

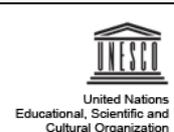
Handout

Why it is important for governments to support singing and music education

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The UNESCO Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education Outcome of the Second World Conference on Arts Education



“The Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education reflects the conviction [...] that arts education has an important role to play in the constructive transformation of educational systems that are struggling to meet the needs of learners in a rapidly changing world characterized by remarkable advances in technology on the one hand and intractable social and cultural injustices on the other.

Issues [...] included [...] were peace, cultural diversity and intercultural understanding as well as the need for a creative and adaptive workforce in the context of post industrial economies.

[...] Arts education can make a direct contribution to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing the world today.”

Seoul Agenda, introduction

Goal 1: Access - Ensure that arts education is accessible as a fundamental and sustainable component of a high quality renewal of education

Goal 2: Quality - Assure that arts education activities and programmes are of a high quality in conception and delivery

Goal 3: Social and Cultural Challenges - Apply arts education principles and practices to contribute to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today's world

<http://www.unesco.org>

Seoul Agenda:

http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/41117/12798106085Seoul_Agenda_Goals_for_the_Development_of_Arts_Education.pdf/Seoul%2BAgenda_Goals%2Bfor%2Bthe%2BDevelopment%2Bof%2BArts%2BEducation.pdf

The Bonn Declaration of the European Music Council

www.emc-imc.org



Background

In May 2011, the European Music Council (EMC) invited actors¹ from the field of music education to discuss the implementation of the UNESCO *Seoul Agenda. Goals for the Development of Arts Education*². The main task of the seminar was to explore how the Seoul agenda can be adapted to music education in Europe.

Recommendations to political decision makers at local, national and European level:

Governments and Legislation need to ensure:

- music education in the formal, non formal, and informal education settings because cultural diversity as well as participatory music education are essential for successful
- public funding for formal, non-formal and informal music education in order to ensure that music education is accessible for all
- the affordability of music education for all from all societal backgrounds, therefore grants must be made available in order to avoid elitism.
- the diversity of learning, from the concept of "music education for all" to a high level of professionalism
- sufficient funding for the provision of appropriate, high quality and up-to-date teacher training.
- high quality of the education of the educators. If music education is taken seriously, the music education practitioners must have adequate training in music
- the continuous professional training of the music education practitioners, also after having received their professional degree
- sufficient funding for both projects highlighting the social benefits of music-making and those supporting traditional music education
- sustainable funding and legislation for quality assurance and evaluation, which give important information on the social impact of music education.
- cross-over funding for multi-sector projects i.e. health, welfare, development etc.
- sustainability in its funding practices and create a balance between long-term structural funding and short-term project funding, this includes core funding to bodies organising activities in the field of music in order to be able to offer good quality education

¹ Over 40 representatives of European music education umbrella organisations were present. The participants have a wide range of experience, e.g. formal, non-formal and informal music education, diverse musical genres and competencies of cultural and educational policies at national and European level. A list of signatories to the declaration is attached

² http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/41117/12798106085Seoul_Agenda_Goals_for_the_Development_of_Arts_Education.pdf/Seoul%2BAgenda_Goals%2Bfor%2Bthe%2BDevelopment%2Bof%2BArts%2BEDucation.pdf

**The Vilnius Conference on Music Education and Singing, July 2009, Vilnius, Lithuania
Organised in cooperation with the European Choral Association – Europa Cantat**

**Recommendations to ministries of Education, Culture, Health and Social Affairs
National and International Music Organisations**

Taking into account the deliberations completed during the sessions of the International Conference “Glee of Centuries” on Singing and Music Education held in Vilnius, Lithuania, 3-6 July, we, the participants from 11 countries, namely Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United States of America and Venezuela, based on the lecture presentations and scientific research results communicated during the conference, declare:

Singing together is an educational, social and artistic phenomenon that ensures intercultural understanding, social integration and respect for others, contributing to the physical and mental health of citizens and therefore the society in which they live and work;

