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

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 15644
18 October 2022

The Observatory on History Teaching in Europe

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 2224 (2022)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2224 (2022) "The Observatory on History Teaching in Europe" (OHTE). The recommendation has been brought to the attention of the governments of the member States and forwarded to the relevant committees for information and possible comments.[2]

2. The Committee of Ministers agrees with the Assembly's view that history teaching plays a key role in strengthening democratic culture in Europe and, in particular, in building young people's competences to be fully part of and adhere to it.

3. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers provide assistance to member States in reviewing their education policies. In this connection, the Committee of Ministers wishes to inform the Assembly that work to support the adoption of the Organisation's "Quality history education in the 21st century – Principles and Guidelines" and "Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture" is part of the Council of Europe Education Programme 2022-2025 and is currently under way. The Education Policy Advisers Network (EPAN) is continuing its work to disseminate the Framework in the member States and to support them in its implementation. It also points out that the principles of history teaching and the activities to be developed in this field were set out in Recommendation Rec(2001)15, "History teaching in twenty-first-century Europe", which is still relevant today. Much has been achieved as a result of this recommendation, not least in terms of training teachers to provide quality history teaching and holding events related to the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and for the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity in schools and elsewhere.

4. With regard to the Assembly's recommendation on the financing, the Committee of Ministers underlines that it is aware of the importance of the Council of Europe's work in the field of education including the work on history teaching and language education which has been duly taken into account in the Programme and Budget 2022-2025.

5. As regards how to link the Observatory's activities to the Council of Europe's work on history teaching, the Committee of Ministers informs the Assembly that the OHTE's medium-term programme (2021-2023), states that the Observatory is also designed to support and complement the Council of Europe's intergovernmental programme on history teaching. Accordingly, the Observatory considers that its regular and thematic reports provide information on how Council of Europe standards and tools are being used by OHTE member States. Ongoing and future work of the Observatory actively promotes European high-quality education for all Council of Europe member States in the field of history teaching. In this respect, the Committee of Ministers underlines the importance of the OHTE Scientific Advisory Board, composed of renowned persons in the field of history teaching and learning, and whose activities ensure the academic, scientific and methodological seriousness of OHTE's work.

1. Adopted at the 1445th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (5 October 2022).
2. Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) and the OHTE's Governing Board.

6. The Committee of Ministers has taken note of the Assembly's proposal to develop co-operation with the European Union, UNESCO and other relevant international organisations through the Observatory's activities and welcomes that the European Union and UNESCO participated in the OHTE annual conference in December 2021. The Committee of Ministers has also noted the Assembly's recommendation on co-operation between European professional associations and institutes active in the field of history teaching. In this respect, it wishes to inform the Assembly of a joint project between the Observatory and the European Commission to set up a Transnational History Education and Co-operation Laboratory (HISTOLAB) which will bring together academic experts, research institutes and networks specialising in a multidisciplinary and multi-perspective approach to history teaching in Europe.