



Strasbourg, 23 January 2023

Draft motion for a resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, submitted to Members by the Open Dialogue Foundation.

Rules of procedure reform: access to the Palais de l'Europe and use of its premises by civil society representatives

In the light of reports on arbitrary and political abuse of the rules of procedure of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Assembly wishes to ensure access to the Palais de l'Europe and use of its premises by representatives of civil society organisations.

We believe no Member or a group of Members of the Assembly should actively seek to prevent civil activists from entering premises of the Palais de l'Europe to conduct their advocacy work because they do not share their views or agenda. In addition, we deem unacceptable unfounded allegations against civil society organisations and Members cooperating with them, formulated by other Members in order to undermine such cooperation.

For this purpose, the relevant rules of procedure should be improved, taking as a model the system used by the European Parliament. In particular, an independent body should be set up at the Assembly to govern transparency issues (such as the EU Transparency Register), including cooperation with external actors, their financial transparency and access to the Assembly's works and premises as part of their advocacy activities.

Obtaining accreditation should depend on meeting formal criteria, not rely solely on sponsorship by Members or an extremely rare, discriminatory instance of having representation in five Council of Europe Member States. It should be renewed on an annual basis, the processing of applications should be continuous and allow access to all parts of the Assembly's premises to facilitate in-person meetings with Members and the Assembly's staff.

Additionally, accredited civil society representatives should have the right to invite guests for their advocacy work, providing information on who will be invited and for what purpose. A procedure should be developed for attending in PACE meetings as observers.

Ensuring reliable, independent and secure access is of paramount importance to enhance Members's cooperation with civil society.