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THE NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ARTS & CULTURE EDUCATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Culture education and arts education are becoming two important topics in the European and global educational and cultural circles in this century; as a result, a number of important documents have emerged. In Slovenia, the importance of culture education has already been recognised by the National Program for Culture 2004-2007 and the National Program for Culture 2008-2011. The UNESCO's first world conference on arts education in March 2006 produced a key document, the so-called Road Map for Arts Education¹ which underscores the importance of arts education in the development of a society founded on creativity. In the same year, the Road Map was followed by the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning² which identifies eight key competences including '*cultural awareness and expression*'³. The European Council and representatives of Member State governments agreed to pay special attention to the development and encouragement of creativity and innovation in education and training as one of the core functions and objectives of education in May 2008⁴. The eight key competences have also been included in the Strategy for Lifelong Learning in Slovenia (2007)⁵.

Culture education was given a special place in the National Program for Culture 2008–2011⁶ (herein the NPC 2008–2011) which is the key strategic document of the Slovenian cultural policy adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia in April 2008. It shows an awareness of the need for systematic culture education; at the same time, it is also of vital importance for culture itself that it remains included in the educational process and is accessible to children and young people as part of the public cultural infrastructure. Slovenia's Development Strategy 2007–2013⁷ specifically puts an emphasis on the fostering of national identity which is the key element of Slovenia's recognition in contemporary Europe. Another important document is the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (UNECE, 2005)⁸ which pays special attention to the awareness of, and respect for, one's own culture and foreign cultures and cultural diversity for sustainable development. This document was used as the basis of the Slovenian Guidelines for Education for

¹http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/30335/11815788433roadmap_final_sept2006.doc/roadmap_final_sept2006.doc

² Official Journal of the European Union, L 394/10, 30.12.2006

³ Cultural awareness and expression

Definition:

Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.

Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence:

Cultural knowledge includes an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world. It covers a basic knowledge of major cultural works, including popular contemporary culture. It is essential to understand the cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world, the need to preserve it and the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life.

Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: the appreciation and enjoyment of works of art and performances as well as self-expression through a variety of media using one's innate capacities. Skills include also the ability to relate one's own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others and to identify and realise social and economic opportunities in cultural activity. Cultural expression is essential to the development of creative skills, which can be transferred to a variety of professional contexts.

A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression. A positive attitude also covers creativity, and the willingness to cultivate aesthetic capacity through artistic self-expression and participation in cultural life.

⁴ Official Journal of the European Union, C 141/17, 7. 6. 2008

⁵ http://www.mss.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/razvoj_solstva/vzgoja_in_izobrazevanje_za_trajnostni_razvoj/

⁶ www.kultura.gov.si

⁷ Slovenia's Development Strategy: http://www.slovenijajutri.gov.si/fileadmin/urednik/dokumenti/strategija_razvoja_slovenije.pdf

⁸ All documents relating to sustainable development can be found at :

http://www.mss.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/razvoj_solstva/vzgoja_in_izobrazevanje_za_trajnostni_razvoj/

Sustainable Development from Preschool to Pre-tertiary Education (2007) which make the knowledge of different areas of culture, and related support for creativity and cultural activity, one of the priorities in education for sustainable development.

Due to its topic and its mission, culture education is positioned at the intersection where culture and education meet; it is therefore, in accordance with the NPC 2008-2011, in the domain of both the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education and Sport. Both ministries will make a particular effort to build a productive partnership between educational and cultural institutions and to facilitate partnerships with other government sectors and institutions in other areas as this is of key importance to achieve the goals set out by the NPC 2008-2011 which require the united efforts of all social stakeholders.

The National Guidelines for Arts and Culture Education (herein the Guidelines) explain and facilitate awareness of the role that arts and culture play in the improvement of the quality of education and the development of an individual's creativity; it also recognises the importance of arts and culture in the society of the 21st century. The document points out the need for closer ties between culture, science, and education, and highlights the need for the talents and creativity of each individual to be brought out by arts and culture education. Objectives of arts and culture education are realised in interdisciplinary activities across the whole educational process in kindergartens, basic and secondary schools. Achieving objectives of arts and culture education also contribute to the development of general culture.

