EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

BUREAU

MINUTES

of the ordinary meeting of

14-09-2020

Altiero SPINELLI Building - Room 5G3

Brussels
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Mr David Maria SASSOLI, President of the European Parliament, opened the meeting at 17:40 hours.

Present

David Maria SASSOLI, President

Vice-Presidents

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<td>Ms McGUINNESS*</td>
<td>Ms BARLEY</td>
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<td>Mr SILVA PEREIRA</td>
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<td>Mr WIELAND</td>
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<td>Mr KARAS</td>
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Quaestors

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Also Present

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<td>Mr WELLE</td>
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<td>Mr WINKLER</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary-General and Director-General DG PRES</td>
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* Remote participation
Invited for item 4
Mr GALVIN, Internal Auditor**
Mr CLERGEAUD, Internal Audit Service**

List of officials present at the meeting:

Private Office of the President
Ms DOUAUD
Ms KYST
Mr COBUCCI

Private Office of the Secretary-General
Ms ALTENBERG*
Ms FERNANDES PERLES*
Ms MRAZ-ANDROVICOVA*
Mr SCHONARD*
Mr CAPOGROSSO
Ms DE ANGELIS*

Private Office of the Deputy Secretary-General
Mr JAVELLE*
Mr BURU*

Secretariat
DG Internal Policies (IPOL) Mr RIBERA d’ALCALA*
DG External Policies (EXPO) Ms RUPP*
DG Parliamentary Research Services (EPRS) Mr TEASDALE
DG Communication (COMM) Mr DUCH-GUILLOT, Ms COLARD*
DG Personnel (PERS) Mr KNUDSEN, Dr. CLAES
DG Infrastructure and Logistics (INLO) Ms LINNUS
DG Translation (TRAD) Mr MAVRIC*
DG Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences (LINC) Ms WALTER-DROP
DG Finance (FINS) Mr KLETHI*
DG Innovation, Technical Support (ITEC) Mr PETRUCCI (f.f)*
DG Security and Safety (SAFE) Mr CAROZZA*
Legal Service Mr DREXLER
Director for Relations with the Political Groups Mr SCHWETZ*
Conference of President’s Secretariat Ms WOLLNY*

* Remote participation
** Only present for Item 4
### Political group secretariats

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<td>Ms</td>
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Mr MARTINELLI, Mr ADLER, Ms GIPPERT, Mr TYMOWSKI, Ms MURRAY and Ms MAROCCHIO* acted as secretary to the meeting.

* Remote participation
1. Adoption of draft agenda

   The Bureau,

   - noted the draft agenda and adopted it as shown in these minutes (PE 653.582/BUR).
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the ordinary Bureau meeting of 6 July 2020 and the extraordinary Bureau meeting of 22 July 2020

The Bureau,

- approved the Minutes of the ordinary Bureau meeting of 6 July 2020 (PE 650.253/BUR) and the extraordinary Bureau meeting of 22 July 2020 (PE 653.542/BUR) held in Brussels.
3. Communications by the President

3.1. General Expenditure Allowance

The Bureau,

- heard the President:

  - recall that according to Article 31(2) of the Implementing measures for the Statute for Members of the European Parliament (IMMS), Members who are absent on at least 50% of the days fixed by the Bureau for plenary sessions in a given year (counted from 1 September to 31 August), shall reimburse to Parliament 50% of the general expenditure allowance they received for that period,

  - note that the COVID-19 pandemic heavily affected the presence of Members at plenary sessions, starting from March 2020, and that since April 2020 Parliament is holding "hybrid" sessions with some Members physically present and others participating remotely from their home countries (who cannot be considered as 'present' in the sense of Rule 156 of the Rules of Procedure and Article 31(2) IMMS),

  - propose that for the purpose of Art. 31(2) IMMS, the sessions impacted by the pandemic should not be counted and thus the calculation of 50% presence should be based only on the sessions of 2019 and the normal sessions in 2020, i.e. only January and February;

- heard Ms JÁRÓKA, Vice-President, thank the President and support the proposal on behalf of her political group;

- heard the President confirm that the months affected by the COVID-19 pandemic shall be deducted as agreed by the Bureau.
A. DECISIONS/EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

