

Finland

Cultural policy: Finland implements the UNESCO 2005 Convention as a Member State of the European Union. The implementation of the Convention forms a natural part of the Finnish cultural policy. According to the Programme of the Finnish Government (June 2011) culture plays a central role in building a society. Accordingly, the Finnish cultural policy recognises the importance of cultural diversity and ensures that culture is available to every citizen. Furthermore, the Strategy for Cultural Policy (2009), by the Ministry of Education and Culture, ensures that multiculturalism is taken into account in all activity relating to cultural policy. Local activity and everyday practices are especially important in multiculturalism.

Cultural industries: Business related to Finnish cultural and creative industries is promoted in many ways, with close cooperation between several ministries and other partners. In addition to supporting the cultural infrastructure, the Ministry of Education and Culture promotes the cultural and creative industries with two targeted programmes: a programme for Cultural Export Promotion 2007-2011 and a Development Programme for Business Growth and Internationalisation in the Creative Industries 2007-2013, co-funded by the European Social Fund.

Knowledge base / indicators: A set of indicators was introduced by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2009 for steering cultural policy and for surveying the information needs. The four sets are: 1) Consolidating the cultural base, 2) Creative workers, 3) Culture and citizens and 4) Culture and the economy. Statistics Finland produces also bi-annual Cultural Statistics.

Expressions under threat / minorities: The Ministry of Education and Culture seeks to secure equal opportunities for language and cultural minorities and special-needs groups (one example: Sámi people) to participate in culture and express their creativity. In preparing and drafting legislation, the Ministry takes special care to guarantee equity and equality.

International cooperation: As regards cultural diversity, the guiding principle for Finland is to take actively part in the work of international organisations, highlighting the viewpoints and needs of a small country and a small language area in larger international and global issues. The preferential treatment of, and the financial support for the benefit of the developing countries are important aspects in the implementation of the Convention.

Cultural projects carried out within development cooperation are an added asset in Finnish development policy. The financial support granted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for “development policy projects in culture” is mainly targeted to the main development cooperation partners and to other countries of major importance for Finland. The aim is to support multiculturalism and better living standards by means of enhancing interaction and cultural identity.

Awareness raising: During the formulation of the Convention the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture heard other relevant authorities, NGOs and representatives of media. In addition, the Parliament of Finland has been informed in due order, there has been several press articles in various publications, and many NGOs have organised their own informative meetings on the Convention. Within the administrative branch of Ministry of Education and Culture there is a wide cooperation with relevant stakeholders, like with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in matters concerning development cooperation, and with many organisations of the civil society.