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Challenge on procedural grounds of the still unratified credentials of the parliamentary delegation of the Slovak Republic

Committee Opinion¹

Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

Rapporteur: Ms Elena CENTEMERO, Italy, Group of the European People's Party

A. Conclusions of the committee

1. The Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination welcomes and fully endorses the draft resolution prepared by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs.
2. The challenge of credentials of the parliamentary delegation of the Slovak delegation demonstrates that gender equality cannot be taken for granted but requires our constant vigilance. The committee wishes to underline how important it is for the Assembly to lead by example and to apply to its own structures the principles it promotes.
3. In the light of the above, the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination wishes to propose one amendment to further strengthen the draft resolution.

B. Proposed amendment

Amendment A (to the draft resolution)

At the end of paragraph 2, add the following sentence:

“The Assembly also recalls its [Resolution 2111 \(2016\)](#) “Assessing the impact of measures to improve women’s political representation” and its support for the principle of gender parity as the ultimate goal in political representation.”

C. Explanatory memorandum by Ms Elena Centemero, rapporteur for opinion

1. It is the first time that a challenge of credentials based on the absence of a woman as representative in a national delegation has been referred to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination. No other case requiring referral for opinion to the committee has arisen since this possibility was introduced in 2014 in the Rules of Procedure (Rule 7.2).

1. Reference to committee: Assembly decision, Reference 4273 of 23 January 2017. Reporting committee: Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs. See [Doc. 14247](#). Opinion approved by the committee on 24 January 2017



2. Gender equality is a requirement for all democratic societies. Achieving gender equality in all spheres of public and private life is one of the goals of the Council of Europe, and the Parliamentary Assembly has contributed to it through the adoption of numerous resolutions and recommendations. Since 1996, the Assembly has also adopted several resolutions aimed at ensuring better gender balance in its own functioning. A key measure in this respect was the introduction in 2003 in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of Rule 6.2.a, which imposes the presence of at least one woman parliamentarian in the composition of national delegations to the Assembly. This measure was modified in 2010 to oblige national delegations to appoint, as representative, at least one person of the under-represented sex.

3. The statistics published every year since 2012 show that the level of representation of women as members of the Assembly has progressively improved, reaching 39% in 2016. It is worth noting that in 2016 women represented 41% of the Assembly's representatives and 38% of the substitutes. This constitutes a significant achievement of the Assembly, which set an objective of 40% representation of women in its [Resolution 1585 \(2007\)](#) on gender equality principles in the Parliamentary Assembly. The committee considers that a step further would be to set gender parity as a new objective and it recalls that the Assembly expressed its support for this principle in [Resolution 2111 \(2016\)](#) "Assessing the impact of measures to improve women's political representation". The committee notes with satisfaction that in December 2016, eight national delegations already had full parity.²

2. Cyprus, Czech Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and San Marino.