SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
BOLLETTINO

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Meeting of the Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe, with the participation of the Holy See (Paris, 26 November 2019)

“Civic education in the digital age” is the topic discussed by the Ministers of Education of the States Parties to the Council of Europe’s Cultural Convention in Paris on Tuesday, 26 November.

The digital revolution poses new challenges for the school of the 21st century: on the one hand it offers new and powerful tools, on the other it requires with increasing urgency to identify shared ethical criteria, to train children and young people to use the large amount of data available, exploiting its potential while at the same time being aware of the risks of manipulation associated with the mass processing of data, as well as the dangers arising from intrusion into the private sphere, and from cyberbullying.

The Holy See, which has been a party to the Cultural Convention since 1962, was represented at the Conference by Archbishop Paolo Rudelli, apostolic nuncio, and Bishop Yovko Pishtiyski, nunciature counsellor. In his speech, Bishop Rudelli echoed Pope Francis’ call for a reconstruction of the educational pact, based on the interaction of all those involved in education, primarily children and parents, on openness to all dimensions of the human person, including the spiritual, and an active involvement in the common good, leading young people to take care of their community, their country and the common home that is the planet earth.

The ministers gathered in Paris adopted a declaration, in which they committed themselves to ensuring that schools guarantee, from an early age, the acquisition of the digital skills necessary to live in a democratic society, in particular those that promote the formation of a critical spirit, civic participation and ecological responsibility.

In adhering to the text adopted by the Conference, the Delegation of the Holy See issued an interpretative statement, recalling once again that it understands the terms “gender” or “gender stereotypes” as referring to sexual difference based on male and female identity.

The Ministers of Education then discussed the French proposal to create an observatory on the teaching of history within the Council of Europe.