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Unholy alliance or way of the future? The intertwinements of community development, cultural planning and cultural industries in municipal and regional cultural strategies in Finland

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Introduction

The main question explored in this chapter relates to how the economic and entrepreneurial orientation of creative industries resonates with artistic and cultural goals, and with other strategic municipal and regional development goals. It also focuses on the ‘pressure’ that the strategisation of cultural policy poses to the use of arts and culture in community development.

As the chapter deals with the role of creative industries in cultural planning in Finland, the primary data drawn upon consists of 16 municipal cultural strategies and five regional cultural strategies. They are analysed using a theoretically oriented content analysis, where the theoretical concepts and perspectives used are derived

from previous international studies on cultural planning, community development, creative industries and the economisation of culture (for example Evans, 2001; Throsby, 2002; Lewis and Surender, 2004; Bilton, 2007). Previous research suggests that cultural industries and enterprises are typically justified in cultural policy based on the idea that they bring social improvements and community development (Verwijnen and Lehtovuori, 1996; Evans 2001). The assumed impact is not regarded as being one-sided, as enterprises are also expected to benefit from community resources. However, the potential contradictions between individual for-profit business goals and community development's equity goals are rarely pointed out in cultural strategies.

The public funding of culture and appreciation of the 'intrinsic value' of arts and culture have a long tradition in Finnish cultural policy. One issue explored in this chapter is how entrepreneurial initiatives with community development goals change the nature of arts, culture and cultural policy. It considers how they become instrumentalised for purposes other than directly cultural ones, such as local brand and competitiveness, profit-making and social welfare.

Finnish cultural policy tradition

Finnish cultural policy belongs to the tradition of what is often referred to as the 'Nordic cultural policy model'. Although there is national heterogeneity within the Nordic tradition, it includes many systemic similarities, such as relatively

decentralised administration of cultural policy through its arts council system. Nordic countries also share many core principles and values in their cultural policies: autonomy of the arts, social welfare, equality and inclusion, for instance. The Nordic model encapsulates inclusive public support for arts and culture, and promotes services that make access to arts and culture available to as many citizens as possible. Community development is an important element of this model. Both national and local cultural policy programmes, actions and projects target the active participation, wellbeing and interaction of communities and their members (Duelund, 2008; Mangset et al, 2008).

Anita Kangas (2004) has recognised three different phases in Finnish cultural policy: nation building (1860–1960), welfare state (1960–90) and economisation (since 1990). The instrumentalisation (Kangas, 2001: 88–9) and strategisation of culture (Jakonen, 2020) have been characteristics of the latest phase, because some power over arts funding has been transferred from the regional and field-specific arts councils to the Ministry of Education and Culture and a new semi-state-led body, Arts Promotion Centre (TAIKE). Kangas (2004) remarks that, these phases are not exclusive, but every new phase is constituted on the previous one(s) and intertwines with their features and principles.

The current ‘economic phase’ of cultural policy is characterised by the dominance of a cultural and creative industries discourse and certain accompanying practices. However, the new phase is not entirely about economisation, and there

remain elements from the earlier phases, such as commitments to access and participation (for example Ministry of Education and Culture, [2017b](#)). One significant feature of the current phase has been the stated aim of improving, through culture, the welfare of people who are ‘customers’ of various social and health institutions, such as hospitals and elderly care homes (for example Finnish Government, [2018](#): 23). These objectives intertwine with the new ethos in governing culture, which incorporates forms of New Public Management, managerialism, strategic and knowledge-based management, and results-based steering. Already in 2001, Kangas called this orientation ‘new instrumentalism’, where culture has an expanding role in both strategic regional planning and participatory community development. Looking internationally at the ‘government’ of community development policies and practices, we can see that similar tendencies have been increasingly evident for some time (Kangas, [2001](#); Mangset et al, [2008](#); Forde and Lynch, [2015](#); Heiskanen, [2015](#); Alexander et al, [2018](#); Jakonen, [2020](#); Pyykkönen and Stavrum, [2018](#)).

