

Culture 21: Actions

Commitments on the role of culture in sustainable cities

29 October 2014 – Draft 2

On the 20th of March 2015 in Bilbao, municipal and local government representatives from all over the world will convene in the first summit dedicated to the role of culture in sustainable development. The worldwide organization United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has drafted “Culture 21: Actions” with the following objectives:

- To promote the integrity of the relationship between citizenship, culture, and sustainable development.
- To summarize this relationship through specific commitments, ensuring international standards that are both achievable and measurable.
- To complement the Agenda 21 for culture adopted in 2004, making it more effective.
- To strengthen the role of cities and local governments as authorities for the development and the implementation of policies.
- To contribute to the worldwide debate on the essential role of culture in sustainable development, particularly in the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

A. INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century is the century of culture. Our development as humans can only be effective if we consider cultural factors like memory, creativity, diversity, and knowledge. Human development also involves extending our liberties and requires each and every individual’s participation. It becomes sustainable when future generations are taken into consideration.

The twenty-first century is also the century of cultures. Around the world, cultures forge dynamic and interactive relationships between our environments and societies. They must therefore be recognized as active in the processes of development, while also contributing to sustainability in a unique way. Each culture is a unique and enriching part of our world.

Sustainable development is experienced on a local level and requires local spaces for public debate and decision making. It is vital for local governments to provide environments that actively encourage public, democratic debate and decision-making.

Indeed, they create spaces where the citizens can exercise their rights, expand their abilities, lead the present, and decide on the future.

As set out in the Policy Statement adopted by UCLG in 2010 in Mexico City, understanding and transforming the world requires a cultural frame of reference for sustainable development. In addition to the existing pillars of environmental, economic, and social factors, sustainable development requires the incorporation of a cultural dimension into these processes.

“Culture 21: Actions” renews the commitment of United Cities and Local Governments by closely relating citizenship, culture, and sustainable development. In 2004, UCLG approved the Agenda 21 for culture, “as a guiding document for our public cultural policies and as a contribution to the cultural development of humanity.”

This document complements the Agenda 21 for culture. “Culture 21: Actions” aspires to be a tool, applicable in all parts of the world, which favours knowledge, permits the exchange of good practices, and fortifies a global network of cities and local governments striving toward the same goals.

B. PRINCIPLES

The following principles summarize the perspectives of local governments as regards the integration of culture in sustainable development, both locally and globally. They are the result of the 2004 Agenda 21 for culture taken in conjunction with contributions by universities, activist groups, international organizations, as well as the specific, practical, experiences of cities and local governments.

Culture, Rights and Citizenship

1. Culture is comprised of values, beliefs, languages, knowledge, art, and practical knowledge, with which a person or people, individually or collectively, express their humanity and existence through a meaningful sense of belonging, and personal development.
2. Culture is a common good; all people are carriers of culture and actively participate in its production. Cultural democracy is a key element of active citizenship as it increases our capacity to shape the future.
3. Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights. No one can invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon, nor limit in scope, those rights guaranteed by international law. The cultural liberties of individuals and communities are the result, and an essential condition, of democratic dynamism.
4. Cultural rights guarantee that, individually or collectively, people retain the right to access the resources needed to freely pursue their lived process of cultural

identification. Access to, and participation in, culture are key factors for the development of cultural sensitivity, expression, choices, critical thinking, harmonious interaction, and citizenship.

Cultural Factors of Sustainable Development

5. Sustainable development, or sustainability, requires the combination of a set of interconnected factors (cultural, ecological, social, and economic). The development of specific policies in each area is important, as well as the interaction and integration of the different areas among themselves.
6. Cultural diversity is our heritage. It is the product of thousands of years of history, and the fruit of collective contributions amongst all nations, through their languages, ideas, techniques, practices and creations.
7. Cultural heritage is a multidimensional testament to human creativity, and is a resource for the identity of people and nations. As something that is alive and constantly evolving, it should be integrated into life and society in dynamic ways, while still respecting its essence and integrity.
8. Territory is the result of a long-term evolution between nature and human cultural activities. It reflects the history, identity, and values of the population inhabiting it; territory is a carrier of a cultural dimension that is essential for a people's quality of life.
9. Land planning and urban planning are cultural acts, in that they recognize, map, and place value on, natural and cultural resources, harmonizing them with a society's aspirations for the future.
10. Cultural economy (or creative economy) plays an important role in the transition toward sustainable societies. It fosters the presence of creativity and innovation in businesses and in the creation of employment. Cultural goods and services are different from other goods and services, because they are carriers of meaning and identity. Therefore, governments have the right and obligation to support cultural expressions, in search of a balance between economic regulations, and the protection of the diversity of these expressions. The reduction of culture to its economic value may reduce or eliminate its public dimension.
11. The appropriation of information, and its transformation into shared knowledge, is a cultural act that is interdependent on the lifelong right to education.
12. Access to cultural services and active participation in cultural processes are determining factors for people who are marginalised, impoverished, or in otherwise disadvantaged situations, because it offers opportunities to overcome their difficulties and feel included in a society.
13. Participation through good-quality, interactive information systems is essential for sustainable development. Good governance requires guaranteeing the right to receiving, searching for, and transmitting reliable information to all citizens.
14. Cultural development is based on the interaction of a wide variety of social actors, including public institutions, civil society organizations, and private actors.

