



Order 353 (1975)¹

Improving the effectiveness of Assembly recommendations

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the report of its Committee on Culture and Education on the results of recommendations from this committee since 1969 ([Doc. 3624](#)), with particular emphasis on the decision-making machinery of the Council of Europe and on the relationship between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers ;
2. Conscious that the recommendations of the Assembly are important instruments for shaping policies that may lead to greater European co-operation and unity, and believing therefore that they ought to be better reflected in the Intergovernmental Work Programme of the Council of Europe ;
3. Deploring, however, the fact that the follow-up to a great number of Assembly recommendations remains unsatisfactory and also that in some cases the time-lag between the adoption of a recommendation and the definitive reply from the Committee of Ministers is excessive ;
4. Recalling that, in the light of [Recommendation 704 \(1973\)](#) on the mission of the Council of Europe, and Resolution (74) 4 of the Committee of Ministers on the future role of the Council of Europe, many Assembly committees have begun to concentrate their activities and to reduce the number of reports submitted each year, but believing that a further rationalisation is necessary ;
5. Convinced that the success of recommendations very much depends on the distinctness of what is recommended and on the clarity of the wording ;
6. Believing that the lack of clarity of texts is sometimes the result of taking too far the search for a unanimous point of view ;
7. Wishing to encourage direct dialogue between parliamentarians on the one side and ministerial representatives and experts on the other ;
8. Recalling that both sides have been studying recently the possibilities of bringing practical improvements to the current procedures ;
9. Having noted that its Committee on Culture and Education has decided :
 - to make an effort of concentration and of rationalisation ;*
 - to endeavour to limit the number of draft recommendations it presents, having recourse more frequently to the use of resolutions where appropriate ;*
 - to draft precise recommendations, thus enabling the Committee of Ministers to make more apposite replies ;*
 - to avoid the juxtaposition of several incompatible subjects in a single recommendation ;*
 - not necessarily to require unanimity on recommendations ;*

1. See [Doc. 3624](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education. Text adopted by the Standing Committee acting on behalf of the Assembly on 2 July 1975.



to make a distinction between political recommendations and those of a technical nature, clearly indicating the category to which each recommendation might belong and whether a reply is required from the Committee of Ministers stating its political option or whether the text should be transmitted directly to the appropriate expert committee or competent ministry ;

to indicate in the texts of recommendations whether or not a rapid definitive reply is required ;

to encourage where appropriate, the participation of Ministers or Ministers' Deputies in its meetings ;

to manage its work programme in such a way as to ensure that items do not, through simple neglect, lose their political relevance, and also to make use where necessary of the procedure for the removal of questions from the Assembly Register where motions appear to be of marginal importance (Rule 14.4 of the Rules of Procedure) ;

to give particular attention to the question of follow-up to adopted recommendations, in close collaboration with the Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations, to examine more regularly and in greater detail the replies of the Committee of Ministers to these recommendations, and in this context to insist that Rapporteurs recognise that their responsibility for a question does not end with the adoption of a text.

10. Instructs the Bureau of the Assembly :to apply more rigorous criteria when deciding on references of motions to particular committees, and to review such references if not taken up within a reasonable time (one year) by the committees concerned ; to transmit this order to all committees ;

a. to apply more rigorous criteria when deciding on references of motions to particular committees, and to review such references if not taken up within a reasonable time (one year) by the committees concerned ;

b. to transmit this order to all committees ;

11. Instructs the President of the Assembly, in consultation with the Chairmen of the committees concerned :

a. to ask more frequently for the hearing of the Rapporteur or the Chairman of a committee by the Ministers' Deputies in the case of particularly important recommendations ;

b. to request the Committee of Ministers to enable and encourage all committees of governmental experts dealing with technical Assembly recommendations to seek, by means of hearings or exchanges of letters, more detailed information or clarification from the Assembly committee concerned ;

c. encourage the development of a dialogue between the Assembly and its committees on the one hand and the specialised Ministers on the other.