

16 February 2022

Subject: request to keep the hybrid model of participation in the European Parliament

Dear madam President,

We are sending you this letter to ask you to examine the advantages of keeping the hybrid model of participation in the Parliament on a permanent basis.

The alarming health crisis due to the spread of the Covid-19 cases, and especially in relation to the Omicron variant, had and will continue to threaten our physical presence at the Parliament.

Taking into consideration the successful implementation of the hybrid model so far, and the fact that the EU is a State Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and, therefore, its public administrations are obliged to provide reasonable accommodation to those who require it either because of a disability or a health related condition, we believe allowing flexibility for MEPs and EP staff to choose when necessary the hybrid mode would be a great advantage. Besides, facilitating hybrid mode will also support work-life balance of many people working in the EP. This should not challenge in any way the physical presence in the Parliament but only provide us with the choice of remote participation, which could help everyone secure equal, continuous and constant access.

Moreover, as you are well aware of, the Commission's concrete plan to achieve Europe's digital transformation by 2030, namely the Path to the Digital Decade was introduced in March 2021. In this context, in order to secure a more sustainable, digital and fully accessible environment the right to be able to work remotely is absolutely relevant in our workplace. This should not in any case compromise the efforts carried out by the EP in improving the accessibility and inclusiveness as a workspace.

More recently, on 26 of January 2022, the Commission proposed an inter-institutional solemn declaration on digital rights and principles for the digital decade, and included the notions of solidarity and inclusion. Technological advances are offering the tools to fully unite people. This must result in the right of everyone to have access to fair working conditions, including their right to work from home when their physical presence is not necessary. At this point, it is important to clarify that for high inter-institutional meetings such as trilogues, this option should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.



Disability Intergroup

We are asking you to fight for the right to work remotely when the conditions require so. We are asking you to give the right to everyone to take part in the parliamentary activities, while securing the best conditions for everyone's participation.

Therefore, with respect to the health and safety of everyone, and to reasonable accommodation for those of us who need it, as well as to the digital transformation, it is urgent that all the parliamentary activities can take place online too, and not in obligatory physical presence. This is why we are suggesting you to keep the hybrid model for every activity that will take place in the Parliament in both Brussels and Strasbourg, on a permanent basis.

Thank you for your help and understanding in these challenging times, and for your effort to change our institution into a more inclusive one.

Kind regards,

On behalf of the Disability Intergroup:

Stelios KYMPOUROPOULOS

Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)

Katrin LANGENSIEPEN

Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

Dragoș PÎSLARU

Renew Europe Group

Anne-Sophie PELLETIER

The Left group in the European Parliament - GUE/NGL

Tilly METZ

Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

Radka MAXOVÁ

Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

Sylwia SPUREK

Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

Giorgos GEORGIU

The Left group in the European Parliament - GUE/NGL