15. People's cultural practices do not only take place in physical spaces, but also in virtual ones, whose manifestations can also take up public space. Their public nature, and the opportunities offered by both of them, must be ensured.

Specific Responsibilities of Local Governments

16. Local governments are primary actors in the defence and promotion of human rights (including cultural rights). By exercising democracy, they guarantee the participation of citizens in public decisions, and promote dialogue and discussion with national and international actors.
17. Local governments develop transversal governance systems (the cultural dimension in the whole of urban policies), apply frameworks of multi-actor governance (in dialogue with civil society and the private sector) and require frameworks of multilevel governance (with other levels of government).
18. Local governments promote the citizens' participation in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies, including cultural policies.
19. Local governments have the responsibility of guaranteeing territorial balance: between centres and peripheries within the cities, and between cities and rural areas.
20. Local governments are fundamental actors in international processes, ensuring that the voices of the citizens reach the international scene. In the area of culture, local governments promote diplomacy, and participate in international cooperation processes while considering specific situations in less developed regions.
21. Local governments build peace daily; they favour non-violence and the peaceful resolution of the internal and external conflicts of a city. Local governments are more frequently becoming a place for experimenting with successful, adequate, solutions to global problems.

COMMITMENTS

The Agenda 21 for culture, adopted in 2004, was the first international document, which systematically approached the importance of the relationship between culture, citizenship, and sustainability. In this decade a large number of local governments (cities, metropolises, regions, provinces, departments, and counties), civil society actors, agencies, national ministries, and international organizations, have all linked their policies and programs with the Agenda 21 for culture. A [complete list](#) is available on the Agenda 21 for culture's website.

Many of the organizations connected with the Agenda 21 for culture have requested and required a practical guide to help facilitate local implementation, international exchange of experiences, and the establishment of a more visible and structured "community of practice." This is evidenced by the results of the [survey](#) that the UCLG Committee on Culture published in September of 2014 to assess the work carried out. These "Commitments" respond to various needs, and aim to specifically promote achievable and measurable international standards.

The twenty-first century has also seen a progressive recognition of culture as an integral factor of sustainability. This is reflected in the number of reports, declarations, and commitments from experts, international institutions, civil society actors, national and local governments, and other interested parties. Noteworthy mentions include the UNESCO conventions, UNDP reports, the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, the agreements of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, the drafts of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals, and the #culture2015goal global campaign.

These contributions show how the current concept of sustainability includes a wide range of cultural, ecological, social, and economic factors that are closely interconnected. It is necessary to recognize interdependencies in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies, as more than mere prerogatives of public authorities. Instead, rather, they are the result of synergies, alliances, and debates in which different stakeholders may intervene.

The "Commitments" have 9 sections, structured in the following way:

- A. Cultural rights
- B. Culture, diversity, and creativity
- C. Culture and education
- D. Culture and ecology
- E. Culture and economy
- F. Culture, equality, and social inclusion
- G. Culture, urban planning, and public space
- H. Culture, information, and knowledge

I. Governance of culture

The following sections aim to go further into the concept of what is public, based on the idea of “Commitments” between state (in our case, local governments) and society. These nine Commitments summarize the cultural dimension of a sustainable city. Each one incorporates a list of ten specific targets, which provide guidance for the work of the local governments linked to the Agenda 21 for culture. This helps favour better implementation as well as to guide them in evaluating their degree of fulfilment.

A. Cultural Rights

Active Citizenship and Full Recognition of Cultural Rights

Human rights pertain to an asserted, entitled, dignity of groups and individuals. They are the foundation and guarantee of the coherence and legitimacy of policies. Cultural rights, an integral part of human rights, guarantee the access to the knowledge necessary for exercising other rights, liberties, and responsibilities.

One-dimensional narratives that freeze culture or identity in specific expressions are both simplifying and reductive. Furthermore, such narratives may be inconsistent with historical analyses, thereby restraining liberties. Identity has ceased to be a predetermining factor in community, but its construction has become a key factor in communal projects. Nowadays, identity is not a starting point; identity has become a negotiable destiny.

