

# CULTURE IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES

LEARNING WITH CULTURE 21 ACTIONS

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PILOT  
CITIES  
2015-2017

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## PROGRAMME PRESENTATION



# A. INTRODUCTION

The “Culture 21 Actions” toolkit providing guidance for cities aiming to evaluate, design and implement cultural policies contributing to sustainable development was adopted at the first United Cities and Local Governments’ Culture Summit, held in Bilbao on 18-20 March 2015 under the title “Culture and Sustainable Cities”.

“Culture 21 Actions” builds on the work of the Agenda 21 for culture, as well as UCLG’s long-standing work on culture and sustainable development, including the Policy Statement “Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development” (November 2010) and the integration of culture in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for Post-2015 Development Agenda Towards Habitat III.

There is increasing evidence and awareness at global level about the importance of culture for sustainable development, as well as about the centrality of cities and the local level as privileged spaces for the promotion of sustainability. Building on the progressive integration of culture in national and international development strategies (e.g. the MDG-Fund’s ‘Culture and Development’ programme, among others), the recognition of cultural rights in international law (e.g. the appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights), the adoption of several international documents (e.g. the UNESCO 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage and 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions) as well as the implementation of many local cultural strategies which have contributed to community cohesion, employment, awareness raising on environmental preservation and social justice, etc., the forthcoming Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda is expected to integrate references to culture as part of the global agenda for sustainable development, with a specific focus on cities.<sup>1</sup>

The approach proposed by Culture 21: Actions combines the promotion of synergies between culture and other areas of local sustainable development (education, social inclusion, employment, citizen participation, environment, knowledge) and the strengthening of cultural policies based on heritage, diversity and creativity. It should be noted that, often, departments or areas entrusted with cultural affairs in local governments are poorly resourced, this being a hindrance for the effective design, implementation and evaluation of cultural policies as well as their ability to enter into a fruitful dialogue with other areas of policymaking. The implementation of Culture 21: Actions should contribute, among others, to raise awareness about the importance of culture for local sustainable development, as well as to build capacities of all those involved, both within local government (culture departments and other relevant bodies) and in civil society. Indeed, sustainable cities require an integral approach, based on the combination of different perspectives and objectives as well as cooperation between public, private and civil society actors.

Culture 21: Actions also emerges from the acknowledgement that, in all world regions, there is an increasing wealth of experiences and knowledge on the importance of cultural policies for local sustainable development, including the intrinsic cultural aspects which are essential for wellbeing and the exercise of human rights, as well as the contribution that cultural participation and resources can make to social, economic and environmental sustainability.

However, much remains to be done to enable effective evaluation, peer-learning and the dissemination of existing intelligence. The 'Culture in Sustainable Cities. Learning with Culture 21 Actions' programme, devised by UCLG's Committee on culture, aims to address this gap, by providing opportunities for cities to participate in a learning process, on the basis of the principles and actions included in Culture 21 Actions. The programme builds on the experience of a similar scheme launched in 2014 and will enable participating cities to become "Pilot Cities" of the Agenda 21 for culture.

In parallel with this programme, UCLG will also implement, in partnership with Culture Action Europe, a similar 'Culture and Sustainable Cities: Learning with Culture 21 Actions' programme with Pilot Cities in Europe. Synergies between both schemes will be explored throughout their implementation, and UCLG's Committee on culture will integrate both of them in learning, awareness-raising and communication activities.

Just as in the case of Europe, partnerships may also be established with other regional or national organisations (e.g. intergovernmental organisations in certain world regions or sub-regions, national ministries of culture, etc.) for the implementation of Culture 21 Actions and the promotion of capacity-building and learning in the relevant regions and countries. In this event, the methodology outlined below may be adapted accordingly, whilst retaining the same global objectives and looking to foster mutual learning and networking. The UCLG Culture Committee is open to discussing this possibility with interested partners.

## B. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- To foster increased local and international understanding of the connection between culture and local sustainable development in the participating cities, on the basis of the issues raised by the Agenda 21 for culture and Culture 21 Actions, as well as other issues relevant to the global and local agendas.
- To enable the design, implementation and evaluation of innovative pilot measures in areas relevant to culture and sustainable cities, through collaboration between public, private and civil society actors.
- To facilitate exchanges, evaluation, peer-learning and capacity-building among cities concerned with culture and sustainable development, on the basis of the thematic areas identified in Culture 21 Actions.
- To provide wide visibility to the participating cities and their policies and programmes in global discussions on the role of culture in sustainable development
- To contribute to the advocacy for the explicit consideration of cultural factors in the paradigm of sustainable cities internationally.

## C. BENEFICIARIES

The programme is open to cities which (a) are direct or indirect UCLG members; and (b) are familiar with the Agenda 21 for culture.

In the course of the programme, participating cities should ensure that a diverse range of local government bodies (e.g. the department in charge of cultural policies, but also those involved in other areas related to sustainable development), civil society organisations and individual citizens can take part in relevant activities, thus contributing to ownership, sustainability and accountability.