4. The Internal Auditor’s Annual Report for 2019 - in the presence of Mr GALVIN, Internal Auditor

The Bureau, with debate,

- took note of the “Internal Auditor’s Annual Report for 2019” submitted to the Bureau on 23 July 2020 by Mr GALVIN, Internal Auditor (PE 653.596/BUR and annex);

- heard the President:

  • note that in accordance with the applicable Rules, the Internal Auditor shall submit an annual report indicating the number and type of internal audits carried out, the recommendations made and the actions taken on those recommendations,

  • stress that the audit work performed in 2019 continued to prioritise the evaluation of the overall level of compliance with the principle of sound financial management,

  • acknowledge the Internal Auditor’s confirmation that his independence was not compromised by instructions or guidance from any source, and the constructive and positive spirit in which all departments co-operated with the Internal Audit Service,

  • in view of the fact that Mr Galvin will retire at the beginning of 2021, thank him for his excellent professional service, which significantly contributed to Parliament’s work;

- heard the Internal Auditor explain that:

  • the introduction to the report describes the mission of the Internal Audit Service, the nature and scope of its activity, the professional standards to which it adheres, and how it is organised; it also recalls that the independence of the Internal Auditor in the conduct of his audits is guaranteed by EU legislation and restated in the Charter of the Internal Auditor,
• in case of identified opportunities or deficiencies, the audit reports propose specific actions, elaborated in close dialogue and cooperation with the audited services, seeking to reach agreement with the relevant management on their substance and timing,

• the audit work performed in 2019 was based on the comprehensive risk assessment of the entire organisation, as formulated in the multiannual work programme, allowing for the resources to be allocated to the areas with highest risk,

• an audit of procurement and contract implementation in the catering sector, taking account of the change in the nature of the contractual relations with suppliers from an open-book to a concession basis in 2016, led to the agreement of 13 actions with DG INLO, addressing, inter alia, the remuneration of the concessionaire and key objectives of the procurement procedures in different areas,

• the audit of Visitors’ Groups, following the entry in force of new rules governing their reception on 1 January 2017, acknowledged the challenges that DG COMM had to confront in the introduction of the new rules and the efforts made in raising awareness about them,

• the audit of financing of European political parties and European political foundations focused on compliance with Regulation No. 1141/2014 and the relevant Bureau Decisions, with a high proportion of the audit time spent in 2019 on the negotiation and conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding with the newly established and independent Authority for European political parties and foundations; a limited number of suggestions concerning registration of parties and foundations, monitoring of their eligibility for funding, and implementation of the legislation, have recently been transmitted for discussion to the Authority and DG FINS,

• the audit of the Parliamentary Assistance Allowance focused on local assistants hired by the Members to work in their Member State of election, with the aim to assess the compliance of DG FINS’ process for the defrayal of expenses with the applicable legal framework and to evaluate the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of that process;
• the inclusion of the preliminary review of the Parliament’s Data Protection Framework took account of the entry into force of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018 and the new Regulation 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions;

• the Internal Audit reviews twice every year the open actions from all previous audit reports for which the agreed due-date for implementation has expired; the current outcome of the 2019 follow-up is that 36 of the 93 open actions were closed, and the risk was lowered from significant to moderate for three actions, with the result of 18 open actions remaining in the category of significant risk,

• the Internal Audit Service continued its own Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme, completing a new intranet portal and further developing the central reporting module of its audit management system,

• he would like to thank the Members of the Audit Panel, as well as the Secretary General and Parliament’s services for their support and excellent cooperation;

- held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms JÁRÓKA, Mr SILVA PEREIRA, Ms BEER and Ms HAUTALA, Vice-Presidents, who:

  • expressed thanks for the thorough work of the Internal Audit Services, and more specifically of the Internal Auditor, as well as for his presentation of the annual report and audit activities presented therein,

  • appreciated the continuous lowering of the number of areas identified as potential risk, and the efficient cooperation of the Parliament’s services with the Internal Auditor that contributes to the institution’s sound financial management,

  • enquired about the audit of the e-Parliament programme, the delay of the consulting assignment for DG TRAD, the risk related to financing of activities of political groups through budget line 1400, details of the contract procurement audit in catering, future evaluation of the Parliament’s cybersecurity, differences of competences of various actors relating to the
financing of European political parties and foundations, and the timing of forthcoming reports as a consequence of the COVID-19 related limitations,

