

## ARTS AND CULTURE FESTIVALS IN FINLAND

### CULTURAL POLICY VIEWPOINT

Finland has a large number of arts and culture festivals to offer and people participate in them actively. The activities are diverse, covering a wide range of art forms. Festivals are an important form of production, supply and participation in the arts and culture, and are an established part of the structures for producing art. Festivals are held throughout the country and they improve the regional and local accessibility of culture. In cultural policy, festivals are considered from the standpoints of vitality of the arts and culture as well as social impact.

#### ARTS AND CULTURE FESTIVALS ARE

- recurrent events that take place at a certain time
- in a certain locality
- and feature an art or culture based programme that is open to the public.

#### ▶ FESTIVALS – A HYBRID PRODUCTION METHOD STRENGTHENS THE CULTURAL FOUNDATION

The **core** of arts and culture festivals is in **artistic and cultural contents produced in series of events**. Festivals play a key part in the development of different art forms and the introduction of new phenomena.

Festivals are produced by a growing number of associations, public sector actors and businesses ranging from small communities to professional organizations. They are not put together by individual organizations alone but **produced in networks**. This model could be called **hybrid production**.

For most festivals **the primary source of income are ticket sales** and revenues from other activities related to the organization of the festival. The significance of sponsorship continues to increase. Funding from the state and municipalities is of crucial importance to many festivals: without such funding, it wouldn't be possible to organize them.

Festival production also strongly relies on immaterial resources, such as the role

of audience in the creation of the festival experience, social media buzz in the marketing of the event, and the partners' knowhow in festival production. The material and immaterial **resources** of festival production **thus derive from diverse private and public sources**.

The costs of festivals comprise artistic production costs, such as artist fees, staff wages, copyright fees and costs related to the creation of the festival environment. Organizing a festival is **labour-intensive**, as is the case with most cultural events. Apart from artists, producers and other creative workers, festivals also employ people from other fields (festival services) both directly and indirectly. The amount of voluntary work is similarly significant.

*Festivals contribute to the cultural, social and economic development of regions and cities.*

From the perspective of participation and inclusion **festivals add to the cultural, social and economic capital** of the communities where they take place. The production know-how cumulates through communal engagement into year-round social and cultural capital in the local community. The organizers and the audience also use local services. The festival production and audiences bring income and economic capital to the surrounding locality.



#### CREATIVITY, DIVERSITY AND PARTICIPATION

- The Finnish field of arts and culture festivals is large in numbers, **regionally extensive and multi-artistic**.
- Finland's festival production is in international comparison **versatile and unprejudiced** – ranging from performing arts and literature to new art forms. The supply is concentrated in the summer months.
- The diversity of the festival field **enhances the vibrancy of cultural life** and cumulates intangible cultural heritage.
- Festivals are produced in a wide range of art forms by both small-scale actors and larger professional organizations in the private, public and third sector.
- **Participation** in cultural events and festivals **has significantly increased** throughout the 2000s.
- The festivals members of Finland Festivals and the six largest pop and rock festivals sold altogether **1 114 955** tickets in 2016.

1,1  
MILLION TICKETS  
SOLD IN 2016

- Due to their strongly network-based production structure festivals **employ** artists and other creative workers as well as providers of supplementary festival services both **directly** and **indirectly**.
- More than 7 300 volunteers worked at the 80 festivals members of Finland Festivals in 2014.

## WHY STUDY FESTIVALS?

The diversity of the Finnish arts and culture festivals presents challenges in efforts to identify the relevant cultural policy factors and gain an overall picture of the festival field. At present the field cannot be unambiguously examined from the viewpoint of any specific funding mechanism, data gathering method, regional development need, art form or audience.

Data on festivals and their impacts are needed to support political decision making, development and assessment. The sources of relevant data are however fragmented and an overall picture of the field can only be constructed through a variety of materials and reports.

Among them are, for example, the reporting on state subsidies allocated through the Ministry of Education and Culture to arts and culture festivals, the figures and statistics produced by Finland Festivals based on its member

organizations, the leisure and time use studies, and culture statistics of Statistics Finland, as well as the Festival Barometer developed by the University of the Arts Helsinki and the University of Lapland. Several theses and doctoral dissertations have also reported qualitative data on the festival field.

The research methods and the definitions of the concepts of event and festival vary, making it difficult to depict the field in any unequivocal manner. There are no data available on, for example, the exact number of events and festivals held in Finland annually or the festival audiences and volunteers.

Alongside the production of arts and culture festivals, their various artistic, cultural, social and economic impacts would be important to measure and assess.

*Festival productions connect simultaneously with the arts, the economy and national policies.*

## POLICY FOR ARTS AND CULTURE FESTIVALS: **PROPOSAL FOR A FESTIVAL POLICY ACTION PROGRAMME FOR 2017-2025**

The first proposal for a national arts and culture festival action programme was prepared under the direction of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture during 2015-2016. The aim of the programme and the background reports prepared by Cupore was to create a foundation that would support the vibrancy of the festival field. The development work was carried out in collaboration between the state, festival organizations and other cultural actors, municipalities, regional and local authorities, and industry.

The seven key objectives of the proposal are:

- to strengthen the esteem and status of arts and culture festivals in cultural policy and raise awareness on the role of festivals in promoting culture at national, regional and municipal level
- to ensure that financial resources are directed appropriately and the state subsidy policy is developed to respond to the special needs of festivals
- to support structures that foster participation and inclusion
- to advance the principles of sustainable development and take them into account in the funding decisions
- to support measures for developing international cooperation, competencies and competitiveness
- to develop methods for gathering qualitative research and statistical data and strengthen the research foundation
- to support and strengthen cooperation among festivals and between festivals and other fields.

