

54.

THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN POLITICAL
AND INSTITUTIONAL LIFE
Assembly Recommendation 1019
(Concl(88)415/51)

Decisions

The Deputies

1. agreed to transmit Assembly Recommendation 1019 (1985) on the participation of young people in political and institutional life to the governments of the member States;
2. agreed to bring Recommendation 1019 (1985) to the attention of
 - a. the organs of the European Youth Centre
 - b. the organs of the European Youth Foundation;
3. adopted the following reply to Assembly Recommendation 1019 (1985):

"1. Referring to its interim reply of February 1986 to Assembly Recommendation 1019 (1985) on the participation of young people in political and institutional life, and having regard to the results of the 2nd Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Oslo, 11-12 April 1988), the Committee of Ministers wishes to give the Assembly the following indications:

2. For the first time, various non-governmental youth organisations were represented at the 2nd Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth. Beforehand, the youth organisations and the national youth committees organised a Colloquy on the themes of the Conference with the financial support of the European Youth Foundation (8-10 April 1988), and the findings of this Colloquy were presented at the Conference.

3. As far as the Council of Europe's intergovernmental activities are concerned, participation of young people on all levels of society is one of the main objectives of the Third Medium-Term Plan 1987-1991 in the youth field (Field V). Objective IV of Chapter 3 of this Field is headed 'Encouraging full participation of all young people in society and democracy; promoting co-management locally and internationally', and refers to the following examples, among others:

- Specific programmes and studies on co-management at local, regional, national and international level;

- Measures to permit the fullest possible participation of young people in political and institutional life;
- Promoting the involvement of youth representatives in Council of Europe action.

4. Intergovernmental youth co-operation centred in 1987 on follow-up action on the first Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (Strasbourg, December 1985), which had stressed the need to promote participation of the young at all levels of society.

5. In April 1988, as part of the reform of youth structures in the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers set up the European Steering Committee for Intergovernmental Co-operation in the Youth Field (CDEJ). Its terms of reference include:

- serving as a forum for the examination of national youth policies, particularly on matters related to the situation of young people in society which could be the object of joint action by governments and, to this end, achieving the objectives of Field V (Chapter 3) of the Third Medium-Term Plan;
- advising the Committee of Ministers on ways of assuring an appropriate follow-up, in the Intergovernmental Programme of Activities, to suggestions of common interest arising from the programmes of the European Youth Centre and the European Youth Foundation, to the extent that they cannot assure this through their own work;
- co-operating with the Governing Board and the Advisory Committee to the Centre and the Foundation in its fields of competence, as well as with other Steering or Ad hoc Committees for the achievement of the multidisciplinary objectives of the Third Medium-Term Plan; and
- preparing the Conferences of European Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs and ensuring the follow-up thereto, having regard to the relevant decisions of the Committee of Ministers.

6. Following the second Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth (the theme of which had been 'Strategies for European Youth Policies towards the Year 2000'), the Committee of Ministers also asked the CDEJ to make a detailed study of the final text, and to make practical proposals for future action within the context of the Third Medium-Term Plan 1987-1991.

In this connection, the Committee of Ministers points out that the Ministerial Conference particularly stressed the importance of maximum youth participation in tomorrow's society. Thus, with a view to giving young people a genuine say in managing their living environment, all the possibilities offered by the various bodies involved in the democratic process in Council of Europe member States should extensively be opened to them.

7. With specific reference to paragraph 14, sub-paragraphs a. and b. of Recommendation 1019, which concern involving youth representatives in the work of Steering Committees and in Council of Europe activities, the Committee of Ministers reminds the Assembly that Steering Committees are able to arrange hearings with non-governmental organisations, including youth organisations, on questions of common interest.

One non-governmental member of the single Governing Board of the European Youth Centre and the European Youth Foundation is furthermore admitted as an observer to the new European Steering Committee for Intergovernmental Co-operation in the Youth Field (CDEJ).

