

## PASCAL International Observatory

# We are more! The overlooked potential of learning through cultural engagement

Henrik Zipsane - 17 January 2011

### **Abstract**

Learning through cultural activities is a strategic area which ought to receive broader attention from the European Union, national governments and regional leadership.

In earlier studies and policy recommendations representatives of national governments have been chasing synergy effects between education and culture. Unfortunately the scope has been narrowed down to almost only focusing on the possibilities of strengthening the role of cultural activities – preferably art – in formal education, and has had a tendency to regard culture as something which should be learnt. The only competence which has been addressed in this thinking has therefore been cultural awareness and creativity. The potential of cultural activities for other competences such as social and civic competences and learning to learn has not been explored.

This is not satisfactory to the cultural sector and should not be so to society at large as the potential of synergy between education and culture is much larger and broader and may effectively be a central and normal part of capacity building through both development of competences and social cohesion.

In this paper the empirical material has been collected by the cultural sector in Europe itself. This is important as the sector has the unique competence to look beyond the trivial images of cultural engagement. The task is to find examples which, in an illustrative way, could show the extraordinary potential of learning through cultural engagement.

The result of the analysis of the examples collected is that:

1. The cultural sector is capable of producing effective pedagogical programmes which are original as they are based on the engagement with culture;
2. The cultural sector creates learning activities which reach people in a true and real lifelong and life wide meaning; and
3. The cultural sector offers learning of several key competences and cultural awareness is just the tip of the competence iceberg.

## Background

The political tradition of regarding culture and education as entities which may live in harmony together in executive departments is known not only from nation states but is also seen on a European level. The European Commission has for many years organised the two themes as neighbours within the same directorate – The General Directorate for Education and Culture. This tradition of having education and culture coexisting in a more or less integrated way goes far back in time and can actually trace its roots back to the pre-democratic age in Europe. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the policy area of education slowly developed and liberated itself from religion and later the ministries and departments of culture grew out of that. Both education and culture have as executive branches their roots in the management of knowledge, thoughts and common values.

Especially in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century however the two themes – education and culture – seem clearly to have grown apart. This may probably best be understood as a result of professionalization of each of the areas but there is more to it. The ideological belief in the independence of culture grew rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s and within education the dominance of formal education at the same time made it necessary for other educational forms to strengthen their own identity. The political move from adult education through continued education and lifelong education to lifelong learning in the last 40 years has been a result of that.

In this development the potential of culture in learning has been systematically overlooked, to some extent even by the wish of cultural institutions and organisations themselves as they strove for autonomy.

Providing lifelong learning is of course also a market and in such a market the economic mechanisms of supply and demand rule and set the price. In the lifelong learning market however, issues such as politics, research-based convictions and the right to acknowledge learning needs and learning effects play important roles. This paper is about the potential of culture in learning which often is as unique as it is overlooked.

The potential of culture in learning is however of such magnitude that it is by any standards and calculations poor policy and counterproductive economics to not let it take its natural place in the lifelong learning market. In the following the breadth and specific possibilities of learning through cultural engagement in a lifelong learning context will be illustrated.

## The material

On the initiative of the European Union, in 2007, the cultural life in Europe was invited to participate in a dialogue on cultural policy (Commission 10.05.2007 & 01.03.2008 and Council 16.11.2007). The dialogue was organized in three different platforms and one of these had the theme of access to culture as its overall area. This Access to Culture Platform (ACP) began its work in June 2008 with 48 representatives from 36 different cultural organisations in Europe covering almost everything from performing arts, heritage, cultural schools, architecture, cultural centres, minority languages, publishers, libraries and the information sector and cultural management.

The ACP decided from the very beginning to organize its efforts in three parallel work groups which each had their own subtheme. One of the work groups was called "Education & Learning" which focused on the issues of possible synergy effects between the world of education and the world of culture. The issue taken up by this work group attracted no less than 19 of the delegates. The popularity of this group may well be seen as a symbol of how important the issues of education and learning through cultural engagement and of the communication of this, are for the cultural sector as a whole.

The Work Group on Education and Culture decided to collect good examples of what can be seen as **extraordinary** meetings between education and culture. The group did not explicitly define what was meant by extraordinary, which is understandable as the participants had no need for that in the situation as they naturally know the ordinary and publically well known activities of their different cultural branches.

In this instance we have to accept that by extraordinary meetings were meant exactly that. The extraordinary was in the focus rather than an idea about best practice, as the participants were well aware of the need to further develop the extraordinary programmes which almost all had come about through short lived projects and needed stimulation and introduction of special mechanisms to become sustainable in a lifelong learning market.

