

Bonn Declaration

Background

In May 2011, the European Music Council (EMC) invited active parties¹ from the field of music education to discuss the implementation of the UNESCO *Seoul Agenda, Goals for the Development of Arts Education*². The main task of the seminar was to explore how the Seoul Agenda can be adapted to music education in Europe.

The Bonn Declaration reflects common focal points for the development of music education in Europe. It acknowledges the principle of subsidiarity and calls upon political decision makers on a local, regional, national and European level to define common policies that promote the development of music education in Europe at all levels and to put these policies into practice. The participants of the seminar agree that it is vital to recognise the value of music education in Europe for the cohesion of the European societies in the 21st century.

The *Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education* reflects the conviction [...] that arts education has an important role to play in the constructive transformation of educational systems that are struggling to meet the needs of learners in a rapidly changing world characterized by remarkable advances in technology on the one hand and intractable social and cultural injustices on the other.

Issues [...] included [...] were peace, cultural diversity and intercultural understanding as well as the need for a creative and adaptive workforce in the context of post industrial economies.

[...] Arts education can make a direct contribution to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing the world today.

Seoul Agenda, introduction

Introductory Remark

The three goals of the Seoul Agenda are closely interlinked and cover important aspects of arts education. The Bonn Declaration reflects the arguments of the Seoul Agenda and gives interpretations of the three goals placing its own emphasis on music education in Europe.

¹ Over 40 representatives of European music education umbrella organisations were present. The participants have a wide range of experience, e.g. formal, non-formal and informal music education, diverse musical genres and competencies of cultural and educational policies at national and European level.

² http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/41117/12798106085Seoul_Agenda_Goals_for_the_Development_of_Arts_Education.pdf/Seoul%2BAgenda_Goals%2Bfor%2Bthe%2BDevelopment%2Bof%2BArts%2BEducation.pdf

Goal 1: Access

Ensure that arts education is accessible as a fundamental and sustainable component of a high quality renewal of education

Under goal 1, the Bonn Declaration focuses on the aspect of providing “access to music education”, it looks at the precondition of the places where music education takes place and asks if these reflect the needs of the learners and if they are open to all who wish to learn and participate in music education.

Access to music education and active music participation is a human right which has to be ensured for people of all ages and all backgrounds in Europe, guaranteeing that all citizens are given the right to express themselves freely through artistic means. This is in accordance with the Five Musical Rights³ of the International Music Council (IMC). Therefore:

- Music education must be a continuous, joined-up process from birth, through childhood and into adult life.
- Music education, including participatory approaches, must be a compulsory aspect of the curriculum in all European schools.
- Non-formal and informal music education opportunities have to be recognized and increased visibility of these projects must be ensured.
- Music education must be practised in a variety of settings in order to reach the largest possible number of people. Formal, informal and non-formal methods must be used within the general school system, in specialised musical and artistic institutions, in the local community and in a wide range of non-artistic settings – for instance business, industry and social work.
- Opportunities and structures must be created, but also barriers removed, so that it is possible for anyone, irrespective of their age or social circumstances, to participate in music education and to engage actively in music making.
- Music education must reflect the diversity of the society in which we live and must incorporate societal and technological developments.
- Cross-curricular projects need to be developed, including interdisciplinary arts experiences, as well as co-operation with non artistic disciplines.

³ The Five Musical Rights:

the right for all children and adults

- to express themselves musically in full freedom;
- to learn musical languages and skills;
- to have access to musical involvement through participation, listening, creation and information;

the right for musical artists

- to develop their artistry and communicate through all media, with appropriate facilities at their disposal;
- to obtain fair recognition and remuneration for their work.