8. Moreover, the Committee of Ministers has suggested to bring together, once a year and in the form of an enlarged General Meeting, the members of the CDEJ and the members of the Youth Advisory Committee with the participation, inter alia, of representatives of the relevant Assembly committees.

9. It should also be noted that the European Youth Centre arranges an annual programme of seminars in close co-operation with the youth organisations, which propose themes and content, and select participants. The Centre also organises training and language courses for members of youth organisations, as well as conferences and colloquies. Approximately 1,400 young people participate every year in its activities.

The European Youth Centre has also been entrusted with the organisation of a representative youth event to mark the 40th anniversary of the Council of Europe in 1989.

10. Finally, the Steering Committee for the Development of Sport (CDDS) organises a number of European courses for young people and sports specialists.

11. With regard to paragraph 14 c. of Recommendation 1019, which refers to the proposals of the Council for Cultural Co-operation on preparation for life, the Intergovernmental Programme of Activities for 1988 contains a number of cultural and educational activities which are designed to help young people to meet the challenges of life in a world which is constantly and rapidly changing.

These activities aim chiefly at developing the quality and effectiveness of education for the purpose of overcoming demotivation and preparing the young people to play their role in society (Activity IV.31) and at fostering democratic values and human rights by generating an awareness of intercultural realities (Activity IV.32).

12. The ways in which history and geography are taught determine young people's attitudes to other countries, peoples and cultures. In the school education sector, the CDCC's activities particularly emphasise the need to eliminate prejudices, mistakes and stereotypes from curricula and textbooks and to find ways of giving all primary and secondary curricula a European dimension.

13. Finally, for the purpose of interesting schoolchildren in European affairs, the Council of Europe co-operates with the Commission of the European Communities in running an annual painting and essay competition in connection with European Schools Day. More than one million children, in 18 member States, participate every year.

14. Moreover, the human rights field has contributed to the realisation of these educational objectives by a project for the teaching of human rights in schools, involving teachers, specialists and non-governmental organisations in collaboration with the CDCC and the Steering Committee on Human Rights.

15. With regard to paragraph 14 d. of Recommendation 1019, which concerns consultation of youth representatives at national, local and regional level, the 2nd Ministerial Conference in Oslo reaffirmed the importance of the role played by intergovernmental youth co-operation within the Council of Europe in implementing recommendations on participation, mobility and information of the young, and as a basis for the exchange of information on national youth policies. The Committee of Ministers has entrusted implementation of the results of the Ministerial Conference to the CDEJ.

16. The Conference also noted that any policy to encourage participation of the young in cultural, social, economic and political life must have its roots at local level. In this connection, it should be said that the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE) has initiated research on experiments with youth participation in municipal and regional life, aimed at generating municipal and regional awareness, encouraging new experiments, promoting exchanges and making the most of present initiatives. Thus a Conference on municipal and regional youth policies was held in Lausanne (Switzerland) from 22 to 24 June 1988 under the aegis of the CLRAE. This Conference gave young people an opportunity to air their concerns, particularly regarding participation in politics.

17. The Third Medium-Term Plan also provides for a local and regional authority contribution to youth exchanges in co-operation with the CLRAE (see Field VIII, Chapter 2, Paragraph ii).

18. With regard to paragraph 14, sub-paragraphs e. and f. of Recommendation 1019, the Committee of Ministers reminds the Assembly that it has taken measures for the purpose of improving and accelerating the procedure for review of the implementation of Committee of Ministers recommendations and resolutions by the member States instructing all the Steering Committees, and, insofar as they were involved, the Ad hoc Committee of Experts, to proceed themselves to the selection and consultation of their follow-up.

19. Finally, the Committee of Ministers wishes to inform the Assembly that it has sent the Recommendation to the governments of the member States. It has also brought it to the attention of the relevant European Youth Centre and European Youth Foundation bodies."