COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS
COMITÉ DES MINISTRES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
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MINISTERS' DEPUTIES Recommendations **CM/Rec(2018)10** 14 November 2018

Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on culture's contribution to strengthening the internet as an emancipatory force

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 14 November 2018 at the 1329th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.*b* of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage;

Acknowledging the potential of the internet and digital media to contribute to the achievement of these ideals;

Conscious, however, that some of the most recent developments in the internet and digital media are currently undermining these ideals and principles, in particular the often covert profiling of citizens by internet platforms and false or misleading information;

Aware that such developments in the internet and digital media are widely perceived as influencing, *inter alia*, political opinion, election results and prosumer behaviour, and threatening the respect for diversity and tolerance that are the hallmarks of democracy and peaceful societies;

Recalling the Council of Europe's Indicator Framework on Culture and Democracy that demonstrates culture's crucial role in developing well-rounded, competent, tolerant and democratically able citizens, by exposing them to diverse knowledge and a variety of influences and experiences;

Acknowledging that this exposure enables citizens to make cognitive connections, gain insights and innovate in ways that are of benefit to democracies and that might, without arts, culture and creativity, remain beyond citizens' range of vision or comprehension;

Conscious that culture can only fulfil this crucial role if all citizens have a genuine open and democratic access to a culture that fosters their active participation, and that the internet and other digital tools facilitate this type of open and democratic cultural access;

Recognising that the internet and digital media have become part of the shared public space for culture, which should be supported by solid cultural policy aims;

Recalling also the Final Statement of the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture (Moscow, 15-16 April 2013), which highlighted the digital revolution as "crucial to the viability of creation and cultural diversity";

Stressing that a human rights approach is required for all policies on culture, including those which address the digital shift. This is to give full effect to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 5), as interpreted by the European Court of Human Rights and as referred to by the Committee of Ministers in its Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)2 to member States on the internet of citizens and its Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)8 to member States on Big Data for culture, literacy and democracy for subsequent follow-up by member States;

Recalling the 4th Council of Europe Platform Exchange on Culture and Digitisation, held in Karlsruhe on 19 and 20 October 2017, which highlighted the internet and digital tools as openly accessible creative spaces for enabling culturally, democratically competent and tech savvy citizens, who are critically aware and can stand against the threats of populist propaganda, false or misleading information and hate speech; and which recognised that a paradigm shift towards a more public-sector-driven development of digital culture could facilitate this aim,

Recommends that governments of the member States:

- draw on culture and cultural players as vital elements for strengthening the internet and digital media as democratic and emancipatory forces, underpinned by respect for human rights, diversity, pluralism, transparency, reliability, independence, tolerance, inclusion, gender equality and solidarity;

- enlarge the scope of critical digital media and information literacy programmes in the education and lifelong learning of children, young people and adults to boost their creative talent and make use of it in order to be able to rise to the challenges to democracy in the digital era;

- capitalise on the know-how of Council of Europe platforms and other related institutions in order to take advantage of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity by promoting intercultural dialogue and exchanging best practices on the use, reuse, innovative creation and diffusion of cultural content, both online and offline;

- when preparing guidelines or measures to counter false or misleading information and hate speech, take into account the capacity of culture to act as a catalyst for shaping and promoting informed citizenship online and make use of relevant European and other international standards and strategies in this connection;

- bring this Recommendation, and the appended guidelines, to the attention of all relevant stakeholders to enable them to take the measures necessary to contribute to its implementation.

