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More participatory democracy to tackle climate change

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

The climate crisis is being felt across the world, scientific evidence indicating global warming is unequivocal and young protesters have taken to the streets. However, governments are slow to react and to develop concrete strategies which build public support for far-reaching climate action, which requires the confrontation of vested interests and a firm commitment to environmental values.

Some experts have claimed that, on climate change, “democracy is the problem, not the solution” and that it might be necessary to “put democracy on hold”. At the same time, initiatives such as citizens’ assemblies are emerging in several Council of Europe member States, providing a detailed understanding of people’s concerns regarding climate change.

Involving people in genuine debate and deliberation is essential to tackle the climate crisis through effective and transformative policies.

Already in 2010, in [Resolution 1746 \(2010\)](#) and [Recommendation 1928 \(2010\)](#) on *Democracy in Europe: crises and perspectives*, based on a report by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, the Assembly stressed the need to increase citizens’ active participation and ensure further involvement of all people in the conduct of public affairs. Council of Europe member States were also called to establish participatory and deliberative structures, such as citizens’ juries or conferences. Such structures and initiatives are more necessary than ever to facilitate citizens’ participation in decision-making on a “public affair” that is of urgent concern to them.

The Assembly should therefore pursue its reflection on how to improve the bridge between people and institutions, as well as the overall democratic processes, to build public support for urgent climate action, including through participatory democracy.

