



3rd ArtWell Net project meeting

Connecting Ukrainian practices and the Baltic Sea model of Arts on Prescription

14th of September 2026, Kolomyia, Ukraine

SI. Funded by
**Swedish
Institute**

Background: The “Baltic model” of AoP



Arts on Prescription in the Baltic Sea Region

Interreg Baltic Sea Region project 2023-2025

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



13 partners from **7 countries**
across the Baltic Sea Region



AoP generic concept



AoP Guide



Evaluation framework



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Characteristics of The “Baltic Sea model” of Arts on Prescription

non-therapy

varying arts categories

programme cycle is 8-12 weeks

mild to moderate mental health issues

group-based and offers activities that are **facilitated** and **participatory**

diagnosis-free space

free of charge or very low cost

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Pilots

Denmark

Odense Municipality

Sweden

Region Norrbotten

Latvia

Cesis Municipality

Saldus Municipality

Poland

Westpomeranian Region

Media Dizajn NGO

Germany

Bremen

(Bremer Volkshochschule - adult education centre/Ministry for Culture and Ministry for health, women and consumer Protection)



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Norrbotten, Sweden

9 weeks arts activities

2 hours arts activity, **2 times a week**

8-12 participants per AoP program cycle

Program consisted of **visual arts, arts with natural materials, dance, singing, & vocal training**

The **link worker** participated in most groups in all activities and in some groups when a new arts for was introduced

Encourage participants to **continue meeting via study circle after the program ends.**

referral channels: mainly **primary healthcare centers**, also collaboration with the municipality and other authorities



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Lessons learned - Norrbotten

Mutual understanding

Non-demanding and safe environment

Arts on Prescription in the Baltic Sea Region project 2023-2025



Bremen, Germany

The integrated AoP approach

Bremer Volkshochschule - adult education centre/Ministry for Culture
Ministry for health, women and consumer Protection of the Free
Hanseatic City of Bremen

Exciting cultural offers available to AoP participants —> with extra support from a Linkworker.

Target group adults with mild to moderate mental health issues

Programme consist of two elements: Selected courses and additional group meetings

Participants liked the combination of both participate in a regular course, where it was all about arts and not about mental health and additionally the safe space of the AoP group meetings.

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West Pomerania Region, Poland - 3 steps of AoP

Knowledge transfer



10-15 people
15-19 years old



8 weeks
4 hours (2 blocks)
/1 time a week

Acting
Theatre education
Dance/Choreography
Vocal training
Stage make-up
Photography
Crafts
Visit in a cultural institution



Lesson learned



2 Link workers

11 Art Facilitators



4 schools



KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



DESIGN PLUS 2023



LESSON LEARNED



SZCZECIN 2025



POLAND-UKRAINE 2024



PASSION PICNIC

BIELSKO BIAŁA 2024

Culture for
Health and Wellbeing



AoP evaluation

Meeting participant needs and growing the evidence base

- Two research teams participated in AoP project developed evaluation framework
 - **Qualitative evaluation:** Turku University of Applied Sciences – participant experiences, how and why AoP works
 - **Quantitative evaluation:** University of Southern Denmark — health outcomes
- Understanding if programme meets participant needs, making improvements based on feedback and contributing to research
- Evaluation framework available in the AoP guide

AoP evaluation

What the numbers show

- 30% at risk of anxiety symptoms
 - 25% at risk of depression symptoms
- 70.8% of low-wellbeing participants improved

Hinrichsen, C., Arp, S. & Mairey, I.P. (2025). *Piloting Arts on Prescription in the Baltic Sea Region: Evaluating health outcomes, costs and implementation strategies*. National Institute of Public Health, University of Southern Denmark.



AoP evaluation

What participants say

"I was able to express my feelings today, including rage, grief, enthusiasm, and happiness. I yelled and used my body to convey myself. It helped me in getting rid of evil from both my body and mind. I shed tears and felt both happy and sad."

"Even though there are dark days, singing has given me a glimmer of hope, which I now always carry with me. It is in my hands to find the light. Make steps towards it."



