



## Recommendation 935 (1982)<sup>1</sup>

# Revival of disadvantaged rural areas

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Conscious of the fact that rural Europe, comprising 85% of the land surface in Council of Europe member states and 40% of their population, is generally disfavoured in the distribution of national resources and suffers excessive dependence on and in some cases unintentional exploitation by cities ;
2. Noting that this leads to a wide and often growing disparity in incomes, social and cultural services, and employment opportunities ;
3. Aware of the heavy financial burden imposed on society as a whole by the peculiar evils of big cities, such as crime, transport congestion, commuting over long distances between home and work, diseases provoked by stress and pollution ;
4. Welcoming the fact that in many countries the migration to cities has slowed down considerably in recent years, partly as a result of forceful national policies ;
5. Concerned, however, that the erosion of the population base which has already occurred presents a serious obstacle to economic development in disadvantaged areas,
6. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers urge member states :
  - 6.1. to recognise the benefits for declining rural areas that flow from preparing comprehensive and integrated plans for revival, based on the interrelationship of various economic and social policies and measures ;
  - 6.2. to involve local and regional interests as largely as possible at the earliest stages of conception and execution in all matters of regional planning, in order to draw fully upon their experience, as well as heighten their motivation and commitment ;
  - 6.3. to encourage, in so doing, co-operation between different municipalities or regions, even, as the case may be, across national borders ;
  - 6.4. to bear in mind, when planning investments, the fundamental importance of agriculture, forestry and related industries as motors for economic growth in rural areas ;
  - 6.5. to strengthen the ability of agriculture fully to assume such a role, by taking measures to ensure to its practitioners a revenue comparable to that in other sectors of the economy ;
  - 6.6. can make to rural development, and grant special advantages to companies establishing themselves in these regions ;
  - 6.7. to give particular consideration to the possibility of further decentralising various government services and providing additional financial means in favour of disadvantaged regions not least for essential public services and in the educational sector - bearing in mind that communications technology is beginning to reduce considerably the handicap of distance ;

---

1. Assembly debate on 27 January 1982 (23rd and 24th Sittings) (see [Doc. 4818](#), report of the Committee on Agriculture). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 January 1982 (24th Sitting).



*Recommendation 935 (1982)*

- 6.8. to expand local educational facilities, especially vocational training, in recognition of the importance to rural development of a sufficient reservoir of qualified manpower ;
- 6.9. to improve the communications and transport systems between rural areas and urban centres, such as railways, road bus services and telecommunications ;
7. Welcomes the fact that the Committee of Ministers has included, in the Council of Europe's second medium-term plan for intergovernmental activities (1981-86), the possibility of launching a European campaign to revitalise rural areas ;
8. Gives its wholehearted support to such a campaign, provided that its aims are precise and well-defined, and urges the Committee of Ministers to provide the intergovernmental services concerned with the means necessary for this purpose.