Through the participating European cultural organisations all sorts of organisations were asked to send material which demonstrate such extraordinary meetings: 39 examples were collected in September-December 2008 and discussed at a seminar. By collaboration between the organisations Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO), European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) and Association of European Open Air Museums (AEOM) the collected material was organised in a simple template with the main focus being on the key competence to which the described cultural activity was especially related. The whole material was then presented to the ACP platform as a whole at a plenary meeting in June 2009

and shortly after, together with policy recommendations from the platform, handed to the Commission in July 2009 (Civil Society Platform on Access to Culture 2009).

During the year from the presentation of this to the Commission in July 2009 to summer 2010 a parallel work group under the European Council on developing synergies between education and culture finalised their work. This work group has been set up as an Open Method of Coordination work group (OMC) and had delegates from each of the EU member states except Bulgaria. The delegates were appointed by the departments of education and culture in the member states.

Even though representatives of the ACP work group on education and culture had reported to the OMC group on the findings in the collected extraordinary meetings between education and culture, this is not reflected in the final report from the OMC group. That report focuses almost exclusively on formal education – primarily the school sector – and the thinking is mostly about education in and about culture, and especially, art.

The main perception in the report from the OMC group is therefore about seeing non-formal cultural education as a complement to formal education – primarily schools, and recommending the creation of special relations between schools and cultural institutions or artists (Lauret & Marie 2010).

Whilst there are many good insights on details in the report, but the overall impression is that the lifelong learning perspective is missing, and that problems arise in exclusively regarding cultural activities from the perspective of formal education. As a reaction to this, the ACP realised that its message about the possibilities in learning through culture which was given in the report with the collected examples of extraordinary meetings between education and culture, were simply not clear enough. The ACP work group on education and culture therefore decided to make a deeper analysis of the material and to support the analysis with some additional material. With help from the participating organisations the ACP collected another 21 examples during the autumn 2010, thereby bringing the total up to 60 examples of extraordinary meetings between education and culture in Europe.

The examples were collected through a process whereby all participating organisations asked their members to look for and report on activities which they themselves saw as interesting examples of learning through cultural engagement beyond the usual.

Overall, the material represents the sectors of heritage (especially museums) with 23 examples, music with 10 examples, theatre (especially drama) with 7 examples and adult education with 13 examples. The collected material also includes 5 examples from building conservation and architecture and one example from a library and one from modern art.

This may reflect that these organisations were most active in the process of collecting examples but there seems to be no particular indications of that. The composition may also be the result of a tendency that member institutions of the dominating cultural sectors here have a relatively active engagement in developing extraordinary meetings between education and culture.

### **Lifelong learning and the key competences**

How can we understand “engagement with culture” from the perspective of lifelong learning policy?

To understand the full potential of learning through cultural engagement it is imperative to perceive lifelong learning literally stretching from cradle to grave and for all regardless of gender, cultural or social background and even education. It is, so to speak, life wide as well as lifelong learning (Ekholm & Härd 2000 and Bengtsson 2009).

In the European context the issue of key competences for lifelong learning means that there are competences which each and every individual in Europe should acquire and persist in, in order to take care of ones own life as well as contributing to society as a whole. The competences are not of a kind which can be understood statically. The competences are to be acquired and nurtured and developed throughout life as the context of both the individual and the society in which the competence is meant to be effective changes over time (European Commission 2000). This makes the issue of an ever changing curriculum for lifelong learning important (Schuller & Watson 2009). The key competences for lifelong learning in Europe are the following:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competences
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression

The key competences are well defined by the EU in a classical manner which here means that all eight key competences are described with their characteristics in the

form of knowledge, skills and attitudes (European Commission 2004 & 2005). If we are to fully understand the possibilities and the capacity of learning through cultural engagement in a lifelong learning perspective we therefore have to address the issue in the same classical manner and look at the different cultural activities from three different angles and raise the traditional questions:

- Can we define the learners – the target group?
- What key competence is addressed?
- What does the composition of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the learning look like?

### **Who is learning through cultural engagement?**

The focus on children and young people is evident in the collected examples. The only or main target group in the examples is divided in the following way:

- |                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| - Children and youth        | 39 |
| - Adults                    | 15 |
| - Seniors                   | 2  |
| - Family learning           | 2  |
| - For both youth and adults | 2  |

This characteristic is probably no surprise as most European countries and the European Union have children and young people as a special priority group in cultural policy and development programmes. As the majority of the examples are based on development projects we therefore see this priority reflected so clearly.

