



Recommendation 1505 (2001)¹

Amelioration of disadvantaged urban areas

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Most of Europe's inhabitants live in towns and in urban areas which are "disadvantaged" or "grey", built according only to the principles of "efficiency" and "functionality", without aesthetic considerations being taken into account.
2. The residents of such areas are generally underprivileged and commonly unemployed. Frequently, they do not own their homes, which is an additional cause for negative social phenomena such as frustration, crime, lack of social cohesion, isolation and marginalisation.
3. The Assembly fully shares the opinion expressed by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) in its [Recommendation 19 \(1996\)](#) on aspects of urban policies in Europe.
4. In the same spirit, it recalls that the heads of state and government "support the efforts of the Council of Europe and of local, regional and national authorities to improve the quality of life in disadvantaged areas, urban and industrialised", as expressed in their Final Declaration adopted at the 2nd Summit of the Council of Europe (October 1997).
5. The Assembly is also of the opinion that the active involvement of such people in a campaign aimed at improving the appearance of the urban areas they inhabit, the principle of subsidiarity at three levels – families, neighbourhoods, and communities – would contribute to eliminating many negative social phenomena and at the same time produce a synergy effect in terms of fostering democratic citizenship through joint efforts to take decisions on improving habitats.
6. Improvement of disadvantaged urban areas could be achieved at a relatively low cost by using appropriate ideas put forward by architects or other specialists, such as town planners, so that apartment-house façades, surrounding grounds, and common rooms (hallways and foyers) would indeed be improved. Successes could then be publicised as examples of good practice by the media or by holding specialised seminars and meetings with the population.
7. Concerning the implementation of the projects, the Assembly considers that it should be promoted by the local authorities and by residence owners who rent the dwellings to tenants.
8. Having regard to the above, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 8.1. implement in the near future the ongoing work on drawing up a programme aimed at improving the appearance of disadvantaged urban areas;
 - 8.2. engage in dialogue with the media and NGOs so that the programme and the good practices established by various pilot projects are brought to the attention of the citizens of Europe;
 - 8.3. follow the outcome and progress of such programmes and inform both the Assembly and the CLRAE about the developments, with a view to ensuring the understanding and support of national parliaments, local authorities and non-governmental organisations.

1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 14 March 2001 (see [Doc. 8811](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, rapporteur: Mr Toshev). Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 14 March 2001

