

It's not a substitute for medical treatment but a complementary community-based intervention to support mental health and social inclusion.



87%

of Europeans agree that engaging with culture improves their emotional or physical well-being reminding us that access to culture is a fundamental human right

From [Culture and Health: Time to ACT, OMC report, 2025](#)

## Arts on Prescription

refers to any program in which health and social care providers are enabled to prescribe, or refer, arts, culture, or nature experiences, such as group-based arts (visual arts, music, dance, creative writing, theatre) and culture activities (like museum visits) to patients or clients in order to support their health and well-being.

An infrastructure needs to be established to make this work. The most widely used model employs a link worker who matches referred patients to the most suitable available arts programmes.



The UK was the pioneer of arts on prescription and now also successfully implemented in most European countries, USA, Australia and across the world. Recently implemented in 8 Baltic countries in a €3.1million EU investment.

*Referenced from various sources, see last page.*

## Some interesting examples from around Europe:

There are now hundreds of inspiring examples from around the world showcasing how the arts are being used to promote health and well-being – from music programs to support people with dementia, to dance initiatives for those living with Parkinson's, creative writing projects in diverse communities, and theatre and music-making with young people.

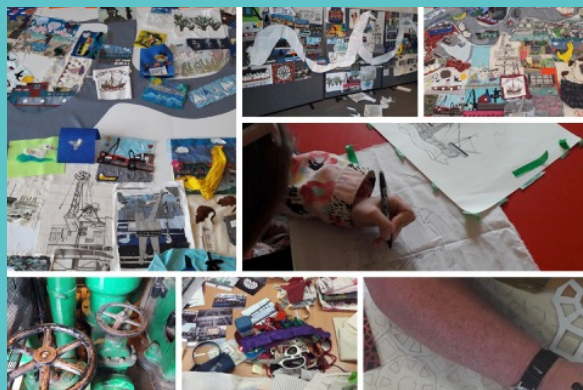
### Music and Motherhood project



Through this [project](#) new mothers experience alleviated symptoms of post-partum depression and more connection to their baby through singing and music.

*Location: Romania, Italy, Denmark and others*

### Tapestry project



This [project](#) involved people working in a group to discuss and create a new tapestry about the regional history inspired from an exhibition at the Arnolfini contemporary art centre.

*Location: creativeSHIFT, Bristol (UK)*

### Minerva project



Minerva is a scientific [project](#) aiming to provide evidence on the positive effects of the artistic experience and cultural activities on the mental health of individuals and the population and indicate the role that museums can play in prevention and treatment in these areas.

*Location: Palazzo Maffei Casa Museo, Verona (Italy)*

### Culture vitamins!



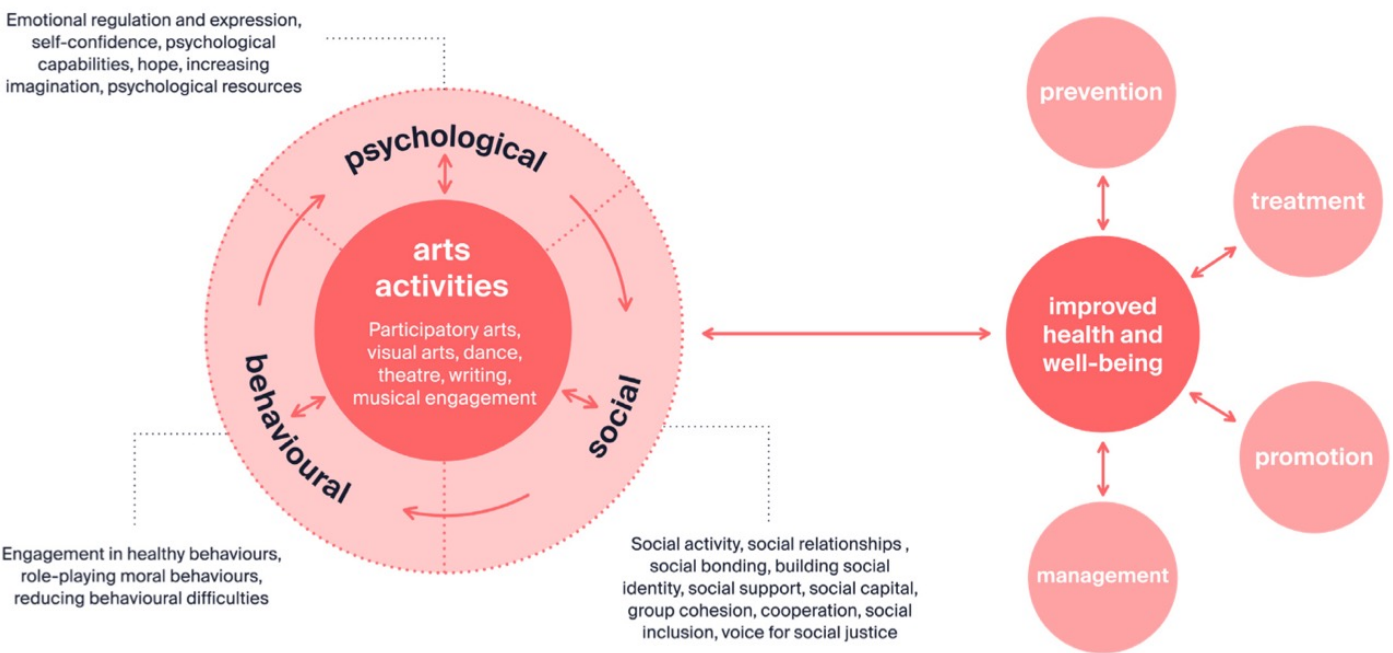
This [project](#) exposes participants to a different art form every week, such as group singing, museum visits and creative workshops, all designed to foster social connection, self-expression and emotional relief.

*Location: Denmark*

# How can the arts help to improve health and well-being?

Often being low-risk with high social and health returns, participation in arts and culture programs offers a promising solution to support public health by reducing the burden on strained healthcare systems, address social isolation and promote cross-sector collaboration.

Below is a theoretical model that outlines the health benefits of the arts



From [Creative care: A resource for artists working in humanitarian contexts](#), by WHO Foundation and Jameel Arts and Health lab

## Why the arts?

Evidence confirms that:

Taking part in art, nature, exercise, music, creative, expressive, social, or philosophical activities including through arts on prescription, can lead to a wide range of benefits:





# Where is the evidence?

An increasing number of reports, research studies, and evaluations now provide evidence-based support for the health benefits of the arts, including findings from Arts on Prescription programs. Here are some...



## Recent developments in the field of arts for health

Momentum has accelerated rapidly in recent years, marked by significant progress in research, publications, toolkits and guidelines, the establishment of dedicated institutions, advancements in national and global policy and advocacy, and the expansion of an active international community of practice.

**Toolkits, guidance and factsheets**

**The impact of arts on prescription on individual health and wellbeing: a systematic review with meta-analysis**

**Culture and Health Time to Act**

**Arts, Health and Well-being**

**Interreg Baltic Sea Region**

**Co-funded by the European Union**

**Arts on Prescription**

“I’m convinced that culture for health interventions will be part of health systems throughout the future. The question is how fast do we want this future to be?” *Nils Fietje, Research officer, WHO*

## What is your take on this?

