Recommendation 535 (1968)[1]

Promotion of modern language teaching in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that the teaching of modern languages is a determining factor in understanding and bringing together peoples of Europe ;

2. Considering that co-operation, especially in the field of culture, education, science and technology is not conceivable unless serious efforts are made to facilitate communication, oral as well as written, by promoting and improving the teaching of modern languages ;

3. Recalling that this fundamental need was recognised in the preamble and Articles 1 and 2 of the European Cultural Convention and confirmed in the resolutions adopted by the Conference of European Ministers of Education in 1961 and 1962 ;

4. Welcoming the fact that the CCC has in recent years organised a series of courses and meetings on the main problems of teaching in modern languages and that it has launched an "Intensified European programme in modern languages" in September 1968 to take over from its "Major project - modern languages" ;

5. Considering that these courses and meetings have more than ever revealed the need to work out common principles for the teaching of modern languages and in this respect to strengthen co-operation between member states both bilaterally and multilaterally in accordance with the spirit and letter of the European Cultural Convention ;

6. Being of the opinion that it is in the interest not only of school leavers but also of European society as a whole that the former should have a good knowledge of at least one widely disseminated European language which is largely used beyond the national frontiers ;

7. Being of the opinion, moreover, that the teaching of languages to adults is also a vital necessity for Europe and an effective means of implementing the principle of permanent education, a concept on which the CCC intends now to concentrate its efforts ;

8. Considering that the problems involved are so complex that they require concentrated and continuous effort in certain priority sectors, such as the rational use of new techniques in language teaching ;

9. Considering, moreover, that certain national centres or institutes might go to work on this forthwith and assume responsibility at the European level, e.g. :

a. The Centre Regional de Documentation Pédagogique, Nancy, with regard to language laboratories ;

b. The CILT (Centre for Information on Language Teaching), London, for regular information on linguistic research to be applied to modern language teaching ;

c. Radio and Television of Bavaria (Munich) for the use of broadcasting and television in language teaching ;

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1. Assembly debate on 24 September 1968 (13th Sitting) (seeDoc. 2431, report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 September 1968 (13th Sitting).

d. Tests section, National Directorate of Education (Stockholm) for new methods in modern language tests and examinations,

10. Recommends the Committee of Ministers :

a. to promote the implementation of the Intensified European programme in modern languages of the CCC ;

b. to invite the governments of the member states of the Council of Europe to take whatever steps are necessary to make the teaching of at least one widely disseminated European language compulsory, beginning at the age of 8 to 10 and lasting throughout the remainder of schooling ;

c. with regard to adult education, to invite, under the rules governing consultative status, the Eurocentres (European Language and Educational Centres, Zürich) to organise information courses and courses in further education for modern language teachers.