Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 13603
23 September 2014

A strategy to prevent racism and intolerance in Europe

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 2032 (2014)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has attentively examined Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2032 (2014) on "A strategy to prevent racism and intolerance in Europe", its Resolution 1967 (2014) with the same name as well as its Resolution 1968 (2014), which it has transmitted to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) for information and possible comments.

2. The Committee agrees that racism, hatred and intolerance in all its forms are serious, persistent problems and that a strategic approach to combatting these phenomena is essential. It concurs with the Assembly's call on member States to reinforce their action to combat them and to actively support the "No Hate Speech Movement".

3. The Committee of Ministers recognises the importance of tackling hate speech and the dissemination of racism and intolerance in political discourse. In this context, it recalls the efforts of member States of the Council of Europe, in particular the conferences organised in Oslo on 14 and 15 May 2013 on "Right-wing extremism and hate crime", in Warsaw on 18 and 19 September 2013 on the "Hate factor in political speech" and in Yerevan on 21 and 22 October 2013 on "Combating racism, xenophobia and intolerance in Europe".

4. The Committee of Ministers recalls that ECRI has co-operated with the member States in most of the areas highlighted in the Assembly's recommendation, combating racism, hatred and intolerance, *inter alia*, through the adoption of several general policy recommendations. ECRI's work includes an ongoing process of awareness-raising and information through round tables involving national authorities and civil society at the national level, but also of consultation and reflection, through seminars organised with specialised bodies or intergovernmental partner organisations.

5. The Committee of Ministers will envisage asking the Secretary General to elaborate, in close consultation with the relevant bodies and intergovernmental committees at the Council of Europe, notably ECRI and the European Committee for Social Cohesion, Human Dignity and Equality (CDDECS), as well as the relevant external partners, a strategy against racism, hatred and intolerance in Europe along the lines proposed by the Assembly, as well as an action plan for its implementation (paragraph 3 of the Assembly's recommendation).

6. Also, the Council of Europe youth sector has a long experience in combating and preventing racism and intolerance through its ongoing activities relating to human rights education and its educational and training resources. To this should be added its past and present campaigns, notably the current campaign "No Hate Speech Movement", which is mobilising many member States (39 campaign committees/ co-ordinators have been established so far) and is developing important partnerships with social media companies as well as with other international organisations. It is therefore well equipped to contribute to a Council of Europe strategy and action plan to prevent racism and intolerance, and could provide an added value in respect of the activities suggested by the Assembly notably in paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.5 of its recommendation.

1. Adopted at the 1207th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (17 September 2014).