The importance of the Guidelines is that they define arts and culture education and implement a unified understanding of this concept in education. They are meant for teaching staff in kindergartens and schools; for those working in cultural institutions; for artists; politicians; parents; and the general public.

2. DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF ARTS AND CULTURE EDUCATION

In different social environments there are different perceptions of the concept of culture. Due to its complexity and varying aspects, it is quite hard to define it in clear and unambiguous terms. Culture covers artistic achievements, results of endeavours by human beings, ethics, laws, religion, knowledge and traditions; it is a group of achievements and values resulting from human activity, thinking and creativity.

In order to limit the broad concept of culture for educational purposes in accordance with the objectives of NPC 2008-2011, the term 'arts and culture education' is used rather than just culture education. In this way, the artistic aspect of culture is given special attention.

In accordance with the abovementioned objectives of arts and culture education⁹, a list of areas includes and connects:

- reading culture,
- film and audio-visual culture,
- music,
- multimedia,
- cultural heritage,
- visual arts (painting, sculpture, photography, architecture, design and so forth) and
- performing arts (theatre, puppets, contemporary dance and so on).

The list is open and by no means conclusive.

Central to contemporary arts and culture education is its cross-curricular dimension; it spans across all areas of activity, school subjects and other school activities. It is a foundation of an

⁹ NPK 2008–2011.

individual's creative attitude to culture and of understanding its importance for the development of human society. It contributes to the development of an individual's personality; assists in the development of one's aesthetic sensibility, cultural awareness and expression; and encourages lifelong learning. It helps children and young people learn about the culture of their nation and develop an awareness of their belonging to that culture; it also encourages respect for other cultures and intercultural dialogue.

The basic aim of arts and culture education is to arouse a wish and need in an individual to participate in cultural, predominantly artistic, expression: both in the sense of personal production and in the sense of the appreciation and enjoyment of the artistic expressions of others.

Arts and culture education facilitates the development of an individual's active relationship with arts and culture; it inspires his or her imagination, creativity, initiative, innovation and tolerance. The development of such skills and abilities leads to personal growth, encourages different ways of thinking and acting, and is the foundation of a society based on knowledge, creativity and tolerance.

3. OBJECTIVES OF ARTS AND CULTURE EDUCATION

Objectives of arts and culture education are interconnected and complement each other.

1. Realisation of the basic human right to education and participation in culture

International documents¹⁰ grant every individual the right to participate in cultural life: as a creator of cultural goods and services, their intermediary or recipient. Culture is recognised as a quality in an individual's everyday life. High quality arts and culture education ensures an appropriate implementation of this right in the education process.

2. Development of creativity

Arts and culture education encourages the development of an individual's creativity in accordance with their potentials.

3. Development of individual abilities

Arts and culture education encourages the development of emotional-motivational, social, cognitive, and motor, competences. It activates imagination, initiative, innovation, freedom and critical thinking, strengthens autonomy, awareness of cultural identity and so on. It thus promotes a holistic development of an individual.

4. Improving the quality of education

The introduction of artistic and cultural themes lifts the level of education, encourages interdisciplinary connections and transfer of knowledge and skills between different subjects and areas, and transcends objectives of general and technical subjects, practical lessons and areas of activity. Artistic and cultural themes make an organic part of life and work in kindergartens and schools: they focus on the child and adolescent by developing his or her abilities and talents and by taking into account his or her personal interests.

5. Development of aesthetic sensibility and critical attitude to arts and culture

Arts and culture education plays a role in the development of aesthetic sensibility, the development of basic artistic and cultural values, and the development of critical, self-critical

¹⁰ General Declaration on Human Rights , 1948:

<http://www.pgeu.net/dirs/pge/pge05/100157/e100157.html> in <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>
Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, <http://www.varuh-rs.si/index.php?id=105>

and active attitudes towards culture and arts. The experience and appreciation of cultural masterpieces facilitates the development of aesthetic values.

6. Expression of cultural diversity

Arts and culture education encourages the individual to become aware of and develop the ability to express one's culture; enables him or her to learn about other cultures; teaches and strengthens tolerance and understanding of diversity and intercultural dialogue; and plays a role in an individual's inclusion in society.

