

The Netherlands

Comments on the Draft Recommendation

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A few short comments on the Draft Recommendation:

- Preamble

This instrument is part of a network of legal instruments, and being a UNESCO Recommendation, will be interpreted in the context of the UNESCO Culture Conventions. At this moment, a direct reference to the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the 1972 World Cultural and Natural Heritage Convention, the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage and the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is missing in the Preamble. To make this Recommendation consistent with the frameworks of other recommendations and the Conventions, this should be reconsidered.

- Preamble / Introduction + II Issues for museums in society

The new Recommendation should balance references to museums in their functional (social and economic) capacities with references to aspects that see to the intrinsic (cultural) value of museums. Acknowledging the new roles of museums is important, however, among all the references to the functional roles of museums, there should be clear references in the preamble as well as in the "Issues" to the cultural role of museum by referring to the intrinsic value of museums, both as hosts to cultural heritage, as well as expressions of cultural heritage.

Likewise, it would be in accordance with today's understanding of the role of museums if there would be a reference, both in the preamble and the Introduction as in paragraphs 14 and 15 on the social role to participatory practices involving relevant communities. An example could be (article 12 of) the Council of Europe's 2005 Faro Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society.

The new Recommendation seeks to address the changing position of museums in a globalising world, in which museums and their stakeholders, including the relevant communities, are facing new challenges of changing societies. It is therefore important to acknowledge separately the role of museums as prime public institutions amongst other public institutions, being part of society at large and representing public interests. This is all the more important in view of policies aimed at promoting public private partnerships.

- Policies (paragraphs 27-31-33 and in view of paragraph 16)

Museums function in and benefit from a network of other museums and other cultural and **scientific** institutions, both national and international, and it should therefore be recognized that national and international collaboration and alliances are an important element in sustainable strategies for the future.

In view of the remarks above, it may be suggested that the Recommendation could benefit from minor editing in the structure of the text:

- I. Definitions could be followed by (now III) Primary functions, and then followed by (now II) Issues. This would logically lead up to the Recommendations for IV policies.
- The Chapter on Issues could be reorganised in a manner that would separate the issues regarding causes (globalization and New Technologies) from the effects as in new roles and new functions.

This way, paragraph 11 on Globalization could be followed by paragraph 16 on New (Communication) Technologies. These two developments may be regarded as two sides from a coin and are often combined in literature on the major challenges for the future.

Then the paragraphs 14/15 on the social role, and only then paragraphs 12 and 13 on the economic/ quality of life/tourism function.

The Globalization paragraph 11 should be cut in two and separate general remarks on globalization, from the concerns raised in the third and fourth sentence. These effects may result from globalization, but are also the result from "Museums relations with the economy and quality of life" in paragraphs 12 and 13. These concerns could be covered in a separate paragraph at the end of the chapter on Issues.