Goal 2: Quality

Assure that arts education activities and programmes are of a high quality in conception and delivery

Under goal 2, the Bonn Declaration focuses on the basic requirements for reaching high quality in music education. It examines how training institutions for educators, and educators themselves, meet these quality demands. Music education practitioners include music teachers, general teachers and pedagogues in formal, non-formal and informal settings. A high quality of music education contributes to personal development. Therefore:

- High quality music education practitioners need to be involved in music education at the earliest stage (already at pre-kindergarten and pre-school education) and to be included in all steps of music education throughout the life-long learning cycle.
- All musicians who entering into music education must receive the pedagogical training providing the necessary academic, practical and social foundations for their work. Ideally this should be included as a compulsory element in the professional training of the musician. Likewise, all education professionals should receive musical training in order to understand the value of music.
- Music Teacher Training:
 - Training must be modernised to equip the teachers with the most up-to-date methods and tools;
 - Learning outcomes of music teacher training should be used as tools for the (re)development of curricula;
 - The status of the music teacher and music educators must be raised.
- Continuous professional development must be offered to all music education practitioners.
- High quality evaluation systems need to be established for all levels of music education (higher education, music in schools, non-formal and informal sectors) in order to ensure the development of innovative pedagogies that will engage a diversity of learners. These systems should include criteria for defining the learning outcomes as well as the teaching.⁴
- A shared understanding of quality between the different educational settings should be developed.
- Cooperation between formal education institutions and non-formal and informal music educations settings should be increased and partnerships, for instance between musicians and teachers, encouraged.
- The exchange of best practices at local, national and international level needs to be reinforced.

⁴ On learning outcomes in the higher music education sector, please see the AEC studies at: <http://www.bologna-and-music.org/home.asp?id=1769&lang=en>
On learning outcomes in the field of Music Teacher Training please see the meNet learning outcomes at: <http://www.eas-music.org/en/activities/publications/policy-papers/>

Goal 3: Social and Cultural Challenges

Apply arts education principles and practices to contribute to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today's world

Under goal 3, the Bonn Declaration reflects the interdependence of the individual and society. It focuses on the intrinsic and extrinsic values of music and music education and re-emphasises the potential of music for social responsibility and intercultural dialogue.

Cultural diversity is a reality in all European countries. The promotion of diversity and dialogue between cultures needs the recognition and the consideration of all musical cultures without hegemony. The intrinsic value of music needs to be respected: Music is a powerful tool for the inclusion of people that are excluded for whatever reason (gender, age, socially, economically, culturally, etc.), and it may serve as a tool for building bridges and for meeting the social and cultural challenges of European societies. Therefore:

- Music education must be context-driven and take into account the changes in society
- Intercultural and socio-cultural training (including personal development and group work) should be integrated into the training of all musicians and music education practitioners at all levels. Likewise workers from other disciplines should receive training in music in order to facilitate cross-over between sectors. They must be exposed to music so as to fully understand its value.
- Social and cultural challenges must be addressed by a variety of disciplines, and cooperation between the cultural, educational and other sectors must be strengthened.
- The debate about the dichotomy of inclusion and quality has to be opened up; it is important to define the goals of a music project with reference to its social implications and address its aims and desired outcomes.
- Music education institutions in the formal sector and organisations offering non-formal music education should offer more activities which are aimed at addressing and resolving social and cultural challenges.
- In order to be able to react to latest trends and to be up-to-date, music education institutions in formal, non-formal and informal settings should have appropriate facilities at hand including digital and music technology equipment.
- Research and good practice examples need to be made available to demonstrate the important role of music education in helping to address personal, social and cultural challenges.

Recommendations to political decision makers at local, national and European level

Governments and legislation need to support and sustain:

- Equal and democratic access to music education for all⁵;
- Music education in the formal, non-formal, and informal education settings because cultural diversity, as well as participatory music education, are essential for successful learning;
- Public funding for formal, non-formal and informal music education in order to ensure that music education is accessible for all;
- Access to affordable music education for all from all societal backgrounds, for instance through grants to avoid elitism;
- The diversity of learning, with the concept of music education for all delivered with a high level of professionalism;
- Sufficient funding for the provision of appropriate, high-quality and up-to-date teacher training;
- The quality of music education offered to the educators. If music education is taken seriously, music education practitioners must have adequate training in music;
- The continuous professional training of music education practitioners, including provision after having received their professional degree;
- Sufficient funding for both projects highlighting the social benefits of music-making and those supporting traditional music education;
- Sustainable funding and legislation for quality assurance and evaluation, which give important information on the social impact of music education;
- Cross-over funding for multi-sector projects i.e. health, welfare, development etc;
- Sustainability in public funding practices and a balance between long-term structural funding and short-term project funding; this includes core funding to bodies organising activities in the field of music and education.

⁵ from amateur to professional, regardless of age, gender or geographic or social circumstances