

ARTS EQUAL

POLICY BRIEF
5/2017

This policy brief is meant for decision makers, authorities, the media and anyone interested in the realization of cultural welfare as part of the ongoing SOTE reforms in the Finnish social welfare and healthcare sector

Enhancing wellbeing in social welfare and healthcare services by expanding the percent for art principle Kai Lehtikoinen

photo: Juha Metso

People in care institutions have limited opportunities to benefit from art and cultural services and the wellbeing they contribute to. This is one reason why the reach of these services needs to be extended to the social welfare and healthcare sectors. This could be done by expanding the currently employed percent for art principle. It would serve to create more equal opportunities for all people to participate in the arts and culture.

This ArtsEqual policy brief is addressed to the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Finnish Ministry of Finance, managers of change in the (SOTE) social welfare and healthcare sector and regional government reform process, municipalities and political decision makers. It offers them latest research information and critical perspectives on the realization of cultural rights and cultural welfare, to support the extending of the percent for art principle in accordance with the program of the current government.

Policy brief

We propose the following measures:

- The current percent for art principle¹ should be extended to the social welfare and healthcare sectors so that Finland's counties (the new regional administrative domains) and the municipalities would, based on their own consideration, allocate a suitable percentage of their appropriations for the organization of social and health services for using art and cultural services in their care and customer work.
- Construction and renovation projects should continue implementing the percent for art principle by financing art procurements as part of the overall costs of construction projects.
- The extended percent for art principle should be marked on the "road map" of the SOTE reform carried out in Finland's social welfare and healthcare sector. The principle should be adopted in all the country's cities and municipalities.
- In the SOTE reform Finland's counties and municipalities should pay attention to the extended percent for art principle in their service contracts and quality criteria when tendering social and health services or organizing them in some other way.
- In order to safeguard the realization of cultural rights and cultural welfare, the counties and the municipalities should include the objective of extending the percent for art principle in the regional strategies and welfare reports as well in municipal strategies, service pledges and welfare reports. The regional cultural welfare program in Pirkanmaa offers a good example in this context.
- The counties and the municipalities should enter the following recommendation in their welfare reports: social and health services should be organized in a way that ensures that all the customers have access to art and cultural services according to their own interests and to achieve the cultural welfare goals that they value in their lives.
- Regional administration staffs should include at least one person who is responsible for the planning and networks connected to cultural welfare. The people in these posts should ideally work in cooperation with the municipal culture and/or welfare coordinators.

1 Esitys prosenttiperiaatteen edistämiseksi 2017 (Proposal for promoting the percent for art scheme); see also <http://prosenttiperiaate.fi/>.

Background

An individual's welfare is made up of various holistically interrelated factors: physical welfare, mental welfare and social welfare.² Welfare presupposes freedom and functional capabilities³, and the individual's possibilities to satisfy central needs connected to standard of living, relationships (community, family and friends) and personal development and fulfillment.⁴ Among the functional capabilities are, for example, health, senses, imagination, thought, emotion, practical reason, play, self-expression, being able to participate in political activities, and opportunity to do meaningful work.⁵

Culture is a socially shared and learnt system of meanings. With it, members of a community categorize their environment, themselves and others and also explain their own actions and those of others. This ties in with the community's assumptions, values and norms, as well as with the actions and outcomes arising from them, from coffee breaks to karaoke and from traditional celebrations to hobbies in the arts. Culture defines social action and gives it meaning.⁶

Art is creative action guided by culturally and historically different conceptions of creation, presentation and reception.⁷ The different art forms each stem from their own traditions. They change as traditional thought and action is challenged. Art primarily exists for its own sake but it can also have, for example, ethical, moral, educational, therapeutic, health enhancing or economic value in society.⁸

The concept of **cultural welfare** refers to the capacity of participation in culture and the arts to increase an individual's cultural and social capital. Participation enhances people's vitality, functional resources (e.g. skills and social networks) and agency, and thereby also their possibilities to act in ways that increase their wellbeing. Cultural welfare also means satisfying one's cultural needs in ways that produce personal or collectively experienced wellbeing.⁹

Art and cultural services offer means to increase people's holistic wellbeing and quality of life as part of quality care in society. Research has shown that participation in arts and culture can, for example:

- prevent loneliness and exclusion¹⁰
- support the development of identity and self-image¹¹
- help to maintain physical and mental health¹²
- alleviate tensions between different cultures¹³
- offer possibilities of empowerment especially to people whose voices are not heard in society¹⁴

In Finland the legal foundation for cultural welfare rests in **cultural basic rights** guaranteed by the Constitution. The right to participate in the arts and culture and to develop oneself and one's community through them and the possibility to express oneself freely are cultural basic rights. These rights are protected by the Constitution of Finland, the Univer-

2 Hyypä 2002, Hyypä & Liikanen 2005, Ruuskanen 2002.

3 Nussbaum 2011; Alkire & Deneulin 2009; Sen 1992.

4 Allardt 1989; Allardt 1976.

5 Nussbaum 2011; Nussbaum 2006; Pirhonen 2013.

6 Buchanan 2010; Horton Fraleigh 1999; Frow 1995.

7 Gielen 2015; Wolff 1993.

8 Laiho 2014; Hyypä 2010; Bourdieu 1984; Bourdieu 1986.

9 Lehtikoinen & Vanhanen 2017; see also Hyypä 2011.

10 Galloway, S. 2015; Cohen et al. 2006; Matarasso 1997.

11 Miles 2007, 278.

12 Clift and Camic 2016; Gordon-Nesbitt 2015; Bidwell 2014; Lelchuk Staricoff 2004.

13 Lehtikoinen & Pässilä 2016; Berhoin Antal 2009; Heinsius & Lehtikoinen 2013; Pässilä 2012.

14 Patel 2012, 66.

sal Declaration of Human Rights, and many of the international human rights conventions Finland has ratified.¹⁵

