

The Impact of Cultural and Citizenship Education on Social Cohesion

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Abstract

Panel

**The Impact of Cultural and Citizenship Education on Social
Cohesion: Chances – Challenges – Changes**

by
Johanna Lindstedt
Annantalo Arts Centre, Finland

www.nece.eu

By what means and methods art and cultural education for children and youth contributes sustainability to the formation of social cohesion in Helsinki?

Formation of social cohesion from the point of view of an art institution means:

- Simply bringing young people to experience and produce arts and culture together;
- Strengthening the young people's sense of belonging to the city where they live;
- Having democracy and equality in services offered to young people, the services should not be dependent on their socio-economic or cultural backgrounds;
- Bringing the art institutions and artists of the city together to work for and with young people and make the programs significant and meaningful for young individuals;
- Creating partnerships between culture and school, creating integration as well as positive interactions between art and cultural institutions as well as actors and young individuals;
- Facilitating participation and improving obtainability of cultural life of the city.

In practice:

1. Annantalo Arts Centre offers multidisciplinary culture courses (30-36 hours) to the teenagers (1.300 pupils annually) in which artists, subject teachers and pupils gain living experience of various phenomena in life. The themes are well suited for the curricula in senior comprehensive schools, high schools and vocational schools. Subject teachers, culture officials and art actors collaborate on current themes: Learning through the arts!
We try to open the school doors to the society, in this case to the cultural and artistic environment in Helsinki and the capital region. Culture and arts are the means for an holistic and integrated education. A Culture Course includes art and culture events and performances, artist meetings and workshops, lectures of experts, discussions and independent work (portfolio).
2. Annantalo organises for children at the age of seven to twelve years working processes with an artist called **5x2 – art lessons** as part of the school day. Every child can participate once during the primary school time. In pedagogical exhibitions in Annantalo we often join the big projects of the City of Helsinki (Picasso exhibition).
3. Annantalo and the Education Department of Helsinki City are building together “A Culture Path” to the comprehensive schools to make sure that every child in Helsinki can get in touch with living arts and culture at least once every year. The aim is to give joy and empowerment to every child and to integrate art and culture into the lives of the young people.
(The Teachers Culture Calendar is also available online at www.kultus.fi)