- supported the inclusion of social and environmental criteria in tenders, so that a holistic approach replaces the choice of the cheapest offer, which would contribute to future sustainability reporting of the Parliament,

- asked about the rules on internal access to audit-related documents and suggested improvements to how the relevant information is shared between various departments of Parliament's administration;

heard the Internal Auditor respond that:

- some elements of the work programme had to be postponed until after the recruitment of a specialised information systems auditor, and that its re-evaluation confirmed the need to prioritise the matters related to identity and access management, with DG ITEC being involved into further planning,

- the consulting assignments are in general only conducted on the request of the relevant Directorate-General, and within available resources, with the one concerning translations possibly still to come in the future,

- the identification of risk concerning arrangements for hiring contract agents by the political groups was based on the principles of proper budget specifications, and the decision to accept that risk was taken by the relevant responsible authority,

- there was no precedent for concession contracts to be managed by DG INLO, and the lessons learned will surely contribute to improved procedures in the future,

- both DG FINS and the Authority for European political parties and foundations bear specific responsibilities on the basis of their competences, and that the forthcoming report will make certain proposals to reconcile the rules and their practical implementation,
• extensive discussions concerning the audit reports on Visitors’ Groups and the local parliamentary assistants should allow for their adoption soon, and the data protection framework is covered by the 2020 programme,

• the audit reports are covered by a clear exception set by the Regulation 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents of EU institutions, as well as the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulation, with the effect that access is restricted;

- heard the President:

  • thank Mr Galvin for the additional information provided to the Bureau,

  • underline the high level of authority and transparency that Parliament holds in respect of financial management and its audit,

  • express confidence that the professional work done by Mr Galvin will be pursued with equal skill and judgement also after his retirement;

- invited the President to forward the Report to the Committee on Budgetary Control.
5. **COVID-19: Latest developments and Outlook - Note from the Secretary-General**

The Bureau, with debate,

- took note of the information provided in the note dated 9 September 2020 from the Secretary-General, entitled ‘COVID-19: Latest developments and outlook’ (PE 653.597/BUR and annex);

- heard the President:
  - explain that his decision to hold the September part-session in Brussels rather than Strasbourg had become necessary in view of the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Bas-Rhin Department in France,
  - reiterate that Parliament’s seat in Strasbourg followed from the Treaty and could therefore not be called into question; stress that Parliament’s part-sessions would resume in Strasbourg as soon as this was possible from a public health perspective,
  - recall that the measures taken in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic took into account the advice from Parliament’s Medical Service and from the competent authorities in Parliament’s places of work, in order to ensure the highest safety standards for Members and staff,
  - suggest that the Bureau decision of 20 March 2020 concerning the alternative electronic voting system be prolonged until 31 December 2020,
  - explain that a number of Members had strongly urged Parliament to put in place an onsite PCR testing facility, noting that such a facility would be a highly useful instrument in addition to existing health-protection measures,
  - in view of the evolution of the pandemic, but also the travel restrictions introduced by several Member States, suggest not to allow visitor groups sponsored by Members until 31 December 2020;

- heard the Secretary-General explain that:
  - all necessary preparations for the organisation of the September part-session in Strasbourg had been made, including arrangements linked to,
inter alia, transport by chartered Thalys trains with physical distancing, specific catering arrangements inside and provision of food trucks outside Parliament’s premises, the availability of medical assistance from the city’s hospitals, the reduction of staff present in Parliament’s buildings in Strasbourg and the possibility for interpreters to work remotely from Brussels, noting that the administration was therefore fully prepared for part-sessions to be held in Strasbourg again, as soon as health conditions made this possible,

- a professional training programme for freelance interpreters had been implemented, noting that the cost of the programme was EUR 5.5 million and that 88% of the free-lance interpreters adhered to the programme;

- it was expected that the proposed testing facility in the immediate surroundings of Parliament’s buildings in Brussels, with a capacity of 200 tests per day, could be implemented within three weeks,