Cultural industries in Finland

The cultural industries consist of market-based arts and cultural activities that create wealth or other economically measurable ‘impacts’ (for example wage labour and employment) at and for different levels of society and diverse actors. Hence, they refer to those forms of text, music, film, broadcasting, publishing, crafts, design, architecture, visual arts, performing arts and cultural heritage that produce

quantifiable economic value. These industries involve private, civil society (associations, cooperatives and foundations) and public or semi-public organisations, ranging from individual entrepreneurs and one-off cultural events to big corporations and public institutions (Throsby, 2002; Hesmondhalgh, 2013).

In recent years, an enthusiastic view of the potential of cultural industries has spread, together with increasingly prevalent references to the ‘creative industries’. This latter term has further boosted the economic and commercial connotations of cultural industries (McGuigan, 2016). Chris Bilton (2007: 164) describes the conceptual evolution from cultural industries to creative industries as follows:

The term ‘cultural industries’ indicates that creativity grows out of a specific cultural context and emphasizes the cultural content of ideas, values and traditions. The term ‘creative industries’ emphasizes the novelty of ideas and products and places creativity in a context of individual talent, innovation and productivity.

The notion of cultural industries first reached Finnish policy discourse in the 1990s (Heiskanen, 2015) via the final report of a ministerial working group for cultural industries called *Kulttuuriteollisuuden kehittäminen Suomessa* (The Development of Cultural Industries in Finland) (Ministry of Education, 1999).¹ It introduced the idea

that the marketisation of culture and artistic entrepreneurship was necessary, and the working group inspired several new projects, seminars and publications. Among the most influential was a project called *Kulttuuriosaamisen merkitys kansalliselle kilpailukyvyille* (The significance of cultural know-how for national competitiveness) carried out by Turku University Business School and funded by the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra (Wilenius, [2004](#)). This project rooted the concepts of creative industries and creative economy in Finland and defined them as positively contributing to both the economy *and* culture.

The assumptions underpinning creative industry and creative economy discourses have undergone only relatively minor changes since, even though the significance of creativity for the national economy has been increasingly emphasised and the number of policy/government speeches on cultural entrepreneurship has grown. Since the end of the 1990s, all the strategic documents published by the Ministry of Education and Culture have included a section on the economic significance of culture. Since 2010, the Ministry has published eight special reports, programmes, strategies and other documents concerning creative industries and the economy per se. However, the creative economy discourse has not entirely replaced or displaced other arts/culture discourses in the Ministry's cultural policy; discourses relating to the social function of culture or access and participation have also remained. Rather, what has happened is that 'economisation' has become intertwined

with those pre-existing discourses (for example Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017b).

Current policy documents on the creative sector show that creative economy and industry discourses favour private entrepreneurs and companies (including cooperatives) that are self-managing as well as economically self-sufficient (Heiskanen, 2015; Pyykkönen and Stavrum, 2018). Entrepreneurs and enterprises are seen as beneficial for five reasons: they feed innovation and renewal in the fields of cultural production; they promote economic practices in the cultural sphere and create new markets; hence, they support general wellbeing through the generation of new jobs and tax income; they promote the diversity and accessibility of cultural services and activities; and creative industries contribute to local and community development for all of the previously stated reasons. (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2007; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017a.)

Although cultural and creative industries and entrepreneurship are popular topics in political and economic speeches on culture, the figures do not indicate growth; rather, they suggest the contrary. In 2014 the whole cultural sector employed a total of 4.7 per cent of the entire employed labour force (n=2,400,000) in Finland. However, looking at the national economy, the impact of the cultural sector is relatively modest, accounting for 3 per cent of GDP in 2014. According to Statistics Finland: ‘During the period between 2008 and 2011, the added value generated by the cultural sectors has declined by one tenth. During the same period, the total value

added of Finland's economy has increased nearly 5 percent.' (Statistics Finland, [2015](#)).² While 7.2 per cent of Finnish businesses operated in the creative industry sector in 1995, in 2012 this figure was 5 per cent. Finland's exports of cultural products also dropped dramatically during 2008–2012, from €693,993 to €341,566. (Ministry of Education, [1999](#); Peltola et al, [2014](#); Statistics Finland, [2015](#); Ministry of Education and Culture, [2017a](#)).

