Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1487 (2006)[1]

The future and regeneration of coalfields in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is aware that the coalmining industry has played an essential part in the economic and social development of Europe. Without coalmining, Europe would never have played its part in the world. Coal was the "staple food of industry" during the 19th century and for most of the 20th century.

2. Today, at a time when mining work is being reorganised everywhere in Europe, the regeneration of entire regions is causing a great many problems and the traces of this glorious past are disappearing one after another.

3. The Assembly notes with concern that in some countries a mining heritage of great historical value is likely to be lost, in particular through lack of sufficient resources for its upkeep and development.

4. More generally, the conservation of the industrial heritage involves essential issues which were emphasised in Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R (90) 20 on the protection and conservation of the technical, industrial and civil engineering heritage in Europe. The Council of Europe's Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199) also stresses the challenges of safeguarding this heritage.

5. Therefore the Assembly invites member states and the European Union, which succeeded the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), to work together on:

5.1. co-operation in protecting mining heritage, whether tangible or intangible, stressing collaboration between the authorities and competent non-governmental bodies and individuals from the areas of industry, tourism and the community;

5.2. the creation of a European body to draw up an inventory of mining sites, to preserve them and to develop them, in particular for cultural purposes and to endow this body with the necessary resources;

5.3. the introduction, in parallel to a new world mining and industrial disaster centre, of a world day for the victims of accidents at work and occupational diseases;

6. The Assembly also asks member states to:

6.1. promote improvements to transport, cultural, tourist and training infrastructures in the coalfields in order to provide a sound foundation for their regeneration;

6.2. encourage environmental improvement policies in order to transform the image of mining regions and re-use the former mining sites for other purposes;

6.3. promote co-operation by SMEs/SMIs with the various parties involved in order to develop an enterprise culture and offset the negative effects of the monoculture inherited from the mining "mono-industry";

6.4. encourage the training of women and men from these regions by fostering initial and continuous training; this is a priority in coalfields, calling for a close partnership between local authorities and states;

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1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee acting on behalf of the Assembly on 17 March 2006 (see Doc.10825, report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mr Kucheida).

6.5. examine the social structures inherited from mining and which, in certain respects can be considered as exemplary.