Laitinen, L. & Linnossuo, O. (2025). *Arts on Prescription (AoP) in the Baltic Sea Region – Qualitative evaluation of the 24 pilot AoP programmes*. Reports from Turku University of Applied Sciences 312. Turku University of Applied Sciences

Key findings



Picture: Mari Villanen (Pisama Art)

AoP Guide (aop.ndphs.org)

Find everything we learned in one place

Link Workers / Project Managers Culture and Arts Facilitators Decision Makers About

Arts on Prescription Guide

Welcome to the Arts on Prescription Guide
The Arts on Prescription (AoP) guide is a comprehensive guide for public authorities and practitioners in public health and culture.

With mental health issues affecting approximately 1 billion people globally, innovative social and health approaches are vital for community wellbeing. Arts on Prescription is one such approach. Evidence clearly indicates the arts enhance mental health and social belongingness.

The aim of the online AoP guide is to provide you with the necessary background information, tools, best practices, and information on how to plan, implement, and invest in AoP programmes. The guide introduces the AoP concept and offers practical information that covers diverse topics regarding community-based AoP programmes. Much of the information in the guide is based on practical experience and insights from the AoP in the Baltic Sea Region project.

Below you will find three entry points to access the guide. Once you have accessed the guide that best suits your needs, we recommend you start with "How-to-read-the-guide" to enhance your reader experience.

Happy reading! We hope you find the guide valuable.

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I am a...

Link Worker or Project Manager

Public health professional, Project manager or a Link worker who is involved in setting up, organising and supporting the participants in an AoP programme within a municipality or region.

Culture and Arts Facilitator

A cultural/art professional or representative of a cultural institution, who has been invited to facilitate culture and art activities for participants in an AoP programme.

Decision Maker

An authority who assesses the feasibility and benefits of implementing an AoP programme in your municipality or region, also if you are an organisational representative interested in funding AoP programmes.





Stepped-Care Pathway

Support increases as needs become more intensive

INCREASING
INTENSITY

1 Self-help, digital tools

2 Low-intensity psychological support

3 Moderate-intensity therapy (CBT, structured programmes)

4 Specialist psychiatric care

A clear pathway from self-management to specialist care

The Missing Step — and How AoP Fills it

1

Prevention & Self-Management

Self-help resources · Digital tools & apps · Psychoeducation

2

Community-Based Support ← AoP sits here

Arts on Prescription · Social prescribing · Community wellbeing · Peer support

3

Primary Mental Health Interventions

Guided self-help · Brief psychological interventions · Low-intensity CBT

4

Specialist Mental Health Care

Psychotherapy · High-intensity CBT · Psychiatric care

5

Secondary / Inpatient Services

Crisis services · Intensive specialist treatment

**Increasing
intensity**

Complementing — not replacing — clinical services

The Missing Middle Tier



X

Without Tier 2

- Self-help is not enough
- Clinical services overwhelmed
- Long waits for therapy
- People deteriorate before getting help
- High system cost downstream



AoP fills this gap

- Structured but non-clinical
- Community venue, trusted setting
- Group format — social benefit
- No clinical training needed
- Referral from GP, social worker, psychologist



With Tier 2 in place

- Early intervention at low cost
- Clinical services protected
- Distress addressed before it escalates
- Cultural assets activated
- Stepped care works as intended

AoP fills the missing middle tier— more supportive than self-help, less intensive than clinical care.

Policy Recommendations

For Health and Culture policy makers in the Baltic Sea Region

1

Recognise AoP formally

designate as a structured component of national mental health support strategies

2

Secure cross-sectoral financing

blended funding from health, culture, social welfare and local municipality budgets

3

Integrate AoP into stepped care

add a community-based non-clinical step between self-help and psychological treatment

4

Close the evidence gap

establish monitoring systems connecting health and cultural actors

5

Invest in workforce capacity

training frameworks for facilitators and link workers, backed by institutions

recognition · financing · stepped care · evidence · workforce