



Recommendation 1222 (1993)¹

Fight against racism, xenophobia and intolerance

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly is deeply alarmed by the resurgence of racism, xenophobia and intolerance throughout Europe.
2. It strongly condemns the resulting acts of violence committed in several Council of Europe member states.
3. The Assembly is encouraged by the massive public response in many member states in favour of accepting and respecting the different cultures existing in Europe.
4. The Assembly stresses the importance of addressing the root causes of racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and of applying existing national and international legal instruments to combat these phenomena.
5. Action by national, regional and local authorities, as well as by non-governmental organisations, should further include prevention through education, support for the victims and protection and promotion of cultural diversity (as already stated in [Recommendation 1206 \(1993\)](#) on the integration of migrants and community relations).
6. The Assembly underlines the role to be played by young people and therefore welcomes the Round Table held by its Committee on Culture and Education, in July 1993, between parliamentarians and youth representatives on "strategies to combat xenophobia".
7. The Assembly also emphasises the crucial role that the media could play in presenting an open and tolerant society and in countering prejudice and hatred. Therefore, it invites the media to inform the public objectively of the dangers of racism, xenophobia and intolerance.
8. It asks the advertising industry not to include commercials in films and/or television productions which encourage violence, brutality and racism.
9. In certain member states, public opinion seems to be that the burden resulting from the application of the Geneva Convention of 1951 relating to the Status of Refugees is not fairly shared by all European countries. This belief contributes to the rise of xenophobic and racist sentiments.
10. The Assembly welcomes the suggestions by the Committee of Ministers that the forthcoming summit of heads of state and government, to be held in Vienna on 8 and 9 October 1993, result in an action plan of the Council of Europe against racism, xenophobia and intolerance.
11. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers include in the draft plan of action to be discussed at the summit the following:
 - 11.1. a European youth campaign enabling the young people of Europe to unite in a common struggle for European values;

1. Assembly debate on 29 September 1993 (49th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6915](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee, Rapporteur: Mr Espersen; [Doc. 6937](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Rapporteur: Mr López Henares; and [Doc. 6935](#), opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education, Rapporteur: Mrs Err). Text adopted by the Assembly on 29 September 1993 (49th Sitting).



11.2. an interdisciplinary comparative study in all Council of Europe member states on the root causes of racism, xenophobia and other manifestations of intolerance and exclusion as well as on the measures taken at national level, in order to lay down guidelines and common principles for a Europe-wide strategy;

11.3. the setting up of an independent group of experts which should:

- a. monitor member states' compliance with international legal obligations;
- b. exchange information and stimulate action at national, regional and local level;
- c. consider communications addressed to it by non-governmental organisations;
- d. report regularly to the Committee of Ministers, which should transmit these reports to the Assembly;

11.4. the creation, in close co-operation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, of a European refugee commission or forum to promote policies and measures which would be aimed at improving solidarity between member states as regards the consequences of receiving refugees and asylum-seekers;

11.5. a decision to re-examine urgently the question of possible obstacles to acquisition of citizenship, in order to facilitate the integration of migrants, if under the national legislation of the host country the requirements of such acquisition are met;

11.6. specific measures to ensure effective communication and implementation of the plan and its objectives.

12. The Assembly also recommends that the Committee of Ministers call on the member states of the Council of Europe to:

12.1. introduce or reinforce, as a matter of the utmost urgency, an active education and youth policy stressing the combat of intolerant, racist and xenophobic attitudes; special attention should be given to human rights education and language teaching;

12.2. support and fund activities by non-governmental organisations aimed at promoting tolerance and, where appropriate, initiate such action as the establishment of multicultural centres and the organisation of language courses for immigrants, training courses for youth leaders, multi-ethnic travel and other forms of cultural exchange;

12.3. set up at national level organisations for the promotion of tolerance, with responsibility for encouraging dialogue between young people from immigrant and indigenous communities and for advising governments on the direction to be taken by their policies to promote tolerance;

12.4. ratify the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and to accept the petition procedure provided for in Article 14 of the convention;

12.5. ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights together with the optional protocol establishing a committee with the right to examine individual complaints;

12.6. ensure that interested lawyers and immigrant support organisations are aware of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;

12.7. adopt legislation in line with the principles and guidelines to be drawn up by the Council of Europe for the punishment of persons initiating racist, xenophobic or anti-Semitic remarks or acts, as well as any act of discrimination of this kind perpetrated by the public authorities.

13. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite member states to promote, in the media, an active campaign against racist and xenophobic attitudes.

14. The Assembly also recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the member states of the Council of Europe and the regional and local authorities to give priority to the means of combating racism and xenophobia.