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TEXTS ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY

Provisional versions*

*subject to editorial review.

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Opinion
307

Opinion 307 (2025)¹
Provisional version

Draft protocol amending the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Reiterating in the strongest terms its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, the Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the finalisation of the draft protocol amending the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism as a way to further strengthen the fight against this scourge by taking into account its recent evolution.
2. For many years, the Council of Europe has been developing key legal standards to combat terrorism. Its main legal instrument in the field of counter-terrorism, the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196, hereinafter “the Warsaw Convention”), was adopted in 2005 with the aim of improving counter-terrorism policies and strategies at the domestic level while facilitating international co-operation. In 2015, with the adoption of the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 217), the Council of Europe became the first international organisation to set up a regional legal instrument to implement the obligations imposed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) regarding the fight against foreign terrorist fighters.
3. Once adopted, the draft protocol amending the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (hereinafter “the draft protocol”) will introduce the first internationally binding and comprehensive definition of terrorism expanding the current wording of Article 1 of the Warsaw Convention to encompass all forms of terrorism currently prevalent. In particular, acts such as cyberterrorism affecting critical infrastructure or environmental terrorism were not fully anticipated in 2005, when the Warsaw Convention was adopted. The introduction of a common pan-European legal definition of a terrorist offence, reflecting contemporary challenges, is therefore a welcome and desirable step.
4. The draft protocol modifies the definition of a terrorist offence for the purposes of the Warsaw Convention through the addition of a list of criminal acts which, when intentionally committed with a terrorist aim and given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation. The proposed definition closely resembles that contained in Article 3 of the Directive (EU) 2017/541 on combating terrorism and departs from it only in so far as necessary to apply to the framework of the Warsaw Convention and its Additional Protocol.
5. While being supportive of the need to strengthen the tools to prevent and combat terrorism, the Assembly takes note of the concerns expressed by some Council of Europe member States and international institutions, relating to the scope of the proposed definition of terrorism, which in their view could potentially lead to legal uncertainty and arbitrary, overbroad and abusive application, as well as the lack of an exception clause, which would protect legitimate activities, such as those of humanitarian organisations.
6. The Assembly recalls that the guarantee enshrined in Article 7 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 5, hereinafter “the Convention”) is an essential element of the rule of law. It embodies, among others, the principle that only the law can define a crime and prescribe a penalty (*nullum crimen, nulla poena sine lege*) and the principle that criminal law must not be extensively

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting) (see [Doc. 16186](#), report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Mr Titus Corlăţean). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting).



construed to the detriment of an accused. At the same time, according to the European Court of Human Rights, Article 7 of the Convention cannot be read as outlawing the gradual clarification of the rules of criminal liability through judicial interpretation from case to case, provided that the resultant development is consistent with the essence of the offence and could reasonably be foreseen. These principles cannot be applied less stringently when it comes to the prosecution and punishment of terrorist offences, even in the most difficult of circumstances.

7. The Assembly welcomes the fact that the draft protocol's preamble explicitly reaffirms that all measures taken to prevent or suppress terrorist offences shall be in accordance with relevant human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly those enshrined in the Convention, as well as other obligations under international law, including, where applicable, international humanitarian law. Nonetheless, it regrets that this notion was not reflected in substantive provisions of the draft protocol.

8. Recalling that combating terrorism and protecting Council of Europe standards and values should be complementary objectives, the Assembly reaffirms that for rights which are subject to restrictions under the Convention, any limitation must be necessary in a democratic society and be proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued, in line with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. It further underlines that the right to freedom of expression is applicable not only to "information" or "ideas" that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter of indifference, but also to those that offend, shock or disturb the State or any sector of the population.

9. Referring to its [Resolution 2509 \(2023\)](#) "Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights", the Assembly is mindful of the risk that anti-terror legislation may be misused in some member States for political reasons. It further notes that the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, in its 2021 report on the human rights impact of the Directive (EU) 2017/541, observed that the use of counter-terrorism legislation and measures may be expanded in some European Union member States to activities that include non-violent movements, public protests and non-governmental organisations – clearly not intended to be considered terrorist in nature. As such, the Assembly believes that the legal definition of terrorism should be as precise as possible to limit the possibility of diverging implementation at the national level and preventing arbitrary application.

10. In this context, the Assembly notes the concerns expressed about the proposed wording of Article 1, paragraph 2(c), which includes "seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation" as one of the three possible terrorist aims defining a terrorist offence. However, it takes note of the clarification provided in the draft explanatory report (paragraph 36), that "legitimate activities that are protected by human rights laws, such as freedom of religion and conscience, freedom of expression or publication, should not be the subject to criminalisation" by virtue of the new provisions. The Assembly considers that this explanation could be further strengthened by adding the following sentence in paragraph 36 of the draft explanatory report: "For example, the public expression of radical, polemic, shocking or controversial views on sensitive political questions does not fall within the scope of this amending protocol".

11. The Assembly further considers that the inclusion of threats to commit any of the acts listed in points (a) to (i) of Article 1, paragraph 1 increases the risk of overbroad criminalisation and, in consequence, criminalisation of the exercise of the right to freedom of expression. It therefore recommends that the scope of Article 1, paragraph 1(j), be limited only to threats that are both "serious" and "credible".

12. Finally, the Assembly supports the proposal for the Warsaw Convention to be supplemented with an explicit humanitarian exemption, in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2664 (2022). Considering the limited scope of the draft protocol, it invites the Committee of Ministers to ask the Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT) to take this proposal into account in its future work, in the context of a more comprehensive review of the Warsaw Convention, including its Article 12 and other provisions.

13. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers make the following amendment to the draft protocol amending the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism:

13.1. in Article 1, paragraph 1(j), of the amended Convention, replace the word "threatening" with the words "a credible and serious threat"

Recommendations
2297 to 2298



Recommendation 2297 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Protecting human rights in and through sport: obligations and shared responsibilities

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls [Resolution 2607 \(2025\)](#) “Protecting human rights in and through sport: obligations and shared responsibilities”, which calls for binding human rights standards at all levels of sport, in particular to address abuse, discrimination and gender inequality, and to urge governments and sports bodies to strengthen safeguarding, transparency and accountability, ensure inclusive participation and embed human rights in the organisation of major sports events.
2. Considering that a co-ordinated, multistakeholder approach is essential for lasting change, the Assembly reaffirms the unique role of the Council of Europe in promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law in and through sport, notably through its conventions on sport and the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS).
3. While commending initiatives such as “Start to Talk” and “All In Plus”, and the work of EPAS in the area of inclusive sport more generally, the Assembly remains concerned about persistent reports of abuse, discrimination and human rights violations in sport, especially involving children, women and marginalised groups.
4. To support Council of Europe member States and sports organisations in aligning governance with human rights standards, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 4.1. reinforce EPAS’ mandate and resources to promote human rights in sport, including through the further development of guidance on good governance, safeguarding and anti-discrimination policies;
 - 4.2. task EPAS to develop model provisions for national legislation and sports regulations aimed at preventing abuse, ensuring safe sport environments and supporting victims;
 - 4.3. invite EPAS to continue to develop technical tools and indicators to monitor compliance with international human rights and gender equality standards across all levels of sport, in collaboration with national authorities and civil society;
 - 4.4. encourage EPAS to work with international partners, including the European Union and United Nations agencies, to define and promote an international code of safe sport;
 - 4.5. mandate EPAS to assist member States and sports bodies in conducting human rights risk assessments in relation to major sports events, to advise on the inclusion of human rights conditionalities in bidding and hosting processes, and to facilitate interregional dialogue, especially with emerging economies and low-income countries.
5. The Assembly considers that EPAS is well placed to co-ordinate a Council of Europe-wide approach to safe, inclusive sport based on values and rights. It calls on the Committee of Ministers to ensure that EPAS has the institutional capacity to fulfil this urgent and growing mandate.

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (23rd sitting) (see [Doc. 16196](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Kim Valentin). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (23rd sitting).



Recommendation 2298 (2025)¹
Provisional version

Saving the lives of migrants at sea and protecting their human rights

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, referring to its [Resolution 2612 \(2025\)](#) “Saving the lives of migrants at sea and protecting their human rights”, and noting the challenges posed by the continuous humanitarian crisis in European waters caused by some member States disregarding international maritime and humanitarian law, recalls the principles by which Council of Europe member States are bound and their collective legal obligations in this area, and stresses the need for enhanced action by the Organisation to support them in this field.
2. The Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to support by all possible means the development and operationalisation of the future action plan on migration and refugees (2026-2029), currently prepared under the coordination of the Division on Migration and Refugees, which may include provision of guidance and assistance to member States to ensure and promote human rights in the context of border control operations, and the enhancement of effective administrative and judicial investigations into violations of Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5).
3. Given the challenges faced by Tunisia regarding the situation of migrants on land and at sea and the fundamental rights at stake, the Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to take into account and address this critical area in the context of its co-operation activities with Tunisia.

1. *Assembly debate* on 26 June 2025 (25th sitting) (see [Doc. 16195](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, rapporteur: Mr Paulo Pisco). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 26 June 2025 (25th sitting).



Resolutions
2605 to 2615



Resolution 2605 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine and its people and its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, including Crimea and all the other Ukrainian territories temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation since 2014 and beyond. It reiterates its strongest condemnation of the illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the wide array of atrocities, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by Russian authorities, including the continued indiscriminate attacks on civilians, residential areas and civilian infrastructure; enforced disappearances and deportations; unlawful detentions and the use of torture; extrajudicial executions of prisoners of war; rape and other forms of sexual violence; the deportation and forcible transfer of Ukrainian children; and the destruction of the Ukrainian cultural and religious heritage.

2. The Assembly notes that under the administration of President Donald Trump, the United States of America has significantly shifted its foreign policy, particularly in its relations with Ukraine and the Russian Federation, including its position on the legal and political assessment of the Russian war of aggression. The United States, alongside the Russian Federation and the latter's allies, voted against a United Nations General Assembly Resolution of 24 February 2025 condemning the aggression and calling for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace and the need to ensure accountability. The Assembly deeply regrets this position. It is also concerned about the growing disengagement of the new US administration from efforts towards accountability for Ukraine, as evidenced by its withdrawal from the Core Group on the Establishment of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine and the International Centre for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine based in The Hague. It further notes with concern that the reduction of US foreign aid by the new administration has resulted in the suspension of several critically important justice and accountability projects related to Ukraine, including those concerning co-operation with the Ukrainian prosecuting authorities. The Assembly is also deeply concerned about sanctions imposed by the United States on the International Criminal Court (ICC), as they significantly hinder the prosecution of international crimes, including those committed in Ukraine as a result of the Russian aggression.

3. This shift has happened in the context of the bilateral talks that the United States has held with both the Russian Federation and Ukraine, aimed at achieving a permanent ceasefire in Ukraine and the launch of peace negotiations. While the Assembly welcomes the United States' commitment in this process to help achieve the exchange of prisoners of war, the release of civilian detainees and the return of forcibly transferred Ukrainian children, it notes that Ukraine's proposal for a renewable and unconditional 30-day ceasefire, supported by the United States, was not accepted by the Russian Federation, which continues to conduct missile, guided bomb and drone attacks against Ukrainian residential areas and civilian infrastructure

1. *Assembly debate* on 24 June 2025 (21st and 22nd sittings) (see [Doc. 16193](#), report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 24 June 2025 (22nd sitting).



almost every day. In March alone, at least 164 Ukrainian civilians were killed and 910 injured by Russian attacks – a 50% rise from February figures. From January to May, a total of 664 Ukrainian civilians were killed and 3 425 were injured.

4. The Assembly notes with utmost concern that certain US representatives have suggested that the Russian Federation's unlawful seizure of Ukrainian territories through its war of aggression should be accepted and *de jure* recognised as part of a future peace agreement. In this context and in light of the rapidly evolving situation, the Assembly declares that certain fundamental principles of international law must not and cannot be set aside or undermined in any ongoing or future negotiations. It refers to all its previous resolutions addressing the legal and political consequences of the Russian full-scale aggression against Ukraine and recalls that all States are under the obligation to respect international law. The inviolability of borders and the non-recognition of territorial acquisitions resulting from the use of force are core tenets of international law and the foundations of the rules-based international order. These principles are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, the Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2625, 1970) and numerous other international instruments. The pursuit of peace must be and can only be based on justice and international co-operation, in line with the Preamble to the Statute of the Council of Europe (ETS No. 1). The Assembly therefore categorically reaffirms the following undisputable legal and human rights considerations related to the Russian war of aggression and calls on all member and observer States as well as relevant European institutions and international partners to ensure that any peace talks or negotiations respect them:

- 4.1. the Russian Federation war against Ukraine constitutes an act of aggression in violation of Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations;
- 4.2. Belarus has allowed the Russian Federation to use its territory to perpetrate an act of aggression against Ukraine, which amounts in itself to an act of aggression;
- 4.3. North Korea has deployed troops to fight alongside Russian forces against Ukraine, therefore participating in the act of aggression against Ukraine;
- 4.4. Ukraine is exercising its inherent right to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations;
- 4.5. the political and military leadership of the Russian Federation, Belarus and North Korea have committed and continue to be complicit in the crime of aggression against Ukraine, which entails individual criminal responsibility for the leaders concerned irrespective of their official position, including Heads of State and Government;
- 4.6. the illegal annexation of Crimea and other Ukrainian territories temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation as a result of the aggression since 2014 is a serious breach of *jus cogens* norms and as such cannot be recognised. In fact, such a recognition in itself, and any coercion of Ukraine to recognise these annexations would be a violation of international law and would lead to a further deterioration in the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially given that, as recalled in the Assembly Opinion 300 (2022), victims of Russian violations of international law still have no access to effective remedies within the national legal framework of the Russian Federation;
- 4.7. the multiple and continued attacks and atrocities committed by Russian forces, its allies and proxies against Ukraine and its people amount to war crimes, including grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law, as well as crimes against humanity when perpetrated as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population, for which individual perpetrators must be held accountable;
- 4.8. the Russian Federation is committing some of the acts that constitute an element of genocide under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and its rhetoric justifying the war of aggression reveals a genocidal intent to destroy the Ukrainian nation as such;
- 4.9. none of these crimes can be subject to any form of amnesty or any statute of limitations under international law;
- 4.10. the International Criminal Court (ICC) has full jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed on Ukrainian territory by Russian forces, its allies and proxies, and States Parties to the ICC Statute have an unconditional obligation to co-operate with the ICC in the context of these proceedings, including by enforcing any arrest warrants issued against Russian or other suspects;

4.11. the Russian Federation has committed multiple and grave violations of the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) in Ukraine since the occupation and annexation of Crimea in 2014 and in the context of the full-scale aggression. Referring to the Decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM/Del/Dec(2025)1521/H46-29), the Assembly stresses that although the Russian Federation ceased to be a High Contracting Party to the European Convention on Human Rights on 16 September 2022, it remains bound by its obligations under the Convention, including the duty to implement judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, particularly the judgment in the case of *Ukraine v. Russia (re Crimea)*. The Assembly urges the Russian authorities to immediately implement all measures specified by the Committee of Ministers that are related to the administrative practice of torture, enforced disappearances, unlawful transfer of civilians, large-scale expropriation of property and other numerous violations resulting from the occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation;

4.12. the Russian Federation has breached many other treaties under international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

4.13. the Russian Federation has also been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights for acts of torture and inhuman treatment committed against its own citizens who challenge the war of aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine;

4.14. the Russian Federation must bear the legal consequences of all of its internationally wrongful acts committed in and against Ukraine, including by making reparation for all the damage caused by such acts to Ukraine and its people, as recognised in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-11/5 of 14 November 2022 and in accordance with the principles of State responsibility;

4.15. the repurposing of the frozen Russian State assets, in Council of Europe member States and non-member States, would constitute lawful countermeasures against the Russian Federation, as they would be intended to induce the aggressor to cease its unlawful behaviour and to fulfil its obligation to make reparations;

4.16. according to international democratic standards, elections cannot be held under martial law and President Zelenskyy is the legitimate President of Ukraine until elections can lawfully be held.

