C3-WELL

Culture, Creativity and Care: Building Well-being Across Europe

About the Project

C3-WELL is a European initiative exploring how arts and culture can contribute to mental well-being, social inclusion, and community care.

Across Hungary, Italy, Spain, Estonia, and Slovenia, the project brings together cultural professionals, healthcare providers, social care organizations, researchers, and policymakers to test innovative arts-based approaches in real-life welfare settings.

The project aims to:

- Improve mental well-being through cultural participation
- Strengthen social inclusion and community engagement
- Foster collaboration between culture, health, and social care sectors
- Develop practical and scalable models for cultural welfare
- Generate evidence and policy recommendations for long-term impact

Why Arts and Culture Matter for Well-being

Research increasingly demonstrates that participation in arts and cultural activities can positively affect people's emotional, social, and physical well-being.

Arts-based approaches can:

- Support emotional expression and resilience
- Reduce loneliness and social isolation
- Strengthen community belonging
- Stimulate cognitive engagement and personal development
- Create more inclusive environments for vulnerable groups

Through C3-WELL, partners explored how these benefits can be integrated into welfare and healthcare systems in a sustainable and evidence-based way.

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Learning from Best Practices Across Europe

As a first step, the project mapped and analysed more than **20 successful arts-based initiatives from across Europe.**

The research examined interventions supporting:

Adults with Mental Health Conditions

Creative activities helping participants build confidence, strengthen social connections, and improve emotional well-being.

Marginalized and Underserved Communities

Theatre, music, dance, and community arts projects supporting participation, empowerment, and social inclusion.

People with Disabilities

Inclusive cultural programmes creating opportunities for self-expression, visibility, participation, and employment.

Individuals with Physical Illnesses

Arts-based activities in healthcare settings improving patient experience and emotional well-being.

Children and Young People

Creative interventions addressing emotional, behavioural, and developmental challenges.

Older Adults

Museum programmes, dance initiatives, and creative workshops reducing isolation and promoting active ageing.

Key Findings

The most successful initiatives shared several common characteristics:

- Strong collaboration between cultural and welfare sectors
- Active participation of beneficiaries
- Long-term community engagement
- Adaptability to local contexts
- Clear evidence of social and emotional impact

These findings provided the foundation for the next phase of the project.

Building Bridges Through Cross-Sectoral Workshops

To transform research into action, C3-WELL organised cross-sectoral workshops in all participating countries.

More than 100 professionals from the cultural, social care, healthcare, education, and community sectors participated.

The workshops included:

- Expert presentations
- Best practice sharing
- Interactive discussions
- Co-design sessions
- Rapid prototyping activities
- Partnership-building exercises

The goal was to create a shared understanding of how arts and culture can support well-being while encouraging new forms of collaboration.

What Participants Said

The workshops generated highly positive results:

90.8% reported that the workshop changed their perspective on how cultural interventions can support mental well-being.

95.4% reported a stronger understanding of how culture can contribute to social inclusion.

86.4% intend to collaborate with professionals from other sectors in the future.

93.9% feel better equipped to experiment with arts-based approaches in their work.

These results demonstrate the growing recognition of culture as an important contributor to health and social welfare.

From European Learning to Local Action

Recognising that every country has different strengths, needs, and priorities, C3-WELL adopted a locally tailored approach.

Following stakeholder consultations and workshop discussions, each partner identified the cultural disciplines, welfare priorities, and target groups that will guide the pilot phase.

The results were compiled into the Country Fields Report, a strategic roadmap for the next stage of implementation.

Pilot Areas Across Europe

Cultural Welfare for Inclusive Communities

GAIA will develop participatory cultural activities supporting:

- **Target group:**
  - Older adults experiencing loneliness
  - Children and young people facing emotional challenges
  - People with disabilities
- **Focus:** Community well-being, inclusion, and social participation

