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Possibility for remote participation in committee meetings outside Parliamentary Assembly sessions

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Anne KALMARI and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Most of the preparatory work of the Parliamentary Assembly is done in the committees that meet regularly during the part-sessions in Strasbourg but also in Paris or elsewhere. Committees are forums for members to discuss issues close to their hearts and minds. On the other hand, members also have duties and discussions in their national parliaments. Many members surely want to minimise the absences and maximise the discussions in which they can participate. Remote participation could be a great help in combining the tasks and meeting the demands.

Many large organisations today use the possibilities of modern connections to allow remote participation in meetings held outside their headquarters. Remote participation can be justified because it is more climate-friendly, i.e. reducing the need for frequent flights. Also travel to and from the meetings, often during the same or the following day, sometimes require more of the members' time than the meeting itself. Moreover, remote participation would reduce travel expenses. These arguments are in line with the general aims and values of the Council of Europe.

It is still very necessary for committee members to meet in person and to become acquainted. This happens naturally during Assembly sessions and is the basis for effective work and dialogue. Even in the case of occasional remote participation, the other members would still know the remote participant.

The Assembly should explore whether remote participation in committee meetings, e.g. via Skype, could be an option in order to increase participation, make savings and tackle climate change. The Assembly should consider organising trial runs for remote participation at some of its overseas meetings and then put forward a set of recommendations for making remote participation available. Naturally, any practice would exclude chairpersons or rapporteurs.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
FDG: Free Democrats Group
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group