If we look at the examples addressed to children and young people more closely, 5 are focusing on the youngest children and 11 clearly on teenagers and young people. No less than 23 of the examples which focus on children and youth are supposed to be designed for a relatively broad age group. This circumstance may in a critical perspective on learning through cultural engagement also be an area where the cultural sector must become better in being clear about its target group.

The belief in culture being for everybody unfortunately creates confusion between the political aim and the need for being specific.

Of the 39 examples addressed to children and youth, 13 are related to formal education and 26 are not. This underlines the fact mentioned earlier that the cultural

sector see differently on the possibilities of synergy between education and culture from national governments who almost exclusively through the OMC report advocated strengthening relations between formal education and cultural institutions or artists.

There are indeed examples of interesting and original collaboration between formal education and the cultural sector where it is evident that the synergy effect is a learning situation where something extraordinary is created. Good examples of that are those from »*Classes d'éveil au Patrimoine et à ses métiers – au centre La Paix-Dieu* » created by Institut du Patrimoine Wallon in Wallonia, Belgium and the programme « *Refugee* » at the Jamtli Museum in Jämtland, Sweden.

***Classes d'éveil au Patrimoine et à ses métiers*** at the *La Paix-Dieu* centre in Amay, Belgium. This initiative of the Walloon Institute for Cultural Heritage aims to raise awareness among youths aged 12 to 15 of the architectural heritage and related professions, by organising four day courses at a Cistercian abbey founded in 1244 that is undergoing restoration. In the past 10 years, over 5000 students and more than 350 teachers have been involved in these courses. Because of its success, the project now also includes 3 or 5 day summer schools for children and their parents.

The project is highly appreciated for the impact it has on its participants, both cultural and social. Living and working for a number of days on a prestigious site, accompanied by conservation and restoration experts and professionals, instils a passion for cultural heritage and its values, and opens a door to a future professional life in the field.

[www.paixdieu.be](http://www.paixdieu.be)

**Refugees** at the **Jamtli Open Air Museum** in Sweden. The complete event at Jamtli was almost four hours long. The participants were allocated their roles and given time to acquaint themselves with their character. The participants sit in a room that suddenly becomes dark. The people smugglers enter the room carrying pocket torches and call their respective groups of refugees together. The flight has begun and to begin with it involves coping with the relatively harsh relations with the smugglers and other refugees whilst coming to and crossing the border. Following a number of harsh experiences the participants cross the border into “Svezia” where the police take hand of the first part of the process. The arrival at Transit is characterised by routine treatment. The asylum seekers undergo short interviews requiring basic information, their photos are taken, as are their hand- and fingerprints. Waiting and idleness are alternated with interviews with the authorities and the attempts by special socio-pedagogical secretaries from the Immigration Board to help pass the time. After what some of the participants think is a long, long time, they are finally called to a meeting where they are informed in writing and orally whether or not they have been granted a residence permit

The target group for Jamtli’s project “Refugee” consisted of 16 year-old pupils at secondary schools in the county of Jämtland. The overall reaction of those responsible for the project, the actors, pedagogues, school children who participated, teachers and adult participants has been highly positive. Learners are active both physically and mentally and the learner is affected emotionally and new attitudes are formed.

[www.jamtli.com](http://www.jamtli.com)

The examples are interesting in the way they show how the participating cultural institutions use their special competences to create a surplus effect in the learning situation for the formal education learners. The cultural heritage institute in Wallonia uses its special competence in building history and craftsmanship and the Open Air Museum in Jämtland uses its special competence in role play and living history re-enactment. From the perspective of the cultural sector – as they have themselves collected such examples – the meeting of the formal education system and the cultural sector becomes extraordinary and interesting exactly when the cultural institution uses its special competences. Put another way, the cultural sector wants to be used when it can contribute to the learning situation with special competences.

The broader issue is however the overwhelming tendency by the cultural sector to create extraordinary meetings between education and culture for children and young people outside the formal education sector. From a critical perspective maybe this is a symptom: this way the cultural sector can take the initiative, control the programme and whilst not having to meet (formal) education standards. If so, this is however not



at all to say that the educational aim or value becomes smaller. Vivid examples of that effect are many: the programme “*Towards an active democracy with Theatre in Education*” produced by The Hungarian Drama in Education Association, the programme “*Ein Hof für Jung und Alt. Ausbau des Dreiseithofes aus Leutershausen zum Museumspädagogischen Zentrum*” produced by Fränkisches Freilandmuseum Fladungen, Germany are very illustrative.

