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Establishment of a “youth partner” status with the Parliamentary Assembly

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media

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

Over a tenth of European adult population is under 30 years of age. These young people have the same rights and obligations, yet they are starkly under-represented in all institutional political processes and policymaking, and their possibilities to have a say over any decisions concerning the societies they live in is limited.

While mainstream politics has lost its attraction among the youth, increasing numbers of young adults seek alternative spaces to express their concerns. Their low rates of political participation should be of serious concern. Only around 4% of young adults are active party members, and the same small proportion is represented in national parliaments.

Young people face various obstacles to their participation, including eligibility rules often not allowing them to run before they are 25 or even 40 for the upper houses. This leaves a full segment of population out of political decision-making and deprives the parliaments of a significant youth component with proper agency and influence.

Whereas it might take years to attain a proportional age representation in local and national parliaments, the Parliamentary Assembly, which itself incorporates only 4 representatives and 12 substitutes under the age of 30 in its current composition (2.3%), should act now and look for more structured avenues of involving organised youth in a meaningful way in its activities. A political partnership with organisations belonging to the Council of Europe Advisory Council of Youth would allow young Europeans to have a say on matters that are not only focused on youth issues but which still impact them.

The Assembly is called upon to set up a youth partnership status with the Assembly along the lines of the existing partnership for democracy status as stipulated in Rule 64 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

