

Art Is Alive!
Non-professional Art in Europe

**CONFERENCE
COMPENDIUM**



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pro kulturu

The background consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of yellow and white. These shapes include triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons of various sizes and orientations, creating a dynamic and layered visual effect. The colors range from a bright, saturated yellow to a pale, almost white yellow.

Art Is Alive!
Non-professional Art in Europe

Národní informační
a poradenské
středisko

NIPOS
pro kulturu

Art is Alive! Non-professional Art in Europe

Conference Compendium

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Introduction

On 20-21 September 2018 the Fabrika Svitavy multifunction centre hosted an international conference entitled Art lives! Non-professional Art in Europe. The Conference was organized by the National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture (NIPOS) in collaboration with the Cultural Services Centre of the town of Svitavy.

Conference participants discussed the scope of the term 'non-professional art', its place in society and support from the public purse, the role of the State, of local governments and civil society in the Czech Republic and a selection of European countries. Also highlighted were a whole range of projects and inspiring examples and approaches, from both the Czech Republic and abroad.

The first conference day was dedicated to the professional contributions of representatives from six European countries, who submitted a comprehensive overview of the non-professional art sphere in their respective countries. Presenting were representatives of key organizations in the field of non-professional art, specifically from Slovakia (Národné osvetové centrum), the Scotland (Volunatry Arts Scotland), the Netherlands (Landelijk Kennisinstituut Cultuureducatie Amateurkunst), Denmark (Amatørernes Kunst & Kultur Samråd), Slovenia (Javni sklad Republike Slovenije za kulturne dejavnosti) and Czech Republic (NIPOS).

On the second conference day, two working groups engaged in lively discussion to formulate the prerequisites for a functioning non-professional art sector, in both theory and practice. The outputs of these working groups are also presented in this compendium.

In our view the conference has brought new observations in the field, as well as a multilateral exchange of experience and new contacts at the domestic and international level.

The event took place under the auspices of Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic Mr. Antonín Staněk and with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic.

Lenka Lázňovská

Non-professional Art in the Czech Republic

Non-professional art (theatre of all different kinds and genres, modern dance, folk dance and folk music, film, photography, choir singing, playing musical instruments as part of an ensemble or as an individual, prose and poetry recitation) has a long-standing tradition and enjoys broad-based support in society. Apart from the term 'non-professional art' the term 'amateur art' is also used. The use of either term varies depending on the art form, each having its own tradition in this respect.

The term 'amateur art' tends not to be used [in Czech] mainly in those fields where there is a risk of it being confused with dilettantism, or a lack of dedicated skill. The most sensitive fields in this respect are music and the visual arts. However, in theatre, film, and photography for example, the term "amateur" is a traditional epithet. An important indicator as to the use of either term is whether the individuals or groups in question use it themselves.

A number of dance and movement disciplines which were deemed amateur art in the past, now align themselves with sporting disciplines, seeking funding from the Ministry of Education. One such example is so-called 'dance sport', previously known as ballroom dancing, while another such area are majorettes. Many kinds of floor dances (e.g. street dance etc.) naturally span both culture and sport.



Lenka Lázňovská is the Director of the National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture (NIPOS). She graduated (Mgr) from the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague. She has worked as a journalist, specialist research analyst, lectured and published, with her publications on Czech amateur theatre being of particular interest; has led two extensive research projects in the humanities, and was a member of a large-scale and long-term project mapping Czech amateur theatre; specialises in the theory of non-professional art and has been a jury member for many amateur theatre competitions. As a result of her work in various non-profit organisations she has considerable international experience.

Even though the notion of artistic copyright does not differentiate between amateur and professional art, the distinction has a tradition and is recognised by society. In no way can it be said, however, that professional art is always of high quality, while amateur art is merely a hobby. Another reason for this is that some fields either have no professional sector, or a negligible one. For instance, in the Czech Republic there is no professional folk-dance ensemble, and there are only a handful of professional choirs (not counting operatic choirs that are part of the troupes).

As for a working definition of the term non-professional art, there are several defining characteristics that apply, jointly. Non-professional art is a voluntary leisure activity, whose main motivation is to satisfy one's interest, not to make a living by it professionally. This does not mean however, that if an amateur captivates the art market, s/he cannot occasionally be paid a fee. In some fields of study, graduates of secondary and university level art schools are not considered amateurs.

Non-professional activity is always not-for-profit. There is currently a complicated debate going on regarding what is known as 'indie' (independent) art. In a range of disciplines (e.g., film, theatre) these artists and groups are very close to amateur performers, in that they try to express their artistic intentions freely, regardless of their ability to succeed in the art market, e.g. working with small theatrical scenes that are not run for profit. They

try to make their living through art, rather than actually doing so, and thus depend on finding various subsidy streams, unable to rely on philanthropy and patronage – unlike many troupes do abroad, since these modes are not yet fully-fledged and reliable here. A testament to how close amateur and independent artists are to each other is the programme of the amateur theatre festival Jiráskův Hronov (which will celebrate ninety years of its continuous existence in 2020) showcasing the work of independent drama groups, a festival which has enjoyed notable interest among amateur performers.

Non-professional art is expressly supported in two national policy documents, approved by the Czech government. These are the 'National Cultural Policy' in the period 2015-2020, and the 'Conceptual Framework of More Effective Care for the Arts' (for the same period). There is another state document indirectly related to this field (folk dance and music) the 'Conceptual Framework of Care for Traditional Folk Culture' (2015-2020). All these documents endorse subsidies for this area, claiming it plays a major role in personal development as well in local and regional culture. This second aspect is to be seen in the context of the demographic structure of the Czech Republic, in which townships with a population of under 3000 prevail. It is in these communities that non-professional art represents not only an irreplaceable form of informal education through art but is also a consolidating element of civic society. Thespians, musicians, and dancers

who are also serving mayors of small municipalities are far from unheard-of. In the municipal elections amateur troupes often put up their own candidature lists and succeed.

Defining the scope of these activities is quite tricky, as official statistics do not track this area. In certain fields the only available data are from authorship rights unions, the agenda details of shows and festivals, or expert estimates. Even these are problematic however, in that the respective fields can be thought of as pyramids, broad at the base and narrow at the tip. Each layer is different with regards to their motivation and the scope of their activities. To illustrate the point, let us take amateur theatre. On the lowest rung are the so-called neighbourhood troupes, which even use the outdated epithet of 'amateur dramatics'. These play only to locals and choose uncomplicated texts that are readily understood by their audience. They do not take part in shows, because they are not interested in reviews or educating themselves in drama. The middle layer consists of troupes that seek to make contacts, have an interest in the theatre as a community, and therefore do participate in shows and educate themselves. They often organize drama festivals and workshops. The quality of their artistic efforts varies. Sometimes they succeed, sometimes less so. The topmost layer consists of first-class troupes with distinctive dramaturgy and their own style, whose quality sometimes compares well with professional work. I speak of such a pyramid because the numbers of neighbourhood troupes at

its base can scarcely be estimated. The same is true for church choirs that do not perform publicly at all. The following figures should therefore be seen in this context. Often, the data speak only of those bodies and individuals who are involved in some competitive system. The most popular field is that of amateur theatre (3000 troupes), followed by choirs (1500 entities), some 800 folklore ensembles, around 300 stage dance groups, 500 wind orchestras, mostly small and medium-sized, and 100 chamber music and symphony ensembles. As for the number of amateur film-makers, we can cite how many films are doing the rounds at competitions, about 200 films annually, plus approximately 60 films in the under 15-year-old and under 19-year-old categories. 182 amateur photographers and 6 collectives have submitted a total of 899 images to this year's national competition.

The organizational structure of amateur arts in the Czech Republic differs from other countries in that for several disciplines there is no single national organization unifying the artists. Either there are various ones that differ very little from each other, or an organization brings artists together irrespective of their amateur or professional status. Amateur theatre is a typical example of this, where a total of nine national unions operate, not one of them enjoying a majority. The opposite is true in photography, where the Union of Czech Photographers encompasses everyone active in the field. Let me remind our colleagues from Denmark, Germany, Scotland and the Netherlands that the Czech Republic

is a post-communist country. The oldest Czech amateur dramatics association was formed in 1882, ten years earlier than the League of German Amateur Theatres (BDAT). While the BDAT still exists today and celebrated its 125th anniversary last year, the Czech association was in existence until 1948, when it was disbanded after the communist coup. A similar fate befell the even older social & gymnastics organization, Sokol. Its branches throughout the country brought together hundreds of drama and puppet theatre troupes and many choirs. The Sokol organization was reinstated after 1990 and has also returned to promoting non-professional artistic activities. Troupes and individuals often have no incentive to form voluntary associations. In order to take part in the public subsidy system the troupes are registered as companies, that is as legal entities.