***Towards an active democracy with Theatre in Education*** project aims to create participatory Theatre in Education (TIE) programmes that give an empowering felt-understanding of basic concepts at the heart of democracy and take them to young people from different minorities and marginalized backgrounds. This gives them a chance to relate their own social and personal values to the ground concepts of democracy and express them artistically. The project aimed to cross borders, not only between arts and education, but also national, social, ethnic and individual ones. The project also offers young people and their teachers new models of democratic dialogue, and stimulus for active involvement in democratic institutions. The project activities will take three different TIE programs, created for children of varying age-groups, to different communities in Hungary and also neighbouring Slovakia and Serbia. Teachers will receive support to follow up the work. Finally an exhibition and publication will give voice to the young people's artistic input to the programs.

Objectives of the project are to bring a change in the democratic attitude of young people living in marginalized communities – an open debate about key democratic concepts – to give new models of discourse and expression and finally to create a forum for marginalized young people.

[www.drama.hu](http://www.drama.hu)

**Ein Hof für Jung und Alt. Ausbau des Dreiseithofes aus Leutershausen zum Museumspädagogischen Zentrum.** Due to protective measures, touching or moving objects or getting active by oneself is prohibited in open-air museums!

After the dislocation of a three-sided farmstead of a hamlet of Leutershausen nearby Bad Neustadt (administrative district: Rhön Grabfeld) to the open-air museum's area, a non-recurring opportunity occurs: To "gain access" to an old, peasant property including its appointments. This implies touching and using everything, starting from the furniture to working equipment and home appliances. To impart knowledge, the sensuous experience by touching, smelling, tasting and hearing is the key approach.

Within the museum complex, a modern museum-educational centre comes into existence inside this 19th century peasant farmstead including the main house (including living accommodation and stables) and its adjoining buildings like a pigsty, sheep pen, a large barn as well as a fountain. The farm complex is rebuilt at a hillside just as at the original location. The interior decoration being of the year 1900 is still in good condition for the most part and gets again to its original place.

The superordinate slogan for everybody is "Learning By Experiencing"!

[www.freilandmuseum-fladungen.de](http://www.freilandmuseum-fladungen.de)

The obvious reason why such programmes work and are popular with the cultural sector is of course that the drama theatre uses its fundamental special competence of high quality dialogue and the museum in the same way its qualitative sense of authenticity as the primary tools for the learning processes.

The special conditions which the participants may meet in the cultural institutions can open the senses to a new learning world. This goes for children, young people, adult and seniors alike. As individuals we have different preconditions for learning within us which are formed as they are in course of our individual biology and personal history (Jarvis 2006 & Hooper-Greenhill 2007). The cultural sector has answers to the need for different learning styles (Gardner 1983).

Now consider the programmes "*The Barclays Special Educational Needs Project*" produced by The Weald & Downland Open Air Museum in Singleton, West Sussex, United Kingdom . and the programme "*Cultures getting to know each other, together we are strong*" by the adult education organisation Turkish Society Switzerland (TGS/ITT).

***The Barclays Special Educational Needs Project*** to develop focussed days designed to suit children with special educational needs (SEN's). These themed focus days were: Shakespeare, Working Animals, Fire and Light and Harvest.

The aims were two-fold: to develop a sustainable programme of activities for this educational group, which included children with physical, intellectual and behavioural problems, and to encourage staff from Barclays Bank to attend the Museum on those days as assistants in a voluntary capacity. The corresponding outcomes were to increase social participation and interaction for the children involved, and develop in the participating bank employees an interest in community and voluntary activities. For instance when studying Shakespeare in a mainstream school setting, to bring the plays to life students can easily be taken to the theatre for a full performance. For the SEN children this presents difficulties. By bringing the children to the Museum for the Shakespeare day, plays could be presented in short excerpts, accompanied by appropriate workshops such as 16<sup>th</sup> century cookery and apothecary sessions.

Bringing the children to the Museum site offered its own benefits. For example, during the Working Animals days we were able to bring the children into close contact with the animals at the Museum. In the Fire and Light day, the children were able to have the often new experience of feeling the heat of an open fire. During the Harvest day they experienced the sights, sounds and smells of autumn.

[www.wealddown.co.uk/](http://www.wealddown.co.uk/)

***Turkish Society Switzerland (TGS/ITT)*** The Cultures (Turkish and Swiss, as well as Christian and Islamic) shall move closer to each other for facilitating a harmonic living together. The event takes place in the month of Ramadan. Therefore there will be special focus on common aspects of these two religions..

**Content:** Opening speech, panel discussions on the relevance of learning and parental education for integration and what do the two religions have in common? Both discussions with both Turkish and Swiss speakers and the possibility for the participants to pose questions.. Then dancing Derwishes accompanied by Sufi-Music, collective fast breaking (Iftar), Turkish and Swiss traditional music and folklore.

