

**Recommendation No. R (2000) 1  
of the Committee of Ministers to member states  
on fostering transfrontier co-operation between  
territorial communities or authorities in the cultural field**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers  
on 12 January 2000  
at the 693<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

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

Having regard to the Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on Transfrontier Co-operation in Europe, adopted on 6 October 1989 on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Council of Europe;

Having regard to the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the member states of the Council of Europe signed in Vienna on 9 October 1993, in particular to its statement that: “The creation of a tolerant and prosperous Europe does not depend only on co-operation between states but also requires transfrontier co-operation between local and regional authorities, without prejudice to the constitution and territorial integrity of each state”;

Having regard to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, signed on 21 May 1980, its Additional Protocol signed on 9 November 1995 and its Protocol No. 2 signed on 5 May 1998;

Having regard to Resolution 165 (1985) of the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on co-operation between European frontier regions, which calls in particular for the drawing up of a model agreement for transfrontier co-operation in the field of culture;

Having regard to Resolution 259 (1994) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on regional and local authorities and transfrontier or transnational school co-operation, which has led to the adoption of model agreements that appear in the Outline Convention;

Considering that good-neighbourly relations are the basis for establishing a freer and more tolerant Europe, which is the key to enhancing democratic stability;

Considering that local and regional authorities are entitled to engage in transfrontier activities in conformity with their national law and with due regard for the international commitments of their states;

Considering that transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field strengthens mutual understanding and confidence between peoples living in frontier areas, whether or not they share one language, religion or cultural heritage, or have different cultural backgrounds;

Aware that solid transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field facilitates the broadening and deepening of co-operation in other areas of activity, such as education, public services, economic development, environmental protection, regional planning and mutual assistance in emergencies, and is, therefore, the cement of transfrontier relations;

Considering that in some of the member states, various forms of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field have been implemented successfully;

Determined to ensure the development and wider practice of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field by putting forward certain guidelines, examples and measures,

Recommend to the governments of member states that they establish a comprehensive policy on fostering transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field and encourage the initiative of territorial communities or authorities in developing such co-operation according to the guidelines which appear in the appendix to this recommendation.

### **Appendix to Recommendation No. R (2000) 1**

*Guidelines for fostering transfrontier co-operation between territorial communities or authorities in the cultural field*

#### *I. Definitions*

*Transfrontier co-operation between territorial communities or authorities*

The definition of the term “*transfrontier co-operation between territorial communities or authorities*” is taken from Article 2 of the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities, which reads as follows:

“[...] transfrontier co-operation shall mean any concerted action designed to reinforce and foster neighbourly relations between territorial communities or authorities within the jurisdiction of two or more Contracting Parties and the conclusion of any agreement and arrangement necessary for this purpose.”

The expression “territorial communities or authorities” shall mean communities, authorities or bodies exercising local and regional functions and regarded as such under the domestic law of each state.

### *Reference to “frontiers” or “borders”*

The expressions related to “frontiers” or “borders” concern both terrestrial and maritime frontiers or frontier regions. The following guidelines also apply *mutatis mutandis* to transfrontier co-operation that may be implemented by territorial communities and authorities of insular and/or coastal regions of different member states.

### *The cultural field*

Transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field involves education (including language learning), cultural action, artistic creation, youth and sports activities, cultural heritage and the media.

### *II. Principles of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field*

1. The aim of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field should be to bring peoples closer together and to ensure that populations on both sides of the frontier draw equal benefit from this.
2. Frontier territorial communities or authorities, when establishing cultural policies, should consider the transfrontier dimension of their cultural policies, and should encourage and mobilise cultural institutions to establish contacts with their counterparts across the frontier.
3. There should be a regular exchange of information between territorial communities and authorities which engage in such activities and the ministries concerned, in order to make sure that national policies and international commitments are respected.
4. Transfrontier cultural activities should encompass as many cultural institutions as possible (museums, theatres, libraries, archives, schools, the media).
5. Transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field should seek to be sustainable. The creation, where possible, of joint centres and common institutions should be encouraged.
6. Central governments should establish, in cases where it has not yet been foreseen either by means of ordinary law or via the national constitution, the necessary legal framework within which territorial communities or authorities could engage in transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field, in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity.

### *III. Specific areas of action*

A comprehensive policy on transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field should encompass several areas of action. Some examples are mentioned below.

i. Education

A transfrontier dimension in education helps to instil in younger generations at an early stage respect for, understanding of, and tolerance towards the neighbouring population of the country.

The following activities are suggested for the educational aspect of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field:

- within the framework of school twinning and partnerships between frontier schools, the promotion of exchanges of students and tutors;
- organisation of excursions across the frontier;
- raising greater awareness of the neighbouring countries' languages, history and culture in frontier school programmes;
- arrangement of bilingual teaching programmes;
- facilitation of access to schools across the frontier, in particular by means of preferential rates of transport;
- institution of transfrontier school programmes or, if possible, common school curricula, where children from the two frontier areas attend school together and receive the same education provided partly on one side and partly on the other side by teachers from the two school authorities concerned;
- promoting transfrontier academic mobility and co-operation between the universities of frontier regions;
- exploring the joint use of installations and equipment, including internet sites, and the joint organisation of research and teaching in higher education in border areas.

ii. Cultural action

The facilitation of access to cultural activities on the other side of the frontier encourages dialogue and eliminates psychological barriers between frontier populations while raising awareness of their common cultural heritage.

