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Review of regulations for election observations by the Parliamentary Assembly

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Jürgen HARDT and other members of the Assembly

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

The Parliamentary Assembly played a central role in establishing institutionalised observation of elections in Europe. So far, over 140 election observations have taken place, in which over 1,800 parliamentarians have participated. In these observations, the Assembly works together with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, ODIHR (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), the European Parliament, and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

In its "Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters" (Opinion no. 190/2002 of 30 October 2002), the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) stated: "Compliance with the five underlying principles of the European electoral heritage (universal, equal, free, secret and direct suffrage) is essential for democracy." The Venice Commission emphasised that: "Observation of elections plays an important role as it provides evidence of whether the electoral process has been regular or not."

In the Resolution "Ensuring greater democracy in elections" (Doc. 1897 (2012)), the Assembly noted "considerable improvements (...) in most member states of the Council of Europe", but also underlined "irregularities which show that the holding of 'free and fair' elections remains a major challenge to be addressed".

Election observations by the Assembly are carried out in line with the "Guidelines for the observation of elections by the Parliamentary Assembly" (AS/Bur (2015) of 10 March 2015), which set out, for example, the size and composition of the observer mission, time and spatial expansion of the observation and co-operation with other observation missions. It would be useful to examine the existing regulations for election observations by the Assembly. The aim is to see if and where these regulations need to be revised in order to further improve realisation of the Council of Europe's goals of promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
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