Despite the collapsing numbers, the Ministry of Education and Culture keeps on emphasizing the strategic significance of cultural industries: Since 2010 it has, together with the Promotion Centre for Audiovisual Culture (AVEK), distributed annual grants for development projects in the creative economy and cultural entrepreneurship. The Finnish Regional Councils and regional TAIKE branches offer workshops and information services to generate enterprises in local creative sectors. Growing cooperation between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture in strategic development programmes concerning creative sector jobs also represents one of the concrete policy changes. Another example of the economisation of cultural policy is the recently commenced Creative Sector Fund, established by the aforementioned ministries and maintained by the explicitly market-oriented Business Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, [2017c](#); [2019](#)). The creative economy is also one of the six sub-branches under Cultural Affairs at the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Cultural planning and strategic community development

‘Cultural planning’ is both an academic and an administrative term that refers to the strategic use of culture for broader urban or local and regional development. The premise behind cultural planning is that ‘culture’ is not always utilised to maximum effect within local development policies and work. It assumes that policy makers, state administrators and developers should adopt cultural planning as a strategic tool for developing regional or local social policy by enhancing the position of culture within it. Cultural planning promotes networked, collaborative and multisectoral processes in local governance. Following the spirit of New Public Management, this not only involves cooperation between public administrators and policy makers, but also cooperation between public officials and non-state organisations, communities and citizens. Public administrators and consultants who advocate for cultural planning typically argue that, locally, it develops cultural activities and practices, empowers civil society organisations, increases competitiveness, citizen wellbeing and participation, and develops the economy by creating new consumer demands and markets. Within this framework, the local public sector is an important lead actor, facilitating citizens, communities, organisations and creative industries but also other kinds of businesses (Evans, 2001; Mercer, 2004; Stevenson, 2004; Landry, 2008 [2000]; O’Brien, 2011).

Usually ‘culture’ is defined broadly in cultural planning. This means that it covers not only the arts and heritage, but also identities, cultural traditions, ways of living and languages, and many researchers and community activists support this broader view. For them, it is a means to dismantle the elitist associations of culture, especially when planning targets poor working-class areas. This resonates with the ideals of ‘cultural democracy’, which assert that ‘culture belongs to all’. According to this tendency, cultural policy must serve local inhabitants, facilitate all forms of local cultural expression and strengthen civil society and citizens’ opportunities to influence policy making (Bianchini, 1996; Landry, 2008 [2000]; O’Brien, 2011; Connolly, 2013).

One of this chapter’s main arguments is that the influence of ‘cultural planning’ can also be seen in local and regional strategic development work in contexts other than urban ones. In Finland, regional and local cultural strategies – many of which concern rural and rural-like areas – speak about culture’s role in strategic development and management in more or less the same way as corresponding documents on urban regions (cf. Anderson, 2011). These strategies also anchor culture in broader local – often economic – development through references to how culture can bring together and serve the interests of different stakeholders and promote the networking of local actors, such as artists, cultural workers, citizens and businesses.

For policy makers and public administrators, cultural planning is part of strategic community development (SCD). It leans on the idea that the public sector and policy makers are core actors in promoting community development. Nevertheless, in many cases SCD texts and related actions afford local residents and organisations an active role, and SCD objectives may overlap with those of community-led development projects. The latter, too, try to enhance social cohesion, empower citizens, increase participation and create economic and employment opportunities. Both claim to improve the quality of life within communities, and relationships between communities and governing bodies. Big difference between them is that ‘community development’ is primarily aimed at serving the interests of a limited community (both geographical and identity based), while SDC connects community interests to the broader interests of local, regional and national public administration (Blair, 2004; Shaw, 2008).

