

## 8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

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### Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

There are no specific national initiatives facilitating young people's access to cultural environments by removing linguistic, financial, time and geographical constraints in the sense that the youth work does. The national policy focuses on equal access to culture for all individuals. Various disadvantages are targeted directly from the perspective of the disadvantage and not the perspective of a social group of youth. General supportive measures are on national as well as mostly on the regional and local level and are the responsibility of individual organisers of cultural activities.

As statistics show, see ([Chapter 8.1](#)), young people are participating more in cultural activities in comparison to adult and senior sections of the population.

Reducing obstacles, that is **creating possibilities for participation in cultural life for young people can be seen in educational activities, programmes, competitions and contests for Children and Young people specially organised by professionals as well as non-professionals**. Within the concept of [non-professional art and its support](#) there are also the **aesthetic activities of Children and Youth**.

From the amount of the state support within the programme of Non-professional art, we can see a small decline in the support of aesthetic activities of Children and Youth:

	Subsidy programme for Non-professional artistic activities in CZK (ca. EUR)	Sum of support to Children's and Youth aesthetic activities in CZK (ca. EUR)
2014	36 241 926 (1 343 000 EUR)	2 385 000 (88 300 EUR)
2015	36 558 257 (1 354 000 EUR)	2 352 000 (87 100 EUR)
2016	38 380 293 (1 421 500 EUR)	2 127 000 (78 800 EUR)

Source: Information provided by the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for the purposes of mid-term evaluation of the Implementation of the Youth Strategy 2014-2020. EUR calculations made by authors of Youthwiki using the exchange rate in respective years.

There is a [coherent and interlinked decentralised system of shows and exhibitions](#) from local to national level. It is a robust system with quality activities of non-professional artists. Many of those activities are limited only to young people but not all; they can attend higher levels and thus new opportunities are opened for the non-professional artists. At the same time, it helps facilitate contact between the active people and stimulate the quality of peer-to-peer as well as professional education and sharing good practices and artistic values of living arts. In the field of theatre and film the foundations of this system were laid in the 1930s.

### Elementary Art Schools

The easiest guided access to artistic education and activities is via the [system of Elementary Art Schools](#) ([Základní umělecké školy, ZUŠ](#) – for basic details on the concept see [Chapter 8.1](#)) as a special formal and professional educational system in the leisure time, based on the voluntary application of the child or their parents, or a young person. Within these schools, professionals (artists, artists with pedagogy approbation) teach and work with individual youngsters. **Young people also have opportunities for collective artistic cooperation in various artistic groups, music bands, dance groups, theatre ensembles, chamber plays, individual performances, youth orchestras etc.** For each of the study fields (musical instruments, painting, theatre, dance, youth orchestra, etc.), **national competitions under the auspice of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports are organised, also with regional, local and often even school competition rounds.**

In the [school year, 2016/2017](#) 248 524 children and young people participated in this system of artistic education, roughly 10% of the youth population. There is a higher interest and more pupils have joined in each of the last several years. **In the school year 2018 /2019, the number of young participants raised to 253 545.**

In total, there are **496 such schools in 2019**, founded mostly by municipalities (240), regions (196), private sector (55), churches (4) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (1). The total number is slowly increasing as well in the last years.

The education is partially paid by the young people (or their families) themselves, but most of the expenses are covered by the founder of the school and state and public transferred resources. **For young people from an economically disadvantaged background, there can be also remissions on the school fees.** From this perspective, it is a very accessible option for young people. On the other hand, there is a logical barrier of

accepting only pupils based on basic talent exams or artistic predispositions, which however are on a reasonable level and make sense in the whole concept and context of individual work with professional artists and art teachers.

There have been [studies](#) that children and young people participating in ZUŠ are usually also further consumers of (higher) cultural events.

Heritage sites often provide student or often youth discounts, which reduce obstacles for young people to participate in public tours at state and public heritage sites.

### **Disseminating information on cultural opportunities**

Information on cultural events and opportunities is a decentralised field in the Czech Republic.

Regarding state channels, Young people can gain information via the system of schools (see [Chapter 8.5](#))

Information on aesthetic activities of children and youth is provided by [NIPOS-ARTAMA state Agency](#) (about shows, exhibitions etc.).

Otherwise, there are many private sources, regional and local authorities' channels, media coverage on culture for the whole population which are used by young people as well (magazines, web sites etc.)

Relevant initiatives

### **Week of artistic education and non-professional activities**

A [promotion week](#) organised by NIPOS since 2013 and supported by the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Partners are the National Institute of Education and Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.

Every year there are more than 200 registered activities within the week.

Every year, printed matter is created for promotion. Promotional materials are distributed through NIPOS contacts to libraries, museums, galleries, theaters and other means. They are also sent to registered participants who show interest in them. The project coordinator also seeks media promotion. Promotion and communication with the public are key activities we have been working on continuously since the 1st year with the intention of targeting national media.

**ZUŠ OPEN**

[ZUŠ OPEN](#) is a private awareness-raising project at the whole state level. The Magdalena Kožená Endowment Fund and the Association of Elementary Art Schools organise it. It is a whole state event for Elementary Art Schools in the public space. The Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports supports the project financially, as do other private donors.

Information about organization of ZUŠ OPEN were in 2020 distributed by Český rozhlas (public service broadcaster), also reports are every year published by several news sources.

### **Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people**

There is a [System of artistic and aesthetic education](#) providing knowledge of cultural heritage among young people. Formal and non-formal education mediate to some extent knowledge of cultural heritage. Pupils learn of that in subjects like history, art etc.

[The National Heritage Institute](#) (Národní památkový Ústav, NPÚ) runs [methodological centres](#) and [provides educational activities](#) (for the whole public and young people and school collectives as well). The centres provide space for concentrated research into a particular theme, and at the same time allow research findings to be presented and transferred to other specialists and the public, most frequently in the form of exhibitions, lectures and workshops.

The Institute also operates national heritage institutions and buildings such as castles, chateaus etc. There are special discounted entry fees for students and very often for young people as well. Children usually do not need to pay entry fees, or special family prices are in place. Visiting heritage sites is a very popular and traditional free time activity of Czech society, which is also seen by the very high density of state and public sites which are open to the public and which organise regular tours as well as many additional activities, festivals, thematic days, night tours, costume tours, children's days etc.