Summary

Cultural life in the Netherlands

Ten cultural domains viewed from fourteen core themes

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On the advice of the Dutch Council for Culture, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has ceased publication of the report series 'Culture in the Picture' (*Cultuur in Beeld*). In the wake of this decision, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (scp) has taken up the challenge of reporting on cultural life in the Netherlands. This report proposes a model for an independent periodic overview study. The starting point was the question of what information this overview should contain; it was explicitly decided not to take the information that was already available as a basis. The opening question was: 'What would ideally lbe known about cultural life in the Netherlands?'. The model presented and used in this report entails studying cultural life in the Netherlands by viewing ten cultural domains from the perspective of fourteen core themes.

The ten domains, grouped under art, design and heritage, are as follows: performing arts; visual arts; literature; film and video art; architecture; design; digital culture; movable heritage; built heritage; and intangible heritage. The fourteen core themes from which these cultural domains are considered are based on the trichotomy of cultural content, cultural infrastructure and cultural engagement, and comprise cultural content itself; cultural media content; organisations; funds flows; labour market; vocational education; culture in education; opportunities to engage in cultural activity in leisure time; interest; support; reach via the media; cultural visits; practising culture; and private spending on culture.

This approach to mapping cultural life was then applied. It gradually became apparent that more was known about some core themes and domains than others. In particular, relatively little was known (by us) about cultural domains within the field of design (architecture, design and digital culture) and about intangible heritage. As regards the core themes, this applies for cultural education at school, for the opportunities to engage in cultural activity in leisure time, for public support for the various forms of culture and for private cultural expenditures. Information on 'born digital' heritage is a point for attention for the near future.

On the other hand, this study showed that there is also a great deal that *is* known. The picture presented shows a cultural life in the Netherlands with a large reservoir of cultural content where many people participate in that cultural life via the media, through cultural visits or by engaging in cultural activity themselves. The cultural infrastructure is also mapped in this report, with attention focusing among other things on organisations, funds flows and employment in the cultural sphere.

Distribution and reach form a common theme running through this report. Among other things, the report highlights the geographical distribution of cultural amenities, the social distribution of cultural engagement and the ethnic-cultural diversity of the staff of cultural institutions.