7. Lifting the level of cultural awareness

A good quality arts and culture education for children and adolescents lifts the level of cultural awareness as defined by the European Parliament and the Council (key competence 'cultural awareness and expression', see Footnote 3). Cultural awareness is one of the conditions for people's inclusion in an open society based on an individual's autonomy and freedom. Such culture can become the cohesive factor of social development.

8. Awareness of the importance of national cultural heritage

Arts and culture education assists children and young people to learn about and become aware of the importance of their cultural heritage. It promotes the protection and preservation of cultural masterpieces which are important for the national, the European and the world's cultural heritage.

4. PRINCIPLES

The following principles are not listed in the order of importance; they focus on specific aspects of the provision of high quality arts and culture education.

The importance of arts and culture education

- Making professionals in education and the general public aware of the importance of arts and culture education for the society as a whole.

Cross-curricular dimension

- Implementation of arts and culture education as a cross-curricular subject in syllabuses across all subjects and areas of activity.

Access and information

- Provision of regional coverage for all forms of arts and culture education (formal, informal, occasional) and access to cultural goods;
- Provision of information on the production of cultural institutions at the national, regional and local level.

Quality and suitability

- Provision of high quality arts and culture activities and projects suitable for different developmental stages of children and adolescents.

Equal opportunity and diversity

- Provision of equal conditions for the development of each child and adolescent;
- Taking into account different age groups and differences among groups (in regards to gender, social and cultural background, ideology etc.) and creating the right conditions for their expression.

Freedom and democracy

- Respect for an individual's right to free expression and participation in their choice of activity in arts and culture;
- Respect for the freedom and responsibilities of the artist and the recipient.

Intercultural dialogue

- Creating opportunities to learn about, create, evaluate, appreciate and present one's culture; perception, understanding and acceptance of diversity; overcoming prejudice towards other cultures; comparison of cultures; development of tolerance and nurturing; and transcending one's identity and culture;
- Inclusion of different cultures in the education process and facilitating experiences of cultural diversity.

Process approach to development

- Provision of process learning which encourages the development of an individual's own strategies for understanding, expression and thinking.

Partnership

- Emphasis on the importance of building partnerships and cooperation among different entities at different levels of society: building ties at the national, regional and local level, at the level of kindergartens, schools and educational institutions, among professional workers in education, among artists and workers in cultural institutions, and educational institutions and families;
- Establishing international partnerships;
- Taking account of team planning and production, horizontal and vertical connectivity among service providers, cooperation with the social environment and special features of the cultural environment.

Professionalism

- Assisting teaching staff and artists participating in education to obtain appropriate qualifications and skills within the educational process in order to provide high quality arts and culture education;
- Provision of further education and training to advance their knowledge;
- Provision of opportunities for teaching staff and artists to learn to appreciate the added value arising from their cooperation.

Planning, monitoring and evaluating

- Pointing out the importance of planning as well as taking account of the process approach to development and the monitoring and evaluation of activities in arts and culture education in order to successfully conduct such activities.

Up-dates and contemporaneity

- Provision of access to the latest high quality arts and culture production, practices, forms, developments.

Supporting research

- Formulating professional arguments to support claims on the importance of arts and culture education.

Provision of material and spatial conditions

- Provision of suitable material and spatial conditions for the organisation and operation of artistic and cultural activities.

5. DIDACTIC AND METHODIC KEY POINTS

Experts in education, arts and culture assist children and young people to learn about different areas of culture: music, visual arts, theatre, dance, film, reading culture and cultural heritage. Using different didactic methods, they encourage creativity in expression, appreciation of cultural activities and active participation. Providers of arts and culture education assist participants in the educational process by teaching them how to appreciate and evaluate arts and culture while developing their ability of critical evaluation. Experts in education, arts and culture are aware that methods inherent to artistic experience and production play an important role in the implementation of the curriculum. It is necessary that teachers of all subjects work together and in partnership with external providers/artists and that arts and culture education is planned for and included in kindergarten and school activities (activities in different areas, lessons in specific subjects, activity days, elective subjects, interest activities, projects and so on).