An amendment of the Municipal Cultural Activities Act was passed in September 2019. The strategic work for this renewal was led by the Ministry, and included participation by experts and representatives of municipalities. The amendment makes culture a part of municipalities’ strategic development. The amendment, and the government proposal (HE 195/2018) preceding it, define municipalities as organisers of cultural work, cultural planning and community development, but they also intertwine culture with other political and social goals in the municipalities’ work. The amendment and proposal also place municipalities at

the centre in relation to the realisation of the objectives (Section 3) which should serve the interests of citizens and the local cultural world. The Act's objectives are to:

1) support people's possibilities for creative expression and activities, as well as for making and experiencing art and culture; 2) promote equal opportunities of all population groups to participate in culture, art and education; 3) enhance the wellbeing and health of the population, as well as their inclusion and community engagement through culture and art; 4) create conditions for the development of local and regional vitality and creative activities that support it through culture and art. (L 166/2019, Section 2)

Aesthetic, creative and 'intrinsic' values of culture are highly appreciated and traditional Finnish cultural policy values such as equal opportunities for access, participation, and inclusion are considered in the Act, but the instrumental side is also taken into account. Culture should, hence, enhance the 'local and regional vitality' at large. There is no question that 'vitality' is connected to economic objectives:

The industrial policy dimension of culture and arts – such as creative economy and cultural entrepreneurship, the development of cultural services, events and tourism

and multisectoral utilisation of creative know-how – enhances the vitality of municipalities. [...] Therefore, the sector has an important role in diversifying the Finnish business structure in accordance with the developments of the knowledge and service society. The sector of culture and arts is a resource for individual municipalities. (L 166/2019, Section 2)

National measures adopted as a result of the Act include the establishment of indicators for municipal self-assessment work, knowledge-based strategic governance, as well as a Development Fund. Municipalities can use this fund to improve the quality of their cultural work, its impacts, staff know-how, resident and citizen equality and cooperation between municipalities.

Local and regional strategies are the documents through which public institutions spatialise and contextualise the spirit and requirements of the Act. The Act does not obligate municipalities to devise a strategy, but it has inspired many to do so: by 2017 one third of the municipalities had a cultural strategy, while at the end of 2019 a little less than 40 per cent had one, and around 20 additional municipalities were in the process of creating one. Many municipalities also renewed their strategy after the Act came into force. Five regional councils had a cultural strategy before the Act, and two introduced a new strategy after it. At the time of writing, three regional strategies are in the making. Next, I will analyse how these municipal and regional

strategies define and use the term ‘community development’, and what they constitute as the role of creative industries, especially cultural entrepreneurs.

Analysis of cultural strategies

After assembling all existing Finnish municipal cultural strategies available online, I undertook a thematic analysis of them, drawing on extant theorisations of cultural planning and previous studies on local and regional cultural policy developments in Finland (for example Häyrynen and Wallin, 2017). On the basis of that kind of close reading, analysis and thematic classification accordingly,³ I discuss three different orientations – in terms of how the role of culture is understood – that I identified within the texts: culture for comprehensive strategic management; culture for communities and citizens; and culture for the economy and entrepreneurship. Each one is explored in the following sub-sections and together they serve as a kind of window to observe how cultural policy constructs communities and development.