5. The Assembly notes that internationally recognised borders constitute an essential element of the rules-based international order. Since 2014, numerous individuals – both citizens of the Russian Federation and of other States – have unlawfully crossed Ukraine's State borders, including through unauthorised visits to temporarily occupied territories such as Crimea, Mariupol, Donetsk, and Luhansk. Among such citizens are pro-Kremlin celebrities such as Russian producer Iosif Prigozhin and singer Valeriya, American actor Steven Seagal. Such actions in support of the Russian war of aggression represent a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and should have legal consequences.

6. The Assembly strongly supports the position of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights to make human rights the guiding principle for all current and future peace efforts. His human rights roadmap for a just, lasting and effective peace for Ukraine encompasses accountability, including the establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine, reparation and redress for victims, the release of prisoners of war and civilian detainees, the return of Ukrainian children and the tracing of missing persons, the protection of people in temporarily occupied territories and reconstruction, among others. The Assembly also recalls the constitutional role of the Ukrainian National Human Rights Institution (NHRI), in monitoring, documenting, and advocating for redress for gross human rights violations. Its effective involvement in peace and accountability processes is essential to ensuring a victim-centred and human rights-compliant approach.

7. In this context, the Assembly refers to its [Resolution 2598 \(2025\)](#) "Russian war of aggression against Ukraine: the need to ensure accountability and avoid impunity" (paragraphs 9 and 10) and welcomes the adoption by the Core Group participants of the Lviv statement of 9 May 2025, expressing political support for the draft legal texts for the establishment of the special tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine within the framework of the Council of Europe. This step will pave the way for the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to adopt in due course the necessary decisions for the setting up of the Tribunal. While noting that a compromise may have had to be reached on certain issues such as personal immunities, which may fall short of the Assembly's own demands and existing rules of international law, the Assembly hopes that the final Statute will enable the special tribunal to effectively investigate, prosecute and punish those who

bear the responsibility for the crime of aggression. The special tribunal is an essential part of a comprehensive system of accountability for Ukraine and for the international legal order, which will fill an existing gap and deter future aggressions by the same or other aggressive regimes.

8. The Assembly underlines that any future peace negotiations aimed at ending the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine must include a comprehensive and just system of reparations for the damage caused. Redress for victims is essential for lasting peace and reconciliation. In this context, the Assembly highlights the critical role of the Register of Damage for Ukraine, established under the auspices of the Council of Europe, as the first operational element of an international compensation mechanism. The Register represents a vital step in documenting the damage, loss and injury resulting from the aggression and in laying the groundwork for a future claims process. In line with its previous resolutions, it considers that the Register of Damage and the comprehensive compensation mechanism should cover claims relating to the damage caused since February 2014 and not only from 24 February 2022. Discussions on mechanisms for contributing to a future compensation fund must be intensified, taking into account the potential of repurposing Russian frozen assets.

9. Recalling its previous [Resolution 2573 \(2024\)](#), the Assembly is appalled by the numerous findings of international mechanisms and independent media investigations, which continue to provide evidence of the systematic use of torture against Ukrainian prisoners of war and detained civilians held in the Russian Federation or in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. It takes note of the March 2025 report of the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, which concluded that enforced disappearances and torture have been conducted by Russian authorities as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population and pursuant to a co-ordinated State policy, therefore amounting to crimes against humanity. The report found that the most brutal forms of torture were used during interrogations, including severe beatings, electric shocks, burns, strangling, suffocation, hanging, rape and other forms of sexual violence. A recent media investigation by Forbidden Stories has also shed light on the prison system established by the Russian Federation for Ukrainian civilian detainees, revealing that torture and ill-treatment are systematic in at least 26 detention centres.

10. The Assembly expresses solidarity with Russian citizens facing repression for denouncing the war against Ukraine. It demands the immediate release of all political prisoners imprisoned in the Russian Federation due to their opposition to this war as well as prisoners of war, political prisoners and civilians captured by the Russian Federation in the occupied Ukrainian territories and in the Russian Federation.

11. According to the figures from the Ukrainian authorities, 5 757 individuals have been returned from Russian captivity since 24 February 2022, including 294 Ukrainian civilians. 186 locations where Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war are detained, both in the Russian Federation and in the occupied territories, have been identified. The current number of missing persons, including both prisoners of war and civilians, is estimated by the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs at 74 000. At the same time, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has documented around 50 000 cases of missing persons, without distinguishing by nationality. It has visited more than 3 000 prisoners of war in captivity on both sides, but specific figures for civilian detainee visits are not available. While the exact number of Ukrainian civilians held in captivity by the Russian Federation is difficult to determine, the Assembly considers that the practice of detention of Ukrainian civilians by the Russian Federation without any legal grounds is *per se* unlawful, arbitrary, in violation of international humanitarian law and amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity. It therefore urges the Russian Federation to immediately and unconditionally release all unlawfully detained Ukrainian civilians. In the meantime, the ICRC should have immediate, safe and unimpeded access to all facilities where Ukrainian civilians are being detained, both in the temporarily occupied territories and in the Russian Federation, in line with Article 143 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (GCIV). The Assembly supports the establishment of an international civilian protection mechanism involving the NHRI and other relevant institutions, tasked with monitoring and publicly reporting on the treatment of civilians in occupied territories and places of detention.

12. The Assembly has repeatedly condemned the deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation and Belarus, and the forcible transfer of Ukrainian children to the Ukrainian territories temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation. These practices violate international humanitarian law (Geneva Convention IV and Additional Protocol I) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity and an element of the crime of genocide. According to information from the Ukrainian Government, as of May 2025, 19 546 children had been deported or forcibly transferred, and only 1 366 have been returned. A recent report by the Yale School of Public Health Humanitarian Research Lab of the showed how Russian Federation-flagged military transport planes under the direct control of Vladimir Putin's office transported groups of children from the occupied Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and how Russian-controlled databases obfuscated these children's identities, including their nationality, in order to facilitate their placement and to conceal the government's program of coerced adoption

and fostering. The operation was initiated by Vladimir Putin and his subordinates with the intention of “russifying” children from Ukraine. On 10 June, during a meeting of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin announced the implementation of numerous educational programs based on so-called traditional values, including the fulfilment of military duty — a policy that, among other consequences, contributes to the militarisation of Ukrainian children in the occupied territories. The Assembly further notes that according to credible sources, as of 14 August 2024, at least 3 500 Ukrainian children from Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine had been forcibly transferred through or into Belarus, where these children were subjected to a Russian political, military, and religious indoctrination program. This transfer was carried out under a direct order from Alexander Lukashenko. The Assembly believes that any future peace negotiations should address this situation and calls for the immediate and unconditional return and reintegration of Ukrainian children, in accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child. The Assembly underscores the critical role of the NHRI as the independent children’s rights protection institution, in ensuring the identification, safe return, legal protection, and reintegration of deported or forcibly transferred Ukrainian children.

13. The Assembly strongly condemns the militarisation and political indoctrination of Ukrainian children in territories temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, recognising that these acts are severe violations of the rights of the child and a form of attack against education, both in content and in quality, as well as against childhood itself. Such actions include the systematic introduction of military ideology into education, forced participation in military-patriotic organisations, rewriting educational programs to align with the occupying State’s political and military agendas, and discrimination against children and educators based on political beliefs. The Assembly urges immediate cessation of these practices and calls for their documentation and monitoring by relevant international bodies, including the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and the Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The Assembly further encourages the ICC to initiate proceedings under the Rome Statute to prosecute these multiple violations as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and calls on the States that are Parties to the Rome Statute to actively support programs focused on psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration of the affected children, as well as educational initiatives promoting peace, tolerance, and critical thinking to counteract indoctrination efforts.

14. The Assembly is gravely alarmed by the Russian Federation’s policy of ethnic cleansing in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, carried out through forced displacement, deportation, and violent assimilation. Presidential Decree No. 159 of 20 March 2025 obliges Ukrainian citizens in these areas to accept Russian citizenship by 10 September 2025 or face expulsion, effectively offering no choice but assimilation or deportation. Such measures violate the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Rome Statute of the ICC, and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Acts such as banning the Ukrainian language in schools, imposing Russian curricula, and systematically erasing Ukrainian cultural identity have been extensively documented by the United Nations and amount to crimes under international law. In view of the Russian Federation’s consistent disregard for its obligations as an occupying power, the Assembly calls for the immediate establishment of an independent international monitoring mission, preferably under the auspices of the United Nations, to observe and report on the human rights situation in the occupied territories of Ukraine. This mission must be empowered to prevent further violations, document evidence, and support efforts to ensure accountability for those responsible.

15. The Assembly expresses its deep concern at the support provided by Iran and China to the Russian Federation. Iran has supplied the Russian Federation with ballistic missiles and drones, many of which have been used in indiscriminate attacks against civilian objects in Ukraine, in what can be described as complicity in the Russian Federation’s violations of international law. Ukrainian authorities have confirmed the detention of Chinese nationals fighting alongside Russian forces, allegedly as irregular combatants. In addition, Chinese companies have reportedly assisted the Russian Federation’s military drone production by providing access to restricted components and helping to circumvent international sanctions.

16. In light of these considerations, the Assembly:

16.1. urges the Core Group participants and all member States to move towards the establishment of the special tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine without delay, by adopting the necessary decisions to finalise the legal instruments for the establishment of the special tribunal, irrespective of the progress of any peace negotiations;

16.2. calls on other States, in particular observer States and States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly, to join the future enlarged partial agreement and support the special tribunal;

16.3. calls on all member States, observer States and other States to support and contribute to the work of the Register of Damage for Ukraine, as well as to the ongoing work to establish a Claims Commission for Ukraine and a compensation fund for Ukraine, and to ensure that reparations remain a core component of any peace settlement;

16.4. calls on all member States, European institutions and international partners to increase their assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine and existing international accountability mechanisms, as well as civil society projects working on Ukraine, to compensate the negative impact of the US aid freeze;

16.5. invites the ICC to consider adding new charges, including crimes against humanity and genocide, in connection with the unlawful detention, enforced disappearance and torture of Ukrainian civilian detainees and with the deportation, forcible transfer and re-education of Ukrainian children, as part of the investigation into the situation in Ukraine, as well as invites States that are Parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC to strengthen political, legal and material support for the Court, in particular regarding bolstering the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC in Kyiv;

16.6. calls on member and observer States to refrain from suspending or impeding processes of international accountability relating to crimes committed in the context of the aggression against Ukraine, including through the United Nations Security Council;

16.7. calls on member and observer States and other States whose legislation provides for universal jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed in the context of the ongoing war of aggression, including crimes related to the enforced disappearance and torture of Ukrainian civilian detainees and the deportation, forcible transfer and re-education of Ukrainian children, and encourages those States that do not provide for universal jurisdiction to introduce such a possibility into their legislation;

16.8. urges the Russian Federation to ensure compliance with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, and immediately cease the practice of enforced disappearances, unlawful detention of Ukrainian civilians, systematic use of torture against civilians and prisoners of war, deportation and forcible transfer of Ukrainian children, to provide complete information concerning prisoners of war, Ukrainian civilians and children under its control, and to ensure the immediate, safe and unimpeded access for the ICRC and the NHRI to all places of detention where prisoners of war and Ukrainian civilians are being held;

16.9. calls on member States, observer States, the European Union and international partners to provide all necessary assistance to Ukraine in its efforts to locate and secure the return of prisoners of war, unlawfully detained Ukrainian civilians and Ukrainian children, and to increase pressure on the Russian Federation to comply with its above-mentioned international obligations, including through increased sanctions and in the context of any peace talks or negotiations;

16.10. invites relevant international accountability mechanisms to establish a standing consultation mechanism with the NHRI to ensure continued victim-focused input into all stages of the international accountability and peace processes;

16.11. urges member States and international partners to enhance maritime transparency, tighten flag State controls, increase insurance oversight, and implement ship-to-ship transfer tracking mechanisms to ensure that the Russian Federation does not benefit from its shadow fleet;

16.12. calls on member and observer States to impose appropriate sanctions or legal consequences on individuals who have entered the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine in violation of Ukrainian law to support the Russian war of aggression;

16.13. calls on member and observer States as well as States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly to ensure that sanctions regimes comprehensively target the full chain of responsibility for international crimes committed against Ukrainian children by including all individuals and institutions – recorded by Ukrainian and partner States' law-enforcement agencies – that are directly or indirectly involved in the deportation, forcible transfer, unjustified delay in repatriation, unlawful adoption or guardianship, as well as the re-education, indoctrination, and militarisation of these children. Such regimes must be consistently applied, regularly reviewed, and co-ordinated across jurisdictions to prevent enforcement gaps and circumvention. The Assembly encourages member States to harmonise efforts, including through the establishment of an international mechanism for countering crimes against Ukrainian children;

16.14. calls on member States to support all existing and past initiatives aimed at documenting, investigating, and legally classifying international crimes committed in Ukraine by representatives of the Russian Federation – including the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry in Ukraine and the Moscow Mechanism of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) – by ensuring regular follow-up, promoting periodic assessments, and facilitating the implementation of their recommendations;

16.15. calls on member and observer States to impose appropriate sanctions or other countermeasures on the Russian officials who encourage the colonisation of the occupied territories of Ukraine, and to ensure that those responsible are held individually criminally accountable for this war crime;

16.16. calls on member and observer States and States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly, and their diplomatic services, as well as on the entire international community acting in good faith, to impose additional sanctions and ensure continued compliance with existing sanctions against the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, North Korea and other States involved in violations of international law, as well as to include in the sanctions lists individuals involved in the commission of international crimes in Ukraine. The sanctions regime must remain in place until the Russian Federation fulfils its obligations to cease its internationally wrongful acts and to remedy their consequences, including by executing the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Ukraine v. Russia (re Crimea)*.



