Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1165 (1991)[1]

Follow-up to the European Campaign for the Countryside

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Rural development has become a concern shared by all European countries most of which are faced with problems such as desertification, the isolation of populations and their gradual drift towards towns, the reduction or industrialisation of farming and the economic recession.

2. The European Campaign for the Countryside, launched by the Council of Europe in 1987 and 1988, helped to stimulate public awareness of these problems and of their extent, and devised projects for rural areas.

3. The Assembly deplores that - despite its repeated requests and those of the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe - the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers did not see fit to give the campaign the means necessary to realise the expectations and potential that were generated, and encourages its Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities to continue to follow activities in this field with attention.

4. However, OECD, the European Community and also the NGOs holding consultative status with the Council of Europe, which were associated with the campaign, considered rural development as a matter of high priority for society and decided to launch large-scale activities concerning it.

5. The Assembly especially welcomes the fact that OECD has embarked on a programme of rural development and has invited the Council of Europe to be closely involved in the work.

6. It therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

6.1. ask member states to continue and intensify the activities developed during the European Campaign for the Countryside, particularly through the agency of the national committees, and to include in the intergovernmental work programme the convening of one or two co-ordination meetings per year of the chairmen or presidents of national committees ;

6.2. clearly demonstrate its intention to follow up, at Council of Europe level, the European Campaign for the Countryside and embark on systematic co-operation with OECD, the European Community and the European Rural Interest Centre set up by the NGOs, by organising for example colloquies and campaigns ;

6.3. include in the intergovernmental work programme as from 1992 multidisciplinary activities on rural development, taking account inter alia of the new dimension of the problem resulting from the Organisation's wider geographical scope ;

6.4. provide, to this end, adequate budgetary resources and appropriate structures.

1. Assembly debate on 23 September 1991 (15th Sitting) (see Doc. 6492, report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, Rapporteur : Mr Pinto ; and Doc. 6493, opinion of the Committee on Agriculture, Rapporteur : Mrs Anttila). Text adopted by the Assembly on 23 September 1991 (15th Sitting).