The venue allows the presentation of several booths providing appropriate information material: brochures, books, arts and crafts.

[www.lernfestival.ch/](http://www.lernfestival.ch/)

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[www.lernfestival.ch/](http://www.lernfestival.ch/)

The programmes illustrate how the museum site or a meeting house as environments different from the image of schools offer conditions which make it possible for the participants to engage with their senses and their own preconditions for learning capacity.

Even though the cultural sector has been stimulated for a very long time in Europe to develop activities for children and youth there are also examples of cultural institutions who have gone almost the opposite way in recognition of the growing number of people in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> age groups. An extraordinary example of how to use cultural engagement as a learning asset for senior citizens in the 4<sup>th</sup> age group is the programme called the “*Memory House*” at Den Gamle By Open Air Museum in Århus, Denmark, which shows a way forward.

***"The House of Memory"*** Since 2004 a small group of people in Den Gamle By Open Air Museum has worked with and developed memory retrieval programmes for elderly people with senile dementia. A key person from the municipal social and healthcare administration is a part of this group, and the participating members of staff from the museum have been through a basic course about senile dementia.

In small groups these people are invited into a home with an interior of past time. The hosts are members of the Living History staff in period costumes acting as the habitants of the house. The "guests" are invited to help in the kitchen with the iron cast stove and other typical objects from the period or sit in the living room with a lot of things they can see and touch, things they remember from their childhood and youth. Later they all have coffee with pancakes freshly made in the kitchen, very often with experienced help from some of the guests. The atmosphere is warm and homely, memories are exchanged and the spirits are high. In this context the "guests" who suffers from more or less severe senile dementia recollect memories, they are able to communicate with the others, they participate actively in a social event. The whole visit is an aesthetic experience with high impact on the "guest"s' senses and emotions. Thus there is a way in behind the consciousness and the intellect, memories are retrieved, and with careful attention and conversation from the staff the "guests" can tell parts of their own personal history.

Senile dementia affects parts of the brain that controls a lot of basic skills such as communicating, remembering, concentrating and consequently the ability to understand and interact with other people on social occasions is strongly affected. When the memory consists only of scattered fragments of facts and memories and the ability to express thoughts and needs is diminished, people with senile dementia tend to become more and more isolated and introvert.

[www.dengamleby.dk](http://www.dengamleby.dk)

All sorts of specific defined target groups among adults are represented in the collected material, for example integration of immigrants, basic skills for unemployed, cultural experiences for physically or mentally disabled and so on. There seem to be all reasons to realize and respect the out-reach capabilities in learning of the cultural sector. When the cultural sector creates learning activities with no relation to formal education it is often difficult for both participants and cultural sector professionals to draw a line between learning and leisure activities.

This is probably the key to understanding the attractiveness of the activities for all possible target groups. This is of course not to neglect the need for continuous

quality improvements in the programmes in terms of pedagogical clarity for which the sector needs support.

Finally we can see a specific dimension in the pedagogical programmes in the cultural sector which may be seen as close to the underlying ideological thinking about access to culture as such. If we allow ourselves to focus on culture as a well defined high quality product there is also a democratic need for making this product accessible. This way of thinking is most clearly visible in the cultural sub-sectors where craftsmanship is evident. We find this aspect dominant in, for example, areas such as art, dance and music and these are also the areas where we find the cultural schools who create programmes for facilitating access to their specific craft and art. The “*Guildhall Connect*” programme in United Kingdom illustrates how the facilitation of access to high quality music engagement in a cultural school system is made into a strategy with several offers of engagement:

**Guildhall Connect** - Over the past twenty years, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama has been dedicated to widening access to music making without compromising on its commitment to nurturing musical excellence. Through using the creative music workshop environment, people of all ages and experiences have been able to engage with inclusive live music making processes led by tutors and students from the Guildhall School.

Guildhall Connect is about making connections, putting people, organisations and cultures in touch with each other and enabling them to do better together what they would do less well alone. Through its local, national and international collaborations with schools, colleges, communities and arts organisations, Guildhall Connect has developed an artistic and educational identity that resonates with people from a wide range of backgrounds, ages and experience.