Creative Participation for Vulnerable Groups

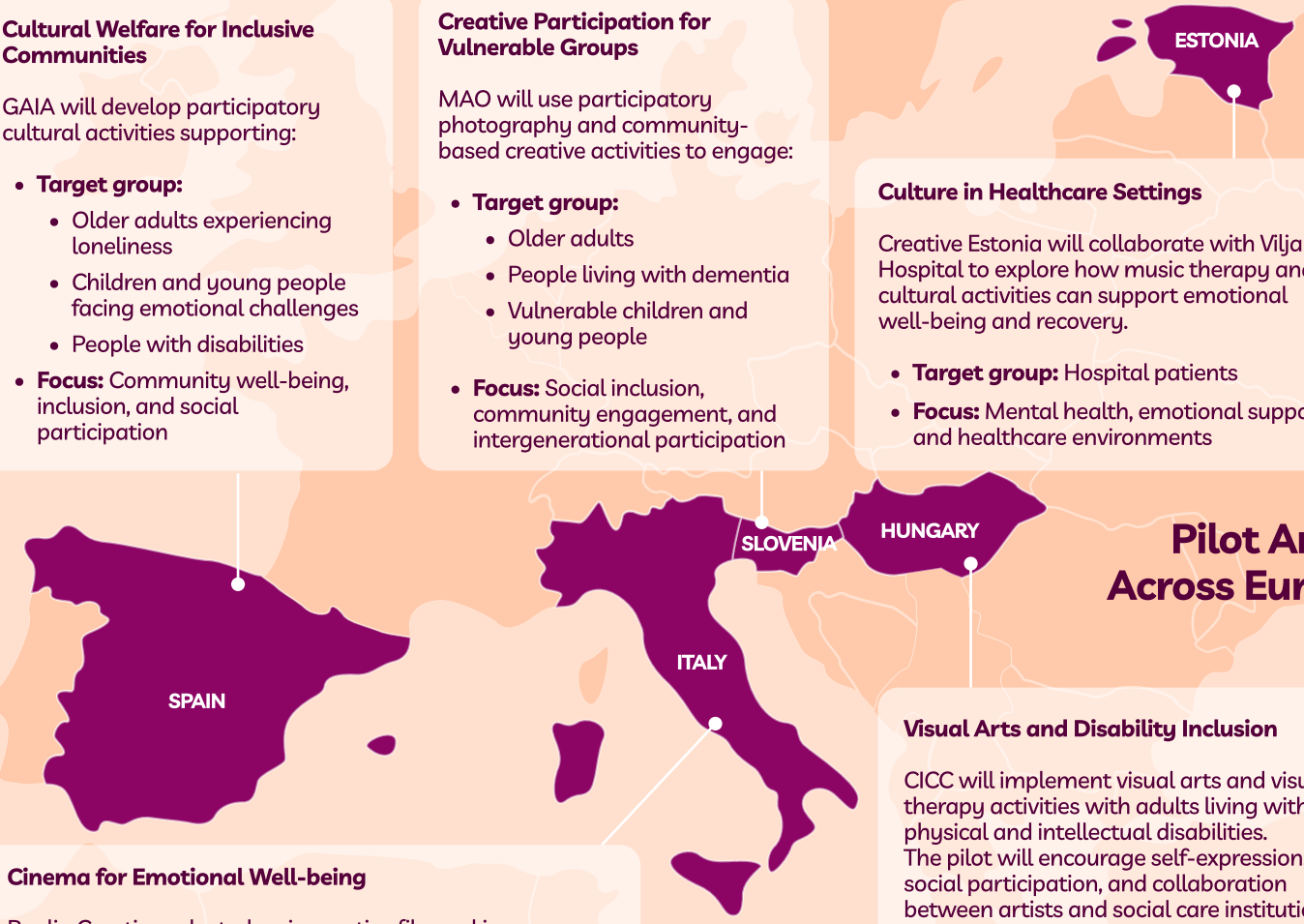
MAO will use participatory photography and community-based creative activities to engage:

- **Target group:**
  - Older adults
  - People living with dementia
  - Vulnerable children and young people
- **Focus:** Social inclusion, community engagement, and intergenerational participation

Culture in Healthcare Settings

Creative Estonia will collaborate with Viljandi Hospital to explore how music therapy and cultural activities can support emotional well-being and recovery.

- **Target group:** Hospital patients
- **Focus:** Mental health, emotional support, and healthcare environments



Cinema for Emotional Well-being

Puglia Creativa selected an innovative filmmaking methodology called Feelmiamoci.
Participants will use storytelling and filmmaking to explore emotions, build confidence, and strengthen resilience.

- **Target group:** Pre-adolescents receiving neuropsychiatric support
- **Focus:** Mental health and emotional development

Visual Arts and Disability Inclusion

CICC will implement visual arts and visual therapy activities with adults living with physical and intellectual disabilities.
The pilot will encourage self-expression, social participation, and collaboration between artists and social care institutions.

- **Target group:** Adults with disabilities, elders
- **Focus:** Inclusion, creativity, and community participation

What Comes Next?

Through national Open Calls, cultural organizations will be invited to join the project and participate in Learning Labs and capacity-building programmes. Selected organisations will play a key role in testing innovative models that connect culture, care, and community well-being.

Learn more → Visit ***c3well.eu***

Towards a Stronger Cultural Welfare Ecosystem

The experience gathered through research, workshops, and stakeholder engagement confirms that culture can play a meaningful role in addressing some of today's most pressing social and health challenges.

By bringing together professionals from different sectors and countries, C3-WELL is helping create practical, evidence-based approaches that place creativity, participation, and human connection at the centre of well-being.

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