Resolution 2606 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Support for political negotiations to enforce exchange and release of prisoners of war

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The illegal, unprovoked and unjustified full-scale war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine is still raging on, after more than three years. The Russian Federation is responsible for the severe violations of international law, in particular international human rights and humanitarian law, including its obligations under the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. In this context, the situation of Ukrainian prisoners of war is particularly dire: they are subjected to summary executions, widespread and systematic torture, and inhuman and degrading treatment, amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. This state of affairs calls for urgent intervention by the international community, first and foremost to secure the proper treatment, mutual release and repatriation of all prisoners of war. Given the ongoing severe violations of international human rights and humanitarian law against Ukrainian prisoners of war, their continued captivity raises serious concerns, highlighting prompt and safe release as the most viable means of preventing further abuse. To this end, political negotiations are of paramount importance.

2. According to the Ukrainian authorities, thousands of Ukrainian servicepersons are currently in Russian captivity in over 300 detention facilities, both in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and in the Russian Federation as well as in the Republic of Belarus. As of 6 May 2025, 4 757 Ukrainians (both prisoners of war and civilians) have been released from Russian captivity since the start of the full-scale war, and 64 exchanges of prisoners of war have taken place.

3. The information received from those who have returned from captivity indicates that the Russian Federation is systematically violating the Third Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War with regard to the right to humane treatment (Article 13); the right to decent conditions of detention (Articles 22, 25, 29); the right to adequate food (Article 26); the right to an initial medical examination and to adequate medical attention (Articles 15, 20, 30, 31, 46); the right to have family members informed about the condition and capture of prisoners of war, as well as to receive information (Articles 48, 69, 70); the right to decent conditions during the evacuation and transfer (Articles 20 and 46 to 48); the prohibition of forcing a prisoner of war to serve in the armed forces of an enemy State (Article 130); and others.

4. Despite the contrary claims of the Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation in August 2022, the Russian Federation failed to fulfil its obligation to establish an official Information Bureau for prisoners of war who are in its power (Article 122 of the Third Geneva Convention), and to appoint a Mixed Medical Commission to examine sick and wounded prisoners of war (Article 112). At the same time, the Russian authorities have effectively barred relatives of Ukrainian prisoners of war from requesting information from the Ministry of Defence by requiring the use of the Russian State portal, which is in fact only accessible to Russian citizens due to authentication requirements tied to State-issued Russian credentials. In addition, the Russian Federation has so far rejected initiatives by other States to assume the role of Protecting Powers, while it is a duty as provided for in Article 5 of the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, and it is impeding the access to most of its detention facilities by the personnel of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU), the United

1. *Assembly debate* on 24 June 2025 (21st and 22nd sittings) (see [Doc. 16197](#), report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko; and [Doc. 16206](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Ms Rian Vogels). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 24 June 2025 (22nd sitting).



Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, the Ukraine Monitoring Initiative of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and other international monitoring mechanisms. However, the Russian Federation is already under an international legal obligation to fully co-operate with all international monitoring bodies and to remove any obstacles to their monitoring activities, notably in areas covered by the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights of 25 June 2024 in the case of *Ukraine v. Russia (re Crimea)*, pursuant to the decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe CM/Del/Dec(2025)1521/H46-29 of 6 March 2025.

5. The Russian Federation's highest political and military leadership is aware of the vicious mistreatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war, including threats, verbal and physical abuse, sexual violence, torture and summary executions. As of February 2025, the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) had verified the execution of 71 Ukrainian prisoners of war and recorded the death of at least 21 prisoners of war in custody. While the real figures are currently unknown, they are certainly much higher. 95% of 454 released Ukrainian prisoners of war interviewed by the HRMMU provided accounts of torture or inhuman and degrading treatment throughout all stages of captivity. In general, the evidence gathered by international mechanisms, independent media and civil society investigations suggests that the inhuman and degrading treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war is not confined to specific detention facilities, but is widespread and systematic. This indicates that not only are the Russian authorities failing to take any effective preventative measures, but that they are mandating a policy of inhuman and degrading treatment of prisoners of war. Moreover, the Russian Federation has recently introduced a legal framework granting exemption from criminal liability for international crimes to individuals enlisting in the Russian armed forces. This legal framework is recognised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner as a violation of the Russian Federation's obligations to investigate war crimes and serious violations of international human rights law, and to prosecute alleged perpetrators.

6. Ukrainian prisoners of war are at risk of inhuman and degrading treatment, torture and even execution from the moment they are captured on the battlefield, and subsequently during their transportation, transit and imprisonment in detention facilities, both in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine and in the Russian Federation. They are also at risk of being convicted on trumped-up charges or simply for having taken part in hostilities and for exercising Ukraine's right to self-defence under the United Nations Charter, in proceedings that violate fair trial guarantees.

7. In stark contrast, the situation of Russian prisoners of war is generally well-documented, as the ICRC and other international monitoring bodies have unfettered access to the facilities where they are held. Overall, Ukraine is complying with its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. Reports of summary executions, torture or ill-treatment of Russian prisoners of war must nevertheless be properly investigated, and the perpetrators must be held accountable.

8. In [Resolution 2562 \(2024\)](#), the Parliamentary Assembly stated the need to address urgently the issue of Ukrainian prisoners of war, and in [Resolution 2573 \(2024\)](#) it resolved to remain seized on this topic. The Assembly welcomes the exchanges of prisoners of war, which can be crucial in the context of a possible peace process. It also reaffirms the need for all possible future peace negotiations to address unconditionally the issue of the mutual release and repatriation of all prisoners of war, in accordance with the formula "all for all", as already expressed in its [Resolution 2598 \(2025\)](#). Nevertheless, the Assembly also considers that the situation of prisoners of war is of such urgency that it must be addressed immediately by all parties concerned, irrespective of developments related to ceasefire and peace negotiations. Any unlawful, unfair or politically motivated convictions of Ukrainian prisoners of war must not be used as grounds to delay or refuse their release, particularly following the cessation of active hostilities. Any such unjustifiable delay or refusal would constitute an additional war crime under Article 85(4)(b) of Protocol Additional (I) to the Geneva Conventions, entailing individual criminal responsibility.

9. The Assembly calls on European non-governmental organisations and civil society to raise awareness of the plight of Ukrainian prisoners of war, in order to increase political and diplomatic pressure on the Russian Federation.

10. The Assembly calls on the international community to unequivocally contribute to and intensify the efforts aimed at achieving the mutual release and repatriation of all prisoners of war, so that the rights and dignity of all prisoners of war, their families and loved ones are fully respected and upheld, while having regard to the Third Geneva Convention. The Assembly encourages the ICRC to offer its good offices to the parties to the conflict and apply a more proactive and innovative approach in general to ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law in the current environment.

11. The Assembly also welcomes and concurs with the recommendations already made by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in various reports, and with the recommendations made by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) in its interim reports on reported violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in Ukraine.

12. Against this background, and building on the recommendations of the OHCHR and of the OSCE/ODIHR, the Assembly calls on the Russian Federation to:

12.1. respect and ensure full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law, notably with regard to the treatment of prisoners of war;

12.2. immediately cease the summary execution, torture, ill-treatment, sexual violence and verbal and psychological abuse of prisoners of war;

12.3. cease the prosecution of captured Ukrainian servicepersons for the mere fact of having directly participated in hostilities and for exercising Ukraine's right to self-defence under the United Nations Charter, and refrain from violating their rights to a fair and regular trial;

12.4. conduct impartial and thorough investigations into all cases of death in custody, summary execution, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, sexual violence and verbal and psychological abuse of prisoners of war, and ensure that the perpetrators are held accountable, including those within the chain of command;

12.5. ensure that the ICRC and other relevant international monitoring mechanisms have unimpeded access to all the places of detention where prisoners of war are being held, and are allowed confidential interviews with them;

12.6. ensure that all the conditions of detention relating to the prisoners of war as set out in the Third Geneva Convention are fully respected, by establishing dedicated places of internment, including prisoner of war camps and temporary and permanent transit camps, providing adequate food, water, medical care, and legal assistance, and allowing prisoners of war to exercise their right to communicate with their families and loved ones;

12.7. appoint a Mixed Medical Commission to examine wounded and sick prisoners of war and make decisions on their repatriation in line with the Third Geneva Convention relating to the Treatment of Prisoners of War;

12.8. ensure that an efficient, functional and transparent official Information Bureau is established, with a mandate to cater for both prisoners of war and civilian detainees who are in its power;

12.9. engage constructively and without delay in negotiations to approve candidates for neutral members of the Ukrainian Mixed Medical Commission pursuant to Annex II to the Third Geneva Convention;

12.10. repeal any legislative provisions that grant impunity to members of the armed forces of the Russian Federation for the commission of international crimes;

12.11. provide regularly to the ICRC and the competent Ukrainian authorities all relevant information that would otherwise be transmitted to the appointed Protecting Power, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

13. The Assembly also calls on Ukraine to ensure that it keeps acting in full compliance with the Geneva Conventions, and that any violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by its armed forces or civilian authorities are promptly and properly investigated.

14. The Assembly acknowledges the crucial role of those countries involved in facilitating the ongoing exchanges of prisoners of war between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, such as Türkiye and the United Arab Emirates, and expresses its deep gratitude to their governments for these efforts.

15. Based on the example of the countries involved in the exchange of prisoners of war between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, the Assembly calls on all States to:

15.1. support political negotiations to facilitate and encourage an acceleration of the mutual release and repatriation of prisoners of war;

15.2. provide additional resources to the Central Tracing Agency Bureau of the ICRC and the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, to enhance their capacity in locating and verifying the status of missing Ukrainian prisoners of war;

15.3. improve information-sharing and co-ordination among relevant stakeholders, with a view to identifying mediating States that could assume the role of Protecting Power as per the Geneva Conventions and facilitate the establishment of channels for dialogue and political negotiation;

15.4. promote the establishment of a structured, permanent mechanism, negotiated and agreed upon by all interested parties, and possibly co-ordinated by the ICRC, to enable the prompt, secure and regular identification, tracing, mutual release and repatriation of all prisoners of war, with special attention to the seriously wounded and sick;

15.5. provide political, financial, material and technical support for the establishment of such mechanism;

15.6. consider the identification of a neutral country where prisoners of war could be safely and temporarily placed before their repatriation.

16. The Assembly stands in solidarity with the families of the Ukrainian prisoners of war, which are enduring immense psychological suffering: in most cases they are not allowed to communicate with their loved ones, and they are often not even aware of their fate and whereabouts. The Assembly also recognises the need to provide medical, psychological and administrative assistance and vocational training to returned Ukrainian prisoners of war, to ensure their rehabilitation and full reintegration in the Ukrainian society. The Assembly therefore calls on all States to provide financial aid and technical expertise to the ongoing initiatives supporting the families of Ukrainian prisoners of war and the returned Ukrainian prisoners of war, including through the establishment of rehabilitation centres.

17. The Assembly underlines the importance of ensuring accountability and providing reparations to victims for the achievement of a just and lasting peace for Ukraine. The Assembly therefore:

17.1. calls on all States that are Parties to the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to fully support the work of the ICC in bringing the perpetrators, military and political authorities of the Russian Federation to justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity, in particular taking into account the public priorities of the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC in Ukraine, regarding the killing and torture of Ukrainian prisoners of war in the Volnovakha Penal Colony No. 120 near Olenivka and other places under Russian control, and urges all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Statute of the ICC without delay;

17.2. calls on all States whose legislation provides for universal jurisdiction to prosecute officials of the Russian Federation involved in war crimes and other crimes, and encourages those States that do not have this possibility, to introduce universal jurisdiction into their legislation.

17.3. calls on all Council of Europe member States to engage in negotiations on expanding the mandate of the International Compensation Mechanism under its auspices, in order to ensure reparations for damage, loss or injury caused by internationally wrongful acts in or against Ukraine before 24 February 2022, in particular to Ukrainian prisoners of war who have suffered as a result.

18. The Assembly deeply regrets that a member State of the United Nations Security Council, which is also responsible for war crimes, retains its veto power, and reiterates its calls to reconsider the use and scope of the veto power by permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to avoid any abuse, as provided in its [Resolution 2581 \(2025\)](#).

Resolution 2607 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Protecting human rights in and through sport: obligations and shared responsibilities

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly have a long-standing commitment to the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in sport, which is a powerful tool for fostering inclusion, equality, integrity and human dignity.
2. The Assembly recalls in particular [Resolution 2420 \(2022\)](#) and [Recommendation 2221 \(2022\)](#) on “Football governance: business and values” and [Resolution 2465 \(2022\)](#) on “The fight for a level playing field – ending discrimination against women in the world of sport”.
3. It wishes to reaffirm the principles enshrined in the revised European Sports Charter, the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions ([CETS N°215, “the Macolin Convention”, 2014](#)), the Anti-Doping Convention (ETS No. 135, 1989) and its Additional Protocol (ETS No.188, 2002), and the Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events (CETS No. 218, “the Saint Denis Convention”, 2017).
4. Human rights must be upheld and protected in all sporting contexts, from amateur to professional, including during the bidding, organisation, implementation and legacy phases of major international sports events. The Assembly:
 - 4.1. welcomes the work of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), including in the area of child protection and of safeguarding their rights, notably through the Council of Europe “Start to Talk” project and in the area of gender equality in sport, whereby EPAS is continuing to develop wide-ranging alternatives, including implementing the recommendations of the joint European Union-Council of Europe “All In Plus: promoting greater gender equality in sport”, project;
 - 4.2. acknowledges the work of the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), World Athletics, and international sports federations in strengthening safeguarding, addressing abuse and discrimination, and embedding human rights and gender equality considerations in governance;
 - 4.3. remains, however, deeply concerned by continuing reports of abuse, discrimination and human rights violations associated with sports participation and major sports events, including in contexts where sports governing bodies and host countries have failed to fulfil their responsibilities;
 - 4.4. is deeply alarmed by the widespread and systemic abuse of children and vulnerable adults in sport, including psychological, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, often facilitated by toxic organisational cultures, impunity and a lack of trauma-informed redress systems;
 - 4.5. is concerned that current systems for assessing human rights compliance in bidding for and hosting major sports events are often opaque, inadequately enforced and do not provide accessible remedies for victims;

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (23rd sitting) (see [Doc. 16196](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Kim Valentin). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (23rd sitting). See also [Recommendation 2297 \(2025\)](#).