- the vaccination of the populations in high percentages would probably be a prerequisite to any significant improvement of the overall situation, noting that this could take at least one year considering the time needed to finalise, produce and dispense a vaccine; the decision to prolong the measures as suggested by the President until 31 December 2020, was therefore necessary, noting further that an estimated one-third of Parliament’s Members belonged to risk-groups in relation to COVID-19;

held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms DOBREV, Mr SILVA PEREIRA, Mr KOLAJA, Ms CHARANZOVÁ, Ms BEER, Ms HAUTALA, Mr PAPADIMOULIS and Ms McGUINNESS, Vice-Presidents, and Ms SANDER, Mr CASA and Mr BOYER, Quaestors, who:

- expressed their agreement that Parliament must respect the requirement to hold its part-sessions in Strasbourg as stipulated in the Treaty, and to revert to meeting in Strasbourg as soon as possible,

- expressed their gratitude to the French national and local authorities for all the efforts carried out to host the part-session of Parliament in Strasbourg, despite the sanitary situation, and their solidarity for the services producers
and economic actors in Strasbourg that are facing difficult times due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the organisation of the part-session in Alsace;

- agreed with the decision by the President to hold the September part-session in Brussels, given the current evolution of the pandemic;

- thanked the administration for its work to maintain the functioning of Parliament during the pandemic, which was an historical achievement;

- welcomed the solution that had been implemented for freelance interpreters who had been severely impacted by the decrease in meeting activities in Parliament; acknowledged that Parliament is the only EU and international institution offering such a scheme for freelance interpreters; enquired about the possibility for interpreters who could not travel, to interpret remotely for example from the European Parliament Liaison Offices;

- expressed their agreement with the measures proposed by the President,

- enquired about financial arrangements for cancelled visitor groups and about a carry-over, from 2020, of unused parts of the Members’ quota for sponsored visitor groups,

- enquired about the possibility to allow individual visitors in Parliament’s buildings, noting that it was not necessarily safer for Members to arrange meetings outside Parliament, inter alia, in cafés and restaurants;

- expressed their support for the establishment of an onsite PCR testing facility in Brussels, in the immediate surroundings of Parliament, noting that fast access and the rapid availability of test results were of the utmost importance for Members whose Member States had introduced the requirement to present a negative COVID-19 test result in order to avoid quarantine upon their return from Parliamentary activities in Brussels,

- reiterated their urge for the implementation of a system that would allow Members to speak remotely in plenary,

- enquired about the organisation of votes by secret ballot in Parliament’s plenary and committees,
• suggested to enhance communication efforts about the vaccination against seasonal flu, given the importance of this matter in the current situation;

- heard the President explain that various requests raised in the debate could now be examined in the light of the extension of measures in Parliament linked to the pandemic, which gave Parliament’s administration a longer horizon for the development and implementation of solutions, stressing that applicable rules and regulations, including relevant national legislation, had to be observed;

- concerning the proposal to extend the Bureau decision of 20 March 2020 governing alternative electronic voting, heard Mr KOLAJA and Ms HAUTALA, Vice-Presidents, express the view that, in order to guarantee the integrity of voting in committees, all votes, including votes on individual amendments, should be registered by roll-call;

- heard the President explain that Parliament’s Rules of Procedure did not make roll-call votes on individual amendments, of which there were often very high numbers, mandatory in the committees; it was therefore a decision to be taken by the Chair of each committee;

- heard Mr WIELAND, Vice-President, address the complaints in connection with a voting procedure in the ITRE committee, ask that they be looked into and that a comprehensive response be given to the complainants, and suggest that the Conference of Committee Chairs be invited to examine the question of differences in voting procedures between the committees;

- heard the Secretary-General explain, in response to questions, that:

• while a budgetary transfer for sponsored visitor groups from 2020 to following years was not possible, it could be envisaged to carry over unused visitors quotas, possibly over a span over some years, for instance 2022-2024, since the year 2021 was likely to be affected by continued restrictions, noting that a proposal to this end could be submitted to the Bureau
• in view of the expected duration of the pandemic, the systematic deployment of virtual visits as already offered by DG COMM, was a necessary tool,

• it should be recalled that interpretation in Parliament was performed by officials, by Brussels-based freelancers and by freelancers residing in all Member States, noting that remote interpretation was a possible solution in the case of the latter who often covered the lesser-used languages and who could potentially be affected by travel restrictions,