The Constitution also contains the **requirement of non-discrimination**.¹⁶ It states that people must have equal access to art and cultural services and to the cultural welfare these produce, regardless of a person's life situation or state of health. **Equal opportunities** to participate in the arts and culture, as a part of cultural basic rights, are not realized in the lives of many people today. Real equal opportunities would make it possible for all people to pursue cultural welfare.¹⁷ It is a question of equal **access** to the arts and culture.¹⁸

In Finland the percent for art principle is applied to some degree in connection to public and private construction projects. Artworks, such as paintings, sculptures, photographs, light art, sound art and works for wall surfaces are procured usually in the construction phase. Numerous examples can be found of the use of the percent for art programs in municipalities throughout Finland.¹⁹ The percent for art programs bring art to where people are – schools, daycare centers, care institutions, municipal agencies and outdoor spaces. The percent for art principle enhances the availability and accessibility of art, helps to create good-quality comfortable and safe living environments and produces employment for artists.²⁰ In 2015 the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a steering group to investigate the promotion of the percent for art scheme in public construction. The group's proposal was published on 13 December 2017.²¹

Towards a Finland that feels well: proposal for the expansion of the percent for art principle

The ArtsEqual research initiative proposes as a policy recommendation that the percent for art scheme is extended to the social welfare and healthcare sectors. It would serve to increase the accessibility of the arts and culture, improve the opportunities of different groups to participate

15 Constitution of Finland (731/1999) 12 §, 16 § and 17 §; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child; the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; see also Lehtikoinen & Rautiainen 2016.

16 Yhdenvertaisuuslaki/the Finnish Non-discrimination Act (1325/2014) 8 §.

17 Lehtikoinen & Vanhanen 2017.

18 Lahtinen, Jakonen & Sokka 2017.

19 Kekäläinen 2017; Tainio 2014; Karttunen & Herranen 2013; Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2013; Järvipetäjä et al. 2010; Salon taidemuseo Veturitalli 2008; Isohanni 2006.

20 Hyyry 2016; Karisto 2015; Pulkkinen & Hannus 2015.

21 Esitys prosenttiperiaatteen edistämiseksi 2017.

in arts and culture, enhance the equal realization of cultural rights and strengthen cultural welfare.

From the viewpoint of cultural welfare, participation in art and cultural activities builds up people's capabilities and skills in life.²² The percent for art principle should thus be expanded so that as many people as possible could, through this participation, use their imagination and emotions, play, laugh and feel refreshed, feel included in their communities, take part in mentally and physically rewarding activities and be heard. Extending the principle would improve the opportunities of customers of e.g. hospitals, elderly care, child protection services, developmental and family counseling, youth services, family welfare work, home services, home care services, institutional care, substance abuse counseling and mental health services to participate in the arts and culture.

The financing for expanding the Percent for Art principle could be organized through a system where the counties and municipalities would, based on their consideration, allocate a suitable percentage from the annual operating budgets of social welfare and healthcare organizations for integrating arts and culture into their services and using their potential to strengthen cultural welfare. Consideration might also be given to using the funding and procurement models currently used in the percent for art projects (e.g. trust fund model) to finance art and cultural activities in care and customer work in the social welfare and healthcare sector or to developing new funding models.

Extending the percent for art principle is a key project (2016–2018) of Finland's current government.²³ By extending the percentage of art principle, art and cultural services could be integrated into social welfare and healthcare services on a long-term and sustainable basis. It would enable Finland's counties and municipalities to advance the opportunities of the most vulnerable groups to have access to the arts and culture, and thereby also strengthen the cultural wellbeing and capabilities of these people. Preventing illnesses and mental ill-being and reducing tensions between different groups by means of the art and culture are humanely valuable goals as such, but they can also be regarded in terms of social welfare and healthcare costs and productivity from the viewpoint of the national economy.²⁴

22 See e.g. Laitinen 2017a; Laitinen 2017b; Malmivirta 2017; Sutela 2017; Vanhanen 2017; Westerlund et al. 2016.

23 The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has assigned the Centre for Cultural Policy Research CUPORE to follow up on the implementation and assess the impact of the key project. See <https://www.cupore.fi/en/research/research-projects/expanding-the-percent-for-art-principle-110406-19122016>

24 Ansio et al. 2016.



Professor Kai Lehtikoinen (Ph.D., MA)

Professor **Kai Lehtikoinen** leads the CERADA Center for Educational Research and Academic Development in the Arts at the University of the Arts Helsinki. He is also Vice Director of the ArtsEqual research initiative and the Team Leader for its research group Arts in Health, Welfare and Care. His research interests focus on arts and art education in hybrid environments. His recent work as a researcher has centered on the employment of dance-based methods in care work, welfare discourses in the field of culture, conceptions on the legitimacy of art services, and artistic interventions in the development of working life.

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The ArtsEqual policy briefs present to policy makers latest research and research-based discussion produced by the ArtsEqual initiative. The Arts Equal research initiative, coordinated by the University of the Arts Helsinki, examines, in collaboration and interaction with more than 50 partners, how the arts as public service can increase equality and wellbeing in Finland and meet the social challenges of the 2020s.



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