Appendix I to Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)10

Guidelines on culture's contribution to strengthening the internet as an emancipatory force

Draw on culture, cultural players and public sector cultural programmes as vital elements for strengthening the Internet and digital media as democratic and emancipatory forces

Member States are encouraged to recognise that the internet and digital media have become part of the shared public space for new forms of culture, increasing the accessibility and exchange of cultural offerings and activities, including those of public service cultural actors and institutions, and allowing citizens to benefit from them in greater numbers. Member States should specifically:

a. highlight the importance and public service and public interest value of the internet in cultural policy making;

b. strengthen the presence of creators and providers of cultural content on the internet to help them engage with citizens and facilitate access to cultural content;

c. support the providers of cultural infrastructures in their efforts to promote digital co-creation and co-production, mindful of the need to protect intellectual property;

d. develop the provision of materials from libraries and archives on the internet, in particular to promote and facilitate the search for diverse and pluralistic information and knowledge, according to legislation applying in the different countries;

e. promote and facilitate the use of open-source tools, commons and related open working methodologies for cultural and research activities by citizens and by public sector and public service actors and institutions;

f. highlight the crucial role of culture and education in debates on the regulation of private digital platforms;

g. encourage independent actors to provide citizens with reliable platforms for checking the source, validity and authorship of digital content of uncertain origin;

h. ensure copyright protection in the digital environment in which authors can develop their creativity in a safe and equitable manner.

Educate citizens to be culturally and democratically savvy and creative

Member States should use digital culture and arts as a means of fostering digitally and democratically competent and creative citizens. Member States should specifically:

a. highlight in policy documents and related strategy action plans the importance of stimulating creativity and its associated competences of entrepreneurship, innovative thinking and problem-solving skills in citizens, emphasising their role as a means of fulfilment, intellectual and social development and economic prosperity;

b. include critical digital media and information literacy training and design-thinking methods as core subjects in formal and informal education, and ensure their adequate financing as well as the training of educators who are able to teach these new skills in line with technological developments, also by taking into account intellectual property rights, privacy and data protection;

c. encourage cultural institutions to co-operate and establish synergies with educational institutions to create digital learning opportunities for citizens by creating incentives that recognise institutions for their co-operation;

d. encourage cultural and educational institutions to include the internet and digital tools as an integral part of their arts and cultural programmes with a view to fostering citizens' critical thinking and tolerance of different viewpoints;

e. encourage cultural institutions to be "pressure-free" spaces for creative learning, in particular to facilitate the experimental use of technology and to support e-culture and new media arts;

f. support and promote new forms of digital culture and heritage in public cultural programmes.

Appendix II to Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)10

Glossary of terms (with specific implications for the purposes of this Recommendation)

Co-creation
Use of the imagination, spirit of invention and innovation of consumers of arts and culture to build on the work of other cultural creators or to collaborate through these skills with other citizens to create works of art and culture.

Commons
The commons in a cultural context are cultural resources in the public domain, free from copyright restrictions and accessible to everyone to build upon and to share. They are distinct from cultural products that are privately owned, copyrighted and require explicit permission (and frequently payment) to use. An example would be the works released under the CC0 (Creative Commons Zero) "no rights reserved" licence which allows licensors to waive all rights and place a work in the public domain.

Co-production
Co-production is the process by which more than one person assembles the raw materials required to produce something new. It is the stage that follows creation and design.

Critical digital media and information literacy
New teaching and learning methods for consolidating and improving technical computer and digital skills in combination with research, processing and critical analysis of information and creative personal development.

Design-thinking
The use of creative plans of action and strategies during the design process.

E-culture
E-culture is the production and consumption of arts and culture through digital media technologies.

Internet of citizens
The internet of citizens promotes the human and cultural dimension of the internet and complements the internet of things. It is a new notion which calls for a people-centred approach to the internet, in particular to empower everyone who uses and relies upon it for their everyday activities. The term “citizens” is used here in a general sense, meaning people or persons, and not in any legal sense.

New media arts
Artwork created using new media technologies such as digital art, computer graphics, computer animation, virtual art, 3D printing and cyborg art.

Open-source tools
Digital tools written in open code which is available to anyone to use and to alter.

“Pressure-free”
Without obligations, restrictions or stressful circumstances.

Prosumer
A fusion of producer and consumer, it refers to the blurring and merging of these roles in the digital world. Processes like crowdsourcing and crowdfunding help to develop goods where the consumer is involved in the design or benefits from specificities of the creation, thus being less passive and more creative.