In the Czech Republic there is one unique tradition in this respect, however. In 1925 (during the inter-war Czechoslovak First Republic) the ‘Masaryk Folk Edification Institute’ (“Masarykův lidově osvětový ústav”) was founded on the initiative of President T. G. Masaryk. Its mission was to provide support to amateur associations, especially those of a nationwide reach, by way of shows and festivals, competitions, and professional education. It also published magazines and scholarly literature. Its endeavours were shaped and checked by a body quaintly named the “Maticе spolků” [from an old Slavonic term, literally the ‘queen bee of voluntary societies’]. A similar organization supported by public

(especially State) funds has existed under each regime, with the exception of the Nazi occupation. Its successor is the National Information and Advisory Centre for Culture (NIPOS), set up by the Ministry of Culture in 1991. It also acts as the organization providing specialised support for non-professional art, much like the Masaryk ‘edification institute’. Its technical department ARTAMA, which you’ll hear more about later, is the organizer of around twenty prestigious national festivals in various fields. It offers courses, workshops and other forms of both one-off and cyclical non-formal courses and publishes professional literature. It also conducts research. One initiative worth a special mention is the five-year research effort into selected collective art activities for children. Findings show that the children involved gained more cultural capital and could demonstrate acquired expertise and focus in the chosen art domain. It is here that a lifelong interest in the arts begins, including one’s readiness for attentive participation i.e. visiting theatres, concerts, exhibitions, etc. In structural terms, we need to mention the specifically Czech phenomenon of Elementary Art Schools, covering four fields of study. These are Literature & drama, Music, Dance, and the Visual arts. There are some 500 of these schools throughout the country, both private and state-run. They are attended by talented children from the age of five, as well as by youngsters and adults. Recently however, they have begun to offer education to other age groups, e.g. as academies for seniors. These afternoon schools are a part of the formal education system. They fall under the

responsibility of the Ministry of Education. They are attended by approximately 17 percent of the child population. The basic course takes 7 years, the secondary degree a further 4. Adults can take the 4-year course. This follows the basic framework issued by the Ministry of Education, which can be adapted by the head of each school. They provide education in the selected fields, and expertly prepare students for later artistic studies at a Conservatoire (secondary education) or for Higher education in the arts. In the musical disciplines for example (learning to play the various musical instruments) they are the main wellspring of players for music ensembles of all kinds and genres. In some fields (e.g. modern dance) most ensembles operate within these schools, as do the majority of advanced junior choirs. It is key to note that the Child and Youth National Festivals under the professional auspices of NIPOS are open to all bodies, regardless of whether they are affiliated to a school. Art schools have their own system of competitions, with their own timetable, i.e. they do not take place every year, as opposed to the open-entry festivals.

Another Czech phenomenon is the system of tiered competition festivals. Its historical foundations in certain disciplines (film, theatre) date back to the 1930s. During the last century it has gradually extended to include other disciplines. The most recent additions are children's film and modern dance. The way the system works is that bodies wanting to perform at the national level must first take part in the regional show. Those selected by the

judges go forward to the national show. The system helps generate artistic quality in Czech non-professional art, since the bodies are professionally evaluated, which helps contribute to their development. In addition, the number of applicants for the national show is so high (e.g. some 200 drama troupes) that they could scarcely be selected by some drama council. It would need years to see them all. In some fields, in addition to regional semi-final nationwide shows, by genre or age-group – e.g. in amateur theatre, separate ones for drama, non-traditional, student, children's theatre, puppet theatre and poetic drama, non-verbal theatre and mime, and for solo recitation (as well as, every two years, a separate show for senior theatre), or in some cases just by age-group (e.g. school children's choirs and student choruses) – there is a seasonal 'best-of' selection. The Jiráskův Hronov festival is an inter-disciplinary cross-section of amateur theatre, with international participants. In addition to the theatrical disciplines and some choirs, the tier system also exists for amateur film, modern dance and children's folk dance. This system enjoys much prestige, i.e. success is held in high regard by various bodies and individuals. NIPOS presides over the regional competitions, i.e. sets the terms under which regional competitions can advance candidates to the national level. It is not a direct organizer. In national festivals, held in cooperation typically with the cities and their organizations, NIPOS draws up the programme and prepares educational activities, and brings together the tutorial teams. NIPOS also holds other open-entry national festivals (for example

the 'Pardubice-Hradec Králové Folk Festival', the 'Nationwide Competition of Amateur Photography', the 'Nationwide Festival of Folk Choreography', and the 'Nationwide Festival of Child and Youth Art'). Currently underway is a nationwide initiative (e.g. in the form of festivals or workshops) for adult choirs. In view of how since the Velvet Revolution festivals have been sources of prominence and image-building for smaller towns in particular, it can be said that the Czech Republic is a country of festivals. Dozens are held in each field, put on by many entities.

The last section of this contribution outlines the system of public funding. This is supported by a single general piece of legislation on culture (Legislation 'on certain kinds of public funding'). The state (Ministry of Culture) and the two lower ranks of public administration (regions and municipalities) can offer sponsorship in this area either through the establishment of an institution (NIPOS is an example of such an entity, or IMPULS which is the only regional centre for non-professional art and operates in the Hradec Králové region) or by announcing a grant offering. The Ministry of Culture provides grant programmes for all fields of amateur art (theatre, music, children's activities, art and audio-visual activities, dance). It subsidises selected national shows under the professional auspices of NIPOS, and also offers limited funding for regional festivals. There is a separate subsidy heading for international contacts between groups. NIPOS subsidises from its budget both international participation at festivals

and individual trips abroad. Traditional folk culture activities also have their own subsidies, arranged through a different organization established by the Ministry (the National Institute of Traditional Folk Culture based in Strážnice). Grants are also issued by regions and municipalities. Unlike Ministry funding, these aim to support activities on their territory and the activities of troupes and collectives.

Martin Mravec

National Culture Centre and Non-professional Art in Slovakia



An experienced manager and strategic consultant with a long track record in both international and domestic companies. He started his career in 2007 and was progressively active at key positions in companies like Mora, BMW, T-Mobile and GfK, where he also worked for several years in multinational expert – and management positions. (6 years CEEMETA Technology Leader, 12 years GfK Managing Director, 5 years General Manager for the Czech & Slovak Republics).

He is currently engaged in management consultancy activities for various domestic and international companies and institutions. He is well-versed in market research & analysis, the labour market and the digital agenda. During his career, he has given dozens of presentations at both domestic and foreign conferences. He also teaches about his experiences by way of advanced training in the commercial and institutional sphere.

He graduated from the University of Economics in Bratislava (Ing – Faculty of Economics, Department of Economic Policy; PhD – Faculty of Business Administration of EUBA).

Non-professional artistic creation in Slovakia originated and developed as an artistic creative activity of people in their immediate life experience, closely related to their everyday life under the influence of social, historical and geographic conditions. The beginnings of institutionalisation and the organisation of non-professional art (in the past, folk art creativity (EUT) or interest artistic activity (ZUČ)) in Slovakia date back to the 19th century and are linked to the creation of amateur theatrical companies and choirs. As a whole, EUT continued to develop on private-business organisational foundations in voluntary clubs. Later, non-professional artists were organised by the clubs in factories, by district cultural centres, municipality offices, schools and other cultural and educational institutions.

The main role in the organised support of non-professional art in Slovakia was played by the Matica slovenská and since 1953 by the Culture Centre and the Slovak Centre for Folk Art Creativity. The gradual development of organised non-professional art in the regions necessitated the establishment of a joint professional centre that would purposefully support and coordinate work in the field of education and artistic interest activities. To this end the Culture Institution was established in 1958, which became

the professional centre on behalf of the Slovak National Council (SNC) for advisory, educational and research activities. Since 1959, district culture centres have been established on the territory of Slovakia, which, in 1960, were incorporated as individual sections into the Culture Institution.

In the early 1990's, the National Culture Centre (NCC) was established as the direct successor of the Culture Institute. The NCC has been a state contributory organisation on behalf of the Ministry of Culture since 1993 and its activities follow from Act No. 189/2015 Coll. on cultural and educational activities.

At present, the NCC is a cultural and educational facility with a Slovak-wide scope that provides a wide range of activities. It is a professional and methodical workplace for cultural and educational activities, non-professional artistic creation, cultural education, cultural research and statistics, digitisation of cultural heritage and its accessibility through the Slovakiana portal and management of national registers of cultural objects. It also provides editorial and publishing activities, documentation and creation of databases and the activities of the European Contact Point.

Slovakiana is the central portal of cultural heritage operated by the NCC. It was created as part of the Central Application Infrastructure and Registry project. Slovakiana comprises more than one million cultural objects of various memory and fund

institutions that are available in digital form through electronic services and the functionality that is available to both lay and professional public.

Thanks to its established infrastructure, Slovakiana offers advanced search possibilities, viewing and downloading of high-resolution digital objects with the possibility of subsequent use, if the current state of legal protection permits. The Copyright Centre assesses the legal protection of cultural and digital objects.

Visitors to the Slovakiana portal can create their own collections from available objects based on their criteria, discuss them with the public and experts, share content, make suggestions to update or amend the content, follow and be informed about topics they are interested in, etc.

The basic idea pursued by the Slovakiana portal is to engage, to make available, to facilitate searches and to enable a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage.