Culture for comprehensive strategic management

In this orientation, culture and arts are instrumentalised to pursue and achieve broader objectives, which unite the perspectives and interests of different administrative sectors. Culture is not approached as an end or good in itself, but from the perspectives, and for the purposes, of cultural policy administrations and institutions. Broader objectives are based on economic, social and health rationales, which are

often intermeshed with each other. For example, Uusimaa regional strategy states the following:

In this strategy, culture is viewed as an opportunity that can help us to address many of the challenges faced by Uusimaa. Our cultural strategy demonstrates that the cultural sectors support the development of the region in a multisectoral way. [...] In the same vein, we acknowledge the impacts that arts and culture can have when employed in social and health care services, not to mention the significance of arts and culture for improving wellbeing at work. [...] The aim of this strategy is to define the meanings, impacts and role of culture in Uusimaa from the perspective of regional development. (Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, 2016: 3, 8, 10)

Significantly, in those strategies where this orientation is strongest, the public authority with responsibility for cultural policy administration has the primary role. According to these strategies, public intervention/oversight is necessary for the strategic development of the cultural field in order to: maintain accessible cultural institutions and services; initiate and facilitate discussions and dialogue between diverse actors; create networks between cultural actors and inspire them to develop and organise events; collect and produce knowledge and share information; and to organise support and resources for actors (for example City of Helsinki, 2012;

Regional Council of Southwest Finland, [2015](#); Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, [2016](#)).

Participation by other public sector administrators besides those directly involved with culture is surprisingly low in these strategies, considering the multisectoral nature of cultural planning in general (see Bianchini, [1996](#); Connolly, [2013](#); Häyrynen and Wallin, [2017](#)). The steering role of public sector actors is highlighted when the strategies reference, for example, facilitation and support: ‘In addition to the state, the city has a more powerful role than before in supporting both professional arts and the voluntary cultural activities of citizens’ (City of Helsinki, [2012](#): 17). However, it is not unusual for local cultural and arts worlds, citizens and communities to be acknowledged as sources of inspiration; in some instances non-state actors have had a clear and active role in the strategy planning process, and some regions or municipalities have strong traditions of civil society participation. Regardless of the fact that public sector actors alone hold the discursive power, or that some actors from other fields or sectors participate in strategic planning, the focus on ‘strateginess’ that is characteristic of this orientation means that arts policy is primarily seen to serve the interests of the state administration, which also has a key role in operationalising that policy.

In this orientation ‘culture’ is broadly understood as referring to a ‘way of life’: ranging from the traditions, patterns and wellbeing of residents, the cultural industry and heritage work, to particular forms of arts practice (for example Regional

Council of Southwest Finland, [2015](#); Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, [2016](#); Mänttä-Vilppula, [2019](#)). This has the effect of increasing the overall significance of culture: the more dimensions ‘culture’ covers within the strategies, the more interest groups (citizens, communities, businesses and tourists) it touches upon and the more social policy sectors it can be seen as relating to; hence, greater stress emphasis should be placed on the role of culture within the overall state administrative system. Some strategies even indicate that culture is – or at least could be – the ideal frame for regional and local strategic development, within which other broad developmental needs can also be met:

A better consideration of social and spiritual needs will be significant for the wellbeing of people [...] Cultural services will have a crucial role [...] in improving people’s wellbeing. (Board of the Regional Council of Satakunta [2015](#), 10)

This orientation is common in both the regional strategies and those of bigger cities. However, two rural municipalities also clearly reflected this orientation by linking culture and its different dimensions strongly to the comprehensive development of the municipality. All these municipalities and regions have an administrative structure that includes a separate and permanent cultural department. If we situate this

orientation against Finland's cultural policy traditions as referenced previously, it aligns with the current phase, which highlights the strategic management of arts and their economic value. It also parallels conceptions of culture in urban planning projects all across Europe, especially those linked to European Cultural Capital awards (Mercer, 2004; O'Brien, 2011). Culture, arts, and creativity are instrumentalised to serve other needs: the empowerment of poor neighbourhoods, the bettering of citizens' wellbeing and the improvement of local economies. Although it erodes the intrinsic value of culture, it can also mean new job opportunities and income sources for artists and cultural workers.