Essentially, cultural rights invite each person to identify with one or several cultural communities, and to modify this choice throughout life. The exercise of human rights—including, but not limited to, freedoms of expression, association, and participation in everyday life—are also essential for the development of a sustainable cultural environment.

Local policies should involve citizens’ rights to freely determine their identity, develop and exercise their creative abilities, and to take part in the collective decisions regarding all facets of community life. Local policies should recognize citizens as the main actors in cultural life.

All public policies are constructed from a reasonable and reasoned articulation between the recognition of citizens’ rights and institutional duties, and the provisions of public services. Indeed, local governments should aim to define these basic cultural services as the bare minimum of rights afforded all citizens, with the purpose of guaranteeing the development of their cultural capacities: rights, liberties, and responsibilities.

Targets:

1. Local cultural policies are based explicitly on cultural rights.
2. The local government adopts a policy on cultural rights and responsibilities.
3. The local government adopts measures to facilitate citizens' participation, either individually or as representatives of civil society groups, in setting priorities within the framework of cultural policy, or in the evaluation of such policies.
4. There exist standards of minimum services for the provision of basic cultural services, such as number of libraries/books per inhabitant.
5. There is a detailed analysis of existing obstacles to citizens' access and participation in cultural life.
6. Cultural policies allow people to have access to, and transmit their own, cultural expressions, paying special attention to more vulnerable groups.
7. Among their objectives, cultural policies include the extension of opportunities for the participation of women in cultural life.
8. Local civil society organizations working in human rights explicitly include cultural rights in their priorities.
9. There are policies and programmes to increase the number of people actively involved in cultural practices and cultural creation.
10. There are policies and programs to increase active membership in cultural organisations in civil society.

B. Culture, Diversity and Creativity

Diversity and Creativity Are Founding Blocks of Culture

Local policies are built upon several basic considerations relating to diversity and creativity. First, there is a tension between traditional sociological conceptions of culture, generally attributed to a repertoire of fine arts, and "anthropological" ones, as adopted by UNESCO in the 1980s. The latter understands culture to be, among others, a set of expressive forms, values, beliefs, and practices present in human life. In assuming the best of both, we can go a step further and place the predominant interests of local cultural policies at the crossroads between the symbolic and the expressive—between sociological and anthropological definitions of culture. Contemporary artists' interests in relating their activities to community life, or the importance of the symbolic dimensions of social and community practices are some examples of this intersection.

Secondly, the search for excellence is usually considered one of the explicit or implicit objectives of every cultural policy. As a result, this creates projects with greater cultural "visibility" that are often poignant and effective, despite having little or no social underpinnings. Alongside this, we usually find cultural projects, of generally little or no visibility, with undeniable social roots. This is understood to retain "culture of proximity."

Cultural policies can therefore promote excellence from a new dialog between proximity and visibility.

Thirdly, the contemporary approach to diversity requires the integration of multicultural strategies, such as the recognition of people with diverse cultural narratives who live in the same place, and intercultural strategies like cultural practices that create bonds between citizens. Active participation in creative processes helps recreate cultural communities where a person can freely determine their belonging.

Finally, the dialogue between “tradition” and “modernity,” so often affected by the tendency to freeze or isolate tradition, may evolve into embracing a more dynamic, engaging, and interactive approach. Tradition that lacks a dialogue with modernity is not capable of evolving because it becomes static and uproots the forefront of cultural development.

Targets:

1. The local government has a department, area, or entity in its organization in charge of cultural policies.
2. The local government dedicates a budget to culture, in accordance with its responsibilities, as well as national and international standards, adequate enough to enable sustainable development of local cultural life. A significant portion of the budget assigned to culture should be dedicated to research, development, and innovation in the cultural sector.
3. The local government supports the existence and accessibility of different facilities, spaces, and venues dedicated to training, creation, and production of culture—residencies, incubator projects, art factories, laboratories, etc.
4. There exist policies and programs that build excellence through their proximity with citizens.
5. There exist policies and programs that explicitly encourage the mutual recognition of the diversity of cultural expressions and intercultural projects.
6. There are support policies for the arts, with attention given to its different disciplines, and policies regarding the protection of cultural heritage both tangible and intangible.
7. There exist policies and programs that are dedicated to scientific culture, in partnership with local civil society organizations, cultural institutions, and training centres.
8. Local productions have a balanced presence in the cultural offering of a city.
9. There exist local platforms and networks that promote access of citizens to cultural programs and activities.
10. There exist international cultural cooperation programs that are related to local cultural life, and especially attentive to the protection and promotion of cultural diversity.

