



Recommendation 746 (1975)¹

Twenty-five years of European cultural co-operation

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Noting the report of its Committee on Culture and Education on twenty-five years of European cultural co-operation ([Doc. 3525](#)) ;
2. Recalling its efforts to stimulate European cultural co-operation and establish it on a more coherent and more dynamic basis (Recommendations 567 (1969) and 649 (1971)) ;
3. Believing that the whole machinery of co-operation in the cultural field should be reviewed in the light of the political aims and statutory obligations of the Council of Europe, and that the attention of member governments should be drawn to the urgent need for a clear definition of the respective roles of the different European intergovernmental organisations in order to obviate any possible squandering of public funds by administrative or technical bodies not subject to proper public control ;
4. Confirming the specific role of the Council of Europe in the formulation and the overall implementation of a European policy of permanent education and cultural development, two inseparable aspects of a policy directed, above and beyond material and economic circumstances, towards man, his right to education and his right to culture ;
5. Convinced that the operation of intergovernmental co-operation as institutionalised in the Council of Europe in the cultural field is vitiated by the absence of political leadership, and that there is a gap between the political level (namely the Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, which does no more than agree the finances to be accorded the Cultural Fund) and the technical level (the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC) which, in the working out of its programme, enjoys almost total autonomy in relation to the Committee of Ministers and to the standing Conference of European Ministers of Education of the twenty-one states party to the European Cultural Convention) ;
6. Aware of the useful work that the CCC has done in comparing together the different experiences of member states in its studies and in its research, and aware also that such groundwork is essential for the choice and direction of subsequent action, but noting that the CCC is poorly equipped to make a start in the coming decade on the process of bringing about the desired convergence of the educational systems of member states so as achieve greater unity in the sense of Article 1 of the Statute of the Council of Europe ;
7. Looking back with some disappointment on the results of a quarter of a century of European cultural co-operation, and wishing to draw the lessons of experience gained over this time ;
8. Believing that it is important for the future to distinguish between :
 - a framework for reflection, study and investigation : the flexible system of technical co-operation of the states party to the European Cultural Convention which it would be desirable to extend as far as possible to all states wishing to accede to this convention ;*
 - a framework for decision and action : such as is possible within the system of the member states of the Council of Europe, bound together by specific statutory obligations ;*

1. Assembly debate on 23 January 1975 (18th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3525](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 23 January 1975 (18th Sitting).



9. Considering that effective governmental direction for the work of the Council of Europe can only come from the involvement of the competent Ministers themselves, whom it is important to associate with the pursuit of the statutory aims of the organisation and whose executive authority is a necessary part of the process of determining the political priorities of the CCC programme and the controlling of their subsequent implementation ;
10. Noting that Article 14 of the Statute of the Council of Europe would allow a development of this nature without in any way affecting the budgetary responsibilities of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs ;
11. Wishing moreover to establish a dialogue with the Committee of Ministers sitting at the level of Ministers competent for educational and cultural affairs on the model of the joint committees held on questions of general policy ;
12. Recalling the report of its Political Affairs Committee on the mission of the Council of Europe ([Doc. 3281](#)), and especially paragraphs V. a and b of its [Recommendation 704 \(1973\)](#) ;
13. Noting that its Committee on Culture and Education has established a list of political objectives and a priority programme for action (contained in [Doc. 3525](#)),
14. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
 - a. institute, along the lines of [Recommendation 704 \(1973\)](#) on the mission of the Council of Europe, special meetings at the level of Ministers competent for educational and cultural affairs of member states, that these may effectively :

determine, in the field of culture and education, priorities for action in the intergovernmental programme for the CCC then to implement ;

reorganise, and if need be cut down, the total programme in the light of these priorities ;
 - b. set up, in conjunction with the Assembly, a joint committee, composed of representatives of these special meetings of the Committee of Ministers and representatives of the Assembly, with a view to ensuring that these priorities for action reflect also the political objectives of a common European strategy of culture and education ;
 - c. remind member governments of their commitment to European co-operation in the field of culture and education, and that, whatever structures are available, these should be taken as a whole into consideration in the planning, but also in the financing, of such co-operation.