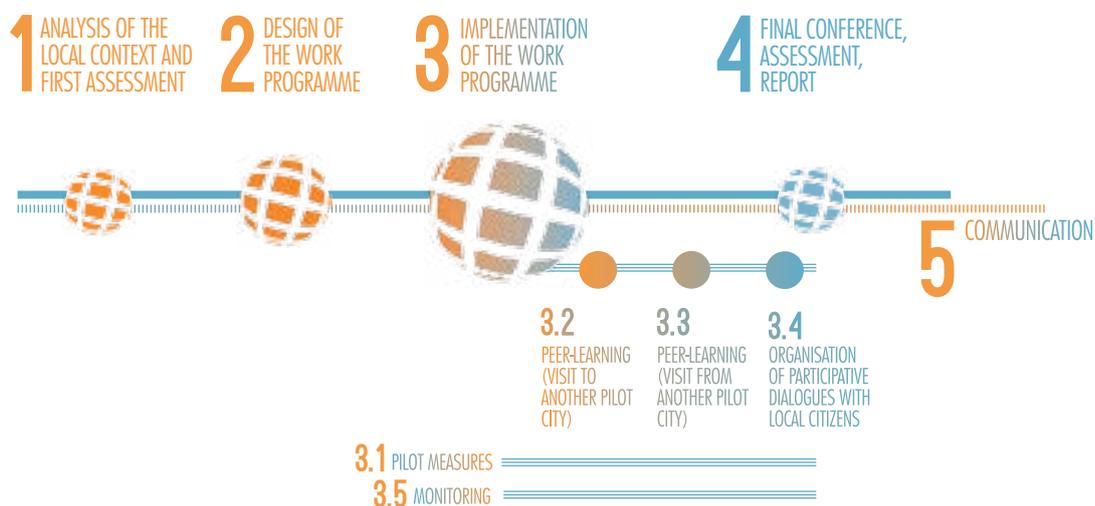
## D. PROMOTERS

The implementation of the programme is based on close work between participating cities, the UCLG Committee on culture and external experts. All those involved understand the programme as a unique learning experience.

As explained above, partnerships with relevant regional or national organisations may be established for the implementation of Culture 21 Actions in specific regions or countries. In this event, partners may play a role particularly in the provision of expertise (i.e. assuming some or all of the tasks entrusted to external experts in the description below), the organisation of events (e.g. peer-learning visits and other national or regional seminars) and the dissemination of preliminary and final outputs. The methodology described below will be adapted accordingly.

# METHODOLOGY

The programme runs between 26 and 28 months, depending on the city's availability and needs. For each participating city, engagement in the programme will involve the following workplan:



In the following pages, a more detailed description of each activity is explained.

# ACTIVITY 1 ANALYSIS OF THE LOCAL CONTEXT AND FIRST ASSESSMENT



This initial stage is very important in order to improve mutual knowledge and set the basis of the cooperation. This activity will last for 7-8 months.

Early stages of the project will involve carrying out:

- a) A desk analysis, conducted by the external expert/s with support from the local team, of the relevant documentation presenting the context of local cultural policies as well as other relevant aspects from the perspective of sustainability.
- b) Visits to relevant cultural facilities/experiences jointly by the external expert/s and some representatives of the beneficiary cities.
- c) Meetings with senior local government officials and relevant agents of the local community.
- d) A 2-3-day initial workshop, gathering a group of 12-20 local stakeholders (different areas of local government, civil society actors, academics, private bodies) and facilitated by an external expert. Workshop participants will be introduced to the Agenda 21 for culture and Culture 21 Actions, as well as related issues (sustainable development, governance, cultural rights, etc.). The implementation tools of Culture 21 Actions (namely, its nine commitments) will be used in order to obtain a first self-evaluation of the state of cultural policies and sustainable development in the pilot city. At the end of the workshop, the group should have identified 2-3 areas requiring further work (among the 9 thematic areas included in Culture 21 Actions) and 2-3 areas where relevant experiences exist which could inspire other cities.
- e) A public event (lasting 2-3 hours) on the occasion of the workshop, to present Culture 21 Actions, the Partners and the city's participation in the 'Culture in Sustainable Cities: Learning with Culture 21 Actions' programme, and to debate some relevant issues in this context (optional).

