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Education for leisure activities

Recommendation 1717 (2005)

Reply from the Committee of Ministers
adopted at the 963rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (3 May 2006)

1. The Committee of Ministers has considered Recommendation 1717 (2005) on education for leisure activities and finds it very pertinent in the age of new information technologies, which should be properly used and not abused. There is a danger of their becoming the only leisure activity at the expense of sport, culture and associative life.
2. The Committee of Ministers recalls its Recommendation No. R (98) 5 concerning heritage education and draws the attention to the Council of Europe's Programme of Cultural Routes. The Routes provide a concrete demonstration of the fundamental principles of the Council of Europe: human rights, cultural democracy, European cultural diversity and identity, dialogue, mutual exchange and enrichment across boundaries and centuries. The partners on the ground, who are often members of civil society and the local community, could be encouraged to provide training regarding the educational use of the cultural routes in order to guarantee high quality leisure education. It is also true that education for leisure should be dealt with not only in schools, but, also by the relevant associations and NGOs.
3. The Committee of Ministers notes that the recommendation is in the spirit of the Declaration of the Third Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe and of the principles developed in the Council of Europe within the framework of formal, non-formal and informal education, as well as the Pestalozzi programme (Programme of training of teachers and educational professionals) to be implemented as from 2006. The Council of Europe could introduce the theme of education for leisure into the programme of future modules or training seminars in the framework of this programme.
4. It shares the opinion of the Assembly as regards item 6.4 concerning the advisability of creating leisure structures in residential areas in all Council of Europe member states and, in this context, recalls the creation of citizenship sites in the framework of the "Education for Democratic Citizenship" project.
5. This being said, the Committee of Ministers considers that not only education for leisure but also access to leisure activities should be continuously promoted. For example, investment should be made in the development of leisure equipment for better integration of children and young people. As regards people with disabilities, the new information technologies could be effectively used. Thus, access to cultural heritage on an equal footing, for example, would not be limited only to a physical access. The Committee of Ministers is confident that the content of texts such as the Action Plan for People with Disabilities and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 October 2005, will soon be applied in member states.