



RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICES

Arts on Prescription

Arts on Prescription in the Baltic Sea Region

Project duration: 2023-2025

Total Budget: 3.5 Mio € / EU Funding: 2.8 Mio €

Odense / 27 February 2024

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interreg-baltic.eu/project/arts-on-prescription/



Challenge 1:

Increase of mental health issues requires new innovative approaches

- **Depression and loneliness are increasing among people of all ages**, while their mental health is declining, not least due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing state of permacrisis.
- **Health and social systems are ill-equipped to meet the growing need of the population to receive support.** GPs in particular are not able to cope with the amount of patients seeking help both for medical and social issues.
- **Policy & decision makers are expected to address this issue through innovative approaches. One such approach is Arts on Prescription** – an intervention that connects people with mental health issues to group-based arts activities.

One solution: Arts on Prescription

AoP programmes can help individuals by providing opportunities for **self-expression** **self-discovery** and **social bonding** and to explore and learn new skills through creative activities and in settings free from external demands. This may lead to:

- Increase in self-esteem, self-confidence and empowerment;
- Reduction in anxiety, depression, stress;
- Strengthening of motivation, hope and optimism;
- increased community connectedness and belonging.



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What is AoP in the Baltic Sea Region

- A **generic programme** that can be adapted in different local municipalities and region in BSR
- A **non-therapy approach** aiming to create a **‘diagnosis-free space’** to meet the individuals for who they are without focus on the type of diagnosis they may have.
- A programme of **varying arts categories**
- A programme cycle: **8-12 weeks with** activities between **1 to 3 times a week.**



Challenge 2:

Lack of knowledge in how to set up AoP programmes by local authorities

Arts on Prescription in the Baltic Sea Region has until now been mostly small-scale one-off pilots

Public authorities (health and culture sectors and administrations) lack the knowledge on how to setup well-organised and sustainable programmes

There are hardly any longer-term financial mechanisms in place



Solutions to support the AoP programme

- **A practitioner's guide** that will aid persons working in or closely with municipalities and regions to plan, test and implement AoP programmes. The guide links to training material and best practises.
- **Information material** aimed at decision makers **to raise awareness** of the value of AoP programmes and the economic benefits
- **Evaluation framework** – to show results and evidence

What we expect to improve

- Through capacity building of local authorities, we **establish sustainable cross-sectorial collaborations** in municipalities and regions that are fit to develop and implement long-term AoP programmes
- **Tools, methods and best practices** that can **support practitioners in setting up AoP programmes**
- **Arguments on the value of AoP programmes** to decisionmakers including the type of policy areas AoP programmes support and improve
- Cost benefit analysis. We provide **the financial arguments** to municipalities and regions on why it is worth investing in AoP. Helping **to establish long-term funding schemes**

How Interreg can facilitate change

Transnational exchange

- **Developing solutions together**, that can upscale and improve AoP programmes to become an integrated part of the future healthcare solutions in the Baltic Sea Region
- Testing and improving ideas and methods at a transnational level – **gaining more knowledge and inspiration on how to overcome challenges**
- **Providing the necessary start-up funds** for developing and testing programmes (that can lead to the necessary results and awareness raising that can provide long term funding)



<https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/arts-on-prescription/>



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