

**Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)3
of the Committee of Ministers to member States
on ensuring full, equal and effective participation of persons
with disabilities in culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 December 2013
at the 1187th 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 and that this aim may be pursued, *inter alia*, by the adoption of common rules in the field of disability policy for the purpose of promoting the protection of political, civil, social and cultural rights of persons with disabilities;

Bearing in mind the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ETS No. 5);

Bearing in mind the principles embodied in the revised European Social Charter (ETS No. 163), namely Article 15 "The right of persons with disabilities to independence, social integration and participation in the life of the community";

Bearing in mind the Council of Europe conventions in the field of culture and cultural heritage such as the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (ETS No. 66), the European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (ETS No. 119), the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (ETS No. 121), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised) (ETS No. 143), the European Convention on Cinematographic Co-Production (ETS No. 147) and the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (CETS No. 199);

Having regard to the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993);

Having regard to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) of the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2001);

Bearing in mind the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008);

Having regard to Recommendation [Rec\(92\)6](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on a coherent policy for people with disabilities;

Having regard to the Ministerial Declaration on People with Disabilities "Progressing towards full participation as citizens", adopted at the Second European Conference of Ministers responsible for integration policies for people with disabilities held in Malaga (Spain) on 7 and 8 May 2003;

Having regard to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1592 (2003) "Towards full social inclusion of people with disabilities";

Having regard to recommendations in the field of sport such as Recommendation

[Rec\(99\)9](#) on the role of sport in furthering social cohesion and Recommendation [Rec\(86\)18](#) on the European Charter on Sport for All: Disabled Persons;

Having regard to the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, as adopted by Resolution A/RES/406(XIII) by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) at its 13th session (Santiago, Chile, 27 September-1 October 1999), and to related Resolution A/RES/56/212 of the General Assembly of the United Nations of 21 December 2001;

Working towards full implementation of Recommendation [Rec\(2006\)5](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015;

Having regard to Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2009\)8](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on achieving full participation through universal design, as well as the accompanying report;

Reaffirming the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment without any discrimination;

Considering that the estimated proportion of persons with disabilities in the total population in Europe is 15%, and that the number of persons with disabilities is expected to grow steadily due to increasing life expectancy, *inter alia*;

Considering that failure to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure equality of opportunities is a violation of human dignity;

Considering that ensuring equal opportunities for members of all groups in society contributes to securing democracy and social cohesion;

Convinced that the human rights-based approach to ensuring the inclusion and full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in society should be incorporated in all relevant policy areas at international, national, regional and local level;

Emphasising the need to mainstream disability issues in all sectors through coherent policies and co-ordinate action;

Emphasising the importance of establishing partnerships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) of persons with disabilities and other NGOs and stakeholders in the fields of culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities in the implementation and follow-up of this recommendation,

Recommends that the governments of member States, having due regard to their specific national, regional or local structures and respective responsibilities:

1. take a twin track approach, mainstreaming the participation of persons with disabilities in culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities for the general population, while not neglecting particular activities aimed at persons with disabilities specifically, reflecting their diversity and needs;

2. take appropriate measures, including with regard to accessibility and the provision of reasonable accommodation and relevant support services, to ensure that education of children and young persons with disabilities contributes to the

development and encouragement of their creative, artistic, intellectual and athletic potential, and that it encourages them to take part in cultural, sports and recreational activities both as actors and spectators from the earliest ages;

3. take appropriate measures, including the provision of relevant support services, to encourage all stakeholders in the fields of culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities – public authorities at national, regional and local levels, private enterprises, cultural and sporting institutions and expert and civic associations, NGOs of persons with disabilities, media, academic society and others – to work towards creating national, regional and local strategies, action plans for making cultural, sports, tourism and leisure activities accessible to persons with disabilities and enabling full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in the above-mentioned activities, both as actors and spectators;

4. ensure effective and continuous consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the process of drafting legal and policy frameworks, and in taking concrete measures to ensure accessibility of cultural, sports, tourism and leisure activities, since such consultation is a crucial precondition for ensuring effective and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the above-mentioned activities;

5. take measures to ensure, from the outset of any project, adequate planning to make cultural, sports, tourism and leisure venues, programmes, services, facilities and related information and communication, including new technologies, accessible to all persons with disabilities, especially through the application of universal design/design for all principles, since such planning is a powerful tool for ensuring access with little or no additional cost and it contributes significantly to mainstreaming and the optimisation of costs;

6. take appropriate measures to ensure that all new cultural, sports, tourism and leisure services and facilities open to the public are fully accessible to persons with disabilities through application of the universal design/design for all principles, and to work towards the identification and progressive removal of architectural, environmental, information and communication barriers in all existing objects, goods, products, facilities and services in the fields of culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities for persons with disabilities, in order to provide for full and equal participation in the above-mentioned fields;

7. take appropriate steps to create and implement effectively a legislative framework that ensures that denial of access to cultural, sports, tourism and leisure activities on the ground of disability constitutes discrimination and obliges service providers (both public and private enterprises) in the above-mentioned fields to guarantee accessibility and provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities in order to ensure access to venues, programmes and services they provide and promote full and equal participation of persons with disabilities;

8. take appropriate measures to ensure that public procurement procedures and incentives and subsidies are applied as an effective tool in ensuring and promoting access to cultural, sports, tourism and leisure activities for persons with disabilities and their full and equal participation;

9. take appropriate measures to provide continuous training on disability matters for all relevant staff of service providers and institutions offering cultural, sports, tourism and leisure activities and to ensure the availability of comprehensive and precise information on practical solutions to enable persons with disabilities to participate in such activities both as actors and spectators;

10. take appropriate measures to ensure that all stakeholders ensure access for all persons with disabilities, regardless of the type of disability, across the broad range of various cultural, sports, tourism and leisure activities, covering both traditional forms of culture, venues and programmes, as well as modern art forms, using all available means, taking care to use to full effect alternative formats of communication, notably texts that are easy to read and understand, interpretation into sign languages, Braille texts, audio description and modern technologies, such as information and communication technologies, to enable the effective and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities, both as actors and spectators;

11. take appropriate measures to encourage all stakeholders to take into account the diversity of persons with disabilities and the wide range of ways in which participation in culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities can be made a reality for all persons irrespective of their sex, age or type of disability.