- 4.6. calls for stronger determination to reinforce accountability, transparency and the alignment of sports governance with international human rights standards, in co-operation with national and international authorities and sports governing bodies;
- 4.7. welcomes the work of Play the Game and the ClearingSport project which aims to introduce new standards, collaborations and mechanisms to counter crime, corruption and other breaches of integrity in sport.
5. In light of the above, with regard to the battle against abuse in sport, the Assembly urges Council of Europe member States to:
 - 5.1. enshrine the promotion and protection of human rights into national sport policy frameworks as a legal and ethical obligation;
 - 5.2. require sports organisations within their jurisdiction to adopt and implement human rights policies, including zero tolerance of abuse and discrimination;
 - 5.3. ensure the appointment of child safeguarding offices by sport federations working with minors, based on a framework agreed by the various sports stakeholders;
 - 5.4. establish or strengthen independent national safe sport units to support victims, investigate cases of abuse, and co-ordinate safeguarding education and prevention efforts;
 - 5.5. support EPAS in improving tools for good governance and child protection, including through the adoption and monitoring of relevant standards;
 - 5.6. actively participate in international efforts to define, promote and monitor compliance with an international code of safe sport, modelled on the World Anti-Doping Code and on the IOC Prevention of competition manipulation code;
 - 5.7. monitor the role of commercial advertising and influencers in sports, particularly the alcohol and gambling industries, and the effects they can have on the well-being and health of minors.
6. The Assembly also calls upon all international and national sports federations to:
 - 6.1. integrate binding human rights and safeguarding provisions into their statutes, codes of conduct and operational rules;
 - 6.2. establish trauma-informed, victim-centred reporting mechanisms accessible to all participants in sport, including anonymously and in multiple languages;
 - 6.3. provide mandatory safeguarding and human rights training for coaches, referees, sports officials and others in contact with children and vulnerable persons;
 - 6.4. include victims of abuse in decision-making bodies, advisory boards and policy-making processes;
 - 6.5. publish annual reports on safeguarding and human rights compliance, including data on complaints and disciplinary actions;
 - 6.6. ensure full co-operation with public authorities and law enforcement agencies in cases of suspected or reported abuse.
7. In light of the above, the Assembly also strongly supports the creation of an independent, global, multisport, safe sport entity offering support and redress to athletes across jurisdictions.
8. With regard to combating discrimination and promoting gender equality in sport, the Assembly:
 - 8.1. reiterates that sport must be a space free from all forms of discrimination, including on the basis of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability;
 - 8.2. welcomes the efforts of FIFA, the IOC, UEFA, World Athletics and international sports federations in setting targets for gender equality in participation and governance, but notes that gender inequalities persist at all levels of sport.
9. The Assembly therefore calls upon Council of Europe member States to:
 - 9.1. support research and data collection using standardised indicators on gender equality and diversity in sport, drawing on the indicators used for the joint EU-Council of Europe "All In Plus" joint project, allowing for comparability of data;

- 9.2. fund national programmes and partnerships with non-governmental organisations and sports associations aimed at increasing the participation and visibility of women and girls in sport;
 - 9.3. penalise discriminatory practices in sport and ensure access to justice for victims of gender-based violence or harassment;
 - 9.4. promote intersectional approaches to inclusion, ensuring that the specific needs of marginalised groups are addressed;
 - 9.5. work with media outlets to combat gender stereotypes and ensure balanced coverage of women's sport, again building on the work of the "All In Plus" joint project, including during its informative sessions, which set up a network of sport media professionals.
10. The Assembly also urges sports federations to:
 - 10.1. co-operate with EPAS where possible in the implementation of recommendations set forth as an outcome of the completed European Union-Council of Europe "All In Plus" joint project and contribute to online repositories on inclusive sport policies with best practices;
 - 10.2. adopt and implement gender equality action plans with measurable targets, including for equal pay and for representation in governance bodies;
 - 10.3. support mentoring and leadership development programmes for women, including coaches, referees and executives;
 - 10.4. engage in campaigns to challenge toxic masculinity and promote positive role models for young athletes.
 11. With regard to establishing human rights conditionalities for major sports events, the Assembly:
 - 11.1. expresses concern that major international sporting events continue to be awarded to host countries with poor human rights records, without adequate monitoring mechanisms;
 - 11.2. strongly supports the inclusion of binding human rights conditionalities in the bidding and hosting processes for all major sporting events, including monitoring mechanisms in the implementation and legacy phases;
 - 11.3. welcomes the example of the Human Rights Declaration signed for UEFA EURO 2024 and Women EURO 2025 and encourages its replication and expansion across future events for all sports federations.
 12. The Assembly also calls upon international sports federations and event organisers to:
 - 12.1. require comprehensive, contextualised human rights risk assessments as a condition for accepting bids;
 - 12.2. include compliance with international labour rights, freedom of expression, gender equality and child protection standards among minimum eligibility requirements;
 - 12.3. develop enforceable human rights action plans with timelines and benchmarks for all accepted bids;
 - 12.4. establish independent monitoring bodies with powers to investigate, assess compliance and impose sanctions, including the relocation of events in case of serious violations;
 - 12.5. work actively with public authorities to facilitate effective access to remedies, including judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, for victims of abuses related to the organisation of sports events;
 - 12.6. prioritise transparency and public engagement throughout the bidding, evaluation and hosting process, using the visibility of elite athletes to challenge harmful norms and practices and promote inclusive values;
 - 12.7. engage in a structured dialogue with the Council of Europe, the European Union and relevant United Nations agencies to develop human rights protocols in key areas such as freedom of expression, gender equality and child protection standards for the organisation of major sports events.
 13. Furthermore, the Assembly recommends that EPAS:
 - 13.1. develops further guidance on assessing human rights compliance in bids for sport event and provides technical assistance to bidding countries;

13.2. facilitates inter-regional dialogue and co-operation on human rights risk assessments in sport, particularly with emerging economies and low-income countries.

14. The time has come for a paradigm shift in the governance of sport: one that places the dignity, human rights and well-being of all athletes and stakeholders engaged in sport at its core. Sports governance must align with democratic values, human rights, transparency and the public interest, especially when operating internationally across diverse legal and cultural contexts.

15. The Assembly underlines that only a co-ordinated, inclusive and multistakeholder approach can ensure the realisation of human rights in and through sport.

16. Finally, the Assembly resolves to continue to monitor these developments, including in framework of the Parliamentary Alliance for Good Governance and Integrity in Sport, and to work with sports bodies, governments and civil society to ensure that the promise of human rights in sport becomes a reality for all.



Resolution 2608 (2025)¹

Provisional version

The Olympic Movement and peacekeeping: is sport neutrality serving sport values?

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Sport and the Olympic Movement can play an essential role in preserving peace and promoting internationally recognised human rights standards and democracy. The Parliamentary Assembly commends the central role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), in bringing together key stakeholders of the global sports arena to achieve these goals, while seeking to overcome differences.
2. The neutrality and autonomy of sport should enable sports institutions to fulfil their mission and safeguard sporting values effectively, without fear of undue pressure or interference. While the complex and ever-evolving relationships between the State and sports bodies, both at national and international levels, blur the clear separation between politics and sport, the Assembly believes that these two fundamental principles must be recognised and duly respected by public authorities, and that the sport movement should assume the responsibilities deriving from them. However, these principles should be properly understood and implemented in accordance with the above-mentioned goals and values of the Olympic Movement.
3. The Assembly acknowledges that the Olympic Charter refers to the respect of internationally recognised human rights, but their prevalence is not always stated with sufficient force by the sports governing bodies and, despite the many statements and declarations, both their protection in practice and their enforcement still lack consistency and effectiveness.
4. The principles of neutrality and autonomy of sport should serve peace, uphold democratic principles and champion human rights; they cannot justify inertia or wavering reactions when peace, democracy and human rights are threatened, vilified or *de facto* denied.
5. The Assembly recalls that while the Olympic Charter has constitutional significance and value for the sports movement, it is not superior to international conventions and treaties: the obligation to fully respect international human rights standards must take precedence over the need to ensure the political neutrality of sport, and the concept of autonomy of sport does not shield sports organisations from accountability when they fail to protect human dignity and human rights.
6. The Assembly wishes to encourage the Olympic Movement and the IOC to strengthen the link between sport and humanitarian law and, in particular, to reinforce the collective commitment to fostering a peaceful and co-operative global environment during the Olympic Games. Any country engaged in active warfare or armed conflict must commit to at least a temporary cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Olympic Games and must be held immediately accountable for any violation of the Olympic Truce.
7. Participation in the Olympic Games and other major sports competitions, the hosting of these events and the celebration of the victories of national teams and athletes are used by some governments as a means of asserting their power and gaining influence and prestige to consolidate it. This approach negates the very idea of the neutrality of sport. The Assembly firmly condemns any martial attitude towards sport which seeks

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (23rd sitting) (see [Doc. 16185](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Mr Mogens Jensen). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (23rd sitting).



to publicly demonstrate economic and political supremacy alongside sporting primacy, and even to present autocratic forms of government as an alternative to democratic governance, which is incompatible with the values enshrined in the Olympic Charter.

8. To avoid this approach, sports governing bodies cannot solely rely on the National Olympic Committees, especially when they do not appear to be autonomous but under government control. Increased scrutiny and the establishment of an independent monitoring system are essential to strengthen the IOC's ability to gather information on the actual respect of the values it proclaims.

9. Athletes are key players and powerful allies in the implementation of the Olympic Charter and its values; they must abide by political neutrality, but this principle and the sport regulations enacted to ensure that it is observed should not prevent them from supporting peace or condemning human rights violations and cannot justify punishing them for doing so.

10. Neither democratic governments or international organisations, nor athletes or sports governing bodies can remain silent and passive, in the name of the neutrality and autonomy of sport, when faced with serious human rights violations.

11. The Assembly agrees that athletes should not be held responsible for their governments' behaviour and that the right of athletes to participate in sports competitions must be preserved as far as possible. However, if a government seriously violates the Olympic principles and values of sport, the athletes of that country should only be allowed to participate in the Olympic Games or major sporting events organised by international sports federations as neutral athletes under the Olympic banner.

12. In addition, exceptional circumstances may require stronger measures, including a total ban on athletes from a given country. This should be the case when, on the one hand, such a ban is necessary to protect other human rights which may override the right of individual athletes to participate in sporting events and when, on the other hand, it is practically impossible for the athletes concerned to dissociate themselves from the actions of their governments, including because their right to freely express criticism is denied by their countries' authoritarian and repressive regimes.

13. This is the case in the Russian Federation and Belarus, where not only are virtually all high-level athletes State employees and/or financially supported by the State, but where there is no freedom of expression, and where taking a stand against the government would put an athlete at risk of losing their profession, livelihood and social status and even being imprisoned. Moreover, in these countries, sport is clearly a tool of soft power for the government and is being misused to generate acceptance, if not support, for the war of aggression against Ukraine, notwithstanding the appalling massive human rights violations and clear threat to the international legal order that this war has unleashed.

14. In light of the above, the Assembly calls on the International Olympic Committee to:

14.1. reinforce the provisions of the Olympic Charter which commit the IOC and its members to respect and protect human dignity and internationally recognised human rights;

14.2. establish the Olympic Truce as a necessary condition for a country's participation in the Olympic Games, and include in the Olympic Charter and other relevant IOC regulations the necessary provisions to effectively enforce the obligation to respect the Olympic Truce;

14.3. introduce, in the Olympic Charter, a provision stating that a martial attitude to sport is incompatible with Olympism and sporting values, and reinforce the obligation of national sports institutions, particularly the National Olympic Committees, to operate under conditions of strict independence and autonomy;

14.4. set up, in co-operation with human rights organisations, a robust monitoring system, such as an independent commission supported by independent experts, with investigative powers to evaluate and pronounce upon human rights violations and infringements of sporting values within the Olympic Movement, including the manipulative use of sport by a government;

14.5. amend Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter to specify that political neutrality does not prevent athletes from supporting peace or condemning human rights violations.

15. With a view to strengthen the rule of law within the Olympic Movement and the IOC, the Assembly recommends the establishment of an independent and impartial sports judicial body to ensure the consistent interpretation and implementation of the Olympic Charter and its fundamental principles by all sports governing bodies.

16. Finally, the Assembly trusts that the IOC and its newly elected President are firmly committed to promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms and to placing sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind with a view to promoting a peaceful society. In this context, the Assembly welcomes the IOC as an institutional partner of the newly established Parliamentary Alliance for Good Governance and Integrity in Sport and invites the IOC to consider entering into a memorandum of understanding with the Council of Europe.



Resolution 2609 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Global peace under threat: halting the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and addressing the wider conflict in the Middle East

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly expresses deep concern about the escalation of the war in the Middle East, where multiple fronts of fighting have been active since the appalling terrorist attack by Hamas against Israel in October 2023, which the Assembly has unequivocally condemned and the response by Israel, which has led to a catastrophic and entirely preventable humanitarian situation in Gaza. This unfolding multifaceted war involves Israeli forces, as well as terrorist and proxy groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis, and has caused immense suffering to the civilian population, particularly in Gaza. The eruption of open military hostilities between Israel and Iran in June 2025 and the direct military intervention of the United States in this conflict targeting nuclear facilities, represent a further alarming development, which could lead to an even wider conflagration with devastating consequences for human suffering and the maintenance of international peace and security, at a time when power politics seem to have overridden the system of global governance based on international law.

2. The Assembly reaffirms, in line with the values of the Council of Europe as a defender of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, its longstanding commitment to peace and regional stability in the Middle East and calls on all the parties to this broader war to de-escalate. The Assembly also reiterates the urgent need to uphold international law, respect human dignity, protect civilians, and reinvigorate multilateral diplomacy to avert further suffering, violence, destabilisation and radicalisation. The solution to the multiple, deep-seated, long-standing conflicts and challenges affecting the Middle East cannot be achieved through military confrontation but through diplomacy and an inclusive political process aimed at laying the foundations for durable peace, stability, respect and reconciliation between peoples.

3. In this context, the Assembly acknowledges the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Iran, and urges all parties to refrain from any actions that could jeopardise this fragile progress.

4. The Assembly remains gravely concerned by the destabilising activities of the Iranian regime which, in addition to systematically denying basic human rights to its population, plays a central role in fuelling regional and global violence and instability. Through its sustained support for armed proxy groups across the Middle East, including Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, armed factions in Syria and Iraq, and the Houthi movement in Yemen, Iran has aimed to undermine regional security and has contributed to the prolongation and intensification of multiple armed conflicts.