C. Culture and Education

Promote Active Citizenship through the Construction of Cultural Capacities

Culture should be understood as a process geared toward expanding opportunities for expression, and access to knowledge. It is therefore closely linked with education and lifelong learning. Any transmission of knowledge or the development of knowledge through research, comparison, and experimentation, is a cultural act. In fact, lifelong education and training are an important part of cultural rights. As learning spaces, cities provide an excellent environment for exploring synergies between culture and education. This can take on different forms, such as improving access to culture within schools and education centres, promoting education in art, creative and technological abilities, and educational and cultural mediation activities designed by cultural institutions, etc.

The policies in this area consider formal and non-formal education and include learning opportunities for all age groups. They also promote the connections between institutional knowledge and knowledge that emerges from social innovation. Recognizing the diversity of our knowledge permits this recognition of cultural wealth. Aside from the traditional educational environments of schools and universities, civil society actors fulfil a very important role in the design and execution of programs in other areas. The synergies with employment strategies in all cultural sectors should also be considered through training courses for students and through specific capacity-building opportunities for professionals.

Education processes today are the result of culture and at the same time enable the building of the future. In these processes, cities are key actors.

Targets:

1. Education and training strategies adequately consider the local cultural resources.
2. The local government approves a local strategy linking educational policy with cultural policy.
3. There exists a local platform or network that gathers public, civic, and private actors in the field of culture, education, and lifelong learning.
4. The cultural institutions that receive public support provide educational activities, and dedicate a significant part of their budget to them.
5. There are measures in place for the information on the opportunities to access cultural activities and for cultural education to be more accessible, such as through online portals, information centres, etc.
6. The curricula of students in primary and secondary education include the acquisition of cultural abilities and knowledge of topics such as intercultural dialogue, diversity, creativity, tangible and intangible heritage, etc.

7. Cultural creation, circulation, and mediation activities are present in schools and education centres, associations, or companies, ranging from artist residencies to more comprehensive projects including creativity training.
8. Artistic education, such as music, visual arts, performing arts, multimedia, etc., is provided in local schools.
9. Training in cultural management and cultural policies is provided.
10. Cultural rights, as well as human rights in general, are present in educational programs and training activities of cultural sectors.

D. Culture and Ecology

Cultural Factors as Accelerators of Eco-Friendly Processes

Recognizing the importance of culture in sustainable development also means exploring the connections between cultural and ecological factors. On a deep level, cultural aspects influence our comprehension of the environment and our relationship with it. As the consideration for the welfare of future generations has an already integrated environmental aspect, it is time to fully develop a cultural one.

Through their cultural practices, values, and visions of the world, inhabitants of a place modify their environment. Human activities depend on “natural” spaces and biological resources such as those in their agricultural and biological heritage, which would otherwise disappear. Environments are carriers of culture in the way that they remind us of our history, practical knowledge, and identity. One example is gastronomic heritage. Natural spaces and resources also contribute an aesthetic value, in either urban or rural landscapes, to culture. They condition our capacity for resilience and response to change. Adequate information on the importance of ecosystems, their resources, and the transmission of knowledge of the environment is an essential cultural act for displaying an ecologically conscious mind-set, and the values inherent to sustainable development. As actors of a dynamic, evolutionary culture, our practices and values are vital instruments in environmental sustainability. Cultural diversity and biological diversity are closely related. As nature and culture have evolved interdependently alongside one another, they form a constantly evolving balance.

On a more operative level, the infrastructures and cultural activities, like events or facilities, have their own environmental impact and responsibility for this must be accepted and accounted for. Cultural actors may also contribute to create awareness of environmental concerns, while promoting more sustainable uses of natural resources.

Targets:

1. Cultural factors, including traditions, actors, etc., appear in the local strategies of promoting environmental sustainability.
2. Local cultural policies express the connections between culture and environmental sustainability, such as concerns about climate change, the sustainable use of resources, raising environmental awareness, etc.
3. There exists a working group or taskforce between the departments of culture and environment within the local government.
4. History and culture appear in the promotion of production models and consumption habits based on the recognition of local products.
5. Gastronomy, based on local produce, is recognized as an activity linked to local culture.
6. The local government adopts measures for facilitating and promoting citizens' initiatives as regards sustainable use of public spaces, especially those linked to new gardening practices, and other examples of socio-ecological innovation.
7. The local government establishes programs to preserve and transmit traditional knowledge and practices, which contribute to sustainable use of the environment.
8. The local government recognizes the cultural importance of natural spaces with specific programs.
9. Cultural organizations that receive public support evaluate their environmental impacts and carry out ecological awareness-raising activities.
10. There are instances or platforms that link civil society organizations in cultural and environmental fields.