In the field of non-professional art, the NCC's main mission is to support the activities of groups and individuals in various areas of non-professional artistic creation, the organisation of festivals, contests and other events, methodical guidance and education of children, young people and adults and care for cultural heritage.

The NCC is the promoter and professional guarantor of 20 nationwide contests and festivals. The system for the implementation of national contests is directly linked to the district culture centres, with the NCC announcing the contests and at the same time also playing the role of a professional guarantor, which coordinates them, monitors their compliance with regulations and evaluates their course. The role of regional and district culture centres is to organise specific events in a selected region.

Funding for contests is provided from multiple sources. Regional rounds are funded from the budgets of self-governing regions and regional and district culture centres. Regional and national rounds are generally funded through a specially created programme established under the Funding Grant scheme of the Fund for the Promotion of Art, which is a public institution for the support of artistic activities, culture and the creative industry. National rounds are also supported financially from the NCC's own budget.

All contests usually consist of three levels: district, regional and national, sometimes of two: regional and national. An exception is the national contest focused on the artistic performance entitled *Hviezdoslavov Kubín*, in which the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the SR participates both in organisational and financial terms. In this case, the district level of the competition is preceded by other levels that take place within

a classroom, a school, a district, etc. Contests have various periodicities and take place either every year or every two to three years. Contests are organised in the form of a public presentation and often constitute a part of another event, a festival, for example. The competition also includes educational activities that enable participants to increase their professional knowledge or interpretative skills in the field of art. The importance of nationwide contests lies not only in the presentation and confrontation of non-professional artists, but also in the feedback that the participants receive from experts during assessment workshops.

The NCC currently supports non-professional art in the fields of folklore and folklorism, theatre, film, photography, music, artistic performance, art creation and literature. The support for creative activity is aimed at children, young people and adults, both at individuals and groups.

In terms of folklore and folklorism, the NCC provides a professional supervision to 5 nationwide contests that focus on folk music performed by children and adults (*Vidiečanova Habovka*), children's folklore ensembles (*Pod Likavským hradom*), folklore ensembles (*Tancuj, tancuj*), folklore groups (*Nositelia tradícií*) and soloists folklore dancers (*Šaffova ostroha*).

In the area of non-professional theatre, 4 nationwide contests are held, where adult theatre groups (*Belopotockého Mikuláš*), youth

theatres (FEDIM), adult theatres playing for children (Divadlo a deti), children's theatre ensembles (Zlatá priadka) are presented.

The area of music includes 6 national contests focused on classical chamber music (Divertimento musicale), choral singing (Mládež spieva, Viva il canto), brass music (FestMlaDych, Lednické rovne) and popular music (Strunobranie).

One nationwide contest is dedicated annually to film production (CINEAMA), to photographic creation (AMFO), to visual arts (Výtvarné spektrum) and to literary creation (Literárny Zvolen). The oldest events include the competition for artistic performance, which is the already mentioned Hviezdoslavov Kubín that has been held without a break since 1954.

The support of non-professional art as part of the NCC's activities also comprises methodological and educational activities in the fields of non-professional artistic production. The NCC regularly organises creative workshops and workshops that are intended for the actual artists, for their leaders, educators, conductors, directors, as well as for the employees of cultural and educational centres and for the wider public. Educational activities are thematic and are conducted either independently in all regions of Slovakia or during national contests.

During the summer holidays, we regularly organise week-long creative workshops focused on traditional folk music and dance, entitled "Muzičky" and "Malí tanečníci". Children of different age categories are here to learn about folk dance and the interpretation of music using folk musical instruments, with particular emphasis on children understanding the natural connection between dance and music. Adult education focuses on professional training during which folk group leaders obtain comprehensive information about the work with an ensemble from the theory to the actual practice in the areas of ethnochoreology, ethnomusicology or pedagogical activities.

Another regular educational activity is a week-long Summer Course of Choirmasters for the conductors of all kinds of singing choirs. At the end of the course a final concert is held where participants present their acquired skills. The new feature is the analysis of the final concert directly from the video record, which enables non-professional conductors to obtain immediate feedback from experts.

Other regular workshops are intended, for example, for members of brass orchestras, for choirs, for reciters, theatre ensembles and their leaders, directors, lecturers and other collaborators. Filmmakers and photographers also have the opportunity to take part in several workshops every year, during which they enhance

their skills and subsequently consult their own photos and films with experts.

Another new feature are video tutorials on the YouTube channel, which are focused on the training of the stylish playing of violin according to Jozef Krok Češlak, a bandmaster from Zemplín. The instructor of the methodical videos is the NCC expert, violinist Michal Noga, who has already been studying this style for several years as part of the field research implemented directly with the above-mentioned performer.

The NCC is the main organiser of the two most important festivals in the field of scenic folklore and non-professional theatre art in Slovakia.

The first is the Folklore Festival entitled “Východná”, which is the oldest and the largest international festival that has been held without interruption since 1953 in the municipality of Východná. It is a top-class festival of the traditional folk culture and its folklore manifestations. The mission of this folklore festival is to present the results of the development of traditional folk art, its musical and dance manifestations, customs, games, oral folklore and also folk crafts. Every year thousands of performers – folklore groups, folklore ensembles, children’s folklore ensembles, folklore bands, singing groups, soloists, musicians and dancers – present their skills in dozens of artistic author programmes. The festival

also includes many accompanying events, such as exhibitions, dance schools, craft fairs, film screenings, professional lectures on traditional folk culture, etc. There are more than two thousand performers present at the festival, with approximately thirty thousand visitors.

“Scénická žatva” is the top-class theatre festival with international participation, which has been taking place since 1923, making it one of the oldest festivals of non-professional theatre in Europe. Every year, the best theatre ensembles from the Slovak national contest and excellent foreign theatrical ensembles are presented on “Scénická žatva”. The specificity of this festival lies in the genre variety, where drama theatre, adult theatre for children, children’s dramatic creativity, poetry theatre, dance theatre and artistic performance all meet on one stage. This festival also represents an active support of live culture in Slovakia and it is also one of the main educational activities in the field non-professional theatre. In 2017 Scénická žatva was awarded the AITA/IATA Special Prize and it belongs amongst the world’s top seven festivals of non-professional theatre.

Year 2017 in the area of non-professional art supervised by the NCC in numbers: 17 nationwide contests, 2 international festivals, 48 educational activities and 40 other events, attended by nineteen thousand performers and seventy thousand visitors. Sources:

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Jemma Neville

A Country Report from Scotland – Voluntary Arts Scotland



Jemma Neville is Director of Voluntary Arts Scotland, the national development agency for community-led arts in Scotland. Voluntary Arts Scotland is part of the UK and Republic of Ireland charity, Voluntary Arts.

Jemma was formerly Communications and Outreach Coordinator at the Scottish Human Rights Commission and was the inaugural Community Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Humanities, University of Edinburgh. She has a background in human rights law. Jemma is the author of a forthcoming book, *Constitution Street*, that explores the experience of neighbourhood on one street, set against the broader context of constitutional change.

Let me tell you a true story. In fact, it's one that I hear and tell often. I think you'll be familiar with it too. I'm at a party with friends and am being introduced to new people. And what do you... do? is the polite, standard thing to say. I work for an arts charity, I say. Choosing the word charity deliberately to make me sound worthy and good.

Oh, which one, have I heard of it?

— Erm, maybe. It's called Voluntary Arts. I manage the part called Voluntary Arts Scotland. We're a development agency, so support the ten thousand and more creative, cultural groups across Scotland – from national orchestras to small groups of crafters. You might have heard of some of the groups themselves. And many of them will likely know us, or the venues, networks, funders we help them connect with. Our role is to help the people running these groups grow and strengthen their participation offer.

[blank face]

— Perhaps you play an instrument, or like to paint, dance, knit, hula-hoop. yourself?

My new friend then jumps in to tell me all about their passion for sixteenth century poetry/ playing video games/ oil painting... etc. The conversation moves on and the noise of the party continues.

In many languages, the verbs 'to do' and 'to make' are the same. I'm from Scotland – a small nation surrounded by the North Sea that is (still, just) part of the United Kingdom. In Scotland, we call our national poet laureate the 'Maker'. The making and the doing are intrinsically connected. We have a strong tradition of story-telling – telling, writing, singing and dancing stories.

If the description of our day jobs doesn't make obvious all that we are and all that we want to be (how many know what an 'arts development manager' actually does?) we might choose to self-define our 'doing' in other ways, by reference to what we do or make in our non-professional time. A more interesting introductory question might be what excites you, what inspires you, how do you express yourself creatively?

My Sunday mornings spent planting seeds and digging vegetables in the community garden is my time – uninterrupted hours of focused energy away from mobile phones, emails and commitment. I have complete absorption in the task. Everything slows down. I have the satisfaction of beginning and completing something. I also like the regularity and expectation of a group commitment. There is something validating about the social gathering

in creative process. Even the pretty pictures I post afterward on Instagram of the sunflowers, poppies and my dog in the garden is a form of reaching out for community and connection – I want others to see and hear my story. All forms of mark-making matter little if there are no others to bear witness and acknowledge the creative effort. This need for self-expression and a desire for beauty beyond utility perhaps separates us from other mammals.

