

RECOMMENDATION 145/2015¹

The Role of Sport in Promoting Growth, Employment and Social Cohesion in the BSEC Region

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) is aware of the fact that sport can play a fundamental role in promoting social cohesion, stimulating growth and improving employment issues. The practice of sport plays a significant role as a promoter of social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. It is also a recognized instrument for strengthening social ties and networks and promoting ideals of peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence, tolerance and justice.
2. The PABSEC recalls the *Istanbul Summit Declaration on the Occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of BSEC*, wherein the Heads of State and Government underlined “the investment in education of Youth as an essential ingredient for prosperity of our societies in the future”, and taking into consideration that “cooperation in the spheres of culture, tourism and Youth policy creates better understanding among our peoples”, expressed their support to member countries initiatives “to organize international cultural and sports events and fairs in their countries that will pave the way for further rapprochement and cultural exchange among the BSEC Member States.”
3. The PABSEC also recalls its Recommendation 24/1997 on “Youth Cooperation in the Black Sea Region”, which recommends that the Parliaments and Governments of the PABSEC Member Countries “encourage cooperation in the field of sports, in particular, within the framework of the future Black Sea Sports Games”.
4. The PABSEC notes that the Member States, through their institutional structures in charge of the management and development of sports, are developing sport policies aiming at enhancing participation in sport with a view to empowering the youth. At the

¹ *Rapporteur*: Mr. Ioan VULPESCU, Chairman of the Committee - Romania

Assembly debate on 10 June 2015 (see Doc.: GA45/CC44/REP/15, Report of the Cultural, Educational, and Social Affairs Committee on *The Role of Sport in Promoting Growth, Employment and Social Cohesion in the BSEC Region*, discussed in Ordu on 1 April 2015; *Rapporteur*: Mr. Zoltan PEK, Member of the Committee – Serbia).

Text adopted by the 45th General Assembly in Chisinau on 10 June 2015.

same time, organization of major international sport events in the region is indicative of the priority given to sport as a means of development and growth.

5. Taking into consideration the fact that participation of young people in sports is still low across the region, the PABSEC stresses the need for greater efforts by the Member states towards enhancement of sport in the region. This would require carefully designed strategies but also effective mechanisms for their monitoring and evaluation.
6. The PABSEC stresses the important role of international and regional cooperation in the field of sports and recalls the major international documents adopted in the framework of the United Nations and the Council of Europe. It also welcomes the initiatives taken in the BSEC framework towards institutionalization of cooperation in the fields of youth and sport and expresses its full support to ongoing discussions and future projects in this area of cooperation.
7. **Therefore, the PABSEC recommends** that the parliaments and the governments of the BSEC Member States:

At the national level:

- i) *redouble efforts* to implement existing international agreements and instruments such as UNESCO's International Charter of Physical Education and Sport and the European Sport Charter;
- ii) *promote* effective internal cross-sectoral cooperation among public authorities dealing with social affairs, youth, sports, employment and economic issues in order to ensure greater awareness of the social and economic role of sports;
- iii) *review* sport governance to embrace inclusion criteria and ensure equal opportunities to participate in and through sport at all levels;
- iv) *develop* training of teachers, instructors and coaches to deliver inclusive and adapted physical activity programmes, including training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- v) ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;
- vi) *allocate funds* to facilitate access to sport by people with disabilities and people from excluded groups such as immigrants;
- vii) *consider* the funding of physical education and sport programmes as a safe investment that will result in positive socio-economic outcomes;
- viii) *invest* in accessible infrastructure to encourage physical activity at community level;
- ix) *support* the establishment of alliances involving all concerned stakeholders, including public authorities, city planners, parents, teachers, sport and cultural organizations, coaches and athletes to develop a national vision and priorities for physical education and sport programmes and policies;

- x) *commit*, when hosting major sports events, to the sustainability of sport infrastructure for physical education, sport for all and high-performance sport and other community activities, in order to ensure that all concerned stakeholders can participate in and benefit from such events;
- xi) *leverage* major sport events as platforms to raise awareness on societal issues and for opportunities for cultural exchange;
- xii) *take all appropriate measures* to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them the same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;
- xiii) *enhance* volunteering and inclusion of young people during sports events.

At the regional level:

- xiv) *promote* sustainable and efficient sports cooperation based on sports policies of mutual interest and benefit;
 - xv) *exchange* experience and best practices on the ways of using the full potential of sports to facilitate growth, employment, skill development and social cohesion, within the context of national and regional policy development;
 - xvi) *strengthen* cooperation in the BSEC region through facilitating contacts in the field of youth and sports, organizing regional sport events, including with the involvement of civil society, developing innovative projects in these fields and ensuring opportunities for social inclusion;
 - xvii) *promote* the creation of an information exchange network of information and consultancy centers in the member states;
 - xviii) *explore* the possibilities of reviving the Black Sea Games with a view to strengthening the improvement of sports and technical skills and the exchange of young athletes from the region.
8. **The PABSEC invites** the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to consider this Recommendation.