

Cultural expenditure in the Nordic region - Summary

Key figures and existing comparative statistics for public expenditure on culture in the member countries of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2018 and the prevailing trends over time are presented in the report *Kulturutgifter i Norden* (Cultural expenditure in the Nordic region). The first part presents public expenditure on cultural services, according to the Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG), for 2017, and a comparison over time. The second part presents the countries' state expenditure on culture and how it was distributed among different areas of culture in 2018.

Public expenditure on cultural services

- Between 2009 and 2017, the total expenditure on cultural services in the Nordic countries increased by 12 percent.
- In most of the countries, a majority of the public expenditure on cultural services is local government expenditure rather than central government expenditure.
- In Faroe Islands and Greenland, a higher percentage of the expenditure on cultural services is central government expenditure rather than local government expenditure.
- Sweden's total expenditure on cultural services between 2009 and 2017 was SEK 197 billion, which is the highest figure among the Nordic countries. During the same period, the Faroe Islands' total expenditure on cultural services was DKK 0.9 billion which was the lowest figure.
- During that period, Iceland spent an average of 603 euros and Finland 207 euros per capita on cultural services. These were the highest and lowest per capita figures among the Nordic countries.
- Norway and the Faroe Islands were the only countries where the share of GDP spent on cultural services increased over time.
- In Finland and Denmark, the share of GDP spent on cultural services did not change during this period. In Denmark, the total expenditure on cultural services was 0.7 % of the country's GDP 2009-2017.

State expenditure on culture

- Several of the countries use takings from gambling services to fund some of the expenditure on culture, but the countries differ with regard to presenting the money in the budget for culture.
- Sweden and Finland are the Nordic countries whose budgets have the largest share for non-formal adult education (folkbildning). Non-formal adult education comprises almost 0.5 percent of Sweden's total state budget and 0.3 percent of Finland's.
- The Faroe Islands have the largest share of expenditure on museums: 40 percent of their expenditure on culture goes to museums and archives.
- Iceland has a larger share of expenditure on music and performing arts than the other Nordic countries: 29 percent of the country's cultural expenditure.
- Greenland has the largest share of expenditure on languages, libraries and literature: 23 percent of their total expenditure on culture.
- Sweden and Norway have the largest shares of expenditure on heritage management, 7 percent of the cultural expenditure in both countries in 2018.

Recommendations of Kulturanalys Norden:

- It should be ensured that annual statistics for all the Nordic countries' cultural expenditure are available.
- The countries should provide extensive documentation showing what kind of expenditure is included in the data that is reported to Eurostat, and thereby also to the Nordic Council of Ministers' database.
- Using the same definitions and in consultation, the countries should produce statistics reflecting the cultural expenditure on different political levels.
- An overview should be drawn up, mapping the differences and similarities in the countries' appropriation systems and budget processes relating to the areas of expenditure for culture.