Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Opinion 122 (1985)[1]

Texts adopted at the 19th Session of the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) (Strasbourg, 16-18 October 1984)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the texts adopted by the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe at its 19th Session (Doc. 5317) ;

2. Recalling the statutory provisions of the Council of Europe which define the Conference as a representative body of local and regional authorities of member states operating within the framework of Article 17 of the Statute of the Organisation, which provides that the Committee of Ministers may set up advisory and technical committees ;

3. Confirming the views it has expressed earlier to the effect that the Conference has developed a political character which is of benefit to the Council of Europe, and welcoming the fact that the Conference is representative of all European democracies,

4. Recalls that the Conference plays a predominantly advisory role towards the Committee of Ministers, the Assembly and local and regional authorities ;

5. Reiterates its view that the Committee of Ministers should consider the texts adopted by the Conference solely in the light of the Assembly's opinion ;

6. Stresses that it cannot be appropriate for the Conference to address its resolutions containing recommendations, intended for the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers, directly to governments of member states, international organisations and the European Communities ;

7. Encourages the Conference to concentrate on activities related directly to local and regional authorities ;

8. Reminds all its committees that, in order to contribute to this process of concentration of activities, they should seek the opinion of the Conference, where relevant, at an early stage before preparing their own policies with an impact on local and regional matters ;

9. Refers, with regard to overlapping and duplication, to the responsibilities of the Committee of Ministers which, by means of the planning tools of the Council of Europe (the Medium-Term Plan and the Intergovernmental Work Programme), shapes the activities of the intergovernmental action of the Council of Europe, whilst reserving for itself the statutory right and obligation to discuss and make recommendations upon any matter within the aim and scope of the Council of Europe ;

10. Supports the Conference in pursuing its efforts to have amongst its members only those holding an electoral mandate and not to give an unduly strong role to those who do not exclusively hold an electoral mandate ;

---

1. See Doc. 5369, report of the Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 22 March 1985.

11. Expresses its opinion on the resolutions adopted by the Conference at its 19th Session as follows :

a. Resolution 148 {1984) on the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter. Looks forward to seeing this resolution implemented, in order to keep the Assembly fully informed of developments in the field of regional planning, to which it has always attached great importance ;

b. Resolution 149 (1984) on the examination of the credentials of delegates to the Conference. Fully subscribes to the spirit of this resolution which is in line with its own preoccupations on democracy ;

c. Resolution 150 (1984) on the activities of the Conference and follow-up to the resolutions of the Conference by the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly. Is of the opinion that some of the concerns voiced in this resolution go beyond the statutory attributions of the Conference, whilst others are of a more structural nature and have to be considered in the light of the introductory paragraphs of this opinion ;

d. Resolution 151 (1984) on the subject : "If the forests die, the towns cannot breathe : local and regional authority action". Questions the advisability of the Conference's dealing with these matters and the way in which it is done. In view of the existing reports by the Parliamentary Assembly (Resolution 977 (1984)), there is an obvious risk of duplication. The work of the Conference ought to be restricted to such practical proposals addressed to municipalities and regions as those contained in the appendix to the resolution ;

e. Resolution 152 (1984) on local radio and television stations in Europe. Observes that this resolution contains inter alia recommendations supporting the European Parliament in establishing a new legal framework for satellite broadcasting, although the Committee of Ministers rejected this idea in 1982 and favoured a sectorial approach ;

f. Resolution 153 (1984) on borrowing by local and regional authorities in Europe. Endorses the proposals made, which it finds profitable for the promotion of regional and local authorities ;

g. Resolution 154 (1984) on the impact of the energy crisis on the European network of trunk communications. Although subscribing for the greater part to the considerations of the resolution, believes that it is addressed to certain institutions which are not natural interlocutors of the Conference ;

h. Resolution 155 (1984) on the progress of European integration. Stresses that this resolution goes well beyond what could be expected to come within a municipal or regional point of view ;

i. Resolution 156 {1984) on the Conference of the Regions of the European Community and the applicant countries. Spain and Portugal.Is of the opinion that the proposals made go far beyond the competence of the Standing Conference ;

j. Resolution 157 (1984) on the Second Conference of European Island Regions.Subscribes to the recommendations which seem to be basically in line with its own considerations and in particular supports here proposals for the establishment of a European Island Foundation for the preservation and development of island cultural heritages and for the setting up of an island teleprocessing network ;

k. Opinion No. 25 (1984) on reception of refugees and asylum-seekers by local authorities. Considering that :

1. the slowness of the procedures preliminary to decisions by the governmental authorities responsible for the granting of asylum often places heavier burdens on local authorities than those occasioned by the integration of persons recognised as refugees ;

2. pending such decisions, asylum-seekers often live in particularly difficult social and material conditions ;

3. procedural differences between the various member states distort the migration patterns of asylum-seekers ;

4. the combination of these different factors makes a detailed study of the position of asylum-seekers necessary ;

5. European co-operation both between governments and between local authorities should make for a decisive improvement in the position of such persons ;

6. it should, as a part of its work in this field, promote the efforts incumbent on the governments with regard both to procedural improvements and to the help given to local authorities, which are primarily responsible for reception,

Endorses the proposal put forward in the opinion that a colloquy on the "role and responsibilities of local and regional authorities in the integration of refugees and asylum-seekers in Europe" be organised in 1986 by the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe in liaison with the Parliamentary Assembly and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.