The following courses of action could be taken in this domain:

- distribution on both sides of the border of joint brochures about theatre and concert programmes, museums and exhibitions, historic centres, monuments, popular and village festivals;
- jointly organised festivals, music and theatre performances and art exhibitions on regional cultures;
- friendship days between frontier regions;

- co-operation between a wide range of cultural institutions.

### iii. Youth and sports

The participation of young people in transfrontier activities helps them to acquire a transfrontier vision whilst making them aware of the diversity and richness of cultural and historical traditions. Young people should be encouraged to participate in all the various aspects of transfrontier co-operation mentioned in this recommendation.

Some additional means of promoting this aspect of cultural transfrontier co-operation may entail:

- organisation of sporting events and competitions between partner schools or others;
- arranging youth camps which include young people from both sides of the frontier.

### iv. Common cultural heritage

In certain border regions, the cultural fabric which previously existed across frontiers has been rent by political boundaries. The architectural and archaeological heritage in border regions rests on historical and cultural values which are often shared by the populations across the frontier. Several transfrontier activities could be directed towards strategies for jointly preserving and promoting this cultural heritage. These may include the following:

- the creation and promotion of cultural routes which bring out common cultural characteristics across frontier areas;
- transfrontier co-operation in vocational training, exchange of information and technical skills for preserving the architectural heritage;
- joint action to co-ordinate the management of transfrontier heritage sites, including landscapes;
- common policies to promote cultural tourism across frontier regions.

### v. The media

Local and regional media in the frontier regions can be a powerful instrument not only in increasing understanding and building confidence between frontier populations, but also in encouraging the development of transfrontier co-operation in various fields of activity.

The following activities could be encouraged and facilitated:

- transfrontier co-operation of local, regional and national television for the co-production and joint broadcasting of programmes of transfrontier interest;
- co-operation between local and regional radio stations disseminating news covering the whole transfrontier area;
- development of cross-border bilingual newspapers/magazines containing information on the border region;
- the creation of transfrontier press clubs to report objectively about the neighbouring region(s);
- local/regional radio programmes on teaching the neighbour's language;
- use of the Internet for transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field (particularly in the creation of transfrontier bilingual newspapers).

#### *IV. Measures to encourage the development of transfrontier structural and administrative arrangements*

Transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field should not be an ad hoc, occasional arrangement. The creation of transfrontier structures and permanent links across the frontier should be encouraged.

The following actions could be arranged:

- promotion of the establishment of local and regional associations which have as their objective cultural co-operation;
- creation of cultural centres in border regions, in accordance with national legislation and procedures established, to promote understanding between frontier populations;
- creation of joint institutes for studying common frontier cultures;
- regular meetings between frontier local and regional administrators to develop and implement yearly transfrontier cultural programmes;
- regular conferences for promoting co-operation between frontier regions in cultural matters;
- twinning of border regions and towns.

## *V. Measures to eliminate legal, administrative and technical obstacles*

Member states are encouraged to resolve any legal, administrative and technical difficulties liable to hamper the development of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field and to co-operate with neighbouring states in this regard.

Some measures could be considered as follows:

- adding a clause on transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field to the agreements concerning friendship, good-neighbourly relations and cultural co-operation concluded or to be concluded between neighbouring states;
- new arrangements to facilitate the crossing of borders for frontier populations attending cultural events, such as waiving visa requirements or the fee for visas, simplifying border controls and so on;
- facilitating customs clearance at the border for goods that will be used for cultural activities (eg. musical instruments);
- drawing up an agreement for transfrontier school co-operation (for exchanges of teachers and pupils), which provides a general framework for more specific local agreements;
- taking action, in accordance with national procedures, for the mutual recognition of qualifications such as diplomas and school certificates.

## *VI. Financial measures to encourage transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field*

Member states are encouraged to examine whether financial support could be provided to those frontier territorial communities or authorities which carry out experimental joint projects on cultural matters and which have a highly favourable influence on good-neighbourly relations.

Some strategies concerning financial matters may involve:

- promoting support from the public and/or private sector for local or regional radio and television stations, with a view to stimulating pluralism in the media;
- encouraging various organisations and institutions in frontier areas to contribute to cultural transfrontier co-operation, such as chambers of commerce and industry, companies, and so forth;
- eliminating obstacles to the use of local and regional budgets for the purpose of transfrontier co-operation in the cultural field;
- creating bilateral intergovernmental funds between various ministries of neighbouring states, in order to provide financial assistance for cultural transfrontier initiatives;

– informing frontier territorial communities or authorities about European financial instruments available for financing transfrontier projects, such as the confidence-building measures programme of the Council of Europe and the relevant programmes of the European Union such as the Interreg, Phare and Tacis programmes on transfrontier co-operation.