5. In addition, Iran's acceleration of its uranium enrichment programme in defiance of international commitments and its growing co-operation with the Russian Federation in this domain raise serious concerns about its capacity to develop nuclear weapons. By supplying military equipment to the Russian Federation for use in its war of aggression against Ukraine, and by deepening its political and strategic alignment with Moscow at both bilateral and multilateral levels, Iran has also emerged as a direct threat to European security.

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting) (see [Doc. 16210](#), report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Ms Ingjerd Schie Schou); and [Doc. 16212](#), opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, rapporteur: Mr Paul Galles). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting).



6. Movements have been reported from Tehran and other parts of Iran, with many people crossing into neighbouring countries, including Council of Europe member States. Equally, shelling has caused people in Israel and the Palestinian territories to seek shelter elsewhere in the country and, in some cases, abroad. Everything must be done to avoid another refugee crisis taking root, as there is no quick way back from this situation. The Assembly recalls that, with the conflict escalating further, additional humanitarian needs would emerge in a region already hosting millions of refugees and internally displaced people, and notes the consequential risks to those people of exploitation and becoming victims of human trafficking. It is concerned that if the conflict persists, existing refugee populations, mainly from Afghanistan, would also face renewed uncertainty and yet more hardship.

7. In the face of the unprecedented escalation in Iran centred on the unacceptable nuclear threat that it poses, and the increased threat to global security, the international community must not lose sight of the dramatic fate of civilians in Gaza, and that of the hostages held captive by Hamas and other terrorist militia groups. The Assembly is convinced that the widening scope of hostilities in the region should not divert attention from the urgent need to halt the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, nor from the deteriorating situation in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the urgent need to uphold international law and ensure accountability.

8. The Assembly recalls its resolutions, in particular [Resolution 2582 \(2025\)](#), that have sought a permanent and unconditional ceasefire and a renewed effort to achieve a political solution in Gaza. While welcoming the mediation that led to a temporary ceasefire on 19 January 2025, the Assembly deplores the fact that, despite these efforts and other expressions of the will of the international community, Israeli forces continue their disproportionate attacks on Gaza, with appalling consequences for the civilian population. The Assembly abhors and condemns in the strongest terms the devastating toll inflicted – with over 55 000 deaths according to figures reported to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, including 15 000 children according to UNICEF. It equally abhors and condemns reported Israeli attacks on civilians seeking aid, the obstruction of humanitarian aid, the mass displacement of communities, the water shortage, the growing likelihood of famine, and the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, including housing, hospitals, schools and religious and cultural sites. These acts cannot be justified under the pretext of self-defense and appear to constitute grave violations of international humanitarian law.

9. Aid delivery models approved by Israel's Security Cabinet, purportedly designed to bypass Hamas-controlled channels, have violated core humanitarian principles and have exposed civilians and aid workers to significant harm. Humanitarian access remains grossly insufficient amid ongoing hostilities and operational restrictions. Hospitals in Gaza, targeted by Israeli bombings, are either totally destroyed or completely overstretched, facing critical shortages of essential medicines and supplies, and more than 50 000 pregnant women are facing growing health risks, such as miscarriages, stillbirth and undernourished newborns. A whole generation risks being sacrificed. Strikes on distribution sites and the absence of adequate protective measures have led to mass casualties and the deaths of over 460 aid workers since October 2023.

10. The expansion of Israel's military operations in Gaza in May 2025 was met with opposition from large parts of the international community, and the Israeli Government has been repeatedly called upon to meet its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law. In this context, the Assembly further recalls the provisional measures indicated by the International Court of Justice, and the issuance of arrest warrants by the International Criminal Court against senior Israeli officials, as well as against a Hamas senior leader. Systemic breaches of fundamental obligations require accountability.

11. In deploring the catastrophic situation in Gaza, the Assembly recalls the grave responsibility of Hamas for the war, its rejection of numerous ceasefire mediation efforts that would provide a pathway for ending the conflict, and its refusal to release the remaining hostages. In sustaining the conflict, Hamas not only threatens Israel's security, but prolongs the appalling suffering and ordeal of the Palestinian people and undermines the Palestinian project for peace and statehood.

12. The Assembly emphasises that the prolongation of hostilities, the intensification of violations of international humanitarian law, the obstruction of ceasefire negotiations and the continued captivity of hostages are inflicting intolerable suffering on civilians and endangering any realistic prospect of restoring stability and securing a viable political settlement. The protracted nature of the conflict, combined with disregard for established legal and humanitarian norms undermines the effectiveness of the international rules-based order and represents a threat to global peace and security.

13. The Assembly expresses particular alarm at the approval by the Israeli Security Cabinet of the Gideon's Chariot Operation, which involves the forcible displacement of the Palestinian population of Gaza, as well as its military occupation. It stresses that any such acts would constitute a grave breach of international

humanitarian and human rights law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and would amount to a serious crime under international law. The Assembly underscores that the protection of civilian populations must remain a paramount concern and that any policies aimed at demographic engineering or forcible population transfer are wholly unacceptable.

14. Furthermore, the Assembly remains deeply concerned about the situation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem where settler violence, the closure of all checkpoints and mass arrests and detentions have accelerated since direct hostilities between Israel and Iran began on 13 June 2025. The Assembly reaffirms its unwavering support for a negotiated two-State solution as the only viable path to lasting peace and security. It further stresses that the continued expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, which remain illegal under international law, systematically undermines this goal, inflames tensions and contributes to the broader destabilisation of the region.

15. In light of the escalation of war in the Middle East, the Assembly:

15.1. expresses its deep concern about the direct hostilities between Israel and Iran and about the involvement of the United States, and calls for immediate de-escalation and restraint by all parties;

15.2. acknowledges the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Iran, and urges parties to take steps to ensure its implementation;

15.3. urges all States to refrain from actions that risk regional conflagration and to pursue diplomatic channels to establish regional stability;

15.4. stresses that under international humanitarian law, all parties must take all feasible precautions to spare civilians and minimise their suffering and casualties;

15.5. expresses serious concern about the continued Israeli military operations in Syria that risk further destabilising a fragile political transition, and calls on all parties to respect the territorial integrity of Syria and refrain from actions that may escalate regional tensions;

15.6. calls for a return to multilateral engagement, particularly through the United Nations and relevant regional actors, to address the interconnected crises across the Middle East;

15.7. calls on its member States to send a stronger message of political support to and solidarity with Iranians standing up for democracy and human rights, by, among other things, listing the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation;

15.8. calls on member States to provide co-ordinated support to Iran's neighbouring States which are part of the Council of Europe, and which may be called upon to deal with a possible humanitarian crisis due to arrivals of large volumes of people fleeing the region, notably by ensuring early planning for humanitarian corridors, fair relocation schemes, protection from exploitation and the risks of trafficking, and support to frontline States by ensuring fair burden-sharing among all member States;

15.9. reaffirms the legal obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) and the 1951 Refugee Convention and calls on member States to uphold the principle of *non-refoulement*, the right to asylum, and to humane treatment, even under increased migratory pressure.

16. As concerns efforts to reach a political solution in Gaza, the Assembly:

16.1. repeats its urgent appeal for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages still held in Gaza;

16.2. calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza to stop the relentless loss of civilian life, end the widespread destruction of homes and infrastructure and enable urgent humanitarian relief to reach all those in need without delay or obstruction;

16.3. urges all parties to engage constructively with mediation efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive ceasefire and the release of all hostages;

16.4. affirms that sustainable peace and stability in Gaza cannot be achieved while Hamas and other groups designated as terrorist organisations maintain any governing or operational role.

17. As regards the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, the Assembly:

17.1. recalls that international humanitarian law comprises a set of universal and binding rules to protect persons and civilian objects, and restricts the permissible means and methods of warfare;

- 17.2. calls for Israel's strict compliance with its obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law and underscores the importance of holding accountable all those responsible for violations;
- 17.3. strongly condemns any use of starvation of a civilian population as a method of warfare, the weaponisation of humanitarian aid and the unlawful denial of humanitarian access, which constitute crimes under international law;
- 17.4. resolutely affirms that there must be no unlawful transfer or forcible displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, nor any attempt to alter the territory of the Gaza Strip, including through reduction or annexation;
- 17.5. stresses the obligation not to deprive civilians in Gaza of goods indispensable to their survival, including by wilfully impeding relief supplies and humanitarian access;
- 17.6. calls on Israel to take all necessary and effective measures to ensure, without delay, in full co-operation with the United Nations, the unhindered and widespread provision by all stakeholders concerned of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance, including food, water, electricity, fuel, shelter, clothing and hygiene and sanitation requirements, as well as medical supplies and medical care, to Palestinians throughout Gaza, including by increasing the capacity and number of land crossing points and keeping them open for as long as necessary and condemns any deliberate obstruction of these efforts;
- 17.7. calls for a full, independent and transparent investigation into fatal attacks near food distribution sites;
- 17.8. calls for immediate and full access for international journalists and independent media outlets reporting on Gaza, which will improve independent and objective reporting.
18. As regards the role of Council of Europe member and observer States, the Assembly calls on them to:
 - 18.1. respect and uphold their obligations under international law, including by supporting the work of United Nations organs and agencies and the work of the International Court of Justice, and by ensuring respect for the rules laid down in the Geneva Conventions in all circumstances;
 - 18.2. refrain from obstructing the work of the International Criminal Court, and for those States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, co-operate fully with it;
 - 18.3. continue to support sufficient and adequate humanitarian funding and the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza;
 - 18.4. facilitate medical evacuations, including the provision of treatment and transportation, with particular attention to children and their families, as well as to pregnant women and their families;
 - 18.5. lend their full diplomatic support for a two-State solution and for creating the preconditions for a durable and sustainable peace in the Middle East built on trust, justice and reconciliation;
 - 18.6. use all possible means within their power, including economic and political leverage, to restore international law and discuss the progress in the Committee of Ministers.
19. In reaffirming its commitment to a just and comprehensive peace based on the two-State solution, the Assembly:
 - 19.1. renews with urgency its call to parties to refrain from any unilateral measures that undermine the prospects for the peace process;
 - 19.2. calls for the urgent and resolute engagement of the Israeli authorities to prevent settler violence and refrain from the building of new settlements and the expansion of old ones, home demolitions, forced evictions and confiscation of land in the occupied territories;
 - 19.3. underlines that the Palestinian Authority is an essential interlocutor in peace negotiations;
 - 19.4. supports international efforts to prepare the political horizon for a two-State solution, including the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution established by Norway, the European Union and Saudi Arabia at the United Nations General Assembly in 2024.
20. Convinced that the young people and children of Israel and Palestine deserve a better future, the Assembly will remain committed to offering a platform for dialogue with the aim of rebuilding trust and devising a possible peaceful future.



Resolution 2610 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Social mobilisation, social unrest and police reaction in Council of Europe member States: is there a need for a new social contract?

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its Resolution 2364 (2021) “Ethnic profiling in Europe: a matter of great concern”, its Resolution 2435 (2022) and Recommendation 2230 (2022) “Fighting and preventing excessive and unjustified use of force by law-enforcement officers”, its Resolution 2552 (2024) “Strengthening democracy through participatory and deliberative processes”, and its Resolution 2553 (2024) “Strengthening the youth perspective in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly”,
2. It also refers to Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on deliberative democracy and the New Democratic Pact for Europe – Building a resilient, inclusive and agile democracy, presented by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe at the 134th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Luxembourg, 13-14 May 2025).
3. The Assembly stresses that member States need to be innovative in their approaches, in order to restore meaning and vitality to the democratic fabric of society, by strengthening the role of Parliament and making participatory and deliberative democracy self-evident, and public debate a living force.
4. The feeling of having a say in essential decisions that affect them is a key component of people's trust in institutions and democracy, and a process of in-depth dialogue among differing political perspectives on social issues can lead to broad compromises that help reduce social tensions.
5. A democracy based on open public debate, which fully integrates the voices of young people and adopts horizontal governance models, provides a safeguard against overly top-down, managerial and procedural approaches to public decision making.
6. The Assembly observes that social mobilisation is an essential element of democratic vitality and a bulwark against political disengagement, often identified as one of the main causes of the democratic deficit in contemporary societies; it believes that a relationship built on respect and trust between institutions and young people is a clear indicator of a vibrant and responsive democracy.
7. The growing complexity and difficulty of the missions entrusted to the law-enforcement authorities, as well as the daily commitment of their officers to ensuring the protection of people and property, deserve recognition both from the authorities, and from society as a whole, of the responsibility borne by them.
8. The rapid evolution of the societal, technological and legal contexts necessitates a constant renewal of the professional skills of law-enforcement personnel, with a view to ensuring that their policies, guidelines and responses are effective, well-tailored to the situations met, and respectful of the expectations and rights of all groups in society.

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting) (see [Doc. 16191](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting).



9. The Assembly considers that placing dialogue and mediation at the heart of crowd control, developing strategies that do not pit law-enforcement authorities against demonstrators, and limiting the use of intermediate weapons to a strict minimum, provide a good framework to preserve the democratic nature of the right to protest and prevent the escalation of violence.

10. Law-enforcement authorities gain in legitimacy when they are centred around a preventive approach, based on knowledge of local realities and consideration of any potential biases which might influence the approach taken, going thus beyond purely quantitative indicators.

11. Law-enforcement practices such as identity checks perceived as discriminatory, combined with the scaling down of community policing mechanisms, may contribute to a loss of trust in institutions among young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, thereby hindering the scope to build relationships of trust.

12. In view of these elements, the Assembly calls on the member States of the Council of Europe which have not yet done so to:

12.1. draw inspiration from approaches based on a political culture of consensus, which promote inclusive debate in public policy making;

12.2. institutionalise forms of participatory democracy as a complement to traditional representative mechanisms, while ensuring that intermediary bodies play a central role,

12.3. adopt an approach to policing as a public service engaged in a continuously evolving relationship with the public, based on trust, accountability, and the ability to question itself;

12.4. place listening, respect, communication, and availability at the heart of law-enforcement authorities' activity and work to prevent delinquency at the root, through knowledge of local residents and issues;

12.5. develop or reinforce a community-based police presence aimed at fostering a relation of trust with local residents, particularly in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

12.6. make long-term investments in the vocational training and equipment of law-enforcement officers, to enable them to carry out their duties in the best possible conditions, in order to maintain security and social cohesion;

12.7. include in law-enforcement officers' training mandatory modules on cognitive and discriminatory biases, crowd management, and the principles of procedural justice;

12.8. combat all forms of profiling including ethnic profiling during identity checks and implement an effective system for tracking and monitoring these checks in order to prevent any discriminatory practices, even if unintentional;

12.9. actively promote the right to protest in a democratic framework by prioritising de-escalation as the guiding principle in the management of demonstrations, rather than preventive arrests, obstruction strategies, and any inherently repressive approach, and by strengthening dialogue and mediation before, during, and after demonstrations;

12.10. reconsider the use of intermediate weapons in the context of maintaining order during demonstrations, reserving their use for specialised and properly trained units, and initiate a review of a possible total ban on the use of defence ball launchers in maintaining order.