• communication about seasonal flu will be provided, noting that the Medical Service would be able to vaccinate Members and staff upon request,

• while the question of speaking remotely in plenary was not only a technical question, but also the subject of diverging political opinions, a technical solution is being explored in view of the October I part-session,

• in the case of votes by secret ballot, it was possible to proceed by e-mail voting, while complex votes currently relied on the iVote-app, noting that a new system, no longer exclusive to iOS devices but also available on other platforms, was to be implemented from 12 October 2020, provided that the outcome of current tests was positive,

• the ambition was that test results from the onsite PCR testing facility would be available within 24 hours;

- approved the cancellation of Members’ sponsored visitor groups until 31 December 2020;

- mandated the Secretary-General to implement onsite testing facilities;

B. DECISIONS WITHOUT DEBATE

6. Opening of the Citizens' Garden - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, without debate,

- took note of the information provided in the note dated 3 September 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled ‘Opening of the Citizens’ Garden’, and related annex (PE 653.599/BUR and annex).
7. **Archives of the European Parliament: Annual Report for 2019 - Note from the Secretary-General**

The Bureau, without debate,

- took note of the note dated 24 July 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled ‘Archives of the European Parliament: Annual Report for 2019’ (PE 653.600/BUR and annex);

- took note of the sixteenth Annual Report of the Archives of the European Parliament for the year 2019;

- authorised its distribution and notification to the other EU institutions, and its publication on the Parliament’s websites.
8. **Proposed dates for the European Youth Event (EYE) in 2021 - Note from the Secretary-General**

The Bureau, without debate,

- took note of the note dated 24 July 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled ‘Proposed dates for the European Youth Event (EYE) in 2021’ (PE 653.601/BUR);

- approved the proposed dates for the next EYE on 28 and 29 May 2021.
9. **Accessibility for all in the buildings of the European Parliament - Note from the Secretary-General**

The Bureau, with debate,

- **took note** of the information provided in the note dated 24 July 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled ‘Accessibility for all in the buildings of the European Parliament’ (PE 653.602/BUR and annexes);

- **endorsed** the measures aimed at further enhancing ‘accessibility for all’ in Parliament’s buildings.
10. **Dissolution of the political groups “Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy” and “Europe of Nations and Freedom” - Note from the Secretary-General**

The Bureau, without debate,

- **took note** of the note dated 24 July 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled ‘Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy’ (PE 653.603/BUR and annexes);

- **took note** of the completion of the dissolution process of the former political groups Europe of Nations and Freedom and Europe for Freedom and Direct Democracy.
11. **Statement of assurance (DAS) 2019 – Parliament’s reply to the observations of the Court of Auditors - Note from the Secretary-General**

The **Bureau**, without debate,

- **took note** of the note dated 3 September from the Secretary-General entitled “Statement of assurance (DAS) 2019 – Parliament’s reply to the observations of the Court of Auditors’ (PE 653.604/BUR and annexes);

- **took note** of the Court of Auditors’ observations attached to this note concerning the European Parliament;

- **approved** the draft replies to the Court pursuant to Article 37 of the Internal Rules on the implementation of Parliament’s budget;

- **asked** the President to forward Parliament’s approved replies to the Court of Auditors and for information to the European Commission.
The Bureau, with debate,

- took note of the note dated 3 September 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled 'Parliament’s reading of its Draft Budget for 2021' (PE 653.605/BUR and annex);

- heard Mr SILVA PEREIRA, Vice-President, support the efforts of the Secretary-General to manage the Parliament’s budget and propose compromise solutions based on the position of the Bureau and the negotiations with the Committee on Budgets, agree with the need to make reasonable adjustments (leading to the limited 1.31% increase of the EP budget in comparison to 2020) and express strong objection to the European Commission’s reduction of the Parliament’s estimates in the proposed draft budget, thus challenging the role of the European Parliament as budgetary authority and deviating from the traditional practice;

- heard Mr WIELAND, Vice-President, underline the political aspect of this situation and the fact that reductions proposed by the European Commission are unacceptable, and invite the President to take a firm stance in defence of the Parliament’s prerogatives;

- heard the President agree with the arguments of the two Vice-Presidents, and remind that Parliament already had to protest against similar cases of general reductions in the past;