Culture for communities and citizens

The 'culture for communities and citizens' orientation is underpinned by the idea that culture improves citizens' quality of life by activating them and giving them the means to participate in actions and hobbies, and consequently improve the vitality of the region, municipality, village or neighbourhood. Whereas the previous orientation mainly defined the strategicness of cultural planning from the perspective of the state or public authorities, in this orientation the primary purpose of cultural planning is to address people's needs and desires, as expressed through their organisations and initiatives.

The concept of 'community', which is not as rooted in Finnish policy-making language as it is in the UK or the US, for example, remains rather abstract or refers

loosely to all citizens of a municipality or region in the strategies. Only local immigrant groups are explicitly named as ‘identity communities’, and sometimes activities for older, young or disabled people are framed as ‘community work’ (City of Helsinki [2012](#); Regional Council of Southwest Finland, [2015](#): 10). Most often the word ‘community’ refers to loose association-like organisations and collectives of citizens (Board of the Regional Council of Satakunta, [2015](#); Hakala, [2015](#); Kuortane, [2018](#)). This is also how the word is commonly used in legal and political vocabulary in Finland. Several strategies talk about geographical entities such as districts, neighbourhoods or villages as communities, but it is not common (Mänttä-Vilppula, [2019](#); City of Vantaa, 2017). ‘Community’ is thus a ‘floating signifier’ (Laclau, [2005](#)) in the texts representing this orientation, insofar as it means different things and is filled with distinct significations based on the objectives of the strategy and those behind it.

Within the texts, ‘community’ is about *doing things together* locally and regionally for the ‘common cause’. Culture and the arts are constructed as improving social cohesion, promoting a sense of community and companionship; therefore, also contributing to sustainable development. Cultural work is seen to build a more vital and cohesive community which, again, revitalises the whole region or municipality. One important subtheme is that participation in cultural activities enables people to meet fellow citizens and better understand them: relationships are built with cultural actors and practitioners and with the wider population. This latter meaning can be

found in strategies that address the cultural diversity of the region or municipality and the challenge of how people can learn to live together despite their different backgrounds. Strategies that attend to this issue call for a common regional or local identity and seek to create shared traditions despite the diversity:

In Ylä-Savo (Upper Savonia), our focus in cultural activities is on development and seeking collaboration opportunities. [...] Through collaboration, we will be far better equipped to promote our local culture than when operating alone. [...] Activities produced by active people themselves will enhance community engagement and improve opportunities for participation. Culture will rejuvenate villages and municipal centres. [...] Our collaboration is based on openness and equality. When we become better acquainted with each other, our collaboration will be more productive. [...] Culture has the ability to include everyone. (Ylä-Savo, 2015: 9, 11, 13, 17)

This theme of a supportive sense of community emphasises the value of cultural heritage and identity as well as multiculturalism. (Board of the Regional Council of Satakunta, 2015: 10). In other words, this orientation constructs ‘community’ as a network of public actors, associations, foundations, businesses and individuals working for the development of arts and culture and, therefore, for the development of

the whole locality or region. This community generates cultural activities and events that serve the needs and interests of the citizens.

At the same time ‘community’ implements austerity and outsourcing from the public sector. This latter aspect is barely acknowledged, because the strategies’ purpose is to celebrate culture and represent its positive impacts on regional development. However, the economic imperative of using multi-actor networks for guaranteeing the continuity of local or regional cultural services lies in the background of the strategies, especially in small rural municipalities:

In the future, the purchaser-provider model, outsourcing of the production of municipal cultural services and collaboration with the independent arts sector will increase [in public cultural service provision], and administrative barriers will be brought down. [...] Audience outreach programmes support the development of new, accessible cultural services for children, senior citizens, old people, immigrants and other special groups. The collaboration between different-sized actors and events guarantees the continued vitality and growth of municipalities and regions. (Regional Council of Southwest Finland, 2015: 6–7, 12)

