



Resolution 2634 (2025)¹

Increasing members' active participation in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Since its establishment, the Parliamentary Assembly has embodied a pioneering vision: placing parliamentarians at the heart of a multilateral organisation dedicated to the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. At a time when both multilateralism and democracy are under strain, active commitment by its members is more crucial than ever to preserve the Assembly's authority and strengthen its role as a guardian of Europe's shared values.
2. The Assembly recognises the unique value of the dual mandate of its members, as both national legislators and members of a pan-European forum, which enables them to enrich European debates and return home as ambassadors of the Council of Europe. It underlines that this dual mandate is both a strength and a challenge, requiring careful organisation and support from political groups and national parliaments. Participation is not merely a procedural formality but a political responsibility. It lends legitimacy to the decisions of the Assembly, reflects the democratic will of Europe's citizens and ensures that the Assembly remains responsive, effective and representative.
3. Building on past reforms and extensive recent consultations, the Assembly considers that its internal procedures and practices must evolve towards a framework that inspires a sense of purpose, fosters ownership, recognises effort, ensures a real impact, promotes equality and fairness and creates the conditions for engaged and effective participation, thereby enabling all members to fulfil their full potential in their work within the Assembly. The Assembly also reaffirms the importance of ensuring that its activities remain accessible and inclusive, while safeguarding high standards of political deliberation.
4. Consequently, the Assembly decides, as a central and forward-looking reform, to strengthen its institutional capacity and the pertinence of its work by creating the possibility for its Bureau to establish special committees. This measure will provide flexibility and ensure that priority or cross-cutting challenges can be addressed with dedicated parliamentary focus. Hence, the Assembly decides to amend its Rules of Procedure by inserting, after Rule 50, the following provision:

"Rule 51 – Special committees

51.1. The Bureau of the Assembly may establish up to two special committees at any given time, each with a clear, time-limited mandate to address priority or transversal issues requiring focused parliamentary consideration.

51.2. Each special committee shall be established for a term of one year, which may be renewed once by a decision of the Bureau.

51.3. The mandate, composition, duration and specific tasks of each special committee shall be defined by the Bureau upon its establishment.

51.4. Special committees shall submit their reports and recommendations within the time frame set by the Bureau and shall automatically cease to exist upon completion of their mandate, the expiry of the one-year period or at the end of the renewal period.

1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 21 November 2025 (see [Doc. 16293](#), report of the Committee on Rules, Ethics and Immunities, rapporteur: Ms Petra Bayr).



51.5. *Members of special committees shall be nominated by the Bureau, taking into account political, geographical and gender balance.*

51.6. *Special committees shall operate under the general rules applicable to general committees, unless otherwise specified by the Bureau.*

51.7. *Members serving on special committees shall be exempt from the membership limitation set out in Rule 44.6.”*

5. To add dynamism to its work and debates, the Assembly decides to:

5.1. introduce a “blue card” mechanism allowing rapporteurs and speakers on behalf of political groups to put direct, concise questions to other speakers during debates. Hence, the Assembly decides to insert, after Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure, the following paragraph:

“37.4. During a debate, the President may give the floor to the rapporteur(s) and to members speaking on behalf of their political groups who indicate, by raising a blue card, their intention to ask another member not belonging to the same political group, in response to that member’s speech, a question lasting no more than thirty seconds, directly related to the speech and the subject of the debate. The member to whom the question is put may respond within the same time limit. The rapporteur(s) may make use of at most two blue cards per debate, and members speaking on behalf of their political groups may make use of one blue card per debate. This procedure shall not apply to exchanges with guest speakers.”;

5.2. while valuing the contribution of its networks in promoting dialogue and co-operation on important themes, invite the Bureau to review the Assembly’s list of networks on a regular basis to ensure that they remain focused on priority objectives, are adequately resourced and can evolve or be phased out once their tasks have been fulfilled;

5.3. require guest speakers to respond to questions from members of the Assembly, so as to ensure a genuine and fruitful exchange within the remit of the Council of Europe;

5.4. encourage opportunities for meaningful exchanges with representatives of the Council of Europe and its bodies, such as the European Court of Human Rights, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), expert bodies and steering committees within the Council of Europe or its institutions, depending on the subject matter. The aim should be genuine co-operation and constructive dialogue, rather than interactions of a purely formal or procedural nature.

6. As regards enhancing participation by a greater number of its members, the Assembly:

6.1. welcomes the Bureau’s recent practice of reducing speaking time from three to two minutes for registered speakers, while proposing to preserve a longer speaking time for political group representatives. It further decides, in the “Additional provisions relating to Assembly debates” (Appendix I.iv. to the Rules of Procedure, “Speaking time”), to:

6.1.1. replace paragraph 1 with the following paragraph:

“Speakers registered for a debate, including youth rapporteurs, shall have three minutes’ speaking time, unless the Bureau decides, at the start of the part-session, owing to the high number of registered speakers for a particular debate, to reduce speaking time for that debate to two minutes. Speakers on behalf of political groups shall have three minutes’ speaking time.”;

6.1.2. add, at the end of paragraph 4, the following words:

“; or two minutes if the speaking time has been reduced to two minutes for the other speakers.”;

