Report on funding what matters for arts-based education across Europe

Summary

The *Report on funding what matters for arts-based education across Europe* examines formal and informal arts-based education funding programmes that have been available in seven sample countries (CLiViE Deliverable D2.2), highlighting common patterns and strategies between public, private and mixed support. The second part of the report maps public and private organisations providing financial support to education and more specifically arts education in these countries and across Europe.

An overview of funding schemes supporting cultural and educational programmes in the seven sample countries shows that each of these countries has, gradually and at different degrees, recognised the importance of the arts as a means of cultural expression fostering social inclusion and their significance in education. This has led to increased support and funding for arts-related programmes. In most cases, there is even significant support for cultural and arts-based education initiatives at the national and local levels, even though all countries are experiencing a trend towards the privatisation of cultural and educational activities and a decrease in public support, requiring the adoption of a more integrated approach to fundraising and the development of public-private partnerships.

The analysis shows that funding is typically categorised into programmes with a distinct cultural focus and other ones aimed at education. Funding programmes that integrate support for both culture and education are less common, although there are exceptions, such as in Finland, where the Ministry of Culture and Education facilitates efforts to integrate and support both areas.

The comparison of the seven national reports shows different levels of public and private support to arts education and, accordingly, different funding-mix strategies. In each country, funding depends on national policies determined to some extent by historical traditions and can be devided by four kinds of financial support: funding through EU programmes; funding by national, federal, regional and local authorities; loans and grants from private donors and sponsors including foundations and charities; and membership fees and ticket sales.

EU funding programmes do not specifically support arts-based education, but arts education initiatives and projects are comprised in other programmes addressing education, culture, and the creative and cultural industries.

In all EU member states, formal arts-based education in lower and upper secondary schools is managed and financed by the Ministry of Education which also determines the amount of arts teaching within the national curriculum. Significant differences can be found when it comes to informal arts-based education initiatives, which are more often provided through bottom-up and community-led projects and programmes organised by a wide network of institutions and organisations collaborating with the school system.

In some cases, e.g., in Germany, public support is provided by the federal government as well as by the federal states. In other cases, informal arts-based education initiatives may be nationally supported but rely more on local institutions. Municipalities often support local organisations in cultural, educational and social intitiatives. Local authorities supporting cultural initiatives or providing cultural services such as libraries and museums also support arts-based education initiatives, but mostly without directly intervening in school activities.

Private donors and sponsors including foundations and charities have developed their own programmes for arts education, and support specific activities in various organisations promoting sustainable development, skills development, inclusive education, creativity and social inclusion. Some arts-related activities are fee-based, financed entirely or partly by admission tickets or membership contributions.

Public funding is the predominant source of funding in countries such as the Czech Republic, Finland and Germany, where national and local governments support cultural and arts education initiatives as a means to foster cultural participation, access to culture and social inclusion.

Key Findings

Dedicated funding programmes for arts-based education still remain scarce and scattered throughout other cultural, educational and skills development programmes.

So far, there is not enough coordination between funding programmes supporting the arts and culture and those supporting education, while arts-based education initiatives are rarely addressed by integrated approaches.

Whereas significant support for cultural and arts-based education initiatives exists at the national and local levels, all countries are experiencing a trend towards privatisation and a decrease in public support, requiring the adoption of a more integrated approach to fundraising and the development of public-private partnerships.

Mixed funding strategies include funding through EU programmes; funding by national, federal, regional and local authorities; loans and grants from private donors and sponsors including foundations and charities; and membership fees and ticket sales.

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A considerable part of Finland's government funding is provided by lottery-related revenues. Countries with a multi-source funding structure include Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, showing that informal initiatives in particular are relying on a mix of government, private and EU funding. Arts-related initiatives in a country like Italy are still strongly relying on private funding, where, apart from local and regional exceptions, few public funds are available for arts education, and local initiatives are mostly resorting to international foundations, charities and the Catholic church.

Next to the sample countries' national and local authorities, public and private funding has been available at the global, European and regional level. UNESCO's key funding programme is the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD), promoting arts-based education as an integral part of a comprehensive learning approach. EU funding schemes include the Creative Europe, Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe programmes addressing the European creative and cultural industries, cultural and educational exchanges across Europe, and various policy frameworks regarding cultural literacy, skills development, innovation and social inclusion. At the regional level, the Nordic Culture Point is an institution of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Its Volt programme provides funding for projects fostering children and young people's creativity.

As to the private and non-profit sector, the report mentions Bloomberg Philantropies, the British Council, the Global Fund for Children, the Goethe Institute, the Mellon Foundation, the UEFA Foundation for Children, the Moleskine Foundation and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Conclusions

As a general result from the mapping of public and private funding schemes it can be concluded that there is not enough coordination between funding programmes supporting the arts and culture and those supporting education, while arts-based education initiatives are rarely addressed by integrated approaches. Despite significant national and local funding in the seven partner countries, there is a trend towards the privatisation of cultural and educational activities, coupled with declining public investment. Dedicated funding programmes for arts-based education still remain scarce and scattered throughout other cultural, educational and skills development programmes. Funding schemes are still fragmented and there is a lack of available information specifically on art-based education funding.

There is a general tendency, especially among private foundations and charities, to create projects rather than support existing organisations and schools. Most of these are working through a mixture of partnerships, grants and their own programmes.

As funding strategies for arts-based education are a key element to be considered to foster social inclusion, a remaining challenge is to keep these activities accessible and inclusive to all children and young people regardless of their social, cultural and economic backgrounds.

Methodology

The analysis of funding levels and funding sources for arts-based education is based on seven national reports presenting the respective countries' policies and programmes in the fields of education, creative and cultural industries and social inclusion in the context of arts-based education addressing children and young people. The diverse funding strategies of the seven sample countries have been examined by mapping common patterns between public, mixed and private support and by identifying public and private funding schemes available across Europe and worldwide that have benefitted stakeholders in the seven sample countries.

References

Multiple authors, *D2.2 National reports on arts-based education contexts and young people*. 2025.
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Policy Takeaways

A more integrated approach to fundraising is required, including the diversification of funding sources and stronger public-private partnerships to ensure the sustainability of arts-based education initiatives.

A comprehensive and cohesive funding framework is required to bridge the gap between cultural and educational funding streams and encourage cross-sectoral collaboration to guarantee equal access to arts-based education.

Knowledge exchange should be fostered about existing funding programmes, best practices and more sustainable funding models for arts-based education.

Schools need to work on capacity building and funding skills.

All in all, the report calls for a holistic and collaborative approach to funding: one that bridges culture and education, fosters cross-sectoral partnerships and aims to guarantee the long-term sustainability and impact of arts-based education across Europe.

The Cultural Literacies' Value in Europe (CLiViE) project develops and applies a Theory of Change (ToC) methodology and Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework to increase our understanding of the value of cultural literacy through arts-based education on social cohesion.

CLiViE
Cultural Literacies' Value in Europe

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