In Finnish public governance the **Ministry of Education and Culture** supports arts and

culture festivals by annually awarding state subsidies for the operations of national festivals.

**The Finnish Film Foundation** supports nationally significant film festivals. Festivals can also receive state subsidies through the **Arts Promotion Centre Finland** and discretionary project support from other state subsidy programmes centred on, for example, cultural export or tourism.

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish Film Foundation supported altogether 274 arts and culture festivals during 2000-2014. The organizational structures, contents and life spans of the supported events aptly reflect the diversity of the festival field. Approximately one half of the subsidies went to music festivals. The number of festivals that have applied for and received state subsidies and also the support for new forms of art have grown in recent years.

In 2016 the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture awarded 4.7 million euro to 139 arts and culture festivals. The Finnish Film Foundation supported seven film festivals with more than half a million euro. State subsidies were also granted to cultural festivals for children and some events were supported as part of the promotion of different art forms.

All publications mentioned in the fact sheet are written in Finnish. Read the English summaries of the articles in *Festivaalien Suomi* (Festivals in Finland) here: <http://www.Cupore.fi/en/publications/cupore-s-publications/festivals-in-finland>

In addition to Cupore's own publications, the following sources (in Finnish) have been used in this fact sheet:

- Finland Festivals Ry (2017). [www.festivals.fi/en/](http://www.festivals.fi/en/)
- Kainulainen, K. (2005). *Kunta ja kulttuurin talous. Tulkintoja kulttuuripääoman ja festivaalien aluetaloudellista merkityksistä*. Tampereen yliopistopaino. <http://tampub.uta.fi/handle/10024/67538>
- Kinnunen, M. (tulossa). *Festivaalibarometri 2016*. Tausta-aineisto.
- Kinnunen, M. (tulossa). *Festivaalibarometri 2016*. Tausta-aineisto.
- Kinnunen, M. et al. (2015). *Festivaalibarometri 2014 ja tuloksia. Teoksessa Rock, Ra(u)ha ja Rakkautta. Festivaalibarometri 2014 ja katsaus tapahtumien muuttuvaan toimintaympäristöön. JOHDE II - tapahtumatutannon muutosjohtaminen -hankkeen loppujulkaisu*. [https://www.uniarts.fi/sites/default/files/Rock%2C%20Ra%28u%29ha%20ja%20Rakkautta\\_1.pdf](https://www.uniarts.fi/sites/default/files/Rock%2C%20Ra%28u%29ha%20ja%20Rakkautta_1.pdf)
- Luonila, M. (2016). *Festivaalituotannon merkitysten verkosto ja johtaminen - Tapaustutkimuksia suomalaisista taidefestivaaleista*. *Studia Musica 70*. Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemia. [ethesis.siba.fi/files/online\\_luonila\\_m\\_vk\\_003.pdf](http://ethesis.siba.fi/files/online_luonila_m_vk_003.pdf)
- Taide- ja kulttuurifestivaalit - vahvistuva kulttuurinen voimavara. *Esitys toimintaohjelmaksi vuosille 2017-2025*. Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön julkaisuja 2016: 42. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-263-437-5>
- Tilastokeskus. [pxweb2.stat.fi/sahkoiset\\_julkaisut/kulttuuritilasto/html/suom0008.htm](http://pxweb2.stat.fi/sahkoiset_julkaisut/kulttuuritilasto/html/suom0008.htm)



## CUPORE RESEARCH ON THIS THEME

The Centre for Cultural Policy Research Cupore has been conducting a research project on cultural events and festivals since 2013. The objective is to produce new data for the assessment of the impacts of cultural policy and create a knowledge base for reforming the government transfer system with regard to the support directed at cultural events. The resulting publications examine the Finnish field of arts and culture festivals by means of diverse data.

1. **Festivaalien Suomi** (Festivals in Finland); Silvanto, S. (ed.), 2016. English summaries. The collection of articles on the Finnish festival field examines through case studies the development of the field and its cultural, social and economic significance as a part of arts and cultural policies nationally and internationally.
2. **Eurooppalaisia festivaalistrategioita ja -avustusohjelmia** (European festival strategies and grants programmes); Silvanto, S., 2016. The working paper reviews festival strategies adopted in European countries, and especially European grants programmes aimed at festivals. The report reveals that despite the growth in the number of festivals no national strategies related to festivals can be found in Europe as yet.
3. **Kartoitus kulttuuritapahtumien järjestämiseen liittyvän sääntelyn ja byrokratian purkamisen tarpeista** (Mapping needs regarding deregulation and reduction of red tape in the organization of cultural events); Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015. The report explores the regulatory environment of cultural events, which is one development area for Finnish art and culture policy. The problems revealed by the report primarily concern the related regulations, administrative cultures and permit processes and fees.
4. **Festivaalien ja tapahtumien edistäminen valtion kulttuuripolitiikassa** (Promotion of festivals and events in state cultural policies. Knowledge base, state subsidies and effectiveness); Herranen, K. & Karttunen, S., 2016. The report offers an overview of the Finnish cultural events field, the audiences of festivals and events and the related social, cultural and economic impacts. It examines the role of festivals and events in cultural policies, with the main empirical focus on the state's cultural policies, especially the state subsidy system of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. The cultural policy part of the publication analyzes the relationship between the general goals of the state and cultural events, and reflects on the degree to which these goals are achieved. The purpose is to determine the state's effectiveness in that regard.