Recommendation 929 (1981)[1]

Music education for all

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having noted the report of its Committee on Culture and Education on music education for all (Doc. 4760) ;

2. Believing music, in all its forms, to be an important means of human expression and also an accepted part of the cultural heritage of Europe ;

3. Wishing to encourage the continuing development of this heritage through aids to contemporary music creativity, but also concerned that every individual should be enabled to develop a critical appreciation of music and, where possible, the ability of musical self-expression whether in singing or playing an instrument or in its interpretation in related cultural activity such as dancing ;

4. Convinced that music education, in addition to the provision of special training for particularly gifted children, should be recognised as forming a continuous part of general education in all countries ;

5. Stressing the importance of music education and the discipline of music training for the development of the individual's total personality and cultural behaviour;

6. Pointing out also the contribution music can make in remedial education, and underlining its positive social value as a leisure pursuit;

7. Noting with interest that the results of research have shown that music education can make a direct contribution to performance in other subjects taught in school ;

8. Noting the omnipresence of music in modern society in particular through the mass media, and stressing the need for young people to be able to discriminate within this constant acoustic bombardment;

9. Welcoming, however, the opportunities offered by the present availability of music in all forms, and the increasing interest shown in music over the last two decades by young people and adults, many of whom are seeking training in singing or instrumental playing ;

10. Recalling its Resolution 624 (1976) on the democratic renewal of the performing arts, and Recommendation 781 (1976) on Council of Europe action for the future of the performing arts ;

11. Welcoming the recognition of the importance of music education as part of government policy, shown by the European Ministers with responsibility for Cultural Affairs in Resolution No. 1 of their 3rd Conference (Luxembourg, 1981) ;

12. Regretting, however, the low priority placed on music education in many member countries, and particularly concerned lest present provision for music education in primary and secondary schools be cut back in the interests of reducing government spending ;

13. Drawing attention to the vast turnover in the music industry, and hoping that some of the profits made might be redistributed to support the training of musicians and to improve public appreciation of music ;

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1. Assembly debate on 8 October 1981 (19th Sitting) (see Doc. 4760, report of the Committee on Culture and Education). Text adopted by the Assembly on 8 October 1981 (19th Sitting).

14. Believing that the number of music schools in member countries is inadequate to meet the need for specialised vocal and instrumental training alongside primary and secondary education ;

15. Regretting the lack of sufficient general or specialised teachers competent to teach music, as a result of inadequate teacher-training, outmoded techniques and the lack of incentives for potential music teachers in view of their poor employment prospects,

16. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

a. prepare a recommendation on music education for all, calling on member governments to ensure :

1. that parents are aware of the importance of the musical interpretation of sounds for children from birth, and that they are given guidelines on their role in developing such perception ;

2. that music education is provided on a continuous basis in all schools from pre-school to the end of secondary education ;

3. that sufficient special schools be maintained (with an even distribution throughout each country to cater for children with a special interest in, or talent for music, and which can prepare them for a school-leaving examination in music ;

4. that the teachers and facilities in such specialised schools are also made available to assist music education in general schools ;

5. that provision is made for adult education, either through distance teaching courses, evening classes, or adult education institutions ;

6. that attention is paid to the training of teachers of music, and in particular :

that the training of pre-school and primary teachers includes music ;

that provision is made for the training of sufficient specialised music teachers for secondary schools and adult education ;

that in-service training in music is provided for established teachers with stress on the relevance of music to other disciplines ;

that effective contact is maintained between teachers (both general and specialised), universities or research institutions, and training courses for teachers, so that music education constantly reflects both the experience of teaching music and new musical developments ;

7. that the status of music school teachers and the conditions of their employment is recognised as equivalent to those of music teachers in general schools ;

8. that agreement be reached on the recognition of equivalences of music degrees and diplomas throughout Europe ;

9. that greater use is made of the mass media (radio, television, records, tapes or cassettes) in music education, and of other technological developments ;

10. that encouragement is given to the composition of contemporary music that does not require too high a standard either for appreciation or performance and can be used by those learning music ;

11. that support be provided for amateur performances (in particular by youth orchestras, pupils at music schools, choirs, etc.) and also for performances of touring professional groups in classrooms or to young people throughout all countries ;

12. that innovations and pilot projects in music be introduced and encouraged at all levels ;

b. ask the Council for Cultural Co-operation to give consideration, in the context of its future work on the culture industries, to the possibility of redistributing for educational ends some of the profits made by the music industry ;

c. report to the Assembly in the course of European Music Year 1985 on the progress made towards the implementation of this recommendation.