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The right of everyone to take part in cultural life

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1990 (2012)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has taken note of Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1990 (2012) on “The right of everyone to take part in cultural life” and of the appended Guidelines for developing policies to ensure effective participation in cultural life. It brought this recommendation to the attention of the member States’ governments so that they might be guided by it in framing their national policies, also transmitting it to the relevant Council of Europe committees² and to the Executive Committee of the North-South Centre for information and for receipt of any comments they might have.

2. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the Parliamentary Assembly’s commitment to cultural democratisation, cultural rights and “living together” in present-day societies. In this area, the Council of Europe offers member States assistance under the programme on democratic governance through educational, cultural and youth policies. Promotion of the right to participate in cultural life is also embodied in the objectives of Council of Europe youth policy (see Resolution CM/Res(2008)23), in the principles set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 on gender equality standards and mechanisms and in the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan (cf. CM/Rec(2006)5 – key action line 2 “Participation in cultural life”).

3. The Committee of Ministers is aware of the influence of social inequalities on access to culture. It notes the importance of promoting the “desire for culture”, particularly among young people, and of providing quality education for all. The measures contained in Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 on gender mainstreaming in education are relevant in that respect; they propose a comprehensive strategy and the necessary mechanisms for achieving equality between women and girls, men and boys, at all levels, in both formal and informal education. Moreover, the Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE) is currently preparing a draft Recommendation on the effective implementation of quality education for all in the member States, which will open up worthwhile paths of interaction with the Assembly recommendation. Furthermore, in 2013, the Committee of Experts on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CS-RPD) will collect examples of good practice and elaborate recommendations to member States in order to promote the participation of people with disabilities in cultural life, including tourism, leisure and sport.

4. Referring to paragraph 13.7 of the Assembly recommendation, the Committee of Ministers indicates that the activities conducted as part of the Compendium project and the CultureWatchEurope initiative in order to establish indicators of access to and participation in culture in Europe and to ensure their monitoring are headed in the direction advocated by the Assembly. In this context, it will be necessary to integrate a gender perspective in accordance with the aims of the Council of Europe’s gender equality transversal programme.

5. Regarding the invitation formulated in paragraph 14 of the recommendation, the Committee of Ministers assures the Assembly that Recommendation 1990 (2012) will be communicated to the Council of Europe conferences of specialised ministers concerned, notably the 10th Conference of Ministers of Culture (Moscow, April 2013) devoted to “Governance of culture – Promoting access to culture”.

1. 2012 - Fourth part-session

2. Joint Council on Youth (CMJ), Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE), Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP), Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) (Gender Equality Committee (GEC)).



6. The Committee of Ministers stresses that the steering committees and the existing bodies are able, within their current terms of reference and, as the case may be, in co-operation with the institutional and international partners mentioned, to address the principal recommendations made by the Assembly. Consequently, the Committee of Ministers does not envisage setting up a new co-operation structure devoted to the promotion of access to cultural life.