So, that's a bit about me and my story. You will have your own. At Voluntary Arts Scotland, we recognise the scale and diversity of creative, cultural activity. In fact, we recently had a project that matched poets and other artists called 'My Time'.

The organisation of which we are a part – Voluntary Arts – was formed some thirty years ago in response to traditional art form umbrella bodies such as The Quilters Guild, The Brass Bands Association, The Choirs Network, recognising that they shared many of the same developmental needs in terms of finding accessible venues, attracting new members and getting the right funding model (it's a truism that most community-led groups as self funding and rely little on state subsidy). They wanted cross-art form representation to policy makers and potential funders and to be better connected to one another. 'Voluntary Arts' as a name was chosen to overcome the negative associations with the term 'amateur arts' – as though self-led arts was somehow lesser arts. We know this to be patently untrue but it has helped in our profile

with funders and partners to change the wording. 'Voluntary' is not without its confusion either, however, and we are likely due a name change and rebrand sometime soon.

For simplicity, let's use the example of a choir. The conductor leading the choir is a volunteer. The singers are participants. And if a guest tutor is brought in to help prepare for a special concert, they may receive a fee for this work. The collective is a voluntary arts group. This is quite distinct from a short-term community arts intervention entirely led by a professional artist.

The traditional umbrella bodies and their member groups will always be important to us. However, we recognise that the cultural sector across the UK and beyond has changed considerably and continues to change apace. More of us are now involved as individuals in lots of overlapping networks. The networks cross national boundaries. For example, the members of a knitting network that meet online on Facebook share patterns and designs from north America to northern Scotland. By contrast, place-based arts is also thriving. Scotland has hundreds of community festivals – from annual Highland games to open studio tours and art form festivals. How do we communicate with all these different types of expression – in depth and at scale?

Digital – as an art form itself and as an enabler of other creative activity – is increasingly relevant to all aspects of our work.

Much of it is being led by young people. As a national strategic development agency, we need to stay relevant and fit for purpose. That's why we are making our new Strategic Plan 5 years in duration. I want us to consider – who are we currently not hearing or seeing? Who are we missing? Because voluntary arts activity does happen in every single place – urban and rural, economically rich and poor, of faith and no faith – across the land.

Our work has two flagship events – the Epic Awards and the Get Creative Festival. The Epic Awards are an annual celebration of innovation in voluntary arts groups. We acknowledge the often thankless efforts of the people that set up and run groups and, in so doing, achieve life-changing things like lessening isolation and boosting mental health. The Get Creative Festival is a ten-day-long festival held each May in partnership with the BBC and others. It is an opportunity to showcase participation opportunities – to try something new in your community or find a regular meet up. Media partnering with the BBC has given us extensive profile across TV, radio and digital.

Voluntary Arts has a devolved organisational structure across the UK and Republic of Ireland. This provides the mutuality of peer support and the sharing of ideas and finance. We are a small staff team with four of us in Scotland. I am the only full-time staff member. The devolved structure reflects the devolved context of the UK. Scotland, with its own government and Parliament, has

its own cultural policy. In the last twenty years of Scottish devolution, there have been sweeping changes to land reform, access to information and community empowerment – this has led some arts groups to take on the ownership of local venues like community centres for the first time and explore income-generating models like social enterprise.

Overall, the last few years have not been quiet times for identity politics and constitutional change! We are living in an anxious, uncertain age for geopolitics. We need gatherings, connections and learning like this event in the Czech Republic more than ever.

I want to assure you that Scotland WELCOMES internationalism. We are a proud European nation who voted to Remain in the EU and, regardless, of the Brexit process, we will always seek out European partners and friendships. Being a leading partner in the Amateo network of amateur arts organisations is a clear example of this.

Across the UK, there is growing policy interest in everyday participation and the health and wellbeing benefits it brings. At present, the Scottish Government is consulting on a new draft Culture Strategy. There have been many similar iterations over the years – all seeking to ask, how cultural life can be promoted and protected within the public policy framework. So far, I am encouraged

by the Strategy's wording on inclusion and access but I am less hopeful if no action steps and legislative protection is given.

In that magic moment of flow between momentum and effort, the making/doing 'thing' becomes more important than our own ego. More 'non-professional art' might help to give us back our sense of place and purpose in the disorientating flux of current times. That is one story worth telling from Scotland.

Piet Roorda

Non-Professional Arts in the Netherlands

1. The sector, facts and figures and functions

I feel very honoured to have the opportunity to give you an impression of the non-professional arts in the Netherlands, of the way it is organised and how it is supported.

About 40 % of the inhabitants of the Netherlands practice arts in their leisure time as non – professionals. We are talking about roughly 6.4 million people. Figure 1: Practitioners of artistic or creative activities in their leisure time: percentage of the population aged six or older in the period 2013-2017 (page 25).

Question: Which discipline do you think has the most practitioners? Figure 2: Participation in artistic or creative activities: percentage of the population aged six or older (page 25).

These are results from LKCA's 2017 Voluntary Arts Monitor. It contains key data about the people actively involved in artistic and creative leisure activities between April 2016 and April 2017. Every second year since 2013, we have asked about 5,000 people in the Netherlands aged six or over to tell us about their activities in this area. The results of the Voluntary Arts Monitor represent a cross-section of the Dutch population aged six or older in terms of gender, age, education, household size and region. It has two



Piet Roorda works as a cultural participation specialist at the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA) in the Netherlands. LKCA works for everyone who is committed to education and participation in culture and the arts, both within the education system and beyond. Piet is involved in projects supporting professionals and board members working in the non-professional art sector, with the aim to stimulate the visibility and accessibility of amateur arts and to emphasize the role culture can play in local politics. He also participates in the Arts Take Part project of Amateo, the European Network for Active Participation in Cultural Activities, and is a member of the Amateo board. Besides his LKCA work he is active as a conductor of choirs, orchestras and musical productions and is chairman of one of the Dutch Umbrella organizations for choirs (KBZON).

parts: The first is about practitioners and practice, the second focuses on facilities.

Functions

I think practicing the arts has three main functions. In the light of these functions I will try and give insight into the support that can be given.

1. Doing: As a non-professional artist you want to practice your art because you love doing that: dancing, painting, writing, acting or making music. Just by yourself or with others.

For this you need space, tools or instruments and other materials.

2. Learning: For some art disciplines you need specific skills and techniques which you have to learn. Some people are competent up to a certain level but want to develop their skills and techniques. Others don't feel the need to do that and are completely happy to practice an art form the way they have always done.

For the Arts Monitor, practitioners were asked what they do to get better at what they do. The percentage of practitioners that learn through classes, courses or during rehearsals is highest among people practicing music, dance or acting. The percentage of practitioners that learn by doing is highest

among those practicing visual arts, creative writing and media. Figure 3: Ways to learn and get better at artistic and creative activities: percentage of practitioners per type of activity (page 26).

For courses, classes, rehearsals etc you need teachers, guides, conductors and schools or buildings.

3. Presenting: The third reason why people practice an art form is to show and share their artistic or creative results. For this two types of services are most needed:

- concert or dance halls and theatres
- internet and social media
- churches or other religious places (for music)

Figure 4: Venues or platforms where practitioners let other see, hear or read what they do or make: practitioners who do so occasionally, per type of activity (page 27).

Practicing the arts, getting better and presenting the results mostly happens in your environment, in a town or village. What kind of support is needed for that?

How many people in the Netherlands are involved in creative and artistic leisure activities?

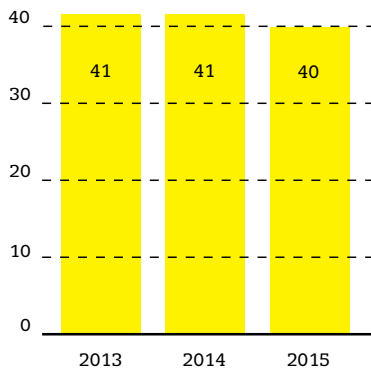


Figure 1: Practitioners of artistic or creative activities in their leisure time: percentage of the population aged six or older in the period 2013-2017

40 % of the Dutch population aged six or older are involved in creative and artistic leisure activities. That amounts to over 6.4 million people. Compared to 2013 and 2015, there has been a slight decrease of 1 %.

What artistic or creative activities do they participate in?