It is also common for the idea of community to be associated with the wellbeing and active citizenship of community members: this is the case especially for so-called ‘at

risk' groups (unemployed, disabled and older people, and immigrants). This is in line with many of the core principles of Finnish cultural policy, such as equality, participation and democracy, but it also mirrors newer, some might say 'neoliberal', rationalities, such as the idea of making citizens more active and responsible for their own wellbeing, care and government (Rose, 1999). Often the economic impacts are an indelible part of these wellbeing and active citizen agendas:

In Ähtäri, we understand culture as many different types of social activities that are meaningful to individuals and communities. [...] Art, culture and different events have very wide-ranging meanings and impacts on wellbeing. These wellbeing impacts are social, communal, individual, economic and regional. Their scope is both small and significant in the lives of the residents and communities of our municipality. (Ähtäri, 2011: 4, 32)

We should improve measures that enhance community engagement in order to reach groups that are at high risk of marginalisation: they include, among others, people with disabilities, aging people and immigrants in the most vulnerable positions.

(Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, 2016: 21)

In general, this orientation is typically found in the regional and municipal strategies of rural areas, but it is also present in the strategies of more densely populated areas. It

is emphasised in regions and municipalities where the cultural public sector is weak or is located within the educational or youth services, and where the role of local third sector organisations is strong. These are also areas where the population is ageing significantly and the need for cultural services and practices is justified accordingly. Finally, creating meaningful cultural activities is rationalised by the expectation that culture might also attract newcomers to those areas. This orientation has a ‘double-standard’: on the one hand, culture is something that develops in communities by citizens, but, on the other hand, cultural activities should also serve broader local and regional interests. Thus, it is very similar to British social policies during and after the ‘Third Way’, where communities were seen as breeders and developers of social capital and the social economy, and as helping local development by substituting for reduced public service provision. In this reading, the value of culture and communities comes from the benefit they can offer to local and regional social policy goals (cf Lewis and Surender, 2004). Although the core rationality in this orientation is not economic, it intertwines with the New Public Management as it aims to optimise cultural and social services through the deployment of communities, artist organisations and citizens (cf Reichard, 2010).

Culture for the economy and entrepreneurship

In the third orientation, cultural planning is understood as contributing towards the economic development and growth of the regions and localities. In this orientation,

‘culture’ is primarily associated with the cultural and creative industries and their economic impacts. This orientation is determined by policy makers and administrators, and its objectives are directly linked to more general local and regional development strategies. What is typical for the strategies in this orientation is that they acknowledge non-cultural stakeholders and beneficiaries that profit from arts and culture; references to collaboration between cultural and non-cultural actors are also common in the texts. The term ‘creative industries’ is more commonly used than ‘cultural industries’, and is understood in a broad sense. For example, ‘creative’ stands for everything from arts to clothing, artefacts, cultural tourism and food.

Nowadays creative industries can have close ties with commercial services, manufacture and software production through industrial design and other types of cross-sectoral collaboration, for example. (Ilmajoki, [2011](#): 14)

This orientation is divided into two strands in relation to the economic significance of culture. First, there are strategies that speak directly and openly about the economic benefits of culture. In this reading, arts and culture are valuable because they accumulate economic wealth by creating jobs, surplus value and ‘hubs’, which can attract other businesses. The key actors are cultural entrepreneurs as well as

businesses that take advantage of the creativity of cultural labourers and artists. In rural regions, the economic benefits of culture are often linked to an increase in tourist income and industries. In cities, industries like IT and health and welfare are seen to play an important role.

