Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 928 (1981)[1]

Educational and cultural problems of minority languages and dialects in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that respect for, and the balanced development of, all the European cultures, and of linguistic identities in particular, is very important to the development of Europe and the European idea ;

2. Considering that, in view of major differences in terms of population, sociological situation, standardisation of language, its use for private or official purposes, and opportunities for access to education and the mass media, each case must be dealt with on its merits, and that an across-theboard solution is not possible ;

3. Considering that the following principles should form the basis for the scientific, human and cultural treatment of each language :

respect for scientific authenticity,

the right of children to their own language,

the right of communities to develop their own language and culture,

4. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers consider whether it would be possible for governments of member states to implement the following measures in whatever manner is most appropriate :

a. With regard to the scientific aspect, the gradual adoption, where applicable, alongside names that have come to be accepted, of correct toponymical forms based on the original language of each territory, however small ;

b. With regard to the human aspect, the gradual adoption of children's mother tongues for their education (use of dialects as the spoken language in pre-school education, and use of standardised mother-tongue language forms in primary education, the prevailing language of the country being then progressively introduced alongside the mother tongue) ;

c. With regard to the cultural aspect, respect and official support for the local use of standardised minority languages, and for their current use in higher education and by the local mass media, in so far as this approach is favoured by the communities which speak them ;

d. With regard to the political aspect, in all areas which have a language of their own and some degree of administrative structure within the state of which they are a part, the possibility of adoption of that language by those areas' authorities as the official or joint official language ;

5. With regard to implementing in a European framework the proposals contained in paragraph 4.a, b, c and d above, recommends that the Committee of Ministers consider the feasibility of undertaking action for the purpose of gathering and disseminating information on developments in this field.

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1. Assembly debate on 7 October 1981 (18th Sitting) (see Doc. 4745, report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 7 October 1981 (18th Sitting).