E. Culture and Economy

Every Sustainable Economy Requires Cultural Responsibility

Broadly speaking, a sustainable economy must consider all useable resources, cultural and otherwise, of the environment in which it develops. The capacity, legitimacy, and dynamism of an economy are reflected in its ability to adapt to its environment.

Culture is an important factor in comprehensive and sustainable economic development. It allows for the renewal and creation of new economic activities, strengthens entrepreneurship and employability, and comprises an important part of the attractiveness of cities. It also favours the development of tourism. However, prioritising quick, short-term economic impact leads to the exploitation of cultural and environmental resources, and the subsequent loss of identification between inhabitants and their territory. A sustainable use of cultural resources must be respectful of its core values and should contribute equally to cultural and economic development. They should therefore consider topics such as adequate economic recognition for artists and cultural professionals, corporate responsibility of companies, and the existence of a

sufficient variety of support mechanisms for cultural projects. In considering the positive externalities generated by cultural actors, a cultural ecosystem must include the reinvestment of resources into the local culture. While doing so, close attention should be paid to important cultural initiatives that are the weakest and least visible. Some examples may include, among others, artistic education centres, grassroots organizations, minorities' expressions of identity, and cultural mediation.

A cultural ecosystem cannot be considered merely a footnote to economic policy. Rather, it must interrelate, and be on equal footing, with the other three aspects of sustainable development: equality, economy, and environment.

Targets:

1. Local economic development strategies include cultural entrepreneurship as one of their key aspects.
2. The local economic contributions by public, civic, and private cultural actors, including their direct and indirect impact on the creation of wealth and employment, are analysed periodically.
3. Legislation ensures the existence of fair contracting and payment systems according to the needs of workers in the cultural sector, as well as the recognition of authors' and other artists' rights.
4. There exist a variety of support mechanisms for market-oriented cultural projects, such as microcredits, venture capital, sponsorship systems, and patronage programs.
5. The local government promotes the existence of public economic schemes, which value or multiply voluntary contributions, or micro donations, of bottom-up cultural projects.
6. Partnerships exist between cultural actors and businesses, such as through residencies or other systems of innovation and transfers of knowledge.
7. Traditional cultural trades are recognized, and measures exist for their innovation and development, as required.
8. The local tourism model is sustainable – that is, balanced across the region, connected to the local communities, and interactive with the cultural ecosystem.
9. Corporate and social responsibility schemes explicitly include topics and projects in the area of culture, as well as the cultural values of the population.
10. Local company organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, have specific policies and programs in the area of culture.

F. Culture, Equality, and Social Inclusion

Cultural Factors Contribute to the Development of New Social Bonds

Cultural and creative processes have a strong impact on the welfare, health, and the self-esteem of people. They extend liberties and make it possible for individuals and human groups to explore their identities, histories, and sense of belonging, as well as to create new senses of meaning in their lives.

From an instrumental point of view, active participation in cultural life has a key impact on social inclusion. It provides motivation and the possibility for greater civic participation and lends cultural visibility to minorities in this regard. Participation fosters greater potential for mutual recognition and cooperation between different social groups through intergenerational or intercultural dialogue. This subsequently increases employment opportunities, the public image of a region, and even security, among others. Culture is an important means for implementing new meeting places and for establishing new collective meanings. It can also contribute to the resolution of conflicts, the strengthening of the social fabric, and better resilience in groups and communities.

Cultural factors can promote or obstruct the access to public services such as health, education, social inclusion, employment, etc., where special attention must be paid to prejudices as well as gender-based, or ethnic discrimination. Policies and programs must explore the common ground between cultural factors and these areas of political action. Processes in these sectors usually require both long-term dedication and open methodologies.

Although the objective is to expand participation opportunities for everyone, and promote common spaces for mutual recognition, attention must be paid to the 'right to indifference', that is, the ability to opt not to participate in cultural activities. This should be understood as complementary to the recognition of citizens' right to difference.

Targets:

1. Local strategies in the social sphere, including health, welfare and social inclusion, explicitly include cultural aspects.
2. The cultural vulnerability, or fragility, of certain groups or people in the city / region is analysed periodically.
3. There exists a training program addressed to professionals and organizations in the social sphere for identifying and confronting cultural obstacles to some public services.
4. Programs promoting employability include cultural knowledge and skills.
5. The relationship between personal welfare, health, and active cultural practices is analysed periodically.