Resolution 2611 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Analysis and guidelines for a sustainable and socially fair energy transition

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Clean, safe and affordable energy is essential to securing Europe's continued prosperity. It is also central in addressing the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss. As part of the international community's efforts, the Council of Europe member States have committed to changing their legislation and policies in the light of the Sustainable Development Goals, climate treaties and the European Green Deal.
2. This commitment was further strengthened at the Reykjavik Summit when member States of the Council of Europe recognised that "human rights and the environment are intertwined" and that "a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of human rights by present and future generations". The Parliamentary Assembly considers that socio-economic transformation, including the transition to a more sustainable energy system, is essential in this collective endeavour and should follow a human rights-based approach as both the goal of a clean and safe energy system, and the transition towards it, are strongly affecting basic human rights.
3. The Assembly highlights the importance of stable access to clean energy for the enjoyment of fundamental social rights to housing, work, health, education, protection from poverty and social exclusion, as well as the rights of vulnerable persons (notably children, persons with disabilities and older persons), as enshrined in the European Social Charter (revised) (ETS No. 35 and ETS No. 163). The Assembly is concerned that in Europe, millions of people still experience energy poverty caused by a combination of low income, high energy costs and poor energy efficiency in buildings, as well as the choice of transport modes. In line with the requirements of the Charter, States have the obligation to remedy and prevent, as far as possible, the situation of energy poverty. A well-designed national energy transition strategy with strong social and economic dimensions is crucial to this end.
4. The Assembly acknowledges the challenges of building sustainable and socially fair energy systems in member States. The transition to renewable energy technology requires strong and stable investment, social adaptation and decisive governance measures to guide and support citizens and businesses in adapting to renewable energy systems. There is a need to embrace new technologies, improve energy efficiency in companies, housing and modes of transport and change both products and procedures, including their location. Special attention is needed for citizens to view the transition as a positive development.
5. The Assembly considers that the transition to clean energy systems presents real opportunities for European countries to boost the resilience of their national economies against external shocks, strengthen energy security, enhance competitiveness with green technologies, empower consumers and improve public health. This complex undertaking requires a holistic vision accompanied by ambitious and stable long-term policies, sectoral synergies and coherent investment strategies, aimed at supporting large-scale deployment of renewable energy sources and phase out fossil fuels which, according to the International Energy Agency, still account for around 70% of energy produced in Europe. The Assembly highlights that new investment in solar and wind projects in the European Union is now cheaper than that in coal and gas.

1. *Assembly debate* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting) (see [Doc. 16182](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Ms Saskia Kluit). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 June 2025 (24th sitting).



6. The Assembly expresses grave concern that the Russian Federation's full-scale aggression against Ukraine has dramatically exposed the vulnerability of energy systems to armed conflict. Repeated and deliberate attacks by the Russian Federation on Ukraine's civilian energy infrastructure have led to severe disruptions in energy supply, threatening not only the safety and well-being of millions of civilians but also undermining regional energy security. The Assembly underscores that military aggression against energy systems is not only a violation of international humanitarian law but also a threat to global climate and energy transition goals.

7. The Assembly believes that in exercising their responsibility for ensuring access to clean, safe and affordable energy for all which is a key goal of transition, States should act through regulatory and budgetary tools on three main axes: providing for adequate energy supplies by maximising investment in clean, locally available energy sources; designing fair pricing strategies that underpin responsible production and use of energy; and supporting vulnerable users in their transition to more sustainable and energy efficient systems. Measures should prioritise the transport and housing sectors which are the largest energy consumers and significant emitters of greenhouse gases in Europe.

8. The Assembly welcomes the targets of cutting national greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% and enhancing the share of renewable energy to 45% of the national energy mix by 2030 under the European Green Deal. It also welcomes the European Union's Action Plan for Affordable Energy and it underlines that switching to more environment-friendly sources of energy and improving efficiency of energy use make good economic sense by saving costs for households, businesses and States in the long term and enhancing energy security through abundant free-of-charge local resources, while also benefiting society at large in terms of better public health, improved well-being and reduced pollution. However, in the transition phase, States should protect citizens, notably vulnerable groups, against expensive lock-in problems and help support high transition costs, especially in rural areas.

9. The Assembly calls on member States to steer sustainable energy policy choices for all stakeholders at national level, while at the same time ensuring their consistent and long-term implementation by building synergies through co-operation at pan-European level. It therefore recommends to member States to:

9.1. consolidate their national strategy for transitioning to clean, safe and affordable energy and promote it through a public communication campaign highlighting the advantages of embracing renewable energy sources;

9.2. put in place more incentives for investment in sustainable mobility, renovation of older buildings, green technologies and smart grids to improve energy efficiency, where appropriate through public-private partnerships;

9.3. considering that data centres and artificial intelligence applications significantly increase energy consumption, make better use of artificial intelligence as a powerful tool to develop policies that can dramatically foster energy transition;

9.4. consider the possibilities offered by the Council of Europe Development Bank for financing projects that promote a sustainable and socially fair energy transition;

9.5. promote local production of clean energy by private and public stakeholders, notably through local co-operative initiatives;

9.6. eliminate public subsidies to fossil fuels and scale down public investment in such sources of energy;

9.7. foster sustainable mobility by improving public transport infrastructure, accessibility and affordability, encouraging walking and cycling, and accelerating the shift to shared mobility and clean vehicles;

9.8. with a view to shielding vulnerable members of society from energy poverty, consider using structural measures such as:

9.8.1. price caps and tax reductions to offset the effect of spikes in energy prices;

9.8.2. targeted payments and income support for the most vulnerable;

9.8.3. grants to implement housing renovation schemes and facilitate the acquisition of electric vehicles;

9.8.4. bans on disconnection of vulnerable users from energy supply;

- 9.8.5. professional training schemes to enable workers acquire new skills and access green jobs in the energy sector;
- 9.9. involve citizens and municipalities in the shaping and implementation of local energy partnerships, in order to empower them as prosumers (producers-consumers);
- 9.10. develop socially fair green taxation schemes that favour transition to clean energy by stimulating investment and shifting financial burden onto polluting activities and away from green solutions;
- 9.11. engage in regional cross-border projects aimed at optimising interconnections, improving network stability and guaranteeing mutual support in situations of disruption in energy supply;
- 9.12. invest in back-up and storage capacity to manage fluctuations in renewable energy supply and demand;
- 9.13. support job creation in sectors that underpin the transition to a sustainable energy system and set up social transition funds to help employees to move from fossil fuel based sectors to clean sectors;
- 9.14. conduct regular and independent energy audits at national level to track progress and ensure accountability in the clean energy transition;
- 9.15. provide continued technical, material and financial support to Ukraine for the restoration, renewal and modernisation of its civilian energy systems. Such support should prioritise decentralised, renewable and resilient energy solutions, helping to rebuild Ukraine's energy sector in line with European clean energy goals and to ensure the population's access to electricity, heating and critical services;
- 9.16. strongly condemn any military aggression targeting civilian energy infrastructure, and support co-ordinated efforts to hold perpetrators accountable under international law.



Resolution 2612 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Saving the lives of migrants at sea and protecting their human rights

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Daily, people flee their home countries to escape war, violence, political oppression or climate change and to seek safety and a better life. Among them, there are people trying to reach Europe, many by sea, risking their lives on dangerous journeys, as recorded since 2014 by the International Organization for Migration, but as witnessed for much longer.
2. The Parliamentary Assembly is appalled by the numerous and recurring tragedies of migrants' lives lost in European waters.
3. The Assembly recalls the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5, "the Convention") and its Article 2 safeguarding the right to life. The Assembly refers in this respect to the European Court of Human Rights' ("the Court") 2022 landmark judgment *Safi and Others v. Greece*, which stressed States' obligation to carry out effective investigations into violations of Article 2 and to take appropriate steps to safeguard the lives of those within their jurisdiction and in the context of any activity, whether public or not, in which the right to life may be at stake. These obligations under Article 2 refer in this context to an operation to rescue migrants who were drowning while trying to cross borders at sea. The Assembly also recalls that States should effectively protect rescued migrants from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention, and effectively investigate any violations of this fundamental provision. The Assembly further recalls the importance of respecting the *non-refoulement* principle, as applied by the Court in the context of maritime search and rescue operations in its 2012 judgment *Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy*.
4. The Assembly urges member States to fully comply with refugee, maritime and international humanitarian instruments, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which places upon member States an obligation to ensure that shipmasters promptly render assistance to anyone in a situation of distress at sea, under Article 98. It additionally underscores the importance of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (1974) and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (1979) of the International Maritime Organization, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197, 2005), the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime ("Palermo Protocol", 2000), and the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951).
5. The Assembly also encourages member States to use the Council of Europe's expertise in the migration field, in particular the newly established Division on Migration and Refugees; the [thematic work](#) of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights on migration; and the Council of Europe Programme on Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP).

1. *Assembly debate* on 26 June 2025 (25th sitting) (see [Doc. 16195](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, rapporteur: Mr Paulo Pisco). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 26 June 2025 (25th sitting). See also [Recommendation 2298 \(2025\)](#).



6. The Assembly wishes to honour the bravery of all those saving migrants' lives in European waters, including member States' national coast guard authorities and navies, NGOs and volunteers. All these people risk their own lives to save others.
7. The Assembly underlines in this respect the important role of the International Maritime Organization in promoting a common and effective application of the legal framework of rescue at sea, as underlined in [Resolution 1999 \(2014\)](#) "The 'left-to-die boat': actions and reactions".
8. The Assembly, echoing [Resolution 2305 \(2019\)](#) "Saving lives in the Mediterranean: the need for an urgent response", emphasises States' responsibility to prevent drownings in European waters. In this respect, the Assembly urges all member States to share responsibility for safety and protection of life in European waters by committing to assist coastal member States in search-and-rescue operations, including by increasing the resources of their coast guard authorities.
9. The Assembly recalls that Greece's Aegean, Spain's Canary and Italy's Sicily islands, in particular Lampedusa, have been major points of entry for migrants trying to reach Europe, and that the Western African/Atlantic and Central Mediterranean migration sea routes are among the most dangerous in the world. The Assembly thus calls on member States to further strengthen the financial and material capacities of the coast guard authorities of these regions – namely the Hellenic Coast Guard, La Sociedad de Salvamento y Seguridad Marítima en Canarias and La Guardia Costiera Capitaneria Di Porto Lampedusa – to enable them to pursue their missions to rescue migrants in distress and prevent deaths at sea.
10. The Assembly calls on member States to re-establish large-scale European search-and-rescue operations. This should involve creating a European sea search-and-rescue corps with the sole mandate of saving lives at sea in full respect of international human rights law.
11. To this end, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member States and the European Union to:
 - 11.1. allocate appropriate funds and means for search-and-rescue operations explicitly earmarked for this purpose of saving lives;
 - 11.2. establish platforms for the co-ordination of search-and-rescue operations, ensuring an effective complementarity between public and private search-and-rescue actors, and with clear responsibilities among member States;
 - 11.3. enhance the identification of distress situations and an effective response by the closest and most suitable ships;
 - 11.4. in co-operation with the Council of Europe, develop and maintain systematic human rights awareness raising and training of border guard and other security forces involved in migrants search-and-rescue operations, as well as increase the capacity of law-enforcement (including border and coast guard), judicial and prosecutorial authorities to effectively investigate violations of Articles 2 and 3 of the Convention, including in the context of migrant search-and-rescue operations.
12. Regarding international and domestic laws, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member States to:
 - 12.1. sign and ratify, if they have not yet done so, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant international treaties, and respect their terms and obligations;
 - 12.2. adopt clear, binding, and enforceable common rules aimed at enhancing search-and-rescue capacities, fully consistent with international maritime law and international human rights and refugee law obligations, as underlined in [Resolution 1999 \(2014\)](#);
 - 12.3. recognise European waters as maritime humanitarian spaces to allow better protection of independent civil search-and-rescue missions, and participate in reinforcing co-operation among all search-and-rescue actors in line with [Resolution 2356 \(2020\)](#) "Rights and obligations of NGOs assisting refugees and migrants in Europe";
 - 12.4. organise safe pathways at sea for migrants in distress;
 - 12.5. take appropriate action to render effective the prohibition of pushbacks, collective expulsions, and other illegal actions vis-à-vis migrants at sea;
 - 12.6. monitor swiftly, independently, and thoroughly all cases of human rights violations at sea and violations of international maritime law, and produce an annual report to this end, with particular emphasis on:
 - 12.6.1. allegations of pushbacks;

12.6.2. allegations of both delayed or absent responses to distress calls from responsible authorities, and instances of endangerment;

12.6.3. cases of non-rescue, delayed rescue or other issues in operations at sea, including allegations that rescued persons have been disembarked in unsafe places.

13. To protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of rescued migrants, the Assembly calls on member States to:

13.1. ensure that survivors are safely disembarked in the place that can be reached most promptly, where their safety is no longer threatened and their basic needs are met, in accordance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea and other relevant search-and-rescue instruments;

13.2. ensure assistance is provided to migrants at disembarkation, including vulnerability, health and mental health screenings, and provision of legal information;

13.3. adopt clear, binding and enforceable common standards for the human and dignified reception of and assistance to survivors, with particular attention paid to vulnerable people, especially women and unaccompanied children.

14. The Assembly encourages the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) to seek an agreement with member States to also send alerts about migrant boats to qualified civil society organisations who act as complementary stakeholders. It welcomes the creation and encourages the development of the institution of the Fundamental Rights Officer within the Frontex structures, with the aim of ensuring human rights compliance of the agency's activities and beyond.

15. As tackling migrant smuggling must not lead to the criminalising of smuggled people and humanitarian organisations, as happens in some member States, the Assembly asks member States to closely consider the recommendations made in [Resolution 2356 \(2020\)](#) "Rights and obligations of NGOs assisting refugees and migrants in Europe" and in [Resolution 2568 \(2024\)](#) "A shared European approach to address migrant smuggling", including by strictly defining in domestic legislation the definition of the crime of migrant smuggling and the scope of criminalisation, in line with the Palermo Protocol. The Assembly asks member States to pay particular attention to vulnerable populations, such as victims of torture and trafficking, migrant women, and unaccompanied migrant children.

16. In order to avoid further tragedies, the Assembly urges member States to cease delaying disembarkation or diverting ships to distant ports, impounding rescue ships, planes, and drones, and to allow humanitarian civil society organisations to operate in support of public actors without introducing legal and administrative obstacles.