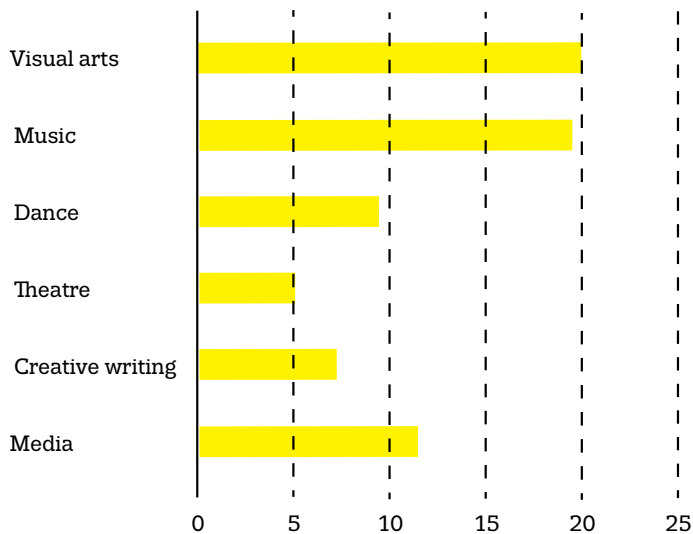
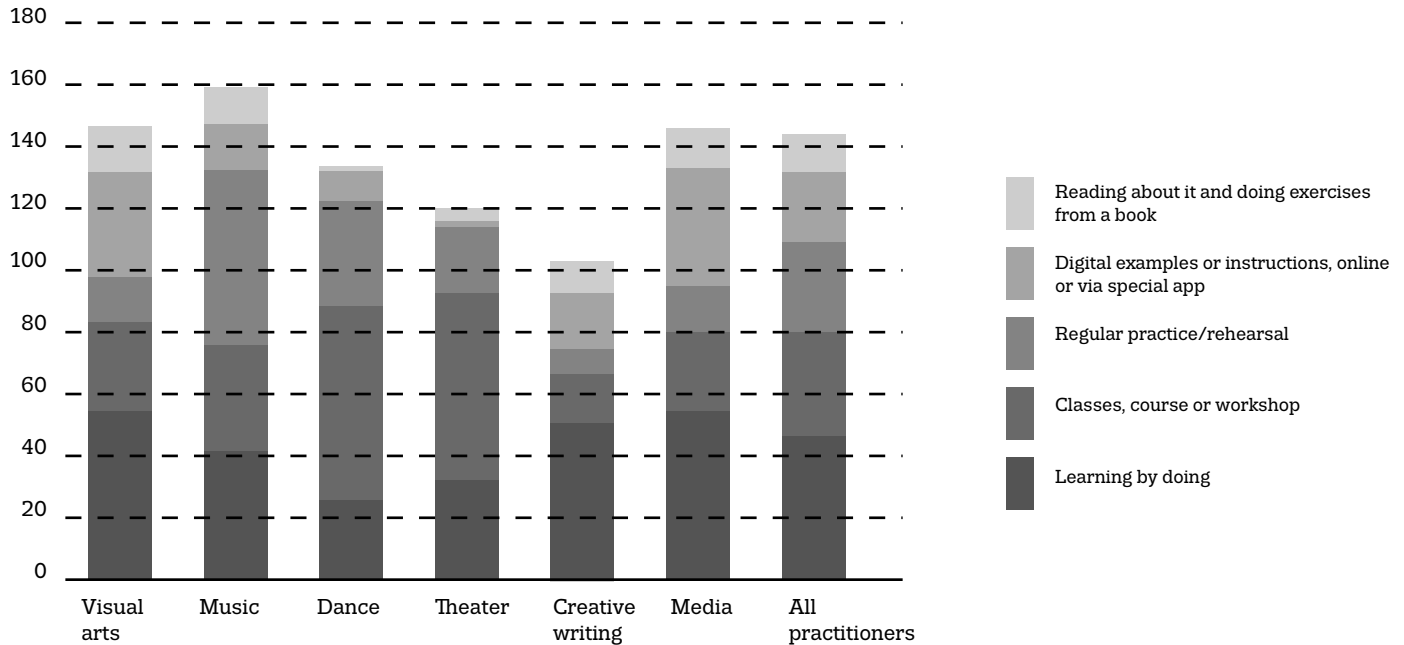


Figure 2: Participation in artistic or creative activities: percentage of the population aged six or older

Visual arts activities – very broadly defined – are the most widely practised, followed by music (which includes singing). Fewer people are actively involved in dance, theatre, creative writing or media. Over 40 % of practitioners engage in more than one activity. This overall picture has remained stable since 2013

What do practitioners do in order to learn and get better at what they do?



Almost half of all practitioners say they learn or improve simply by doing, playing or making. Over one third attend classes, take a course or participate in workshops. That amounts to over 2 million people in the Netherlands. Children take lessons, courses or workshops more often than adults do. Regardless of age, approximately one third of

practitioners practise or rehearse regularly. There are also online learning opportunities available: Digital examples on internet, special apps or community platforms. Nearly a quarter of practitioners use these kinds of digital learning resources.

Figure 3: Ways to learn and get better at artistic and creative activities: percentage of practitioners per type of activity

Which channels and platforms do practitioners use to show others what they do or make?

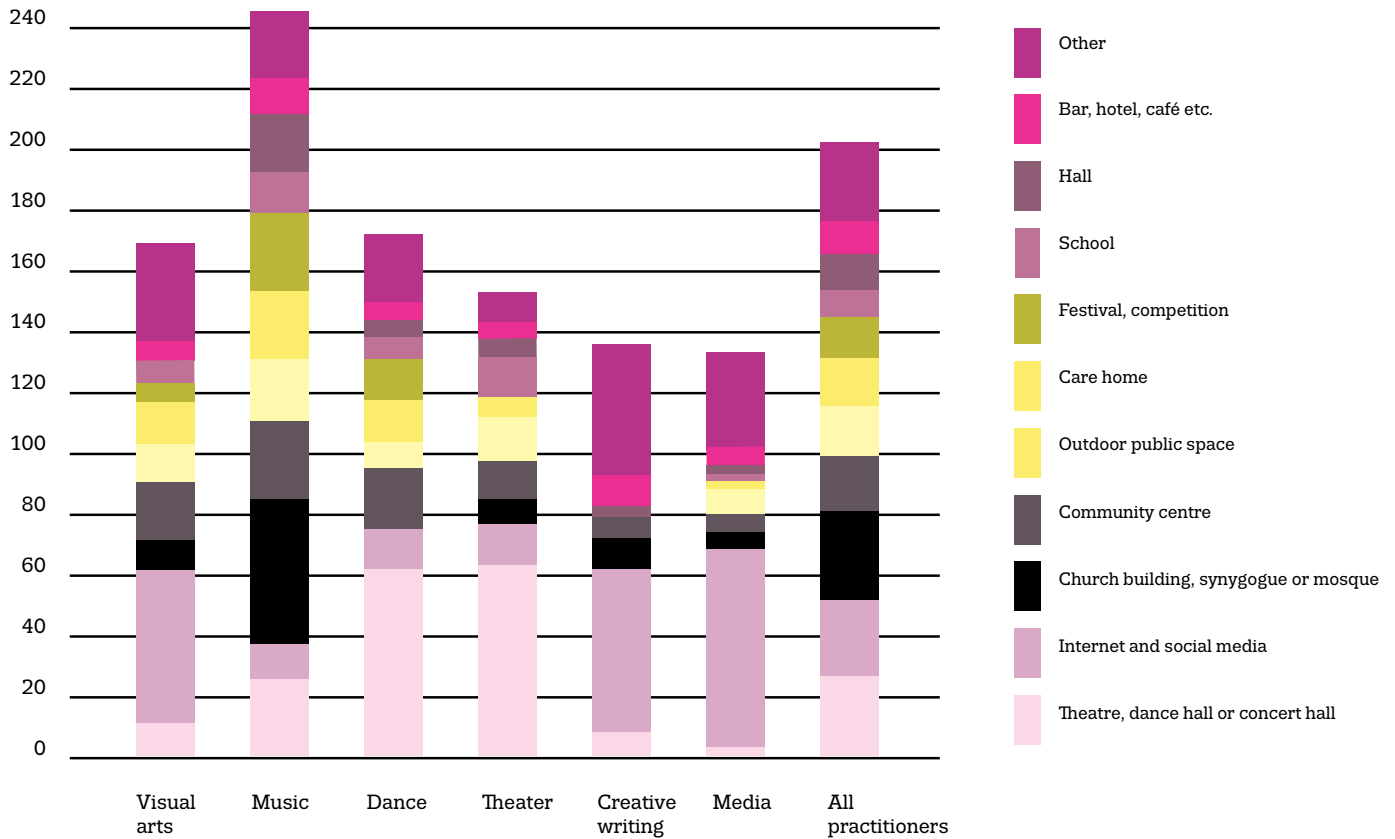


Figure 4: Venues or platforms where practitioners let other see, hear or read what they do or make: practitioners who do so occasionally, per type of activity

I'll show you some characteristics and facts of the support system in the Netherlands and differentiate between the national, regional and local level.

Support at a national level

I would like to give you an impression based on my own career. I started my working life as a conductor, musical leader and choir coach. In 1999 I started working at the national Choral Foundation SNK in Utrecht, right in the center of the country. The Foundation received money from the national government to support choral music, choirs and conductors in the Netherlands. Before SNK existed there were 12 Choral Organizations that received government money to support their members. For the government it was more convenient to give the available money to SNK, a central foundation with deputies from all umbrella organizations. It is important to mention here that the relationship between SNK and the umbrella organizations for choirs was quite direct.

