Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2602 (2025)[1]

Interconnections between the Council of Europe and the European Political Community

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Following a proposal made by the President of the French Republic on 9 May 2022 at the closing ceremony of the Conference on the Future of Europe, leaders of the European Union agreed at the European Council meeting in June 2022 to launch the European Political Community, with the aim of bringing together European Union and non-European Union countries on the European continent. The ambition was to foster political dialogue and co-operation among leaders to address issues of common interest to strengthen the security, stability and prosperity of the European continent.

2. The launch of the European Political Community demonstrated the willingness of European Union leaders to rapidly react and adapt the multilateral architecture of Europe to a deeply challenging geopolitical environment, marked, in particular, by the full-scale war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

3. So far, five summits – one every six months – have been held, hosted alternately by the European Union member State holding the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union and a non-European Union country. Since the inaugural summit in Prague in October 2022, summits held in the Republic of Moldova, Spain, the United Kingdom and Hungary have focused on peace, prosperity, security, energy resilience, connectivity and, most recently, democracy and migration.

4. The non-institutionalised and flexible nature of the European Political Community has created unique possibilities for dialogue that would otherwise not be possible in other frameworks. The Parliamentary Assembly notes that the European Political Community, a platform for political co-ordination, does not replace any existing organisation, structure or process, nor does it seek to create new ones. The Assembly also notes that the European Political Community has no legal basis establishing a formal membership. It underlines that the European Political Community has remained an informal intergovernmental platform for political dialogue between European leaders from European Union member States and non-European Union member States, in the presence of European Union institutions. Operational work is carried out by the host country and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, while continuity between European Political Community summits of European leaders is ensured by the President of the European Council.

5. The Assembly welcomes the participation of the Council of Europe in the last two summits of the European Political Community in Oxfordshire and Budapest. To ensure synergies and complementarity between the European Political Community and the Council of Europe, a pan-European political community of 46 member States based on a treaty (Statute of the Council of Europe, ETS No. 1), the Assembly encourages future host countries to maintain this invitation to the Organisation.

6. As the European Political Community is not meant to replace the European Union's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, it adds another circle to the already existing variable geometry of European integration. In that respect, the European Political Community has yet to prove that it can contribute to the further alignment of non-European Union countries.

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1. *Assembly debate* on 10 April 2025 (17th sitting) (see Doc. 16128, report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Mr Zsolt Németh). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 10 April 2025 (17th sitting).

7. Although the nature and objectives of the Council of Europe and the European Political Community are not the same, the question of the links between the new European Political Community and the long-standing Europe-wide political activity of the Council of Europe was raised from the outset. Since then, the geographical scope of participation in the European Political Community has come closer to that of the Council of Europe member States, and the wider range of issues addressed by the European Political Community has highlighted the need to seek co-operation, in line with the Reykjavik Declaration. In addition, the support of the Council of Europe to Ukraine and its efforts to hold the Russian Federation accountable for its war of aggression against Ukraine make the Organisation a key partner of the European Political Community.

8. In light of these considerations, the Assembly:

8.1. recalls that the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe met at their 4th Summit in Reykjavik on 16 and 17 May 2023 to stand united against Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and to give further priority and direction to the work of the Council of Europe. They reiterated the pan-European role of the Council of Europe and confirmed that it is uniquely placed to bring together, on an equal footing, all the countries of Europe to protect democratic security on the continent and to counter the undermining of human rights, democracy and the rule of law;

8.2. stresses that the Council of Europe is a pan-European political community of 46 member States;

8.3. believes that, at this pivotal moment for Europe, the Council of Europe must be an ever stronger and more resilient pillar of multilateralism. The Council of Europe should play a proactive role in the discussions related to the European political architecture. It should also maintain its leading intergovernmental role in all matters relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe, and its leading responsibility for the functioning of its convention system.

9. Furthermore, in this rapidly shifting geopolitical landscape, where the rules-based international order faces severe challenges, the Assembly believes that European leaders should bring the European Political Community and the Council of Europe closer together and, in line with the Reykjavik Declaration, set an example of effective and dynamic multilateralism that promotes shared values and underpins security and stability in Europe.

10. Equally, the Assembly considers that the unprecedented challenges currently facing Europe call for ever closer co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union. As reaffirmed in the Reykjavik Declaration, "the European Union is the main institutional partner of the Council of Europe in political, legal, and financial terms". The Council of Europe should further strengthen its strategic partnership with the European Union.

11. The Assembly also recalls the invaluable role of the Council of Europe in the European Union enlargement process. In this context, the Council of Europe, as the benchmark for human rights, the rule of law and democracy in Europe, should increase its support to enhance the level of preparedness of candidate and potential candidate countries for European Union accession.

12. Consequently, as regards relations between the Council of Europe and the European Political Community, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member States, in particular European Political Community host countries and, when relevant, European Union leaders to:

12.1. ensure synergies and co-ordination between the European Political Community and the Council of Europe, notably by ensuring systematic participation of the Council of Europe in European Political Community summits;

12.2. develop, during European Political Community summits, a format for dialogue on strategic issues, with the Council of Europe, on matters falling under its mandate;

12.3. make full use of the participation of the Council of Europe in European Political Community summits for additional high-level dialogue;

12.4. develop contact points through senior officials in the Council of Europe Secretariat in Strasbourg, in close co-operation with the Council of Europe Liaison Office in Brussels, and in the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union;

12.5. make full use of Council of Europe instruments and work, notably on democracy through the New Democratic Pact for Europe under preparation;

12.6. consider developing a joint declaration to ensure complementarity of respective activities and develop further synergies.

13. Regarding the role of the Council of Europe, the Assembly calls on the Council of Europe member States to:

13.1. strengthen the position of the Council of Europe as the leading intergovernmental organisation in Europe promoting and safeguarding human rights, democracy and the rule of law, in the evolving European and global multilateral architecture as they committed to in Reykjavik;

13.2. further develop the role of the Council of Europe as a resilient and robust political community and a platform for strategic and political dialogue, diplomacy and multilateralism, where member States can come together to address shared challenges and pursue common goals, by:

13.2.1. enhancing the political dimension of its work and bodies;

13.2.2. ensuring efficient co-ordination of functions and responsibilities with other institutions and fora within the multilateral architecture;

13.2.3. convening summits of heads of State and government on a more regular basis.

13.3. support the further development of Council of Europe work in the area of democratic security and democratic resilience.

14. Finally, the Assembly resolves to continue to act as a dynamic platform for pan-European political dialogue and parliamentary diplomacy.