- approved the following proposals to amend the Draft Budget:

  a) an increase of EUR 346 000 for Item 101 (the remaining EUR 2 154 000 being channelled to the new bodies),
  b) an increase of EUR 2 067 660 for Item 2007,
  c) a decrease of EUR 3 500 000 for Item 1401 for security guards,
  d) an increase of EUR 3 500 000 for Item 2026 for the prolongation of the ongoing security guards contract,
  e) an increase of EUR 1 000 000 for Item 2000 for the rent of Tower A and
Tower B buildings in Luxembourg,

f) a decrease of EUR 1 000 000 on Item 2120 (furniture),

g) an increase of Item 1400 with EUR 1 202 000 to cover additional staff needs for the five newly created committees,

h) an increase of EUR 13 000 for Item 3020 to cover reception and representation expenses in relation with the 5 committees,

i) an increase of EUR 77 000 for Item 3042 for the meetings and conferences for the 5 committees,

j) an increase of EUR 862 000 for Item 3200 for the acquisition of expertise for the 5 committees.
Performance audit - The European Personnel Selection Office: Selection process insufficiently adapted to evolving recruitment needs - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, without debate,

- took note of the note dated 4 September 2020 from the Secretary-General entitled ‘Performance audit - The European Personnel Selection Office: Selection process insufficiently adapted to evolving recruitment needs’ (PE 653.606/BUR and annex);

- took note of the observations by the Court of Auditors;

- instructed the Secretary-General to organise specialist competitions in house, when appropriate.
14. **Request from the Association for the Support of Patients with Pneumonia and their Families (NEUMOAI) to light up a building of the European Parliament in a blue colour on 12 November 2020 on the occasion of World Pneumonia Day ‘Light for Pneumonia Education and Prevention - 2020-2024’ - Letter from Dr. Catia CILLÓNIZ, President of Association for the Support of Patients with Pneumonia and their Families (NEUMOAI)**

The Bureau, without debate,

- **took note** of a letter dated 6 July 2020 from Ms Catia CILLÓNIZ, MD, President of Association for the Support of Patients with Pneumonia and their Families (NEUMOAI) requesting Parliament to illuminate its buildings with blue-coloured light on 12 November 2020 from 21.00 to 22.00, on the occasion of “World Pneumonia Day” (PE 653.607/BUR and financial statement);

- **took note** that the initiative, entitled “PneumoLight”, sought to raise awareness about pneumonia among citizens and public authorities over a five-year project period;

- **took note** that the initiative went beyond the current health crisis, since the organisers had explained that while society would pass the COVID-19 pandemic, pneumonia would continue to be a disease that affected thousands of people worldwide;

- **took note** of the financial statement, which set the cost for an internal illumination in Parliament, with limited visibility from the outside, at EUR 3,000, while noting that the services had indicated that an external facade illumination with increased visibility, similar to, *inter alia*, the recurrent “Orange the World” initiative, raising awareness about violence against women, would amount to approximately EUR 12,000;

- **recalled** its decision of 9 May 2016, in which the Bureau agreed that “the lighting-up of Parliament on specific dates with specific colours should remain an exceptional awareness-raising measure reserved for causes directly related to Parliament’s political activities for which a wide impact is sought”;
- recalled that a number of illumination initiatives linked to diseases had been declared on the basis of the aforementioned decision;

- recalled its decision of 6 July 2020 to authorise the participation of Parliament in the “Go Gold campaign” against childhood cancer, considered as an appropriate awareness-raising initiative related to the political activities of Parliament in view of the decision to set up a special committee on beating cancer with a specific reference to childhood cancer;

- took note that the initiative, as proposed, was not, strictly speaking, directly linked to Parliament’s political activities;

- on the basis of the considerations mentioned above, declined the request to participate in the “PneumoLight” initiative.
Public Hearings

15. Request from the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) to organise a remote hearing on 'Fruits, vegetables and wine market situation – the impact of the EU measures to face the COVID-19 pandemic', on 26 October 2020 - Letter from Mr LINS, Chair of the Committee concerned

The Bureau, without debate,

- took note of a letter dated 27 August 2020 from Mr LINS, Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI), requesting authorisation to organise a remote hearing on 'Fruits, vegetables and wine market situation – the impact of the EU measures to face the COVID-19 pandemic', on 26 October 2020 (PE 653.608/BUR);

