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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

France's new
organisation
for **the restitution
of cultural property
spoliated** due
to national socialism

France has decided to improve its public organisation for the return of **art and cultural objects spoliated due to national socialism**. At the end of 2018, two administrations will become responsible for implementing this policy, with one specially charged with handling cases and the other with suggesting compensation measures:

- ▶ a **Mission for Research and Restitution of Spoliated Cultural Property** has been created within the Ministry of Culture. This mission will direct research with a view to identifying and restituting such property.
- ▶ On the basis of this research, **the Commission for the Compensation of Victims of Spoliations (CIVS)** will propose reparation measures to the Prime Minister (restitution or, failing such, compensation).

Why a new structure?

The aim is to give new momentum to research on spoliated works and to strengthen public action undertaken for their restitution:

- ▶ by centralising all decisions relating to restitution **at Prime-Minister level**,
- ▶ **by grouping and strengthening research means** within a new Mission **directly attached to the Minister of Culture** and possessing its own **specific budget**,
- ▶ by **widening the possibilities of referral** to the CIVS, a commission whose action has been recognised since 1999 and whose Deliberative Panel is strengthened by the arrival of **four new individuals with qualifications** in the fields of art history, the art market, the history of the Second World War and heritage law.



Two **specialised** services with **complementary** activity

The Mission for Research and Restitution of Spoliated Cultural Property

- ▶ coordinates research on all spoliated cultural property
- ▶ investigates spoliation cases submitted to the CIVS or selected at its own initiative
- ▶ is responsible for informing and increasing awareness amongst the public and professionals on the issue of spoliated cultural property, and, in particular, property preserved by public institutions (museums, libraries)
- ▶ encourages and assists scientific research on spoliation and restitution

The Commission for the Compensation of Victims of Spoliations (CIVS)

- ▶ can take action at the request of victims and their families, of any person concerned, of the administration and at its own initiative
- ▶ refers to the Mission for Research and Restitution to investigate cases of anti-Semitic spoliation
- ▶ proposes restitution of spoliated cultural property, or failing such, compensation, to the Prime Minister
- ▶ is competent for all cases of anti-Semitic spoliation having occurred in France during the Occupation

What **property** is concerned?

- ▶ any cultural property spoliated in France during the Occupation
- ▶ any cultural property (work of art, book, etc.) spoliated between 1933 and 1945 by the Nazis and now currently on French soil

Summary on 30 June 2018 of the French policy on reparation

- ▶ Since starting its work, **the CIVS has examined 4,331 cases** claiming spoliation of cultural property, 298 of which concerned one or several works of art.
- ▶ **The CIVS has recommended restitution of 13 works of art**, and proposed compensation for the other cases of anti-Semitic spoliation having occurred during the Occupation.
- ▶ Since 1951, **121 cultural works and property recovered by France** after the Second World War **have been restituted** (25 of which were restituted after 2012). Approximately 2,000 are still placed in the custody of national museums whilst awaiting restitution.

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