Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Measuring the well-being of European citizens

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Alexander [The Earl of] DUNDEE and other members of the Assembly

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

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On 27 April 2010, the Assembly adopted Resolution 1721 (2010) on Wealth, welfare and well-being : how to reconcile them in a changing Europe which calls on the Council of Europe member states to take better account of the well-being of European citizens.

Following an earlier initiative of the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, the British Prime Minister, David Cameron announced, in November 2010, that the Office of National Statistics had been entrusted with the task of developing new ways of measuring national well-being.

European countries are slowly recovering from the severest economic and social crisis since the 1930's. The time has come for all European countries to look into the possibility of establishing new measures of national well-being which will cover the quality of life of their citizens in addition to GDP (Gross Domestic Product), the conventional measure of a country's economic success.

A new measure of 'well-being' would define the success of a country in more than terms of purely economic performance and would give a better picture of whether life is improving for a country's citizens. It would also allow a full debate to be engaged on what matters in their lives, which would inevitably have consequences at a political level and would lead to the development of government policies focused on improving the quality of people's lives, thus strengthening social cohesion and enhancing the democratic process.

The Council of Europe, which has always pioneered the promotion of democracy, rule of law and human rights, must encourage all its member states to measure the well-being of their populations.

Therefore the Parliamentary Assembly decides to debate the issue of alternative measures of national well-being and to encourage the governments of member states to initiate new ways of measuring national well-being.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left