Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1682 (2004)[1]

Education for Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Council of Europe has been working for more than fifty years to bring the countries of Europe together around fundamental values, principles and rights. Education, which is essential for forming full citizens in democratic societies, has a central place in its work.

2. With recent changes, Europe is no longer divided between East and West. Nor is it limited to the countries of the European Union. This notion of a Europe without dividing lines in which each country has its place, regardless of the institutions or organisations to which it may or may not belong, needs to be defended. The Council of Europe needs to reaffirm its dynamic pan-European mission and its identity in the global context.

3. Young people are European citizens. It is therefore essential to explain Europe to them so that they feel concerned and are able to play a part. As part of their education, they should be given not only information about European institutions but also the means of understanding what Europe stands for and taking an interest in it. To this end, they need to know how Europe came about and was built and about the work it has done if they are to understand the changes it has brought about at their own level.

4. The generic values of the Council of Europe, and in particular respect for human rights, political pluralism and the rule of law, have to be transmitted to the younger generation.

5. The wealth of Europe resides in its great cultural, religious and other diversity. Europeans therefore need to be brought to value all its benefits, learn to know and understand one another and realise that, aside from all the differences, they have many things in common. The emergence of a European awareness needs to be fostered among young people.

6. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers call on governments and the appropriate authorities of member states to take initiatives to promote education for Europe:

6.1. by adapting the educational curricula in order to add a European dimension to subjects already taught in primary, secondary and higher education establishments;

6.2. by introducing the European dimension and European values in teacher training, including teacher-training and teacher exchange programmes;

6.3. by informing the Council of Europe of the action taken in this field at national level so that a guide to good practices on the subject can be produced and disseminated;

6.4. by involving the various institutions of civil society, that is, not only schools but also associations and municipalities, so that every opportunity can be taken to discuss Europe in all its diversity;

6.5. by fostering use of the countless fresh possibilities afforded by the new information and communication technologies, such as establishing correspondence between schools or, more directly, between pupils in different European countries, undertaking research on other European countries and following current affairs in Europe.

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1. Assembly debate on 8 October 2004 (32nd Sitting) (seeDoc. 10203, report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mr Prisacaru). Text adopted by the Assembly on 8 October 2004 (32nd Sitting).

7. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

7.1. recognise education as a major leverage in the European process and give support to education for Europe as a priority goal of European co-operation;

7.2. invite heads of state and government at the 3rd Council of Europe Summit in 2005 to establish the development of policies to promote Europe through education as a major element in the future work programme of the Council of Europe following the designation of 2005 as ?European Year of Citizenship through Education?.

8. It further recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

8.1. draft a European framework convention on education for democratic citizenship and human rights;

8.2. institute programmes for the training of teachers in education for Europe