in exceptional cases set up an ad hoc working group with specific terms of reference covering, in particular, the following tasks:

- preparation of a report,
- organisation of a conference,
- follow-up to a co-operation project or to specific intergovernmental activities of the Council of Europe.

2. The Bureau of the Chamber shall draw up the terms of reference of the working group and ensure that they are executed.

3.

a. Working groups shall have a maximum of eleven full members and an equal number of alternates.

b. The Bureau of the Chamber shall appoint members of working groups on the basis of candidatures put forward by the members themselves or the national delegations, bearing in mind the need for balanced geographical distribution.

c. In principle, no member of the Chamber may belong to more than one working group.

d. In principle, no national delegation may have more than one member in any working group.

e. A member of a working group who is unable to attend a meeting shall inform the Secretariat so that he or she may be replaced.

Rule 21 – Procedure in working groups

Rule 43 paragraphs 2 to 8 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 22 – Reports of working groups

Rule 41 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

Rule 23 – Hearings

The Chamber, its Bureau, the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee, the committees of the Chamber and its working groups may organise hearings under the terms of Rule 46 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress.

Rule 24 – Advisers

A member of the Bureau, of the chamber of Local Authorities of the Standing Committee, of a committee of the Chamber or of a working group may be accompanied at meetings thereof by not more than one adviser selected by him or her. The cost of participation of such an adviser shall not be borne by the budget of the CLRAE.

Chapter XII – Use of languages and publicity of debates

Rule 25

Rules 48 and 49 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable.

Rule 26

Rule 50 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter XIII – Official documents of the CLRAE

Rule 27

Rules 51, 52 and 53 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter XIV – Budget

Rule 28

Rule 54 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable.

Chapter XV – CLRAE Secretariat

Rule 29

Rule 55 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable.

Chapter XVI – Revision of the Rules of procedure of the Chamber

Rule 30

Rule 57 of the Rules of procedure of the Congress shall be applicable, *mutatis mutandis*.

Appendix – Practical arrangements for the election of Vice-Presidents of the Chamber

1. Such elections shall be held in the following places:

- if the Chamber is meeting in the Hemicycle: in the area behind the President's rostrum;
- if the Chamber is meeting in a meeting room in the Palais de l'Europe: at the entrance to the room.

2. A specific time-limit shall be set for these elections, but:

- the meeting shall not be interrupted following the announcement of the start of the voting, after a possible brief presentation of the candidates and the appointment of two tellers by drawing of lots;
- the members of the Chamber shall not be called to vote individually, but rather shall place their ballot papers in the ballot box at any time within the specified time-limit.

3. The register of voters and the ballot box shall be placed on a table in one of the above-designated places; there shall be a second table on which members can fill out their ballot papers.

4. The members of the Chamber shall sign the register of voters in the presence of a member of the Secretariat.

5. In cases of doubt or dispute about a member's entitlement to vote, the matter shall, if necessary, be submitted to the President, who shall take the final decision; no points of order shall be permitted.

6. After verification that a member is entitled to vote, he or she shall be issued with a ballot paper.

7. Voters shall place their ballot papers in the ballot box.

8. On expiry of the specified time-limit, the President shall ask whether any more members wish to vote and, when all the votes have been cast, shall declare the voting closed.

9. Ballot papers shall be counted outside the meeting room directly after the vote, under the supervision of the two tellers assisted by the Secretariat.

10. The result shall be announced by the President, if possible before the close of the sitting or else at the opening of the following sitting.

11. The notices of proceedings shall contain detailed information on the running of the election.

1 For the practical arrangements for this election, see the appendix to these Rules of procedure.

2 See Article 4.2 of Statutory Resolution (2000) 1.

3 See Article 4.2 of Statutory Resolution (2000) 1.

4 See Article 9.2 of the Charter.