



**Recommendation 1164 (1991)<sup>1</sup>**

## **Demographic imbalances between the countries of the Mediterranean basin**

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Over the next thirty years, the demographic imbalance between the northern shore of the Mediterranean and the southern and eastern shores will continue to increase.
2. Throughout Europe, and not only southern Europe, the demographic situation since the mid-1960s has been characterised by low fertility, falling mortality and population ageing.
3. While the population of Europe will remain fairly steady over the coming decades, the population of the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean will double between 1990 and 2030.
4. This demographic imbalance is accompanied by a development gap between the countries to the north and to the south of the Mediterranean which is likely to increase in the years ahead.
5. Furthermore, in the eastern and the southern Mediterranean countries, population growth has obliged governments to increase budgetary expenditure in sectors related to demography, such as education, health, housing and food subsidies.
6. The economic impact of population growth is increasing the difficulties of these countries already faced with substantial foreign debt, growing unemployment, a very precarious social situation and an upsurge of fundamentalism.
7. The contrast between demographic and economic conditions in the Mediterranean countries will give rise to migration towards the European continent.
8. Such migration will extend well beyond southern Europe, spreading westwards and northwards in competition with fresh migratory flows from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the more traditional flow from Third World countries.
9. At the present time, it does not seem that the European countries are able to totally absorb the potential immigration from the eastern and southern Mediterranean countries.
10. The Assembly believes that Europe, in its own interest and in the interest of the countries of the eastern and southern Mediterranean, must endeavour to help the governments of those countries to implement policies of balanced economic and social development.
11. The Assembly accordingly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
  - 11.1. instruct the European Population Committee (CDPO) to study the problem of demographic imbalances between the countries of the Mediterranean basin;
  - 11.2. invite the Mediterranean countries which are not members of the Council of Europe, and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) to participate in this work;

---

1. Assembly debate of 23 September 1991 (15th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6462](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, Rapporteurs: Mr Mota Torres and Mr Vázquez). Text adopted by the Assembly on 23 September 1991 (15th Sitting).



*Recommendation 1164 (1991)*

11.3. use the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity to make European public opinion aware of the close links between economic, ecological and demographic problems in the southern Mediterranean countries;

11.4. encourage the governments of member states to help the governments of the southern Mediterranean countries to implement development policies appropriate to the demographic situation.

12. The Assembly repeats the request it made to the Committee of Ministers in [Recommendation 1148 \(1991\)](#) on Europe of 1992 and migration policies to organise an international conference on demographic problems in the Mediterranean basin and related population movements.