The objective: the creative economy and cultural entrepreneurship will create new jobs and promote a spirit of innovation and synergy, and thus boost the regional economy. (Etelä-Karjala instituutti, 2007: 54)

Culture boosts economic growth. Culture has clear economic significance. Creative labourers contribute to the production of economic growth, wellbeing and entrepreneurship that benefit the city. (City of Helsinki, 2012: 9)

Second, there are strategies in which the economic benefit of culture is expressed through, or intertwined with, other – usually social – objectives of community development. In other words, the economic benefits of arts and culture are recognised, but they are not justified primarily or solely by economic rationalities – rather, the economic use of culture is seen to support/supplement other regional and local goals. The economic growth offered by creative industries is thus regarded as flowing into other sectors and increasing overall participation, active citizenship, wellbeing, vitality, sustainability and civility:

THE POWER OF THE CULTURAL ECONOMY

A strong arts and culture sector will make Uusimaa flourish

- Active cultural activities, creative industries and cultural interaction will provide a significant resource for future expertise, development and business.
- Collaboration and partnerships with businesses will increase intangible value creation, growth and jobs in the region.
- Wellbeing and balance in daily life will improve people's engagement with their community and neighbourhood. (Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, 2016: 12)

This economic orientation is most typically found in cities, regions and municipalities that include big or middle-size towns. Usually, they are also municipalities with relatively established cultural industries and/or art and cultural educational institutions. This orientation intertwines with the current Finnish cultural policy phase described earlier; arts and culture can – and perhaps even should – benefit economy and markets. A similar trend can be found in many other European countries as well (for example Alexander et al, 2018). It also reflects the more general trend of the economisation of the public sector, community work and human capital, which many describe with the term ‘neoliberalization’ (Evans et al, 2005).

Conclusion

According to the regional and municipal strategies included in my analysis, it seems that cultural planning as community development is becoming a strategic trend catalysed by the 2019 Act regarding the cultural activities of municipalities in Finland. Municipalities and regional councils see cultural planning as a ‘way of the future’, where the intertwining of community development with the economic agendas of creative industries does not form an ‘unholy alliance’, but rather generates common good. This is in line with the wider European trend that emerged in the 1990s and has been fuelled by initiatives such as the European Capital of Culture (for example Connolly, [2013](#)). It is also consistent with the main lines of current national cultural policy in Finland, in which cultural expression, wellbeing and business go hand in hand (for example Ministry of Education and Culture, [2017b](#)).

My analysis shows that municipal and regional culture-mediated strategic community development instrumentalises art and culture for broader social and economic policy goals. In this its results are equivalent with, for instance, conclusions made by Lewandowska ([2017](#)) about the instrumentalisation of culture in Europe. Inclusion of arts in broader policies for SCD, does not completely renew its social meanings and values, but adds new demands to it: art must be innovative and creative on the one hand, but this must not be too revolutionary or avantgarde, instead serving strategic management. Innovations should help the local and regional economy, social

cohesion or tourism, for instance (cf Murzyn-Kubisz and Dzialek, 2017). Cultural planning, as proposed by the analysed strategies, tends to create new connections between artists, communities, public government and the local economy and its businesses. This has been the administrative trend in urban social and cultural policy for several decades in certain countries, such as the UK (Pratt, 2009), and now it is truly landing in Finland, in administrative strategic rhetoric at least. Finnish municipal and regional strategic cultural planning seems to also resonate with the current trends in community development, where the engagement of artists, citizens and communities means a complex interplay of empowerment and new forms of power and governance (for example Meade et al, 2016).

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¹ Previously, this working group had already published two reports, but they were more general international and conceptual overviews about the nature of cultural industries and did not entail guidelines about how industries should be promoted and developed in Finland, or why.

² All translations of texts from Finnish sources are by the author.

³ The analysis was done as follows: I performed a preliminary close reading of the texts before deciding on the key themes to be used for classifying the text corpus, which were: 1) Strategic planning linking culture to broader local and regional development schemes. 2) Community empowerment, civil society collaboration and citizen participation. 3) Creative/cultural industries, the economy and entrepreneurship. 4) The connections between pro-community and pro-business speech. Interrogating the texts according to these themes, I

analysed how the role of public administration typically was constructed; the kinds of understandings of culture reflected; how the role of public cultural policy and its relation to culture communities, citizens and creative industries was described; and what kinds of differences there were between (a) regional and local strategies and (b) strategies of rural and urban municipalities.