Parliamentary **Assembly**
**Assemblée** parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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# Sports and the integration of migrants

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr. Olin and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. Sports have always been an important tool for the integration of immigrants and their children in the host society. The practicing of a sport fosters the sense of belonging to a group. It is a powerful instrument in creating friendships. The feeling of wellbeing in a given society can be fundamentally influenced through the practice of a sport.

2. Most sports associations have social programmes in addition to sport activities and can thus reach a broader audience than only the group of sport practitioners. Migrants and their children, who are members of a sports association, can involve other family members, friends and relatives in these social activities, which, in an important way, can help reduce feelings of isolation in society.

3. Sports associations are democratic organisations and will therefore help their members to understand and practice democracy. In this respect it encourages their members of different origins to assume responsibilities for the wellbeing and well functioning of the association. The feeling of contributing to a common goal can be very strong and it gives great scope for individual involvements and initiative. This can be the case for the sports practitioner as well as for members of his/her family members, friends and relatives.

4. Sport associations are keen to present a positive image of them-selves to society. They will therefore invest in the training and education of its members to behave correctly and as examples to follow in exercising their sport as well as for their behaviour in private, professional and public life. This can have important positive repercussions on the behaviour of the groups that sport practitioners are associated with or belong to.

5. As a consequence of the above, sport practitioners are often better placed to find employment, not only as professionals within the different sports they may practise, but also in a variety of enterprises linked to different sports or completely outside this area.

6. The practice of sports in an enterprise is normally regarded as very positive for the wellbeing of the enterprise, its internal cohesion and its internal and external image of the enterprise inside and outside it. Sport activities in enterprises can also involve family members, friends and relatives of the employees. Sport practitioners can make important contributions to such functions within enterprises, which can contribute in an important way to their integration, as well as chances for promotion.

7. A particularly important place where sports are practiced is the school. Sport associations could in the context of physical training be given a more important role. They could also to a larger extent be given access to the school premises for their activities.

8. In view of the above and given the importance of achieving a positive integration of migrants and their families in Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends that member states:

1. share their experience of policies and practices combining sports and integration of migrants;

2. proceed with the compilation of good practices with a view to drawing up guidelines for policies that can foster integration of migrants and members of their families through sports;

3. involve sports associations in programmes of physical training given in schools and offer school premises to be used for the associations' activities, costs could be shared for equipment;

4. use the Council of Europe and/or other relevant international organisations for necessary co-ordination and promotion of this work.

*Signed* [1]*:*

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1 SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group