



Recommendation 1884 (2009)¹

Cultural education: the promotion of culture, creativity and intercultural understanding through education

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly reaffirms the fundamental importance of education for every individual and society as a whole and recalls that, under Article 26, paragraph 2, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and ethnic or religious groups. All forms of artistic expression are recognised as tools for intercultural education by the Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue of 7 May 2008.
2. The right to education is a fundamental human right guaranteed under Article 2 of the first Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 9). Education should be used as the driving force for new social and economic structures in today's world of rapid change, increasing globalisation and complex economic, societal and cultural relations.
3. Cultural education, which is learning and practising the arts, as well as learning through the arts using transversal pedagogical means, should also be understood as using the arts for the promotion of cultural and social objectives, in particular mutual respect, understanding and tolerance vis-à-vis others, appreciation of diversity, team work and other social skills, as well as creativity, personal development and the ability to innovate. Cultural education can help to create synergies beyond cultural diversity through positive and constructive dialogue. The promotion of creativity and the ability to innovate are indispensable for the development of a person's character and for meeting daily challenges. Self-expression through, and experience of, the arts develop basic co-ordination and core skills that assist a child's ability to learn from the earliest years.
4. The Assembly recalls the UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education adopted by the World Conference on Arts Education: Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century (Lisbon, 6-9 March 2006) and welcomes the European Union initiative "European year of creativity and innovation" in 2009. It regrets the absence of a Europe-wide programme to assess adequately cultural education and social competencies acquired at school.
5. The Assembly has widely supported education policies related to culture, such as through its [Recommendation 1833 \(2008\)](#) on promoting the teaching of European literature, [Recommendation 1717 \(2005\)](#) on education for leisure activities, [Recommendation 1621 \(2003\)](#) on the promotion of art history in Europe, [Recommendation 1437 \(2000\)](#) on non-formal education, [Recommendation 1104 \(1989\)](#) on dance, and [Recommendation 929 \(1981\)](#) on music education for all.
6. Education typically takes place in schools and institutions of higher education, as well as in an informal way through media, cultural institutions and art. Art can usefully reinforce formal education. Cultural and artistic means of education should become an essential part of formal education, in particular at school level. New information and communication technologies have strongly increased the possibilities for, and the impact of, cultural education, both in formal and informal education.

1. *Assembly debate* on 29 September 2009 (30th Sitting) (see [Doc. 11989](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, rapporteur: Mrs Muttonen). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 September 2009 (30th Sitting).



7. Successful education implies logical and abstract thinking, imagination and sensibility, creativity as well as cultural memory, with communication skills being the necessary starting point. Communication requires cognitive and social competencies, as well as literacy in a broad sense, comprising not only speaking, reading and writing literacy, but also numerical, cultural and artistic literacy.
8. Artistic communication could assist in particular persons experiencing difficulties in speaking, reading or writing, irrespective of whether these are a result of physical, mental or educational problems. In order to fully exercise their right to education, persons with special needs should have access to more intensive and holistic education, including in particular cultural education.
9. Literacy is a fundamental requisite for the participation in and active contribution to democratic society. Although illiteracy in terms of reading and writing in Europe is below the estimated worldwide level of 10% to 20%, a proportion of Europeans with a migratory background is functionally illiterate in the language of their country or region of residence. This cultural illiteracy hinders participation in social life and the mutual understanding between different social groups.
10. The Assembly reaffirms that member states must guarantee the freedom and diversity of artistic and cultural expression under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Educational and cultural institutions, representing the wide range of artistic and cultural practice, should set up joint projects in order to ensure an active and vivid approach to diverse cultural expressions.
11. Educational institutions should set up international co-operation projects in cultural education, in particular in regions with political tensions. Member states should support educational institutions in such co-operation by raising awareness, providing funding, facilitating travel visas where necessary, ensuring mutual recognition of cultural courses, and granting educational institutions the administrative powers to conclude transfrontier co-operation agreements. They should ensure that every person can meet his or her educational needs by ensuring the availability of adequately trained teachers, as well as access to culture and the arts.
12. The Assembly welcomes the organisation of a meeting with the Governing Board of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) in order to explore the pedagogical and ideological grounds of their work and examine the possibility of expanding the scope of their assessment to include civic awareness, creative skills and cultural education.
13. The Assembly asks the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to assist member states, educational institutions, cultural institutions and teachers in developing and maintaining cultural education projects and to share information on best practices, for instance through the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) in Lisbon, the European Wergeland Centre in Oslo and the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz.
14. The Assembly invites the ministers for education, culture and the media in Council of Europe member and observer states to:
 - 14.1. support research with a view to establishing national strategies for cultural education at school and as part of informal education and lifelong learning;
 - 14.2. make cultural education through qualified arts teachers and artists mandatory at school and provide related training for all teachers;
 - 14.3. facilitate access of young people from disadvantaged, minority and migrant backgrounds, as well as from culturally disadvantaged regions, to cultural education, thus counteracting tendencies to isolate or create parallel societies;
 - 14.4. provide platforms of dialogue and learning for people of all ages and backgrounds, also for people distant from the arts, in order to promote integration and cohesion through cultural education;
 - 14.5. promote diversity in culture, as well as respect and tolerance vis-à-vis other cultures, for instance by distinguishing national identity from a particular culture, but recognising the common cultural roots and historic cultural inter-relations in Europe and beyond;
 - 14.6. recognise culture and the arts as an open and living phenomenon of humankind when teaching cultural heritage;
 - 14.7. develop at national level an adequate assessment of cultural education and social competencies when evaluating educational success, thus complementing the OECD's PISA studies and other programmes monitoring the results of education;

14.8. set up, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, projects for the implementation of the UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education and present them at the next World Conference on Arts Education, planned to be held in Seoul in 2010.

15. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

15.1. transmit this recommendation to the competent national authorities and to the participants in the 23rd Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, to be held in Slovenia in June 2010;

15.2. develop a policy framework for assessing educational success with regard to social competencies of students, in particular in areas such as cultural knowledge, creativity, teamwork and intercultural understanding;

15.3. analyse gender differences in educational success and develop strategies for gender-specific support in education at national level, in particular through targeted cultural education at the level of primary education;

15.4. recognise the right to cultural education, set up assistance programmes for member states on ensuring proper implementation of the right to education under Article 2 of the first Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and monitor such implementation, in particular as regards people from disadvantaged, minority or migrant backgrounds, in order to combat cultural illiteracy and a growing educational and cultural divide in society.