At that time there were also foundations for:

- Wind music
- All other types of instrumental music
- Visual Arts, including Photography and Film
- Dance (with roots in the (international) Folk Dance)
- Theatre
- Creative Writing

In 2001 the separate music foundations were ordained to form one music foundation, which became the foundation Unisono.

Seven years later, in 2008 all amateur art foundations for all disciplines had to merge into one new organization, Kunstfactor. This institute differed from the previous foundations in that it had to be an institute for the entire sector and was concerned with education, information, documentation, promotion, coordination and heritage for the amateur arts world.

Kunstfactor had to take on an independent role. It was supposed to serve not the interests of just one discipline, but to support the sector as a whole.

You can imagine that the distance between Kunstfactor and the practitioners and their umbrella organizations became bigger. Kunstfactor supported and stimulated amateur arts in a more general way. The umbrella organizations had to pick up more specific tasks.

In 2013 Kunstfactor had to merge with Cultuurnetwerk Nederland, an organization committed to cultural education in schools. This was due to financial crises and changes in political ideas about culture and the arts. Within this merger Kunstfactor lost 60% of its budget. The result of the merger was LKCA.

This brief historical overview shows how the support system developed at a national level and what the current situation is.

1. You can see a few political trends in these developments:

- There is less government money to subsidize initiatives in society. Partly to make parties responsible for their own budgets, partly due to financial cuts
- The policy at the time was to appoint one organization as the central contact instead of many.
- National politics and the government were of the opinion that it is not the task of the national government to support what people do in their leisure time. That's people's own responsibility and that of local government. Art was seen as luxury, 'a left-wing hobby'. At the same time, the government feels it is their duty to give each child the opportunity to come into contact with cultural education. Currently, there seems to be a change of policy. The Minister of Culture is developing a programme for Cultural Participation intended to make sure that everybody is able to take part in culture, especially people that do not do so as a matter of course. We have yet to see what the impact of this programme will be.

2. At the moment there are three national subsidized organizations for non-professional arts. They were appointed by the

Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Before taking this decision the Ministry took advice from the Council for Culture.

“The Council for Culture is a body established by law to advise the Dutch Government and Parliament on the arts, culture and media. The Council provides recommendations regarding the cultural policy in the Netherlands, whether it is requested of them or not.”

The three organizations are:

a. LKCA – National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts.

LKCA is for everyone who is committed to education and participation in culture and the arts, both within the education system and beyond. Our aim is to help a wide range of people in the education sector and in umbrella organisations for the amateur arts.

LKCA has 4 main themes. LKCA is committed to:

- facilitating high-quality, active cultural education, both inside and outside school
- encouraging active cultural participation that is available and accessible to all

- increasing support for cultural education and participation
- connecting cultural education and active cultural participation with society as a whole.

We achieve that:

- by organising conferences and network meetings on specific topics and so bringing professionals, policy makers and administrators into contact with each other.
- through knowledge and knowledge exchange: website, publications, social media
- by conducting and stimulating independent research on developments in cultural education and participation.

In all activities LKCA aims to cooperate with partners inside and outside culture.

b. The Cultural Participation Fund (FCP)

FCP provides subsidies for special cultural initiatives all over the Netherlands.

They “support projects in which participants produce their own beat, appear on stage, create the most beautiful products with traditional crafts, or form an orchestra with their class.”

FCP is the gate to national subsidies for initiatives and organizations in cultural participation.

c. Youth Fund Sports & Culture

This Fund makes it possible for children and young people from families with lack of finances, to be able to join a sports club or a dance, music, visual arts or theatre club.

Other important organizations for the non-professional arts which do not receive national subsidies are:

d. The Ministry

e. Cultuurconnectie, the branch organization for local centres for the arts. In the past they received subsidy from the national government but now their budget is made up of contributions from their members.

f. Over a hundred umbrella organizations for amateur arts and amateur culture in all kind of disciplines or crafts. Most of them have members, varying from 25 till 150,000.

3. Umbrella Organizations in amateur arts are finding new ways to support their members and to reinforce cooperation between each other.

To illustrate this I will go back to my own perspective: at this moment there are 11 choral organizations, all affiliated to one of the national associations for choirs “Koornetwerk Nederland”. All of them, by themselves or in cooperation with each other, try to reinforce the service and support for choirs. LKCA supports both Koornetwerk Nederland and the other umbrella organizations in this.

A big step was made recently as regards Wind Music, in that a new national Wind Music organization was founded in which the three former national organizations merged.

3. Support at a regional level

The Netherlands consists of 12 provinces. These are not independent states. Of all the three support levels, the tasks of the provinces are least sharp defined. The role of the provinces is regularly under discussion. Their main responsibilities include the provincial infrastructure, including the road network and water management. As regards culture the provinces can subsidize important professional arts institutes such as orchestras and museums, or festivals and other events.

In general they feel that support of non-professional arts lies at the local level. Yet, the provincial government can play an important role in supporting non-professional arts: by issuing public

contracts and a set budget to an organization whose main task it is to support (aspects of) culture.

Most provinces have such an organization, but they are never the same. Most of them focus on cultural education in schools, some on amateur arts, and some have a role in both.

An example of the latter is Brabant. Brabant is not only responsible for the regional organization of culture and the arts, the province also supports initiatives through a subsidy fund.

The support organizations subsidized by provinces are united in a national platform: the Council of 12 (Raad van 12).

4. Support at a local level

On the conference there was a film trailer with people singing, acting, living their passion. I love the joy and pleasure that splash off the screen. And you can see the three functions I mentioned before. Doing and presenting, obviously, but also learning. A lot of them had to learn and practice to be able to do this. By the way, the musicians in the orchestra are professionals.

With this trailer I wanted to give you a short impression of the so called ‘Amateur Arts Month’, in Dutch ‘iktoon’, I-show – everyone’s art. A national campaign to make all the local activities and events that take place in June more visible. And in my view, the

essence of the campaign is: Making music, dancing, acting, painting, learning and presenting: it all happens 'locally', in a village, town, or maybe somewhere out in the countryside, but basically, somewhere within a municipality.

So the way the non-professional arts are supported by local governments is important. I assume this is done differently from country to country.

In the Netherlands there has been a big change for municipalities due to changes in national laws for the social domain. The WMO, Social Support Act, determines that social issues that in the past were financed and the responsibility of national government, were transported to the municipalities. Of course due money was allocated to the municipalities for this, but it meant a huge shift for local government. The issues at stake here are related to social care, youth services, addiction problems, caring for the elderly and people with disabilities, etc. That – together with the changes in policy views at a national level I already mentioned – also led also to changes in the support of non-professional art at local level.

I will briefly mention a few of these changes in relation to the three functions. Doing:

- Every municipality still gives money to amateur arts in one way or another. But very often conditions are set to receive subsidy for practicing the arts. Conditions can be: doing things for special target groups; give something back to the community; or present yourself during the Amateur Arts Month in June.
- There is a growing tendency to give the available subsidy money to project-based activities rather than to orchestras or other amateur art groups that enjoy working together on a weekly basis.
- On the whole it has become increasingly difficult the Netherlands to find other financial sources to practice the arts at a local level. Presenting:
- All this affects the way practitioners can present themselves.
- In addition to that, fees for stages, galleries and concert halls have become much more expensive. Often these venues ask the 'professional' amounts for renting a place and for technical appliances etc.

The result of all this is that it is much more difficult for the more traditional associations to give concerts, performances and shows in the way they used to. That, combined with the aging of club members and the difficulties to find new board members, is quite a challenge!

Is it all negative? No definitely not. Many groups and practitioners look for and find new creative ways, new places for performances,

and start to cooperate with other groups, also from disciplines outside culture.

The last subject I want to shed light on is the aspect of learning

- Over the past years, a lot of municipalities have chosen to cut the budget for art education centers, such as music schools.
- Of course this is partly caused by the changes for municipalities I mentioned before, but there is at least one factor that plays a role in this. About six years ago the national government initiated a national programme to improve cultural education in schools. Part of that was a matching arrangement in which the money for cultural education projects from the national government was matched on a 50-50 basis by the municipalities.

Certainly a very positive incentive with good results. But there was also a side effect: municipalities didn't increase their budgets for culture, but made a shift. Quite a number of centers for art education only received money for art education in schools and not for art education in the leisure time. On top of that several institutes didn't get any money at all any more and had to close down. This affected a lot of teachers and professionals in the cultural sector.

- Art education is still available in most places and is taken care of by individual teachers or through partnerships, but working with them is often more expensive.

Again, it is not all negative. New partnerships were formed, new network organizations and new forms of learning came into being, some more alive and inspiring than the traditional ones. Digital tools and platforms are among them. Still, continuation is more insecure, certainly for art professionals. Often they are paid less than before these changes took place.

I would like to end with some words on support at an international level. It is great to share practices and support systems for non-professional arts today from several countries. A very positive initiative by NIPOS.

LKCA is a member of Amateo, the European Association for cultural participation. Nipos is a member too. It is very interesting to see at Amateo conferences and today what the differences between the various countries are. I hope that this meeting is not a start or an end, but an impulse to talk, to discuss, to learn from each other and to inspire.