17. Moreover, the Assembly urges ending such tragedies by establishing safe legal pathways for migrants in need of international protection. Furthermore, member States must protect and recognise European waters as maritime humanitarian spaces to be regarded as sanctuaries in the name of humanity.

18. Welcoming the adoption by the European Union in 2021 of its Integrated Border Management Fund and its renewed Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Assembly encourages greater cooperation with the Council of Europe in these areas, in particular in the implementation of the European Union Pact on Migration and Asylum by member States.

19. Given extensive reports describing unacceptable violations of human rights and international maritime law by the Libyan Coast Guard authority and the Libyan General Administration for Coastal Security, the Assembly calls on member States to reconsider their co-operation with these authorities, including their funding, training and provision of equipment, in order to ensure they fully respect their human rights obligations.

20. Considering the challenges Tunisia faces regarding migrants' human rights on its territory and at sea, the Assembly calls on member States to re-evaluate their co-operation with Tunisia, especially its coast guard authority, in the light of these key issues, including an examination of the support given to the Tunisian Coast Guard, through funding, training, and provision of equipment.

21. Considering the widespread protection concerns affecting migrants and refugees in Tunisia as expressed in, among other things, the joint communication to the Tunisian Government issued jointly by different United Nations Human Rights Special Procedures, the Assembly calls on member States to avoid instructing vessels involved in rescue operations to disembark refugees and migrants on Tunisian territory.

Resolution 2613 (2025)¹
Provisional version

The challenges and needs of public and private actors involved in migration management

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is convinced that co-operation between public and private actors is one of the crucial aspects for successfully managing migration in Europe and for responding to one of the challenges faced by Council of Europe member States, in particular regarding the first assistance, the reception, and the inclusion of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.
2. Such challenges emerge in particular at the borders of some Council of Europe member States, as well as in congestion points, which are places where people live in formal and informal contexts.
3. The Assembly recalls the importance of the international and regional treaties as well as customary international humanitarian law protecting migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, in particular: the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5), the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the Geneva Conventions, the [United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights (ETS No. 160), the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse ([CETS No. 201](#)).
4. Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings ([CETS No. 197](#)), the Assembly draws the attention of member States to the importance of this convention, and to the Council of Europe's expertise in combating trafficking in human beings, with migrant populations being particularly targeted by this phenomenon.
5. The Assembly invites member States to make use of the Council of Europe's standards and expertise on migration issues, including: the [thematic work](#) on migration of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights; the [standards](#) developed by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) on "Safeguards for irregular migrants deprived of their liberty"; [General Policy Recommendation N°16](#) on safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination issued by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) as well as its 2024 [factsheet](#), "Integration and Inclusion of migrants"; and the Council of Europe Programme on Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals ([HELP](#)).
6. The Assembly recalls the [Reykjavik Declaration](#) adopted during the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held on 16 and 17 May 2023, during which the Heads of State and Government reiterated "the necessity to fight against trafficking and smuggling of migrants", "while continuing to protect the victims and respect the human rights of migrants and refugees".
7. With regard to civil society, the Assembly refers to [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2018\)11](#) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member States on the need to strengthen the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe. It also refers to Appendix III of the Reykjavik Declaration, the "[Reykjavik Principles for Democracy](#)", which reaffirms that "civil society is a prerequisite for a functioning democracy".

1. *Assembly debate* on 26 June 2025 (25th sitting) (see [Doc. 16192](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, rapporteur: Ms Sandra Zampa). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 26 June 2025 (25th sitting).



8. On age assessment in the context of migration, the Assembly refers to [Resolution 2195 \(2017\)](#) “Child-friendly age assessment for unaccompanied migrant children”, promoting the development of a child-sensitive, comprehensive model of age assessment that would enable member States to meet the needs of unaccompanied or separated children. The Assembly also refers to [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2022\)22](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on human rights principles and guidelines on age assessment in the context of migration, underlining the importance of the principle of presumption of minority for persons undergoing age assessment, and the requirement for member States to implement multidisciplinary and evidence-based age assessment procedures.

9. The Assembly underlines the responsibility of its members, in their capacity as both national lawmakers and members of the Assembly, to act at European and domestic levels to promote the Council of Europe instruments, standards and expertise, and to align national legislation and practice with the recommendations made hereafter, in particular regarding arrival, reception, and inclusion of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

10. To ensure that the public and private actors involved in migration management exercise their tasks with respect for the human rights of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers at first arrival at borders and in congestion points, the Assembly invites the Council of Europe member States to:

10.1. ensure that minimal standards be established for a dignified assistance, with a particular attention to vulnerable people, especially women, children, unaccompanied minors, and victims of trafficking, ensuring their safety in transit and reception facilities, as well as separate and safe spaces;

10.2. ensure adequate medical assistance, both at first arrival and in the long term, including access to psychological and psychiatric support;

10.3. establish clear procedures for the identification of persons with specific needs, including a safe and child-sensitive age assessment for unaccompanied minors, in line with Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)22 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

10.4. ensure enough staff and adequate resources to the authorities involved, and a sufficient staff rotation in order to avoid risks of traumas and burnouts;

10.5. train civil servants on legal information and assistance to be provided to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to overcome legal and administrative obstacles, and on up-to-date country-of-origin information;

10.6. provide financial support to municipalities, and local government bodies overall, affected by recurrent arrivals of migrants on their territory;

10.7. ensure full and clear information to migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers on current legislation on immigration and asylum, and facilitate their access to international protection procedures;

10.8. ensure effective and timely access to the national reception system for people claiming international protection;

10.9. support a closer co-operation between these actors and European agencies, such as the European Union Agency for Asylum, Frontex, and Europol, as well as international organisations, such as the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

10.10. establish independent human rights monitoring mechanisms at European and domestic borders, where they do not exist already.

11. To respond to the challenges and needs of public and private actors involved in the reception and the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers, the Assembly encourages member States to promote inclusion and further social cohesion within host communities and invites them to:

11.1. strengthen the co-operation between public and private actors supporting refugees and asylum seekers, including local government bodies, local communities, and civil society actors;

11.2. favour decentralised decision making by empowering local government bodies and local communities to design and implement integration programmes, encouraging participation in community life;

11.3. establish coherent, locally-driven inclusion policies and ensure assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in overcoming legal and administrative obstacles;

11.4. support public and private actors involved in reception to provide medical care, legal aid, language courses, vocational training, and access to public services, in co-operation with local government bodies, local communities, and civil society actors;

11.5. ensure predetermined and reasonable timeframes for examining applications for international protection, avoiding prolonging the over-reliance on reception centres;

11.6. support the transition from reception to community inclusion, with specific accompanying measures to favour autonomy and independence.

12. To facilitate the way in which public and private actors contribute to the inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers, the Assembly calls on member States to:

12.1. end reliance on large-scale reception facilities and prioritise smaller reception facilities, such as houses and apartment units, by investing in dignified small-scale community accommodation, disseminated throughout the national territory;

12.2. adopt the model of “integrated reception” going beyond the mere distribution of food and accommodation, and providing individual programmes designed to enable people to regain a sense of independence and effective involvement in life in the community, in terms of employment, housing, and access to local services and social interaction, through the development of solid relationships with local government bodies, local communities, and local networks;

12.3. ensure dedicated reception facilities for unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking, and persons with special needs;

12.4. ensure an independent monitoring mechanism of the different reception facilities, including by offering accessible complaint procedures to people.

13. The Assembly also encourages public-private co-operation in places where informal situations are observed, and where the humanitarian situation is very concerning. National authorities and local government bodies should put in place specific measures to assist people living in informal settlements, to respond to their basic needs and orient them to local services, including the provision of suitable reception facilities and protective measures for minors, women, victims of trafficking, and other vulnerable people.

Resolution 2614 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Women's rights in Europe – Progress and challenges

Parliamentary Assembly

1. For decades, the advancement of women's rights has been a defining force in shaping more equitable societies, with growing female participation in economic, public, cultural and political life. Several Council of Europe member States have already had a woman head of State or government for the first time, while the increase in the number of women members of parliament has contributed to making those bodies more representative of the populations they serve. Discussions on gender equality have thus become a part of public discourse and legal standards have changed to reflect or inspire progress. The Parliamentary Assembly stresses that gender equality and the rights of women, in all their diversity, are cornerstones of democracy.

2. However, recent years have witnessed an erosion of women's rights worldwide, with growing challenges that may be viewed as resistance to change or a reaction to past and recent achievements. These obstacles arise against the backdrop of increasingly polarised societies, in a time of “cultural wars” and ideological tensions. This erosion is certainly a feature of the current threat of democratic backsliding. In some cases, external influences, including those from foreign powers, seem to contribute to this climate, complicating the efforts to consolidate and expand women's rights. [Resolution 2290 \(2019\)](#) “Towards an ambitious Council of Europe agenda for gender equality” denounces the fact that “certain government forces and non-State actors are targeting long-acquired rights and previously agreed language is being questioned”. According to the 2021 report “Tip of the Iceberg”, published by the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual & Reproductive Rights (EPF), between 2009 and 2018 over 700-million Euros originating from various actors in the United States, the Russian Federation and Europe funded anti-gender equality activity within the European Union. A 2024 report from the United Nations Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, “Escalating backlash against gender equality and urgency of reaffirming substantive equality and the human rights of women and girls”, warns about this backlash, “which has reached extreme proportions in certain countries, including gender apartheid”, and calls for a commitment to substantive gender equality and for co-ordinated efforts to counter the gender backlash globally.

3. Calls for a return to so-called traditional family values are questioning the benefits of the advancement of women's rights for society as a whole, or even portraying women's rights' defenders as a threat to families. Politicians promoting traditional roles for women are attracting attention in the media on this theme, which is gaining some traction in the public consciousness. The Assembly expresses concern with regard to the political instrumentalisation of family values to undermine women's rights and deplores the spread of gendered disinformation and the growing backlash against women's rights in Europe. For attacks against women's rights are attacks against democratic values.

4. The increasing popularity, particularly on social media, of “masculinists”, advocating the submission of women to men, is a particular reason for concern, as is a growing climate of misogyny. Unchecked social media algorithms amplify these voices and tend to silence the more inclusive ones. The harmful impact of sexist propaganda on young people's mindsets, particularly among boys, has been observed by experts. Recently, the popular television series *Adolescence* has raised awareness and debate around this

1. *Assembly debate* on 26 June 2025 (26th sitting) (see [Doc. 16211](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Petra Bayr). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 26 June 2025 (26th sitting).



phenomenon. In its [Resolution 2480 \(2023\)](#) “The role and responsibility of men and boys in stopping gender-based violence against women and girls”, the Assembly recognised the responsibility of men and boys to be proactive in combating this scourge.

5. With the exception of Andorra, parliaments in Europe remain male-dominated, including in leadership and decision-making positions, and such under-representation of women in parliamentary life undermines democratic institutions and processes. The Assembly welcomes General Recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, adopted in October 2024 by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as the Kigali Declaration, adopted at the 145th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in October 2022, entitled “Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world”. The Assembly calls for the full implementation of its [Resolution 2615 \(2025\)](#) “Promoting inclusive participation in parliamentary life: gender equality, accessibility and inclusive policies”.

6. According to the latest survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, one in three women is a survivor of gender-based violence in Europe. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, the “Istanbul Convention”), which entered into force on 1 August 2014, is recognised globally as a key text, and the Assembly welcomes the fact that countering violence against women and domestic violence is constantly recognised as a political priority within the Council of Europe. However, the withdrawal of Türkiye from the Istanbul Convention constitutes a warning signal, not least because Turkish civil society organisations have reported that this decision was preceded by a growing backlash against the concept of gender and, consequently, of gender equality. Gravely concerned that violence against women and femicide are still an everyday occurrence within Europe and beyond, the Assembly calls for stronger financial support to transform commitment into tangible change.

7. Female politicians are especially targeted by hate speech and online and offline threats of violence or acts of violence. At the Assembly Conference of Speakers of Parliament held on 20 and 21 March 2025, the speakers stressed that attacks against women politicians aim at intimidating them, obstructing their participation, and pushing them out of the public sphere and back into the private domain. They called for systematic investigation and condemnation of any form of violence against politicians.

8. In its [Resolution 1860 \(2012\)](#) “Advancing women’s rights worldwide”, the Assembly called on member States to step up efforts to combat discrimination against women and to give more political weight to gender equality issues and women’s rights. This call remains necessary. The Assembly recognises that vulnerable groups are at a higher risk of cumulative forms of discrimination and calls for concrete measures to prevent intersectional discrimination. The Assembly is particularly concerned about attacks against women with a minority background, women with disabilities and LGBTI women and about significant levels of gendered discrimination in the fields of housing, employment and healthcare. In its [Resolution 2576 \(2024\)](#) “Preventing and combating violence and discrimination against lesbian, bisexual and queer women in Europe”, the Assembly stressed that they are especially targeted by anti-gender movements, which attack women’s rights and the rights of LGBTI persons and attempt to silence them or deny them their legitimate place in public spaces. Once again, the Assembly highlights that attacks against women’s rights and LGBTI rights weaken the fabric of our democratic societies.

9. Recalling its [Resolution 2554 \(2024\)](#) “Protecting women human rights defenders in Europe”, the Assembly reiterates its constant support for women’s human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States and beyond, and calls for their protection from undue pressure, intimidation and violence. In the present context, particular attention must be paid to online hate speech, which increasingly targets human rights defenders, making them also vulnerable to further attacks, including physical violence. The Assembly recalls that women human rights defenders in all their diversity play a crucial role in promoting and protecting human rights, including women’s rights and the rights of LGBTI persons, and in furthering gender equality.

10. Sexual and reproductive health and rights epitomise the conflict between progress and new challenges in women’s rights. Despite some significant advancements over the past few decades, with progress in access to education, healthcare, contraception, and medical innovations, they have also faced a growing number of obstacles in recent years. Referring to [Resolution 2331 \(2020\)](#) “Empowering women: promoting access to contraception in Europe”, the Assembly reiterates that access to modern contraception is crucial to women’s empowerment, by increasing their decision-making power and autonomy, individually and within the household, enabling them to plan employment and professional development more efficiently and leading to an improved balance between private and work life.

11. Comprehensive sexuality education has the potential to contribute significantly to advancing gender equality. It should cover issues including contraception and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections; gender equality, gender norms and stereotypes; prevention of and protection from sexual, gender-based and domestic violence; sexual orientation and gender identity and expression; self-determination and consent in relationships; and personal interaction. In [Resolution 2490 \(2023\)](#) “Innovative approaches to sexual and reproductive health and rights”, the Assembly states that comprehensive sexuality education should be both a mandatory part of all school curricula, and a right that is recognised for all.

