



Recommendation 1410 (1999)¹

Links between Europeans living abroad and their countries of origin

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Recalling its [Resolution 1035 \(1994\)](#) and its Order No. 495 (1994) on Europeans living abroad, the Assembly is satisfied to note that its Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography organised a Conference on the Links between Europeans Living Abroad and their Countries of Origin in Paris in June 1997, which highlighted the need for a coherent policy on links between European expatriates and their country of origin, at both state and European level.
2. The Assembly recalls that, at present, several tens of millions of Europeans are living outside their countries of origin and that migration within Europe is constantly on the increase, particularly since the introduction of the legislative framework for free movement within the European Union, the collapse of the communist system in the East and the concomitant opening of frontiers.
3. The Assembly believes that it is in the interest of states to ensure that their nationals continue actively to exercise their nationality, so that it does not become merely passive or essentially a matter of feelings and emotions, and that those nationals can in fact play an important go-between role in host countries, working for better political, cultural, economic and social relations between their country of origin and the country where they live.
4. The Assembly considers that emigration may serve as a bridge between states and cultures and notes that, by maintaining close links, based on respect for other peoples and cultures, with their expatriates in Europe and elsewhere, the countries of origin discourage the misuse of such links for nationalistic or xenophobic ends and foster mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence between states and between peoples.
5. For these reasons, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 5.1. ensure the implementation, within the Council of Europe, of close collaboration between the governments of member states, their parliamentary delegations and the competent associations as regards political, legal, cultural, economic and social means of strengthening links with their expatriates;
 - 5.2. to this end, organise a colloquy on this theme, bringing together representatives of the governments and non-governmental bodies of the forty-one member states of the Council of Europe;
 - 5.3. prepare a recommendation to the member states with the intention of fostering voluntary participation of expatriates in political, social and cultural life in their country of origin, by instituting and harmonising arrangements for specific representation, such as the unrestricted right to vote or specific parliamentary and institutional representation through various consultative councils;
 - 5.4. consider implementing new forms of representation at European level for Europeans living abroad, for example by setting up a "council of Europeans abroad" under the auspices of the Council of Europe;

1. See [Doc. 8339](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, rapporteurs: Mrs Aguiar and Mrs Guirado. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 26 May 1999.



5.5. invite member states:

- a. to take account of the phenomenon of expatriation, its benefits and challenges, in their emigration policies, notably with a view to introducing support measures in the cultural, educational, political and social spheres based on the criterion of nationality rather than territoriality;
- b. to undertake, if they so wish, a survey of their nationals living abroad, taking into account the differing and complex situations of permanent and temporary expatriates;
- c. to draw up, at national level, an in-depth, systematic analytical description of the respective situations of expatriates, with a view to co-ordinating expatriate relations policies at European level and harmonising arrangements for the institutional and political representation of expatriates, for example by creating a real expatriate status through appropriate legal instruments;
- d. to take account of their expatriates' interests in policy-making and in national practices concerning:
 1. the movement of individuals, visa arrangements for them and their relatives as well as border formalities;
 2. naturalisation in the host country, resulting in dual nationality;
 3. the right to vote in loco in the country of origin;
 4. the right to vote of expatriates in embassies and consulates in their host countries;
 5. the right of expatriates to vote in local elections in the host country;
 6. the guaranteed right of expatriates to vote in and to be elected to European bodies;
- e. to draw up specific legal frameworks for protecting these "Euro-migrants", particularly in the new democracies of central and eastern Europe;
- f. to promote the idea that public media should produce specific programmes for expatriates.

6. The Assembly considers it important to maintain the right of return for expatriates having possessed the nationality of their country of origin and to foster the economic and social reintegration of persons returning to their country of origin.