



Recommendation 1320 (1997)¹

Education, training and advisory services in agriculture, fisheries and forestry

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly considers training and education to be of fundamental importance throughout a person's life for his/her professional advancement, for an active participation in a democratic society as well as for the development of the personality.
2. It is aware that many rural regions have experienced a degradation in their education and training infrastructure, and that the countryside has suffered an exodus of young people – often encouraged by the centralisation of the education system with higher education and training facilities located almost exclusively in urban centres.
3. It believes that the insufficiency of rural education and training possibilities as well as the brain drain which has occurred has negatively influenced the development potential of rural regions.
4. Meeting the needs of an increasingly discernible and competitive market through the adoption of sustainable and economic production methods is a requirement of all agricultural, forestry and fisheries (including aquaculture) industries.
5. Achieving this in countries experiencing massive transitional changes to a market economy, and complete re-organisation of infrastructures and financial systems, places heavy demands on the agricultural, forestry and fisheries fields with respect of education, training and advisory services.
6. It is important that the education, training and advisory service systems be of the highest possible quality, be integrated and have good contacts with the professions and industries concerned as well as with research and development capacities relevant to its different branches.
7. By taking advantage of the experience of other European countries, together with the support which co-operative partnerships can offer, the inadequacies identified in current systems are being addressed.
8. It is vital for the future prosperity of rural/coastal areas and the nation as a whole that education, training and advisory service systems in the agricultural, forestry and fisheries fields be well organised and have sufficient financial resources.
9. Training personnel for these tasks requires not only the technical skills of economically sustainable production methods, but also the interpersonal skills necessary for effective communication and understanding.
10. Opportunities available from developed democracies should be harnessed as a means of developing mutually beneficial partnerships.

1. See [Doc. 7761](#), report of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, rapporteurs: MM. Thompson and Prusak. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 19 March 1997.



11. Consequently, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

11.1. fully include agricultural, fisheries and forestry education and training institutions and issues in the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work programme and in particular promote co-operation among institutions and the mobility of students and staff as well as work on the equivalence of diplomas and the recognition of study periods abroad;

11.2. examine, in co-operation with the European Union and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the role these institutions could play within a policy to revitalise the countryside and preserve its natural resources, the landscape and the rural cultural heritage;

11.3. assess, within this co-operation, the role and mission of agricultural, forestry and fisheries education and training institutions, in conjunction with industrial organisations, for the fostering of rural entrepreneurship and rural employment, and for the preparation of professionals for a broad variety of jobs that can be performed in rural areas. This assessment should also include an analysis of these institutions' *raison d'être* as regards promoting equal opportunities for men and women in rural areas;

11.4. call on member governments, the European Union and OECD:

- a. to promote the development of co-operation among education, training and advisory services in the fields of agriculture, forestry and fisheries (including aquaculture) in particular by exploiting the opportunities offered by new communications technologies;
- b. to give support to national and European organisations that work for the promotion of education, training and advisory services in these fields, in particular those working for European east-west co-operation and assistance.