6. Cultural institutions receiving public support carry out programs that are inclusive of disadvantaged groups.
7. The cultural institutions, which receive public support, carry out programs in the most impoverished areas of a city.
8. There exists a local platform or network of associations, cooperatives, and organizations of the third sector, which carry out their activities in relation to culture, equality, and social inclusion.
9. There exist programs to promote intergenerational cooperation.
10. Local civil society organizations carry out awareness-raising campaigns, like the promotion of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and anti-racism, with the support of public institutions and cultural organizations.

G. Culture, Urban Planning, and Public Spaces

Planning a City with an Explicit Cultural Awareness

Territories are carriers of history resulting from the interaction between the environment and human activity, their worldview, and populations' sense of meaning. A territory's cultural aspects are manifested in the practices and customs of citizens, heritage, architecture, public art, landscapes, relationships with the natural environment, and the organization of space. Cultural factors are a powerful instrument for the construction of environments in which the citizens recognize themselves, identify with, and freely display their work.

Urban planning and public spaces are essential in the transition toward sustainability of cities and regions. Indifference toward cultural factors in urban planning has negative impacts on the preservation of heritage; it prevents the exercise of memory, creativity, and coexistence. It also promotes homogenization, and limits opportunities to access and participate in cultural life. Overall, urban planning must incorporate an evaluation of its cultural impact in much the same way it currently incorporates environmental impact studies.

Other synergies between culture, urban planning, and public spaces include: (a) the need for urban development projects that adapt to their cultural context. One such example is the use of local knowledge and traditional construction techniques, where possible, instead of using foreign models; (b) the potential of cultural activities and suitably designed infrastructures to contribute to urban regeneration, and (c) the balance among large or small facilities, city centres and the decentralization of neighbourhoods, and resource planning and cultural opportunities.

Targets:

1. Local urban planning or master plans explicitly recognize the importance of culture and cultural factors.
2. There exists a reference document for “cultural impact assessment,” normally used in urban policies, as well as in training programs for professionals and organizations involved in urban planning and design.
3. The local government keeps an inventory of the natural and cultural heritage, whether tangible or intangible, of a city/region, and has subsequently implemented mechanisms for its preservation and conservation according to international standards.
4. The local government adopts measures for promoting the role of culture in the renovation of historic centres and in the plans for territorial, neighbourhood, or district development.
5. The local government explicitly considers the notion of ‘landscape’ in its policies, by integrating both natural and cultural aspects of development, while also ensuring citizens’ participation.
6. The local government recognizes public spaces like streets, squares, and other areas in the city, as key elements in cultural participation.
7. There are programs to promote and manage the development of public art, while also guaranteeing citizens’ participation.
8. There exists an architectural guideline for the renovation of existing buildings, the planning of new buildings, and the use of traditional construction techniques.
9. New cultural infrastructures are planned as parts of a broader cultural ecosystem, and their potential aesthetic impact is taken into account.
10. Policies for urban transport and mobility consider the access of citizens to cultural life, paying special attention to people residing in a city’s peripheries, or those with other obstacles to accessing it.

H. Culture, Information, and Knowledge**Technology as it Contributes to the Plurality and Construction of Citizenship**

Increasing access to information and knowledge is a cultural process, which is part of the basic conditions of sustainable development. A larger availability of data, quality information, and citizens’ participation in their creation allows for a more transparent resource allocation. It also appropriates citizens their own part of the development processes. Moreover, within a context increasingly marked by technology, innovation and connectivity may become means for positive change in communities, allowing citizens to respond to local problems, or to their own aspirations.

Organizations working with information and knowledge, such as libraries, archives, civil society organizations, or the media, can be providers of information on cultural rights and public services in support of local communities. They can also help people guide

their own development by connecting cultural actors and facilitating the exchange of solutions, contributing to guaranteeing the preservation of, and access to, cultural heritage. Furthermore, these organizations generate public forums and debates, and also offer training, so that citizens can access and understand information, in order to create real public knowledge.

Moreover, urban policies should consider recent changes in the production, access, and exchange of information, as well as changes in the cultural and creative industries. These changes also include new ways of how creating, exchanging, collaborating, and distributing information can be approached on a local level. The public space of culture also involves a virtual dimension. These factors show how vital the promotion of opportunities is for international connectivity, whether through online networking or in person.

Targets:

1. Legislation guarantees freedom of expression, including artistic expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of information, and respect for cultural diversity, and public or civil society mechanisms are in place to monitor these.
2. There are policies that guarantee access to free and pluralistic information, as well as measures to guarantee that the existing information favours the citizens' right to participate in cultural life.
3. There are systems of research and analysis on cultural developments and their interaction with other areas of sustainable development, connecting universities, governments, and civil society.
4. The obstacles to accessing and using information and communication technologies for cultural purposes are analysed periodically.
5. The relationship between grassroots cultural processes and social innovation is analysed periodically.
6. There are policies and programs focused on creation, production, and digital distribution aimed at activating public cultural democracy.
7. Cultural institutions that receive public support are present in debates on information and knowledge and provide consistent support for public cultural dimensions.
8. There exist training or awareness-raising activities from cultural professionals on the cultural, social, and economic implications of existing and emerging forms of cultural reproduction and access, such as copyright or open source, among others.
9. The media reflects the pluralism of opinions and existing cultural diversity.
10. There are policies and programs allowing cultural actors to participate in international cooperation networks.