6.2. considers that, to ensure orderly proceedings and equitable opportunities for all members, one possible method would be to automatically cut the microphone once a speaker has reached the time limit;

6.3. decides to recognise consistent participation in voting by providing that the 10 members who have participated in the highest number of votes in plenary shall move up seven positions on the lists of speakers. It therefore decides to replace, in the “Additional provisions relating to Assembly debates” (Appendix I.iii. to the Rules of Procedure, “Order of speakers”), in paragraph 10, the word “three” with the word “seven”;

6.4. decides to set limits on the number of simultaneous rapporteurships held per member and per committee. It therefore decides to replace, in Rule 50.1 of the Rules of Procedure, the sentence “A member of the Assembly who is simultaneously rapporteur for five reports or opinions under preparation, on behalf of one or more committees, may not be appointed rapporteur.” with the following text:

“No member may be appointed to prepare more than three reports simultaneously, excluding reports prepared by the Monitoring Committee; reports under the urgent procedure; opinions on the reports of other committees; and reports or opinions for which the chairperson of a committee is required to act as rapporteur. No member may hold more than one general or youth rapporteurship at any one time.”;

6.5. decides to replace the first sentence of Rule 50.7 as follows:

“Committees may appoint one or more general rapporteurs, whose terms of reference they shall determine beforehand, with no more than four general rapporteurs per committee. A chairperson of a committee may not simultaneously hold the position of general rapporteur of that committee.”;

6.6. entrusts the Secretary General of the Assembly, on the basis of guidelines approved by the Bureau of the Assembly, with the implementation of [Resolution 2615 \(2025\)](#) “Promoting inclusive participation in parliamentary life: gender equality, accessibility and inclusive policies”, including the provision of support for limited, exceptional online attendance in committee work for pregnant members, members caring for children under the age of three or those facing health or caregiving challenges.

7. As regards transparency and the optimisation of its order of business, the Assembly decides:

7.1. to lengthen the time limit for distributing lists of speakers to members and, in the “Additional provisions relating to Assembly debates” (Appendix I. *ii.* to the Rules of Procedure, “List of speakers”), to replace paragraph 4 with the following paragraph:

“The list of speakers for a debate taking place during a morning sitting shall be closed at 4 p.m. on the previous day, and for a debate taking place during an afternoon sitting at 9 a.m. on the same day.”;

7.2. to debate the progress report of the Monitoring Committee once every two years, aligning the duration with that of the typical term of office of the committee chairperson. The Assembly therefore decides to amend [Resolution 1115 \(1997\)](#) “Setting up of an Assembly committee on the honouring of obligations and commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)”, as modified, (Appendix VIII.*i* to the Rules of Procedure), by replacing in paragraph 15 the words “once a year” with the words “once every two years”;

7.3. that the chairperson, or, in his or her absence, a vice-chairperson, of the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights shall be invited, during the debate on the Bureau’s progress report, to make a brief oral intervention in order to present the committee’s recommendation on the list of candidates for the post of judge submitted by a member State.

8. As regards visibility, support and outreach, the Assembly resolves to:

8.1. further develop and maintain the PACE-APPS tool, turning it into a dedicated mobile application and member portal offering real-time information on debates, lists of speakers, procedures, voting and resources for members;

8.2. further improve public visibility and communication about its work, including by making the available tools more well known, using concise, media-friendly report titles, enhancing press and social media outreach and making online presentation clearer on the Council of Europe website;

8.3. expand induction, mentoring and training programmes for new members, including handbooks (drawing in particular on the Assembly’s handbook entitled “National parliaments as guarantors of human rights in Europe”), briefings, digital tools and peer support initiatives;

8.4. facilitate joint committee meetings, hearings and best-practice exchanges, to promote collaborative and transversal work for greater coherence and impact;

8.5. collect and analyse data on travel connections to Strasbourg, advocating for improved public transport to and from the city and easier access for members.

9. The Assembly invites national parliaments to support and facilitate members' participation in its work by:
- 9.1. ensuring that members regularly attend plenary sittings and committee meetings, and taking appropriate measures to promote active participation;
 - 9.2. treating Assembly work as an integral component of their members' parliamentary service and providing all necessary practical and political support;
 - 9.3. facilitating "pairing agreements" and similar forms of co-operation among parliamentary groups belonging to the majority and the opposition, to facilitate attendance at sessions and committee meetings;
 - 9.4. aiming to avoid timetabling conflicts between national parliamentary calendars and meetings of other international parliamentary bodies with Assembly sessions;
 - 9.5. encouraging and enhancing reporting by national parliaments on Assembly activities by supporting parliamentary television, briefings, newsletters and plenary debates in national chambers;
 - 9.6. fostering co-operation and information exchange between national parliamentary committees and Assembly committees, including joint hearings and exchange opportunities for officials;
 - 9.7. facilitating parliamentary staff study visits and learning opportunities about the Assembly and the Council of Europe in general;
 - 9.8. monitoring member attendance and working constructively to restore regular participation where needed.
10. The Assembly decides that the amendments to the Rules of Procedure set out in this Resolution shall enter into force at the opening of the January 2026 part-session.