There are four key areas of developmental activity underpinning Guildhall Connect:

- **Youth Music/Creative Partnerships** with young people, teachers and parents in East London, as well as across the UK and overseas. This includes researching and evaluating inclusive creative music education practice and models of instrumental teaching and learning which encourage widespread access and participation.
- **Arts and Community Development Project** for Healthcare and Disability Centres, hospital patients, prisoners and young offenders, 'third age', parents and toddlers. These projects are also run in association with orchestral and opera education programmes and regional instrumental teaching services.
- **MAP/making: Exploring New Landscapes in Music, Art and Performance** in collaboration with the Royal College of Art and the London Contemporary Dance School. This project has been established to enable musicians, actors, dancers and visual artists to meet with confidence the opportunities offered by the growing market of cross-arts multi-media presentation. The processes undertaken aim to foster the development of cross-arts initiatives which are innovative and responsive to changes in arts practice.
- **Trans-cultural Collaboration and Research** is facilitating an international network of creative and performing artists who can meet, exchange skills and ideas, share resources as well as explore respective education methodologies. Regular collaborations take place between staff and students at the Guildhall and performing artists from Africa, Central/South-East Asia and South America.

Whilst its primary role and principle area of expertise are in relation to Music, this Centre is also helping to establish much stronger School-wide connections with the Drama department through joint productions, courses in circus skills and storytelling, and music-drama improvisation initiatives.

<http://www.gsmd.ac.uk/connect/>

## What is learnt through cultural engagement?

A learning situation will often stimulate acquisition of more than one competence even though one may be more tangible than others. When the cultural sector themselves put a key competence reference on the collected examples of meetings between education and culture the following picture emerged:

- Communication in the mother tongue	17
- Communication in foreign languages	11
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology	9
- Digital competence	8
- Learning to learn	25
- Social and civic competences	51
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship	7
- Cultural awareness and expression	40

Clearly the social and civic competences appear to be front runners among the competences addressed through the engagement with culture in the collected examples, even ahead of the competence of cultural awareness and expression. That is indeed very interesting. It points to what may be a central part of learning through culture which is that engagement in cultural activities generally always includes confrontation and challenge of attitudes. This element in the learning process can be seen both as a facilitator for acquiring other competences or as a side effect when acquiring other competences, or both. Of the 60 collected examples five out of six addresses more than one key competence:

- Number of programmes addressing 1 key competence	10
- Number of programmes addressing 2 key competences	20
- Number of programmes addressing 3 key competences	18
- Number of programmes addressing 4 key competences	2
- Number of programmes addressing 5 key competences	6
- Number of programmes addressing 6 key competences	2
- Number of programmes addressing 7 key competences	1
- Number of programmes addressing 8 key competences	1



**Jugendbauhütten der Deutschen Stiftung Denkmalschutz** The basic idea of the Jugendbauhütten project of the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz e.V., the German Foundation for Monument Protection is to introduce young people to Europe's cultural heritage through practical conservation work, thus making them aware of the importance of preserving this inheritance. The volunteers work on actual restoration sites, where they undergo a year of practical and theoretical training, encompassing all disciplines related to monument conservation. In addition to acquiring the requisite skills and expertise in the *métier* of historic conservation, the youngsters witness firsthand the tangible success of their work, thus strengthening their identification with the task. Their experience of working as part of a group fosters sense of community.

[jugendbauhuetten@denkmalschutz.de](mailto:jugendbauhuetten@denkmalschutz.de)

Examples of this are the programmes “*Jugendbauhütten der Deutschen Stiftung Denkmalschutz*” produced by Stiftung Denkmalschutz e.V. in Germany and the programme “*Changing Horizons – Secrets of the New City*” produced by L’Alpha du Miroir Vagabond in Bourbon Marenne-Hutton, Belgium.

***Changing Horizons – Secrets of the New City*** is an *Intercultural* and *Interdisciplinary* art project, dealing with the theme of '(Im)migration'. Migration is not a contemporary phenomenon, but one that has been taking place over the whole world since the existence of mankind. With this art project (with theatre as its basis), we want to contribute to the awareness of the history and the recent developments of migration.

By enabling theatre groups from different countries and cultures to share recent migration history and to cooperate in making and performing theatre about it, we purposely try to deepen the dialogue between residents and migrants. One could say this whole project is about *crossing borders*. This is obviously – and literally - the case for 'migration'. It is an open door to state that bringing different cultures and countries together, will fit within this principal. Each partner uses two different art disciplines: e.g. dance/movement & theatre; e.g. visual art & theatre. In the final performance video fragments will be an integral part of the performance.

In this way of working the borders between the different elements of theatre, such as lighting, music, text, movement and space are supposed to be crossed. The mutual influence and collaboration will produce a "democratisation" of the dramaturgy. This is in contrast to the traditional theatre, where the text is at the top of a strict hierarchy in the dramaturgy. The intercultural way of theatre making tries to establish a theatrical dialogue between different cultures that usually aim for the 'living apart-together relationship'. This project focuses on the process of making interdisciplinary and intercultural art forms, and on the creation of accompanying art materials (including pedagogical and educational material).

