Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 15047
28 January 2020

Relationship between the parliamentary majority and the opposition in a democracy

Motion for a resolution
tabled by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

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

In June 2019, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) adopted an opinion on the Parameters on the relationship between the parliamentary majority and the opposition in a democracy: a Checklist.

The Checklist is a result of a long and careful work carried out by the Venice Commission which took its origin in Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1601 (2008) on *Procedural guidelines on the rights and responsibilities of the opposition in a democratic parliament*. It is a worthy attempt to introduce soft regulations in an area which is essential for the proper functioning of parliamentary democracy.

Six years after the Venice Commission published a first report on *The role of the opposition in a democratic parliament,* the Secretary General of the Organisation, noting worrying trends in his 2016 annual report, asked the Venice Commission to formulate guidelines on the relations between the majority and the opposition thus initiating the process which led to the Checklist.

For its part, the Assembly has been associated in the work on the Checklist at several stages. It should now welcome the elaboration of the Checklist, disseminate it and recommend it to the parliaments of the Council of Europe member and observer States, as well as to the Parliaments enjoying partner for democracy status.

In line with existing practice as regards a number of documents emanating from the Venice Commission, including the Codes of good practice in electoral matters and on referendums, and more recently the Rule of Law Checklist, the Assembly could also formally endorse the new Checklist.

Furthermore, the Assembly should continue to review, in co-operation with the Venice Commission, the issues raised in the Checklist, with a view to developing it further if required.