Susan Fazakerley

The Non-professional Arts Sector in Denmark: System, Support and Functioning



Susan Fazakerley (1963) holds a Master's in Theater Science from the University of Copenhagen and additional exams in business management and public affairs. Since 2010 she has been the Secretary General of AKKS – The Joint Council of Amateur Arts Associations in Denmark www.akks.dk and is currently also the president of Amateo – The European Network for Active Participation in Cultural Activities www.amateo.org. In the past she has among other things worked as a coordinator at The House of Dance in Copenhagen and at Danish Theatre festivals. Besides this she has been a co-writer on several reports, articles and evaluations from the world of culture.

Historically, amateur art in Denmark is strong in the field of music and since World War II also in theatre. Today there are two main national amateur organizations in Denmark. The Joint Council of Voluntary Arts Associations in Denmark (AKKS) and The Danish Amateur Theatre Association (DATS). They have more than 115 000 active members who participate in primarily music and theatre activities on a regular basis, organized in local voluntary associations. Statistics from AKKS show that more than 25 000 cultural events are organized by the voluntary amateur associations in AKKS and DATS every year in Denmark.

Co-existing with the organized amateur activities there is a large, but unknown, number of amateur activities in less formally organized groups within film, dance, photography, painting and literature. Besides this there's also tuition for children in arts in the Danish elementary school as part of the curricula (primarily in music) and state financed music schools in all municipalities in Denmark as well as some more locally sponsored culture and art schools.

Aimed at adults there is a wide variety of tuition in arts offered in evening schools and the possibility of taking part in art projects facilitated by cultural houses or municipalities.

All in all there's a lot of non-professional arts activities taking place in Denmark, but nobody really has an overview of how much. All we know from the occasional culture surveys is that 17% of the Danish population over 15 years describes themselves as active in playing music (Danskernes Kulturvaner, 2004). But that's only music and we must presume the number for participation in all arts activities is a lot higher.

The support system

Since the establishment of the Danish Cultural Ministry in 1962, Danish cultural policy has primarily focused on democratizing the access to culture, so everybody despite social income or geographical location, would be secured experiences of professional art. Despite good intentions and focus on the benefits from art activities for children in elementary and music schools, the non-professional art sector and especially the voluntary arts activities have never had the same focus in national politics.

Traditionally the main principle of public support to amateur culture has been that the national organizations, the national programmes for the development of talents and the occasional national funds aimed at amateur arts are financed through both

the State Budget and the annual lottery surplus allocations. The support for the local associations is then set by the regulations in the General Education Act and applied by the municipalities.

By means of The Music Act, the Ministry of Culture may support “artistically working amateur choirs, orchestras and their associations”. In 2010 an arm's-length-body granted EUR 862.820 to amateur music organizations and events within this legal framework and financed via the State Budget, but this number has lately been decreasing and in 2018 had fallen to EUR 688.860.

Likewise, the amateur theatre is mentioned in the Theatres Act, where it is stated that support may be given to “artistically working amateur theatres and their central organizations”. Since 1970, this has meant that the funding has been distributed to and through DATS – up till and including 1996, financed via the State Budget and since 1997 financed via the lottery surplus but distributed by the Ministry of Culture. For the year 2018-19, DATS was granted EUR 486.577 within the legal framework of The Theatres Act.

Furthermore, financed by the lottery surplus, the ministry grants annual support for the amateur culture umbrella organization AKKS. For 2018-19 the grant amounted to EUR 69.127. The same amount was granted to two organizations centering on creating the framework for voluntary arts activities: The cultural

houses in Denmark and The National Association of Voluntary Cultural Councils.

It is also from the lottery surplus that the occasional national funds aimed at amateur arts have found their funding. Most noteworthy was the Cultural Fund that gave a “boost” to the co-operation between amateurs and professionals during 1990-97. Later the Ministry of Culture’s developmental fund for amateur and folk culture activities distributed EUR 1.506.711 during 2001-06 to innovative amateur projects throughout the country. And later again, a fund called the Project for the development of amateur culture, amateur art and voluntary cultural work distributed EUR 671.140 between 2007-09 to the national amateur and voluntary arts associations’ development projects.

Since 2009 there has, however, not been any additional governmental funds specifically aimed at amateur arts.

Besides support from cultural legislation, The General Education Act plays – and has historically in particular played – an important role in the financing of the national and, not least, the local amateur associations. For many years this support has however been decreasing, first at national level but later also locally.

The national amateur associations receive support from The General Education Act for their professional advisors and the

general education of their members and member groups. But this support has almost vanished and doesn’t play a substantial role any more.

The greatest impact of the General Education Act is today on the local amateur associations, as this legislation sets the conditions for the funding from the municipalities to the amateur associations. This includes both funding for the general education of their adult members (i.e. music tuition) and the funding to the associations themselves and their premises. The latter two are primarily aimed at associations working with children and youth.

However, a revision of the act in 2002 led to very extensive cuts in the funding from the municipalities. This primarily hit the funding for the general education of adults that has decreased by 45 per cent. But the funding for the local associations and their premises has also dropped by 5 and 9 per cent respectively.

Finally, The Ministry of Education’s share of the lottery surplus has historically been of great importance for the financing of the national amateur youth organizations through funding distributed by the Danish Youth Council (DUF). But in this field the arts organizations have experienced severe cutbacks. From 2002 to 2018 the total support from DUF to the national arts organizations dropped from EUR 863.355 to EURO 397.986 – by more than half.

Weakening infrastructure and current challenges

Furthermore in 2016 the national music organization DAM – Danish Amateur Music, who was funded through The Music Act, was shut down and in 2018 DATS – The Amateur Theatre Organization lost their funding aimed at their youth work, leaving the national amateur organizations with a fractured infrastructure.

This has made it difficult for the sector to be politically strong and visible and to face up to the demands of the ever more widespread project funding that's often very instrumentalized. Today the financial reality for a lot of organizations is that they are largely sponsored by a combination of the above mentioned funds and projects who by means of art aim to solve social or health issues, create activities in remote areas or enhance youth participation in democracy. Thus the sector has gradually become more and more instrumentalized.

The reality of having to operate from project to project and staying in tune with the changing trends in public and private funds, is one of the big challenges facing the national organizations to day. Fundraising is a big part of the daily work of the national organizations and leaves little room to solve other challenges of the voluntary sector, like the recruitment of youth and much

needed political lobbyism, creating a vicious circle of insufficiency and invisibility.

To conclude it is often claimed, that amateur arts in Denmark is to day suffering from never having been able to reach the level of funding that sport has. Perhaps the many different sources to financing are an explanation of this, perhaps the lack of strong national amateur arts organizations is another. In any case the sector is currently looking towards the future and co-operating in order to reestablish an amateur music organization and a stronger amateur culture organization.

Marko Repnik

Republic Of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities (JSKD)



Director of the Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities

2016 MS, Academy of Music, University of Ljubljana

2002 BA hons, Academy of Music, University of Ljubljana

Marko Repnik (1978) started his professional career in 1997 as a soloist in the Slovenian Police Orchestra. In 2002 he became the head of the music sector of the Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia, where he also acted as a conductor for the Protocol.

From 2007 he works at the Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities (JSKD). He was head of the JSKD Žalec Branch Office from 2007 until 2017.

In 2017 he was elected as director of JSKD.

Through its programmes, JSKD enables personal growth and cultural integration, encourages programmes of cultural education and lifelong learning and enhances competencies, skills and abilities. As a professional, organisational and financial support to cultural activities, it emphasises counselling, quality education and events, publishing activities, targeted co-financing of projects by cultural societies and associations and interdepartmental and international connections. The Slovenian cultural space is considered as a field of open communication, relaxed creativity and comprehensive cultural education for continual development.

Our Values:

- Conservation and development of the Slovenian language,
- Encouraging cultural diversity,
- Enforcement of cultural education and education in all segments of culture for all generations,
- Increasing social connectedness in the society,
- Retaining tradition and encouraging modern creative forms.

JSKD (Javni sklad Republike Slovenije za kulturne dejavnosti / Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities) was established in 1998 as a national organization in the field of amateur culture. JSKD is a nationwide network (59 regional branch

offices and the headquarters with expert unit) – professional service that enables multidirectional interaction between cultural societies, local communities and public institutions. Branch offices are combined into 10 regional units (in all major cities), which coordinate and implement regional programs. The spatial dispersion and integration into the local environment is a key to balanced development and crucial for networking on regional, national and international level.

Today, the Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities realises is one of the most effective cultural networks in Slovenia, enabling omni-directional communication between more than 5,000 cultural societies with nearly 110,000 members, local communities, 59 regional branch offices, the central professional service and state institutions. Together, we create over 25,000 events per year, which are viewed by nearly 4 million spectators.

Main activities

JSKD supervises implementation of the national cultural programmes for a wide range of activities from vocal and instrumental music, theater and puppets, folklore, dance, film to visual art and literary activity. Work also includes cultural education and introduction of new practices.

JSKD carries out a three-level pyramidal programme for the availability of cultural contents, enhancement of creators and

development of the public by organising events, educational courses and counselling.