[www.fabrevieux.nl](http://www.fabrevieux.nl)

The examples can illustrate how the open and seemingly parallel pursuit of two or more key competences at the same time actually strengthens the potential of each to be a success in the learning engagement with cultural activities. The collected programmes for extraordinary learning through cultural engagement shows that especially the combination of social and civic competences, cultural awareness and expression competence and learning to learn competence is popular. This is no surprise as the three competences all appear to have development of attitudes as a dominant feature. The most frequent combinations of key competences in pairs in the programmes are.

- Social and civic competences + cultural expression	33
- Social and civic competences + learning to learn	21
- Social and civic competences + mother tongue	12
- Social and civic competences + foreign language	10
- Social and civic competences + entrepreneurship	7
- Cultural expression + entrepreneurship	4
- Cultural expression + learning to learn	19
- Cultural expression + mathematic	7

The combinations are many and the possibility to do many different activities which is typical for the collected programmes encourages many different competences. Outstanding examples of programmes which put the variety of activities in the front as a key factor in the programme are the “*Art Nouveau project*” produced by the Réseau Art Nouveau Network, Brussels, Belgium and “*Xpress on tracks*” produced for The Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning, Jämtland region, Sweden:

**Art Nouveau Project** at the Réseau Art Nouveau Network developing tools for the youth public to present Art Nouveau as artistic concept in all partner cities. The network created various tools to reach different targets:

All tools were made by partners specialized in education:

Here is a short list of tools:

- Activity books for pupils from primary schools: Activity book, Flora book and Night Book in 11 languages
- Newspapers for students in high schools: 2 versions for children and teenagers in 11 languages
- Activity sheets for teachers: in 7 languages
- Activities on line for pupils from primary schools and children at home
- Multilateral exchanges on ‘Art Nouveau and education’

All educational tools were made in a long term perspective to be used as long as possible with no use-by date. The promotion of the educational tools is done on the home page of the website, through the Réseau Art Nouveau Network Newsletter and during our colloquia where we briefly present our actions.

[www.artnouveau-net.eu/](http://www.artnouveau-net.eu/)

***Xpress on Tracks*** - The NCK (The Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning) has, through Jamtli Museum and the State Regional Archives, who are its parent bodies, initiated a project of cooperation with Birka Folk High School, which lies app.10 kilometres west of Östersund and the archive and museum.

A maximum of 12 young people in the age range 20-25 participate in the project at any one time. They are young people who, in addition to lacking a basic education, are also unemployed. The project has three members of staff with pedagogical and curator qualifications and experience, each one of whom works part-time. The participants get stimulated through a great variety of activities related to heritage which includes research, archaeology, exhibitions, genealogy, and restoration etcetera. The aim of the project is to stimulate the participants into re-starting their education, possibly, but not necessarily, at Birka Folk High School, or to work more intensively at applying for jobs and finding work, hopefully permanent, not for a limited time, and not subject to government subsidies. The results show that a third of them have begun basic education, another third have found employment – unfortunately mostly short-term and with one or another form of government subsidy—and the final third are either still with the project or have left it for various reasons. On condition that the third who have begun courses to supplement their basic education actually complete their courses, which we will only know in one or two years' time, one can ask whether the transition of 1/3 of the participants from passive recipients of welfare with a poor basic education to being individuals in a position to partake of life-long learning is a satisfactory result. As far as we know, this figure is probably something of a breakthrough! Financially it is a question of major savings for the municipality and the employment service in the short term, but even more so in the long run.

[www.nckultur.org/](http://www.nckultur.org/)

The two examples illustrate the importance of the diversity in the cultural activities and also that the responsibility for a successful learning process is shared between the participant and the cultural institution as a learning environment.

### **What is learnt through cultural engagement?**

In the two examples “*Art Nouveau*” and “*Xpress on tracks*” there are many opportunities for the participants to feel and to realize a sense of responsibility. In the “*Art Nouveau*” we include the activities which imply production of artistic works and in the “*Xpress on tracks*” the participants are invited to participate in specific parts of

heritage and museum or archive management. The composition of competences in the learning process of engaging with culture may be dependent on what the structure of knowledge, skills and attitudes in a specific programme looks like.

To understand this we can look at a relatively simple programme called *“Bilingual Benefit – summer-work at the local library”* which was produced by the Regional Library in Västmanland, Sweden:

### ***Bilingual Benefit – summer-work at the local library***

The main objective of the project was integration. The project also aimed:

- to create diversity in the library profession and enhance access to information
- to create role models
- to disseminate a way of working for integration through trade unions, library networks and schools.

