Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2443 (2022)[1]

The role of political parties in fostering diversity and inclusion: a new charter for a non-racist society

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Racism and intolerance are rife in Europe, in spite of the efforts to eradicate them on the part of public authorities, civil society organisations and many other actors. Forms of intolerance including Afrophobia, antigypsyism, antisemitism, Islamophobia and xenophobia, as well as online and offline hate speech, are on the rise. Moreover, certain individuals and groups that are habitual victims of structural discrimination and widespread bias face additional hostility and scapegoating whenever Europe is affected by an international crisis, such as the 2015 refugee crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic and most recently the war of aggression waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

2. The Council of Europe has long been committed to combating racism and intolerance through the action of its bodies and organs, in particular the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). The Parliamentary Assembly has consistently contributed to these efforts by raising awareness of upsurges in racial hatred, hate speech and various forms of intolerance and by calling on member States to urgently implement specific measures it has prescribed.

3. Recalling its Resolution 1967 (2014) "A strategy to prevent racism and intolerance in Europe" and Resolution 2275 (2019) "The role and responsibilities of political leaders in combating hate speech and intolerance", the Assembly reiterates that government representatives and politicians in general should lead the efforts to eliminate racism, hatred and intolerance with resolve and set an example by publicly challenging, rejecting and condemning expressions of hatred, from whatever quarters they come. The Assembly also reiterates that politicians, along with other public figures, have a vital role to play in promoting a model of society that embraces diversity and respects human dignity and in embodying this model, as their status and visibility allow them to influence a wide audience, to set an example for others and to set to a significant degree the themes and tone of public discourse.

4. In this context, political parties are best placed to counter racism, intolerance and hate speech, promote diversity and foster inclusion in European societies. In times of electoral campaigns and in their regular activity, their communication largely contributes to shaping the political discourse. Political parties enjoy a wide autonomy in regulating their internal functioning and the duties of their members. In addition, as the main gatekeepers of elected bodies, they are best placed to promote the political representation of all social groups and communities.

5. The Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-Racist Society, drawn up under the auspices of the European Union Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia and opened for signature in Utrecht in 1998, was a praiseworthy initiative that gave political parties the possibility to formalise their commitment to defending basic human rights and democratic principles and rejecting all forms of racism, intolerance and hate speech. The charter was based on the self-regulatory power of political parties. Over 80 European parties had adhered to the charter by 2003.

1. *Assembly debate on 20 June 2022* (18th sitting) (see Doc. 15535, report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Mr Momodou Malcolm Jallow; and Doc. 15536, opinion of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Sir Tony Lloyd). T*ext adopted by the Assembly* on 20 June 2022 (18th sitting).

6. The Assembly welcomes the revision of the charter undertaken by its Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination in co-operation with the European Parliament's Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and the document resulting from this process.

7. In view of the evolution of Europe's social and political landscape and the manifestations of racism and intolerance that have emerged in the decades that have followed the adoption of the original document, its revised version has a wider scope, reflected in a new title: Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-racist and Inclusive Society.

8. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly:

8.1. endorses the revised Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-racist and Inclusive Society[2] and calls on all democratic political parties to sign and enforce it in their internal functioning and their public action, including by asking that all members formally commit to complying with its principles by signing the charter personally and by establishing independent complaints mechanisms;

8.2. calls on the national parliaments of Council of Europe member States to endorse the charter, and on political groups and national delegations in the Assembly to promote it among their members;

8.3. invites the European Parliament to endorse the charter and promote it among its political groups;

8.4. encourages civil society actors, including the media, to observe the conduct of political parties and play a proactive role in holding them accountable in the event of non-compliance with their commitments under the charter.

9. The Assembly intends to periodically review the state of implementation of the charter and considers that the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance should be associated with the relevant procedure, and that it should contribute to the promotion of the charter among political parties and groups.

2. The text of the charter is appended to the report (Doc. 15535).