- took note of the decision of the President of 26 August 2020, renewing previous ones, on measures to be taken in connection with the COVID-19 outbreak, providing for that committee hearings with physical attendance are cancelled until further notice;

- took note that the requested hearing is expected to take place in an online format, on 26 October 2020 from 16:45 to 18:45, a time set aside for an ordinary meeting of the AGRI Committee;

- took note that no travel expenses and daily allowances will have to be covered by the Parliament as experts will intervene remotely;

- recalled similar decisions taken by the Bureau during its meetings of 11 May, 15 June and 6 July 2020 as regards the authorisation of hearings with remote participants requested by the AFCO, AFET, ENVI, JURI committees and the SEDE subcommittee;

- granted, in principle, the authorisation requested, subject to a competence clearance by the Conference of Committee Chairs;

- invited the AGRI Committee, pursuant to Article 5 of the applicable Rules, to notify the President, prior to the hearing, of the final programme as well as the names and capacities of the invited experts and, if applicable, whether the latter
comply with the registration requirements of the Transparency Register, as required by Article 7 of the applicable Rules.
16. Request from the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) to organise a remote meeting with experts ahead of the LIBE Security Dialogue with the Commission on ‘Police information exchange and in particular the future developments regarding Prüm and the API Council Directive’ including the presentation of the corresponding briefing procured by the Policy Department, on 22 September 2020 - Letter from Mr LÓPEZ AGUILAR, Chair of the Committee concerned

The Bureau, without debate,

- took note of a letter dated 6 August 2020 from Mr LÓPEZ AGUILAR, Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), requesting authorisation to organise a remote meeting with experts ahead of the LIBE Security Dialogue with the Commission on ‘Police information exchange and in particular the future developments regarding Prüm and the API Council Directive’, including the presentation of the corresponding briefing procured by the Policy Department in accordance with the rules on public contracts, on 22 September 2020 (PE 653.609/BUR);

- took note of the decision of the President of 26 August 2020 on measures to be taken in connection with the COVID-19 outbreak, providing for that committee hearings and similar events with physical attendance are cancelled until further notice;

- took note that the requested hearing including the presentation of the corresponding briefing is expected to take place in an online format on 22 September 2020 at a time set aside for an ordinary meeting of the LIBE Committee;

- took note that no travel expenses and daily allowances will have to be covered by the Parliament as both experts and the author of the briefing will intervene remotely;

- recalled similar decisions taken by the Bureau during its meetings of 11 May, 15 June and 6 July 2020 as regards the authorisation of hearings with remote participants requested by the AFCO, AFET, ENVI, JURI committees and the SEDE subcommittee;
- granted, in principle, the authorisation requested, subject to a competence clearance by the Conference of Committee Chairs;

- invited the LIBE Committee, pursuant to Article 5 of the applicable Rules, to notify the President, prior to the hearing, of the final programme, the exact timing, as well as the names and capacities of the invited experts and, if applicable, whether the latter comply with the registration requirements of the Transparency Register, as required by Article 7 of the applicable Rules.
17. **Urgent matters and any other business**

17.1 **The alternative electronic voting procedure at the part-sessions**

The Bureau,

- heard Ms BEER highlight a problem incurred with the electronic voting system, more precisely a case where the correctly filled, signed and submitted ballot paper of a Member was not counted, because the vote had been changed on the computer in the Member’s office afterwards, without submitting the second ballot paper with the Member’s signature; and insist that only signed ballot papers should be counted, as this was the only guarantee for a real vote by a Member;

- heard the President announce that the responsible services will examine the matter.
18. Items for information

The Bureau,

- took note of the following documents:

  Interinstitutional mail

  External mail

  Internal mail

- Assessment of the alternative electronic voting procedure at the part-session held on 8-10 July 2020 - Note from the Secretary-General (PE 653.610/BUR and annex)

- STOA Annual Report for the year 2019 – Letter from Ms KAILI, Chair of the STOA Panel (PE 653.611/BUR and annex)

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19. **Date and place of next meeting**

   The Bureau,

   - decided to hold its next ordinary meeting on **Monday, 05 October 2020** from **18:30 to 20:30**.

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   The meeting closed at 19:58 hours.

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