Swedish local authorities (municipalities) hire high school students during summer holidays. The summer-work is often placed in parks and public gardens. Bilingual Benefit placed students with another language-background than Swedish at the local library.

Libraries should deliver literature and media to all in all languages. That is the principle. In practise libraries and the library profession are limited by language constraints. This means that the library's services are not equal for all citizens in the local community.

By having high school students with another language-background than Swedish work at the library the project resulted in better communication between the library and its social context, both when it comes to language groups and age groups. The students became 'ambassadors' for the library in the local community.

The project involved a trade union, libraries at the local and regional level, local authorities and state authorities. A seminar was held at the Gothenburg Book Fair.

[http://www.ltv.se/LTVTemplates4/LTV\\_Page\\_27417.aspx](http://www.ltv.se/LTVTemplates4/LTV_Page_27417.aspx)

When this programme is presented by the library itself the central issue is the “meeting” in several aspects. First of all we have the meeting between the young immigrant and the culture of a “Swedish” library with staff, “Swedish” literature on the shelves and “Swedish” traditions in every day work life. Secondly we see the meeting between the young immigrant and the “Swedish” visitors of the library and thirdly we have the meeting between the young immigrant and the “immigrant” visitors

of the library. All these meetings involve challenges for both the participant and the learning environment.

Each of the meetings has its own challenge for attitudes both for the participant and the environment besides the issues of knowledge and skills.

By way of example, the key competence of communicating in a foreign language is formally described with the following composition of knowledge, skills and attitudes (European Council 18 December 2006):

*“Competence in foreign languages requires knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction and registers of language. Knowledge of societal conventions, and the cultural aspect and variability of languages is important.*

*Essential skills for communication in foreign languages consist of the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and produce texts appropriate to the individual's needs. Individuals should also be able to use aids appropriately, and learn languages also informally as part of lifelong learning.*

*A positive attitude involves the appreciation of cultural diversity, and an interest and curiosity in languages and intercultural communication.”*

When this competence is challenged in combination with the competence of learning to learn it seems evident how the two support one another. The learning to learn competence is described in the following way (European Council 18 December 2006):

*“Where learning is directed towards particular work or career goals, an individual should have knowledge of the competences, knowledge, skills and qualifications required. In all cases, learning to learn requires an individual to know and understand his/her preferred learning strategies, the strengths and weaknesses of his/her skills and qualifications, and to be able to search for the education and training opportunities and guidance and/or support available.*

*Learning to learn skills require firstly the acquisition of the fundamental basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that are necessary for further learning. Building on these skills, an individual should be able*

*to access, gain, process and assimilate new knowledge and skills. This requires effective management of one's learning, career and work patterns, and, in particular, the ability to persevere with learning, to concentrate for extended periods and to reflect critically on the purposes and aims of learning. Individuals should be able to dedicate time to learning autonomously and with self-discipline, but also to work collaboratively as part of the learning process, draw the benefits from a heterogeneous group, and to share what they have learnt. Individuals should be able to organise their own learning, evaluate their own work, and to seek advice, information and support when appropriate.*

*A positive attitude includes the motivation and confidence to pursue and succeed at learning throughout one's life. A problem-solving attitude supports both the learning process itself and an individual's ability to handle obstacles and change. The desire to apply prior learning and life experiences and the curiosity to look for opportunities to learn and apply learning in a variety of life contexts are essential elements of a positive attitude.”*

The challenge for a young immigrant in the public library forms the basis for the acquisition of all the different competence aspects mentioned above. The participant even contributes to the library's own capacity as it can serve a broader community. To sustain the knowledge and skills the learner as well as the organisation develops the necessary attitudes.

The part played by attitude development in learning through cultural engagement seems to be an essential component in all of the collected programmes. This characteristic also implies some similarity in learning through culture with work place learning.

The collected programmes from the cultural sector throughout Europe presented above are an eye opener for many as it is still not normally expected that cultural institutions create such original pedagogical programmes. The possibility in the programmes almost speaks for itself.

We even have to bear in mind that what we have been looking at here are examples of learning through cultural engagement which are more or less original or unique as they do not normally form part of the day to day practice in cultural institutions. This means that beside these examples we should also consider the ordinary meetings in these cultural institutions between education and culture.

We would probably find that many of the characteristics in the extraordinary programmes also are to be found in general educational activities in the cultural sector even though they are intended for a mainstream audience and have a stronger focus on the competence of cultural awareness and creativity. This is also an explanation of why and how the earlier studies and recommendations about synergy effects between education and culture have been as they have. But that way the true potential of the cultural sector in lifelong learning has also been seriously and wrongly overlooked.



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