Art and cultural policy benefiting sustainable development

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Finland’s national strategy for sustainable development “Towards sustainable choices – A nationally and globally sustainable Finland” has been revised already 2013. Ministry of Education and Culture (OKM) joined the strategy by publishing commitments for sustainable development. The first and the most important commitment is to promote sustainable development in research and education as well as in various civic organizations and institutions in the field of art and culture through performance management.

The objectives of cultural policy in Finland relates to creativity, cultural diversity, and equity. Societally and culturally sustainable development must be based on each nation’s own cultural heritage and set of values. Development is only sustainable if the cultural environment is nurtured and the diversity is respected.

The means to reach these objectives are 1) to provide favorable conditions for the work of artists, other creative workers, and cultural and art institutions; 2) to promote the preservation and development of cultural heritage and cultural environments; 3) to enhance equal access to, accessibility of and diverse use of culture; 4) to boost production, employment, and entrepreneurship in the cultural sector; 5) to reinforce the cultural foundation of society.

Through national cultural policy OKM aims to contribute and encourage the sustainable development to enable more effective interventions. National cultural and art institutions present their program for sustainable development annually. Concrete suggestions for sustainable development for example in the field of dance are composed of four interconnected dimensions: cultural (including artistic), ecological, economic and social (The Kedja-project). The dance field gives good examples for all other fields of art; Inadequate funding schemes, short-term solutions, short-lived productions – how should the art be developed in a more sustainable manner?

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