

Minutes from Tampere 2008-11-12

AER Culture for Health working group meeting Tampere Hall, room Opus 1 and 2

1. Opening of meeting

2. Presentation of participants

- **Marita Fransson**, Chairman of the working group. Västerbotten
- **Sten-Erik Nilsson**, subcommittee Culture chairman, Gävleborg
- **Runar Englund**, County councillor, Jämtland
- **Helen Richardson**, European policy coordinator, Hampshire (replacing Stuart Dorward)
- **Anna-Carin Holmgren**, International coordinator, Jämtland
- **Kerstin Hamre**, Culture and health Project manager, Norrbotten
- **Iлона Novak**, International project coordinator, Västernorrland
- **Doris Materne**, AER secretariat
- **Linnéa Lundström**, International coordinator, Västerbotten

3. Background and objective of this working group

Marita Fransson gave a background to the creation of the working group. The main objective is to organize a conference (or seminar/workshop) to highlight the importance and impact of culture on health in Europe. To prepare this event, this working group led by Västerbotten, was set up during the committee 3 meeting in Ustron, Poland, (May 14-16, 2008). This meeting in Tampere is the first time the working group is gathered, although some regions are not able to attend this time. The main orientation and structure of the conference, timeframe and venue etc will be discussed and outlined during this and future WG meetings.

4. Short presentations of projects (approx. 5-10 min/region)

The members had been asked to look for interesting projects or research on culture's impact on health in their regions. In the future, the members of the working group will have a coordinating role, and will be responsible for having contact with other regions in their country and also with the national level, to find interesting projects.

Hampshire presented two projects:

- **Active hearts:** a project for art activities for elderly in residential properties. Started in 2003 in 8 residential centres, now in all 32 residential centres. 1000 events take place every year. Includes training for the people who work in the centres. Hampshire University has been involved and concluded that the standard of life for the elderly has improved, especially for those suffering from dementia.
- **Books on description:** for people with mild mental health problems (anorexia etc). Self-help books are subscribed to the patients, and follow-ups have shown that it's often been

equally as good as medication. There are currently 100 schemes running in Hampshire, but it will expand. No quantitative measures of success have been carried out yet, but qualitative.

Norrbotten:

Kerstin Hamre presented how the County council works with culture for health and care for elderly: pilot projects about storytelling, music, dance, art etc, but focused on one project called "Creating power".

- **Creating power:** involves theatre, singing, land art. Children with disabilities and children seeking asylum are the target groups. The objective is to increase their self-esteem; empowerment. Two pilot projects with 8 week-long camps. The camps are "documented", and there is a connection to the university in Luleå.

Norrbotten also gave examples of other projects, for example one in Arvidsjaur for elderly.

Västernorrland:

Iлона Novak presented a project that has not taken place yet. Västernorrland will submit a project proposal for the **Interreg**-program together with regions in Norway. The aim is to highlight the impact of culture and arts on public health and projects already successfully completed: develop new methods and services, support collaboration between research, business and other actors of society. The objective is to equalize cultural participation of different social groups, combat social exclusion. Four sub-projects: Culture and health in healthcare, Culture and health at work places, KROKUS: cultural experiences at private companies, Culture and health in education.

Gävleborg:

Sten-Erik Nilsson presented two projects from Gävleborg.

- **Project** for elderly with individual "plans": Personal plans have been developed for people in institutions, these plans include cultural activities. The project has also established places for interaction and meetings, where culture is one theme, (others are food, IT etc). This project includes volunteers.

- "**Glada Hudikteatern**" - "Happy Hudik theatre": theatre project for mentally disabled, who starred in and put up a show in Stockholm for five weeks. The project has attracted interest from national media.

Västerbotten:

The County council supports culture in health care through several projects, mainly run by the county's hospital libraries and the cultural centre "**ALVA Kultur**" at the university hospital. Municipalities in the region, especially Umeå, support cultural projects for the elderly in residential centres, and Umeå university has carried out some studies on the subject.

Västerbotten has also started looking for interesting culture for health projects in other parts of Sweden, for example in one **research rapport from Stockholm** county council, describing several different research projects. A **research centre** has recently been established at Gothenburg university. Marita Fransson also described other projects in southern Sweden, for example about classical music in connection to surgical procedures and rehabilitation.

Jämtland:

- **KomVidare** – "Moving on": the target group for this project is women who have suffered from "burnout" and therefore no longer are able to work. Through arts and craft and other cultural activities, the rehabilitation is facilitated.

5. The work ahead: conference, timeframe and future meetings

Target groups: the main target group should be politicians working with health care and/or culture, to highlight the importance of culture and its impact on health. But practitioners and researchers should be welcome as well.

Length and structure/orientation

There was also a discussion about the length of conference: should it be one/two day conference? There should be examples/speakers from both practical side (“action”) and research. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Time and venue

The conference (seminar/workshop) will take place during spring 2010, as autumn 2009 is to close in time. There were discussions about having it in connection to an AER committee (2 or 3) meeting, but it could also take place in Brussels or if one region offers to host it. Everybody agreed that it should be located in central Europe so that it’s easier for eastern European regions to participate.

Future WG meetings

The working group will have continuous contact via email. Meetings will be held during the committee 3 meetings (in Albania in March or April for the spring plenary meeting), and next General assembly. The members will do “homework” and look for interesting projects and research not only in their regions but also on a national level or at universities.

Since there are so many Swedish members they need to be coordinated among themselves, so not everyone contacts the same persons or organizations etc.

Financial aspects

Doris Materne from the secretariat said that the plenary meeting interpretation is covered by AER, the rest by the host region. The cost for the conference depends on if it will be held in connection to a plenary meeting or not, one or two days long etc.

→ Questionnaire

A questionnaire, with questions to gather views about this from the working group members, including those who couldn’t participate in Tampere, will be distributed and summarized until the next meeting, where it will be discussed further.

6. Any other business:

Connection to other organizations/researchers

Several individual researchers, and organizations like Union of Baltic Cities and the Russian International Organization for Tourism, have expressed their interest in joining or collaborating with the working group.

Marita Fransson explained that the working group should consist of AER member regions and the political representatives or their civil servants. However, collaboration should be encouraged, and it was decided that the working group should ask those interested how they

would like to cooperate, how they work with culture and health, and what their interest in the WG would be.

When it comes to suggesting individual projects for the conference, everybody is welcome to contact one of the WG members and submit their proposal. Being a member of the WG means playing an active part in the entire planning process and execution of the conference.

7. Closing of meeting

Marita Fransson closed the meeting and thanked everybody for their participation.