I. Governance of Culture

Towards a Balanced and Shared Governance of Local Cultural Policies

Governance implies “good government” as well as “shared government”, and assumes three fundamental values: multi-actor governance, including public sector, private sector, and civil society, transversal governance, through different areas of public action, and multi-level governance across different levels of government.

The integration of cultural factors into local strategies of sustainable development implies recognizing the common nature of culture and its central place in the construction of public spaces for experience, learning, and recognition. It must also be based on a shared responsibility among a large number of participants, via multi-actor governance. Apart from local governments, it is necessary for civil society organizations, private organizations, and individuals to be recognized as key actors in public debates, in establishing priorities, in developing policies, and in managing and evaluating programs. Local governments must be able to take on different roles as leaders, financial supporters, facilitators, and sometimes as just observers. They must also accept a general responsibility for creating favourable environments for sustainable development and cultural participation. In doing so, local governments must identify obstacles to citizens’ cooperation, and promote synergies between different parties. However, over-institutionalisation may unbalance cultural ecosystems as much as privatization.

Local governance of culture must include opportunities for mapping a plural culture. It should encourage participation in identifying cultural resources and relationships. It is also responsible for the strategic planning of priorities and key actions, as well as the evaluation of all of these. Balanced governance encourages the establishment of forums for private and public participation, like civil society organizations and local councils on culture, respectively.

Governance of culture is also supported by coordination mechanisms that exist across different departments whose responsibilities in cultural areas, and the frameworks of multi-level governance help facilitate further coordination among local, regional, and national governments.

Targets:

1. The local government implements a cultural policy based on the Agenda 21 for culture and Culture 21: actions, joining public initiatives with civil society actors in shared projects.
2. The local government promotes the existence of cultural planning at neighbourhood or district levels.
3. The local government creates forums for public, civil, and private actors’ participation, whose aims are to steer local cultural policy, such as a local council on culture.

4. There exists an independent civil society platform, or network, which includes citizens and cultural actors.
5. Citizens are represented in the boards of cultural institutions that receive public support.
6. A gender perspective has been adopted in the cultural programs and institutions that receive public support.
7. There exist policies or programs that support the participation of citizens in the management of cultural institutions, programs, and events.
8. Public projects generate permanent forums for the consultation, negotiation, and regulation of objectives and methods, through cultural reflexivity and dynamics, evidenced by the participation of all the parties involved.
9. There exist measures like training programs in the area of culture, to strengthen NGOs, trade associations, unions, and other civil society actors who contribute to the cultural life.
10. There are frameworks in place for the distribution of responsibilities or collaboration in cultural policies for local, regional, and national governments.

D. HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Local Implementation

The “Culture 21: Actions” document may be used by any local government that wishes to do so.

We have attempted to draft a document that is useful for local governments as a whole rather than for specific cultural departments. Our aim was to consolidate this into one practical and easy to use document encompassing everything we understand about the relationships between citizenship, culture, and sustainable development. This is an emerging field, which has yet to be completely established, but it is necessary to respond to the challenges faced by twenty-first century societies. Local governments stand to play a vital role.

We believe this document will help mayors and local government leaders to strengthen the cultural dimension of development.

