



Recommendation 655 (1972)¹

Control of the sale and possession of firearms in order to combat violence

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Noting that the rise in criminality in member States, in particular the number of crimes of violence, is a cause of growing anxiety ;
2. Taking account of the fact that many of these crimes are committed with the help of firearms, and thus constitute a special threat to public safety and order ;
3. Considering that the member States of the Council of Europe have a common interest to combat violence, in particular violence committed by using firearms ;
4. Considering that the conditions regulating the acquisition, possession and use of firearms vary greatly in member States ;
5. Noting that in some member States the acquisition of firearms by nationals is subject to control while this is not always the case for foreigners, provided they undertake to export such firearms ;
6. Concerned by the prospect that governments of member States may feel obliged to counter the dangers resulting therefrom by tighter frontier controls, thus hindering the process of unification of Europe,
7. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers take urgent action with a view to reducing crimes of violence and securing more effective control of firearms in member States :
 - a. by examining the possibility of drafting European agreements introducing appropriately harmonised regulations on firearms ; and, pending the harmonisation of the law on the acquisition and possession of firearms as it applies on the territory of member States,
 - b. by working out effective regulations governing the export of such weapons, and thus preventing their illegal import and use on the territory of other member States.

1. Assembly debate on 20 January 1972 (17th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3077](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 20 January 1972 (17th Sitting).

