



Recommendation 2305 (2026)¹

Violence and hate speech against politicians: a threat to democracy

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly draws the Committee of Ministers' attention to its [Resolution 2646 \(2026\)](#) "Violence and hate speech against politicians: a threat to democracy", in which it underlines that violence against politicians is on the rise in many Council of Europe member and observer States.
2. The Assembly is concerned that violence against politicians at all levels can have a chilling effect on democratic participation in political life, thereby reducing pluralism, representativeness and the quality of democratic processes and institutions. Intimidation, threats and other forms of verbal, physical or sexual attacks can also have a considerable impact on the mental well-being of politicians, reducing their ability to work and serve the public. Urgent action is therefore needed to prevent and counter this phenomenon.
3. Certain categories, such as women politicians and representatives of minority groups, are disproportionately targeted, including through gender-based violence, sexual threats and misogynist, homophobic or racist attacks. Particular attention should therefore be paid to these categories to ensure that they are not discouraged from participating in politics and to safeguard the diversity and representativeness of elected officials.
4. The Assembly recalls that the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe adopted in 2023 the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy, through which they committed to ensuring "full, equal and meaningful participation in political and public life for all, in particular for women and girls, free from violence, fear, harassment, hate speech and hate crime, as well as discrimination based on any ground" (Principle 10).
5. The Assembly also refers to Recommendation 544 (2026) and Resolution 522 (2026) "Preserving grassroots democracy – Tackling violence against local and regional elected representatives", adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in April 2026.
6. The Assembly believes that, in the framework of the New Democratic Pact for Europe, the Council of Europe could play a leading role in ensuring that violence against politicians at all levels is adequately tackled, thus strengthening democratic security across the continent.
7. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to consider establishing a mechanism to identify and track specific threats or episodes of violence against politicians at local, regional and national levels, which could take the form of a Council of Europe platform or observatory.
8. The mechanism would increase understanding of this phenomenon and help the competent authorities improve their prevention and response efforts. It could also be used to collect data for the analysis of trends and be instrumental in raising awareness of the matter through dedicated Council of Europe public campaigns.
9. The Assembly calls on the Committee of Ministers to further develop early warning mechanisms to detect democratic backsliding.

1. *Assembly debate* on 21 April 2026 (12th and 13th sittings) (see [Doc. 16363](#), report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Ms Elisabetta Gardini; and [Doc. 16382](#), opinion of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Yevheniia Kravchuk). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 21 April 2026 (13th sitting).