We therefore urge governments and music organisations to adopt the following recommendations for immediate action:

- To the Ministries of Education
Research proves that singing together contributes significantly to the improvement of students’ personality, performance, social and cultural skills
 - Therefore a required curriculum of singing together must be accessible to every child in every school, awarded high priority funding, and staffed by musically and pedagogically qualified teachers
- To the Ministries of Health
Research proves that singing together has a significant impact on the general state of physical, mental and emotional health of participating individuals
 - Therefore singing in groups should be strongly encouraged in schools, communities, hospitals, work places and social centres. Singing programmes must be awarded the highest funding priority and led by qualified teachers and conductors
- To the Ministries of Social Affairs
Singing together increases the social capital of a culture by empowering human qualities including self-esteem, respect for others, social solidarity, tolerance, empathy and loyalty, qualities vital for the process of society-building, with an emphasis on decreasing violence and crime
 - Therefore singing should be encouraged and integrated into community service and social action projects for families (prenatal and early childhood) and senior citizens as well as for prisoners and other socially disadvantaged. These projects must be awarded high priority funding and staffed by qualified professional leadership
- To the Ministries of Culture
Singing together is essential to the preservation of Intangible Heritage and the development of Cultural Diversity as supported by the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
 - Therefore national and international programmes that support singing traditions or use singing as a tool for intercultural inclusion should be awarded the highest priority for support and funding
- To the national and international music organisations
Research on the benefits of singing in groups has been carried out internationally
 - Therefore national and international music organisations should collect, translate, disseminate and commission research, renewing strategies and developing projects based on the results. They should utilize research results for advocacy work.

Some Examples of Good Practice

SINGING Poland

In Poland the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage with the Ministry of Education and Sport signed a new programme called "Singing Poland" for the development of school Choirs. The main aim of the programme is to create about 300 choirs in the whole of Poland over a period of two years. This activity is considered very important because the situation concerning choirs in the primary, secondary schools and gymnasiums in Poland wasn't very good. There were still many schools without choirs, vocal work or music education. Thus the project "Singing Poland" wanted to support the development of the school choral life and the creation of new children choirs.

See <http://www.opus3artists.com/news/?id=1953> where the project is mentioned or google for "Singing Poland" and "school choirs"

2 Examples from Germany

Jedem Kind seine Stimme – JEKI / Singen macht Sinn - SMS

JEKI is a model programme in the German City of Neuss. All 25 primary schools of the city are participating and more than 4.000 children are thus getting access to the diverse world of music and to cultural experience. The project is supported by the region of Nordrhein-Westfalen and a Bank Foundation in Neuss. In the school year 2011/2012 JEKI means: 4.000 children get one hour of singing per week during the normal school hours as part of their regular curriculum – all children in the 1st and 2nd grade and many in the 3rd and 4th grade, during the complete school year and without any costs for the parents. Teaching is done by qualified personnel and in teams and the projects includes teacher-training courses.

<http://www.jedem-kind-seine-stimme.de>

SMS is an initiative for music education at a basic level and thus a contribution to make our society more human. Selected schools, among others schools in difficult areas in a specific region of Germany get singing lessons for the 1st to 3rd grade of primary school, with 2 hours of singing per week in the frame of regular school time. The project also includes vocal training within teacher-training colleges especially for teachers without musical training, offering basic competences about the voice and singing with children in primary school. It also includes training of students in Music Pedagogy and Singing, including a masters in "Singing with children".

<http://www.singen-macht-sinn.de/>

Anti-Drug Campaign in Lithuania – creation of Boys' Choirs

A campaign against drugs and violence among children launched in 2000. At the time there were only 9 boys' choirs in Lithuania. After the campaign there were over 70 boys choirs in the country. The campaign was organised by a Lithuanian boys' choir and the children's rights organisation "Save the Children Lithuania". The aim was to get more boys to sing and thus get them away from criminal street-life.

http://www.europeanchoralassociation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Dateien_Europa_Cantat/Research_documents/Anti-Drug-campaign-Lithuania.pdf