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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.

## Contact information:

**Jérôme BENEZECH**

*Director of the Commission for the Compensation of Victims of Spoliations*

Tel.: +33 (0)1.42.75.68.32  
renseignement@civs.gouv.fr



**David ZIVIE**

*Mission for Research and Restitution of Spoliated Cultural Property between 1933 and 1945*

Tel.: +33 (0)1.40.15.38.39  
david.zivie@culture.gouv.fr

