

Recommendation 392 (1964)¹

Problem of leisure

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that modern civilisation may in some respects be called the civilisation of leisure, and that leisure, which was once associated with the idea of privilege, is now shared by the masses;
2. Considering that one of the most important problems for the future of man is to determine how much a society can give every individual the possibility to attain an optimum balance, freely chosen, between the need for rest, amusement and participation in social and cultural life;
3. Considering that the promotion of leisure for the masses essentially represents the problem of the cultural development of our society and is closely linked with the democratisation of culture;
4. Considering that a clarification of this vast and complex problem as it appears in European countries is necessary, in order to define a policy of leisure;
5. Considering that such a policy is becoming ever more urgent in Europe;
6. Deeply concerned with the consequences of this increased leisure on the public, private, family and social lives of working people;
7. Having defined a number of general principles by which Government action should be guided;
8. Considering that a study of the relations between work and leisure shows that each has equal value and equally great influence on men's lives and the development of their personalities;
9. Considering that mass media could make a decisive contribution towards an educational drive of dimensions that would have been unthinkable only fifty years ago, but only if they are properly used;
10. Considering that the problem of individual leisure varies with environment : industrial, residential, rural, family, or remote from the usual environment;
11. Considering that the problem should be approached with due regard for the division of people into three categories – schoolchildren, the working population and the retired – and also for the necessary distinction between free time at the end of the day, at weekends, and annual holidays;
12. Considering that individuals should be encouraged to exercise creative activities during their free time;
13. Considering that it is necessary to resist the temptation to over-organise leisure, thereby trespassing on individual liberty;
14. Considering that the development of the individual must take place within a system of life-long education including school, out-of-school and post school activities and all cultural activities, together with physical education and sports;

1. Assembly debate on 24th April 1964 (6th Sitting) (see [Doc 1760](#), report of the Social Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24th April (6th Sitting).



15. Considering that leisure pursuits require a planned organisational framework and that the creation of the necessary machinery requires intervention by the State, local authorities and private initiative;
16. Having been informed of the problems facing some of the member countries of the Council of Europe;
17. Having consulted a group of non-governmental experts;
18. Having identified certain trends, examined the practical difficulties and put forward a number of suggestions;
19. Considering that an all-out effort is nevertheless imperative, in the form of comparative and prospective research, to provide the solid foundations needed for a policy of leisure;
20. Considering, moreover, that a policy of leisure can only be carried out in close co-operation with organisations concerned with future trends and long-range planning in the field of regional development;
21. Having heard the opinion of the Cultural Committee,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

1. Transmit the report of the Social Committee ([Doc. 1760](#)) to the Council for Cultural Co-operation with the request that it include in its programme the basic research required for a policy of leisure on a European scale;
2. Request the Council for Cultural Co-operation to study in particular the following aspects of the problem:
 - a. leisure for young people,
 - b. leisure in an industrial environment,
 - c. leisure in a rural environment,
 - d. the town-planning aspects of leisure,
 - e. the relationship between trade unions and educators,
 - f. the leisure problems of the retired,
 - g. the training of leaders;
3. Transmit the report of the Social Committee to the Governmental Social Committee with the request that they examine its social aspects;
4. Prepare an article on the problem of leisure, based on the general principles set forth in this report, for inclusion in the European Social Charter;
5. Transmit the report of the Social Committee to the Conference of Local Authorities, inviting it to study the aspects of special interest to local authorities, especially those concerned with town planning and cultural facilities for small municipalities.