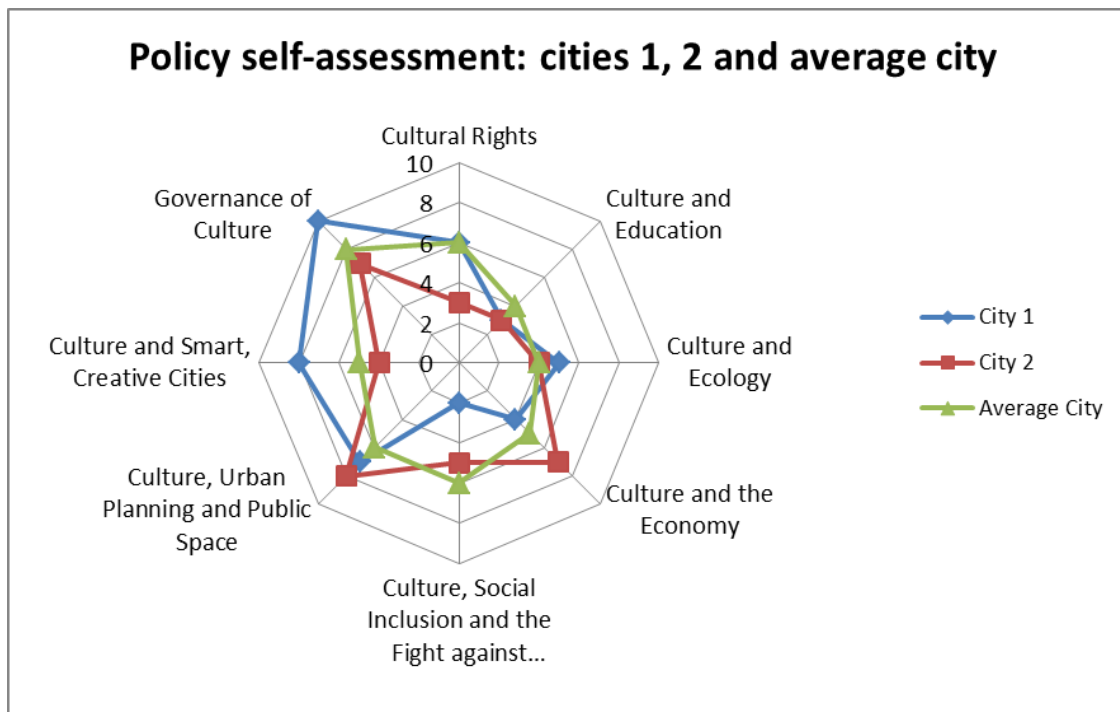
We hope it may prove useful to urban actors in the areas of culture, citizenship, and sustainable development.

Self-Assessment

The chapter dedicated to “Commitments” should make it possible for local governments to be able to carry out self-assessments, considering current policies and programs. The

self-assessment is geared toward increasing knowledge, connectivity, and the operational capacity of urban actors whose work is focussed on citizenship, culture, and sustainable development, whether belonging to the cultural sector or not. We hope that this framework of self-assessment will be a useful resource in local debates.

We encourage local governments to lead the implementation of this framework in their cities through processes, which are open, participatory, and action-oriented. The self-assessment is based on the “Commitments,” the 9 thematic sections, and their corresponding targets. The self-assessment should estimate the level of achievement of each target, allot points, and provide comments. Afterwards, each local government may present issues in a graph, outlining any strengths and weaknesses for a specific year. This will enable timeline comparisons and the exchanging of experiences and lessons learned with other cities.



The UCLG Committee on culture will provide a document to partner cities, with complete advice on how to carry out the self-assessment, including indicators, measurements, and comments.

International Networking

“Culture 21: Actions” aims to encourage local governments all over the world to compare their experiences, and work together in an international community of practice.

On one hand, the UCLG Committee on culture will offer cities a framework for local implementation, and on the other, an opportunity for international exchange. They must both be closely related in order to impact positively, and substantially improve the relationship between culture, citizenship, and sustainable development in local areas.

International networking will be based on technical assistance for self-assessments, exchanges through peer review, explanations of good practice, and the identification of cities that are leaders in a specific area.

The UCLG Committee on culture will organize a Culture Summit every two years to connect the parties, foster exchanges, and publicly report on progress made through networking.

Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly will approve a Development Agenda based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It will guide all the countries, either developed or developing, in the improvement of the living conditions. The SDGs will be universal, transformative, and ambitious. Although the post-2015 SDGs will not have a cultural goal, it does appear that several of them will explicitly include cultural topics and processes. This will have a significant impact on the role of culture in globalization and on local cultural policies.

In close partnership with the SDGs, UN-Habitat is preparing a new framework for defining policies and programs that ensure sustainable urbanisation. This framework will be presented in 2016 at the Habitat III conference in XXX.

We believe that the “Culture 21: Actions” proposal may help to understand the comprehensiveness of the relationship between culture, citizenship, and sustainable development, and that it may be used as a key document in the “localisation” of the SDGs and Habitat III.

National Governments

We consider this document “Culture 21 Actions” to be useful in the design of national development plans, national urban policy plans, or support programs for local and

regional governments. Nowadays it is necessary for planning to take place in close cooperation with local governments, and that cultural factors are an integral part of the process. Indeed, it should be present to ensure local ownership, to guarantee their implementation, to strengthen democracy, and to empower citizens with the ability of meaningful, transformative action.

CONTACT

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Annex 1: Relevant documents of international policy since 2000 + GLOSSARY (20 concepts)

Annex 2: Commitments, with Targets and possible indicators + Measures and advice on self-evaluation + Comments