12. Highlighting that most Council of Europe member States recognise the right to abortion, the Assembly stresses that once this right has been established, it is also necessary to guarantee access to free, legal, and safe abortion for all who seek it, ensuring legal certainty as a fundamental principle of the rule of law. As highlighted by [Resolution 2439 \(2022\)](#) “Access to abortion in Europe: stopping anti-choice harassment”, in many Council of Europe member States anti-choice activists conduct campaigns of harassment targeting women’s human rights defenders, healthcare professionals, politicians and people seeking abortion care. Such harassment is a violation of fundamental rights, including the right to respect for private and family life, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly and association. Attempts to control women’s bodies are nothing less than attacks against their human rights and a way to silence them.

13. The Assembly expresses concern at the low and/or decreasing level of funding for sexual and reproductive health programmes, gender studies and research on women’s health throughout Europe. The advancement of women’s rights – taking a feminist perspective – requires robust and constant investment in these fields.

14. The persisting gender pay gap and pension gap create long-lasting economic inequalities. As stressed by [Resolution 2589 \(2025\)](#) “Women in the economy: employment, entrepreneurship and gender-responsive budgeting”, there is an urgent need to change mindsets with regard to the place of women in the economy. The Assembly reiterates that gender equality benefits society as a whole and that investing in women’s participation in the economy has immediate but also long-term positive benefits.

15. The Assembly recognises the urgent need to eradicate poverty in all its forms, including extreme, multidimensional and intergenerational poverty, as well as the feminisation of poverty, and to address global economic inequality. Women and girls, particularly in rural areas and indigenous communities, remain disproportionately affected by poverty and exclusion. Addressing these issues should rank high among the priorities of the foreign policies of Council of Europe member States, particularly for those who pursue feminist diplomacy.

16. The Assembly expresses its solidarity with women fighting for their basic rights in totalitarian and theocratic regimes, in Europe and beyond, and supports the work of civil society organisations endeavouring to improve conditions for these women by providing education and other services. The Assembly reiterates its call to Council of Europe member States that are Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to consider proposing an amendment to the statute in order to include the crime of “gender apartheid”, which is the institutionalisation of gender-based discrimination and exclusion of women and girls from all spheres of society. The Vigdís Prize for Women’s Empowerment provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the work of women human rights defenders to empower women in their countries and fields of activity.

17. Current wars and conflicts across the world have a devastating effect on women and girls, who are moreover subject to sexual violence and rape as a weapon of war, as well as human trafficking.

18. In the light of all the above concerns, and referring to the political declaration on the 30th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, adopted at the 69th edition of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Assembly considers that 2025 represents a pivotal opportunity to advance towards the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Noting the recognition in this declaration that no country has yet achieved full gender equality, with progress hindered by persistent structural barriers, discriminatory laws, gender stereotypes, and negative social norms, the Assembly considers that there is no room for complacency. The reduction of funding especially from the United States has also had a negative impact on programmes aimed at ensuring equal rights for women.

19. Seeing an urgent need for concerted and innovative efforts to provide a response to the false discourse of anti-gender movements, the Assembly welcomes the work currently being undertaken by the Council of Europe’s Gender Equality Commission to develop positive narratives that will work to promote gender equality and prevent and combat violence against women. It looks forward to the outcome of this work, which is intended to be used by the Council of Europe and its member States in awareness-raising and communication activities.

20. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly calls on the member and observer States of the Council of Europe, and States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly:

20.1. with regard to preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and with the aim of tackling the current low reporting rates and the high levels of impunity, to:

20.1.1. take measures to prevent sexual violence in wars and conflict and ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice;

20.1.2. ratify and implement, if they have not yet done so, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence;

20.1.3. invest in awareness-raising campaigns on preventing violence against women and domestic violence and on the services available for survivors of gender-based violence;

20.1.4. provide adequate funding for support services for survivors of gender-based violence;

20.1.5. provide training to the police, the judiciary and all professionals likely to be in contact with victims of gender-based and sexual violence on preventing, identifying and combating gender-based violence, ensuring that these institutions do not contribute, through their response, to a situation of secondary victimisation;

20.1.6. take measures to prevent and combat online forms of gender-based violence against women;

20.1.7. strengthen the fight against online sexual exploitation, paying particular attention to the risks posed by the development of artificial intelligence;

20.1.8. provide comprehensive sexuality education in schools, including on consent;

20.2. with regard to ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, to:

20.2.1. ensure that obstructing a person's access to legal abortion care or to relevant information is prohibited and criminally or otherwise sanctioned; the prohibited conduct should include online activities and prevent anti-choice organisations from misrepresenting themselves as neutral or pro-choice organisations;

20.2.2. introduce buffer zones near reproductive healthcare facilities and any organisation providing relevant information, so as to avoid disruption of the activities of medical institutions providing abortion care and ensure the safety of people seeking such care, including post-abortion care;

20.2.3. provide reliable information on reproductive rights and services, including abortion care, and take the necessary measures to counteract misinformation and disinformation on abortion; these measures should include specific monitoring to detect the possible spread of misinformation and disinformation, openly or covertly, by anti-choice organisations;

20.2.4. take steps to prevent and counter networks of individuals and organisations created with the aim of harassing pro-choice activists and politicians as well as those seeking an abortion;

20.2.5. ensure effective access to legal abortion care, when provided for by national legislation, and relevant and objective counselling by qualified healthcare professionals; conscientious objection by professionals – where permitted by law – should never constitute a barrier to genuine and timely access to legal abortion care;

20.2.6. effectively investigate and prosecute online and offline hate speech – including coordinated attacks – targeting human rights defenders;

20.2.7. provide information and training to law-enforcement officers and members of the judiciary to ensure that they have knowledge of the extent and impact of anti-choice activities;

20.3. with regard to increasing women's political participation, to:

20.3.1. ensure through legislative and/or other means the balanced participation of women and men in all areas of parliamentary life, and especially in decision-making roles;

20.3.2. set up a gender parity goal for political representation in national parliaments, conduct a national assessment of the situation, and develop a strategic plan to reach this goal through specific measures;

20.3.3. promote and support networks for women parliamentarians, including women's caucuses in national parliaments;

20.3.4. develop specific programmes to engage with male politicians as partners and champions, working together with female leaders to achieve gender equality in politics;

20.4. with regard to preventing and combating sexism, gender-based discrimination and gender stereotypes, to:

20.4.1. adopt and implement ambitious gender equality strategies, including gender budgeting;

20.4.2. promote gender mainstreaming in public administrations, in political parties and in the private sector;

20.4.3. launch educational programmes on preventing and combating gender stereotypes in school, from the earliest years;

20.4.4. work with media outlets on awareness-raising campaigns on preventing and combating gender stereotypes;

20.4.5. promote the development of critical thinking to counter sexism and violence in the content, language and illustrations of toys, comics, books, television, video and other games, online content and films, including pornography, which shape the attitudes, behaviour and identity of girls and boys;

20.4.6. ensure that the development and regulation of artificial intelligence is carried out in a way which does not infringe on women's rights;

20.4.7. raise awareness of countering gendered disinformation, online and offline, and guarantee full access to information on women's rights;

20.4.8. support civil society organisations working in this field;

20.4.9. impose pay transparency in order to expose gender pay gaps and legislate on pay equality;

20.4.10. invest in gender studies and in medical research on women's health to reduce gender inequalities and improve access to treatments.

21. Referring to its [Resolution 2274 \(2019\)](#) "Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment" and the #NotInMyParliament initiative led by the former President of the Assembly, Liliane Maury Pasquier, the Assembly calls on national parliaments to step up their efforts to prevent and combat violence against women members of parliament and parliamentary staff.

22. The Assembly also calls on national parliaments to hold regular debates on the protection of women's rights and on the issues raised in this resolution, and to focus on securing and mainstreaming women's rights both in national legislation and in policies throughout all fields of life.

Resolution 2615 (2025)¹

Provisional version

Promoting inclusive participation in parliamentary life: gender equality, accessibility and inclusive policies

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Parliaments in Europe remain male-dominated, including in leadership and decision-making positions, and such under-representation of women in parliamentary life undermines democratic institutions and processes. Equal participation of women and men, in all their diversity, in every area of society and employment, is a human rights matter: their equal representation in parliamentary life is essential for well-functioning democracies and good governance.
2. Parliaments are also workplaces where many elected representatives and members of staff are parents. Yet the absence of adapted infrastructures – including childcare facilities and equipped areas for breastfeeding – accessible premises, and requirements such as physical presence, create additional barriers to participation in parliamentary life, especially for women – further exacerbating their under-representation.
3. Members of parliament, like all persons in employment, need a healthy and sustainable work-life balance, yet family and care responsibilities continue to affect mostly women's participation in parliamentary life. Male parliamentarians need to be key actors to bring about transformative change to parliamentary life, working together with women to achieve gender equality in parliaments.
4. At the same time, inclusion is not limited to levelling up women's participation in parliamentary life and accommodating the needs of young parents. The specific needs of other groups, such as persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility, either as members of parliament or parliamentary staff, must also be taken into account.
5. The Parliamentary Assembly underlines the need to meet relevant targets under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, including target 5.5 (under SDG 5): "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life"; target 10.2 (under SDG 10): "Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status"; and target 16.7 (under SDG 16): "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels".
6. The Assembly welcomes the Pact for the Future, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2024, and its action 8 whereby States have undertaken to "ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life".
7. The Assembly further welcomes General Recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, adopted in October 2024 by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

1. *Assembly debate* on 26 June 2025 (26th sitting) (see [Doc. 16183](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Maryna Bardina). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 26 June 2025 (26th sitting).



8. The Assembly refers to the Kigali Declaration, adopted at the 145th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in October 2022, entitled “Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world”.

9. The Assembly further refers to its Resolution 2386 (2021) “Enhancing participation of women from under-represented groups in political and public decision making”; Resolution 2274 (2019) “Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment”; Resolution 2222 (2018) “Promoting diversity and equality in politics”; Resolution 2155 (2017) “The political rights of persons with disabilities: a democratic issue”; and Resolution 2111 (2016) “Assessing the impact of measures to improve women’s political representation”.

10. The Assembly calls on the member and observer States of the Council of Europe, and States whose parliament enjoys observer or partner for democracy status with the Assembly:

10.1. with regard to gender equality, to:

10.1.1. ensure the balanced participation of women and men in all areas of parliamentary life, and especially in decision-making roles;

10.1.2. set up a gender parity goal for political representation in national parliaments, conduct an assessment of the situation at national level, and develop a strategic plan to reach this goal through specific measures;

10.1.3. analyse the composition of national parliaments with an intersectional perspective, collect disaggregated data and support research on the participation of women, including those from under-represented groups, in political decision making;

10.1.4. consider using the available tools drawn up by the IPU, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODHIR) of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to assess the representation of women and men in national parliaments, so that appropriate measures can be put in place;

10.1.5. raise awareness of the impact of sexism and gender-based violence on political life, including on the level of participation of women parliamentarians;

10.1.6. promote and support networks of women parliamentarians, including women’s caucuses in national parliaments;

10.1.7. develop specific programmes to engage male politicians as transformative actors, working together with female leaders to achieve gender equality in politics;

10.1.8. review national legislation and repeal, where applicable, legal measures restricting the right of women parliamentarians with children to participate in business trips and carry out paid overtime work to which they have agreed;

10.2. with regard to the accessibility of parliaments, to:

10.2.1. make both the parliamentary buildings and the work of parliaments fully accessible to persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, including members of parliament, parliamentary staff and visitors;

10.2.2. establish clear rules and procedures so that members of parliament and parliamentary staff can enter the premises with children and infants;

10.2.3. formally allow for breastfeeding in parliamentary premises and consider providing nurseries, baby feeding and changing rooms in parliamentary premises;

10.2.4. encourage co-operation between parliaments and relevant non-governmental organisations to carry out audits on the accessibility of parliamentary premises and work;

10.3. with regard to inclusive policies in parliaments, to:

10.3.1. develop internal policies aimed to facilitate a better work-life balance for members of parliament and parliamentary staff, including the regulation of working hours aimed at preventing late sessions and meetings, and setting the sittings schedule based on the school calendar;

10.3.2. adopt the necessary measures so that parliamentarians and parliamentary staff can benefit from parental leave;

10.3.3. consider establishing procedures for substitution/proxy voting or distance voting in certain cases;

10.3.4. review the implementation of Assembly Resolution 2155 (2017) as regards the accessibility of electoral processes, information and procedures; and take the necessary measures to address any existing gaps;

10.3.5. promote support networks for minority groups in national parliaments;

10.3.6. adopt, review and/or update, as appropriate, codes of conduct for parliamentarians and staff members to address abuse, sexual and psychological harassment, sexism and discriminatory behaviour, and introduce reporting procedures and sanctions in case of breach, in line with Resolution 2274 (2019);

10.3.7. organise training on inclusiveness, intersectionality and gender equality, covering relevant policies and reporting mechanisms, for all members of parliament and parliamentary staff.

11. The Assembly also encourages political parties in Council of Europe members States to:

11.1. adopt measures to promote the participation of women and persons from under-represented groups in their internal structures, including at leadership levels;

11.2. assess, and develop a long-term strategy to address the needs of persons from under-represented groups – such as persons with disabilities and those facing multiple and intersectional discrimination, with a view to facilitating their participation in political life; and organise capacity building trainings, in accessible formats, to enable such participation;

11.3. establish rules for the selection of candidates for elections with a view to ensuring the active promotion of gender equality and diversity;

11.4. review their internal composition, policies and working practices, for example through the use of OHDIR's assessment tools, with a view to determining measures to increase participation and representation of women and men from diverse backgrounds;

11.5. put in place internal codes of conduct, including sanctions, complaints procedures and trained contact persons, prohibiting abuse, harassment, sexism and all other forms of discrimination, and collect data on incidents and the outcomes of cases reported;

11.6. implement targeted actions to engage male political party leaders as allies, working with female leaders towards abolishing the harmful practices and stereotypes that persist in the organisational culture of political parties.

12. As regards its own functioning, the Assembly invites its political groups to consider implementing the measures listed in paragraph 11 above, as appropriate.

13. The Assembly asks its Secretary General to:

13.1. consider carrying out a new joint study with IPU to assess the progress made in combating sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Europe, following an intersectional approach;

13.2. consider carrying out a gender-sensitive audit (using the tools referred to in paragraph 10.1.4 above) and an inclusivity audit of the Assembly;

13.3. provide training to staff to raise awareness of the needs of members, experts and visitors with disabilities and reduced mobility who participate in Assembly meetings and events;

13.4. consider possible measures to make the Assembly's work accessible to persons with visual impairments.

14. The Assembly invites the Committee on Rules, Ethics and Immunities and the Bureau of the Assembly to consider taking the necessary steps to enable the online participation in committee meetings of members who are unable to attend in person due to care responsibilities, including caring for children under the age of three.