



Recommendation 1565 (2002)¹

European sports co-operation

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly last debated European sports co-operation in 1992 (see [Recommendation 1190](#) and [Doc. 6664](#)). It expressed satisfaction with the approach of the Council of Europe, which was the first intergovernmental organisation to work seriously on the place of sport in society, through the Committee for the Development of Sport (CDDS). Over the years it has set out the fundamental principles that should underlie all sports systems.

2. It is important to look again at the Council of Europe's reasons for working in sport, because the resources for the sports sector are now facing drastic cuts and its visibility within the Organisation is at risk. Sport has close links with a number of areas and interacts with many other facets of the Council of Europe's work such as democracy, tolerance and social cohesion. Because of this universality the Assembly believes that sport should be addressed separately by an independent body, which can track these links and interact, orchestrate, act and capitalise on them.

3. The programme and activities of the Council of Europe in the field of sport are anchored in the revised European Sports Charter and revised Code of Sports Ethics. Two conventions are aimed to combat the negative aspects of sport and to advance the search for responses to specific problems, such as violence and doping – problems that have affected sport for some years: the European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches and the Anti-Doping Convention.

4. The Council of Europe has worked positively to promote sport for all. Pursuant to Order No. 479 (1992) the Assembly has actively co-operated with the CDDS in meeting the challenge of helping the new member states in central and eastern Europe to improve their sports systems under the SPRINT programme.

5. Throughout central and eastern Europe this programme has used sport to teach democratic citizenship, given training for employment in sport and advised on the implementation of the European Sports Charter and respect for commitments undertaken under the two sports conventions. Helped by the programme, countries have set up democratic sports systems, concentrating on new legislation and the reorganisation of the former hierarchic and elitist sport systems to make way for recreational sport programmes, helping people to be fit for life.

6. The Assembly notes that sport is one of the largest, if not the largest area of voluntary non-governmental organisational activity throughout Europe and that the CDDS is a meeting point for both governmental and non-governmental organisations.

7. The Council of Europe, through its Sport Department and the Monitoring Group of the Anti-Doping Convention, has played a key role (together with the European Union) in setting up and developing the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). Co-operation with WADA is becoming increasingly important as the Council of Europe explores ways of setting up machinery to channel the contributions of the various European countries through a central point.

1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 29 May 2002 (see [Doc. 9451](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mr Kiely).



8. New programmes are emphasising the value of sport for refugees and displaced persons in camps and those affected or disabled as the result of war or grave industrial accidents. The awareness of the contribution that sport can bring to refugees has been reinforced by media reporting, which has shown how in refugee camps, once the basic necessities of life are met, there is too much enforced leisure.

9. The Council of Europe should continue to examine and defend the right of everybody to practise a sport at which they may never excel, but which brings such rewards as improved mental and physical health, mobility, enjoyment, participation and, for some, a way back into society. Economic reality and market forces do not allow these benefits to be accurately calculated.

10. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

ensure that the Sport Department is provided with the adequate resources, both human and financial, to enable the Council of Europe to pursue its work and to respond to new challenges in the field of sport;

continue, in co-operation with the Assembly, its systematic review of sport legislation in all members states;

promote sport as a means of overcoming political tensions;

promote sport for all as part of education programmes for refugees and displaced persons;

develop sport as one of its contributions to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe;

co-operate actively with the European Union in projects related to the 2004 European Year of Education through Sport;

ask governments of member states to implement as effectively as possible the revised European Sports Charter and revised Code of Sports Ethics.