Majority of the programmes is carried out through a pyramid scheme (local, regional and state level) – systematic selection that promotes qualitative development.

JSKD also performs research in individual areas and in the fundamental area.

JSKD organizes events (festivals, competitions, concerts, exhibitions, etc.) and publishes professional literature (books, magazines, music collections...) covering all topics of creativity in the field of amateur art.

In addition JSKD carries out the procedures for co-financing of amateur cultural programmes and projects. The fund ensures and directs financial support to amateur cultural activities at the national, regional and local level and monitors the implementation and use of resources.

JSKD study centre

Educational programmes of the JSKD Study Centre provide for continuous development of amateur culture. They focus on fields without specialised programmes in the formal education system or with a significant lack of staff due to high demand.

The publishing programme of the fund includes all professional material connected to cultural creativity – manuals from various fields of cultural activities, editions of notes, periodical publications, professional compendiums, research, monographs and drama texts.

Cankarjeva Residential Centre chooses its residents through international public calls. In nearly a decade of operation, the centre has hosted over 100 artists from all over the world and all areas of art.

Through residential programmes, JSKD enables foreign top artists to stay and create. Through their presence in Ljubljana and Slovenia, they enrich their opus and leave a mark of their creativity in our environment.

Week of amateur culture

The All-Slovenian Week of Amateur Culture awards recognition to those that devote their energy and time to culture. The week of amateur culture is intended for raising public awareness about the extent, quality and positive effects of amateur culture on modern society.

There are over 1,000 cultural events all over the country during the week of amateur culture.

International cooperation

On the international level JSKD cooperates with other national organisations in various EU programmes and projects. JSKD is also a member of numerous international professional organizations and networks in the field of amateur culture. JSKD is a member of the European Network for active participation in cultural activities AMATEO. The network acts as a representative body and an information platform at European level and linking socio-cultural organizations representing the interests of amateur cultural organizations across Europe and promotes their integration into the European cultural programmes.

JSKD takes care of implementation of international programmes and projects and inclusion into networks of similar organisations and supports guest appearances of the best groups and their participation at various festivals.

Conference Conclusions and Recommendations

The conference participants working in two breakout groups formulated the prerequisites for a functioning non-professional art sector in theory and practice. The conclusions reached in these working groups are presented herewith. They are intended for national and local government representatives, politicians and culture policy makers, as well as representatives of organizations working in the non-professional art domain, whether in a working or voluntary-contributor role. The recommendations cover the general prerequisites for the functioning and development of the non-professional art domain in society, while reflecting on the current situation, the opportunities and risks as well as current trends in the field.

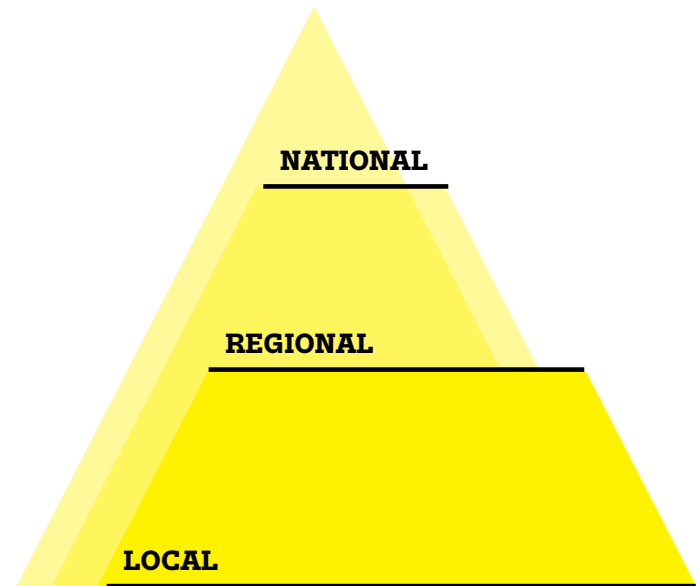
One oft-encountered view is that non-professional art is ‘cheap’, a spare-time hobby, and is thus outside the scope of activities needing the support of society, or more specifically, from public bodies. It is a truism that people will practically always need to express themselves artistically, but to do so they must have suitable conditions. We need to bear in mind that non-professional art plays a major role in local cultural life, particularly in small communities, whilst for several sectors (such as folk dance) no professional option exists or is only marginal (as with choir singing). Yet this domain brings a whole range of positive effects, not least in personal, social or economic terms. To make the best of such potential, the non-professional art domain needs purposive

and systematic support. The issue is to build a stable supporting infrastructure and a ‘groundswell’ for creative leadership, while nurturing underlying interest and the desire for more culture in the wider community. This brings us to the prerequisites and recommendations for the development of non-professional art in society:

1. Prerequisites

1. a functioning cultural infrastructure, interconnected at all levels: national, regional and local

Cultural infrastructure levels



2. a clearly defined place for culture in national, regional and local development strategies – to include non-professional art (and culture in general) in strategy documents at all levels

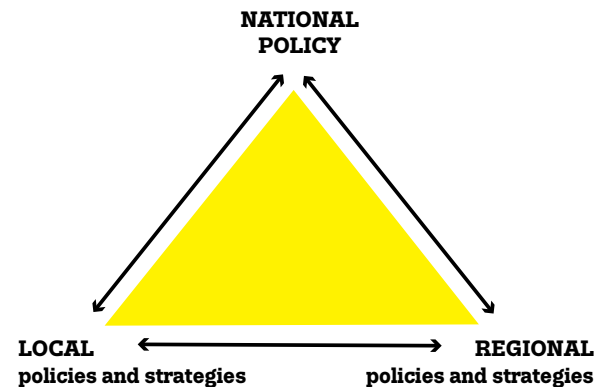
3. the existence of long-term, conceptual support for this area, both direct and indirect, aimed at all groups of the populace, whether grouped by age, ethnicity or social strata

4. a favourable social climate, to make people aware of the importance of the non-professional art domain

2. Recommendations

INCORPORATE NON-PROFESSIONAL ART INTO POLICY DOCUMENTS AND THE LEGISLATURE

– to encourage municipalities, cities, regions to support non-professional art, making it one of the priorities of public policy – seeking to interconnect the national, regional and local levels



– to seek to incorporate non-professional art in strategic documents, ranging from specific measures (e.g. round tables with the participation of all stakeholders to formulate the basic needs and options for non-professional art; to regularly recognize/award individuals or organizations that significantly contributed to the development of culture in a location or

- region) – whilst in the strategy papers and grant titles to distinguish between professional and non-professional culture
- to strive for long-term sustainability, in terms of public support, while maintaining quality and artistic independence (grant programmes) – to include, as one of the major arguments for the public support of arts and culture, their economic multiplier effects (the cultural and creative industries; the economic benefits of cultural activities for the municipality, etc.)
 - to lift the administrative and legislative barriers complicating the implementation of specific artistic activities (e.g. initiatives in public spaces)

FOSTER COOPERATION

- to seek to make cooperation between the cultural and education sectors inherent in educational and strategic documents for the cultural domain, from the national to the local level
- in joint projects and activities to interlink any existing cultural entities (under the supervision of public bodies and other providers of public cultural services, including NGOs)
- to look for partners in other social areas, i.e. to connect the cultural sector with institutions from other disciplines (in particular education, social work, health care, etc.) – one positive effect, among others, being the strengthening of the role of the cultural sector at the given level

SUPPORT RESEARCH

- to initiate a variety of research projects in this area, including those that show the benefits of culture, even beyond the economic ones¹
- to strive for the means to obtain current data, beyond the scope of the national statistical services, on the number of ensembles and individuals in the various artistic fields of culture – to find partners for collecting such data in a given location (e.g. public libraries, city authorities, cultural centres, etc.)

BRING NON-PROFESSIONAL ART INTO THE PUBLIC SPACE

- to support the arts in public spaces – for this purpose, to create a stable cultural infrastructure (physical, educational, and recreational)
- to create public meeting places, having the ambience for mutual exchange
- to implement interdisciplinary projects and through novel connections to grow the appeal of such events (e.g. culture with gastronomy, multi-sensory experiences)
- to involve the public and the local community in artistic activity and so build a sense of local belonging, improving quality of life and reducing the migration pressure from rural to urban settings

¹ A View on Amateur Arts. Forum voor Amateurkunsten, Gent (BE), 2009; Ramsden, Hilary: A skeleton overview of the state of the amateur arts in Europe. Voluntary Arts, Edinburgh (GB), 2013; Andersson, Anna-Karin: Mapping of Nordic Cultural Organizations. Amatörkulturens samrådsgrupp, ax, Stockholm/Copenhagen (SE/DK), 2010.

- ↪ to motivate and energize the ensembles and individuals active in non-professional art, so they publicize themselves and thus raise awareness of how important non-professional art can be

PROMOTE THE SHARING OF INFORMATION

- ↪ to share experience and knowledge in terms of tangible and virtual social networks, both on the part of the public policy makers, as well as those active in non-professional art
- ↪ to create an electronic information platform to disseminate information on funding opportunities and projects (grants, subsidy programmes, etc.) and to establish partnerships between the various entities operating in the non-professional art domain