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Beside the public events, the expected outcomes of this phase are:

- The appointment of a local focal point by the local government.
- The identification of an initial group of other 2-3 "interlocutors" (municipality and local community) to be closely associated to the programme and its set up.
- A document with initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the city's cultural policies, on the basis of Culture 21 Actions' "circular radar", including the identification of 2-3 areas deserving further attention and 2-3 areas where the city has strengths. The name of this document would be "Radar1".
- The creation of a dedicated page at the Agenda 21 for culture website.
- A press-release
- A video recording

## ACTIVITY 2 DESIGN OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

In the month following the workshop, the local focal point and the team of 2-3 “interlocutors”, in collaboration with the expert/s, will draft the plan for the approximately 19-20 months which the work programme is expected to last, aimed at improving the city’s performance in the areas where needs have been identified. In addition, the work programme could include a set of awareness-raising and/or capacity-building activities, in order to inform key stakeholders (e.g. local government staff, NGOs, universities, the business community, etc.) of the links between culture and local sustainable development and presenting both the Agenda 21 for culture framework and examples of relevant policies and programmes illustrating this approach. The work programme will require joint contributions by a range of local actors (local government, civil society, private organisations, citizens) and will include monitoring mechanisms based on the contents of Culture 21 Actions.

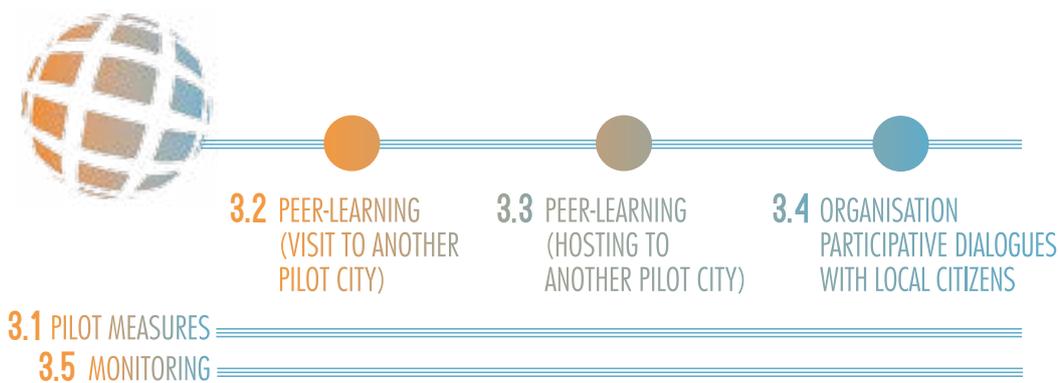
### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A 19- to 20-month work programme, on the basis of the initial analysis.

# ACTIVITY 3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme designed above will be implemented over a period of 19-20 months. It will be coordinated by the local focal point, in close contact with other Interlocutors and Stakeholders. Regular exchanges should also be maintained with the team of Agenda 21 for culture, as well as with the external expert/s, particularly regarding the implementation of the planned measures and projects and the international peer-learning dimension.

The implementation of the work programme includes the following activities:



Monitoring and adjustment to the work plan as well as communication and development of regular reports are foreseen as transversal activities of the implementation phase.

## 3.1 PILOT MEASURES

The work programme will include the implementation of a limited number of pilot measures which address in particular the 2-3 areas where specific efforts are required (approximately 70% of the time) but also 2-3 areas where relevant experiences exist (approximately 30% of the time).

The exact nature of these measures will be determined in accordance with the needs identified in the initial phase. They may include new partnerships with relevant agents in priority areas (e.g. schools, universities, private companies, NGOs, etc.), innovative funding schemes, new participatory spaces, etc. In some cases, they may mainly involve the improvement of internal learning, capacity-building and reflection spaces, as a first step towards the mid- or long-term development of other programmes. Given the time available, cities will be advised to focus their efforts on a limited number of feasible measures, which could later provide the basis for broader, permanent programmes.

The implementation of the pilot measures will run in parallel with and be informed by exchanges occurring throughout the implementation phase (see sections 3.2-3.5 below), both at local level (meetings with citizens, exchanges among the stakeholders involved in the initial workshop, etc.) and at international level (visit to another city, hosting of a pilot city, advice provided by external experts, online exchanges of information, synergies with other international seminars or meetings, etc.). As explained further below, the implementation of the work programme, including its pilot measures, will also be the subject of a monitoring process, which should enable to identify progress made as well as any relevant shortcomings.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Implementation of pilot measures in the priority areas identified during phase 1.**
- **2-3 good practice descriptions prepared by the pilot city, using the format designed by UCLG. They will focus preferably on the pilot measures implemented in the context of the work programme, but they could also refer to previously-existing initiatives which are seen as relevant and could be illustrative for other cities. These documents will be written by the managers of these relevant experiences, in cooperation with the local focal point and other local stakeholders where necessary.**

## 3.2 PEER-LEARNING (VISIT TO ANOTHER PILOT CITY)

A visit to another another city participating in the implementation of Culture 21 Actions (peer 2), which provides illustrative evidence in the areas where weaknesses have been identified for the beneficiary city (peer 1), will take place. The visit will involve roughly 4-6 actors from the beneficiary city, as well as the external expert/s.

The agenda will include a combination of meetings with local government officials and civil society actors, visits to relevant cultural facilities or services, public events involving citizens, etc. UCLG and the experts involved in providing support to Pilot Cities will explore, in dialogue with the participating cities, the possibility of organising joint activities involving more than two pilot cities, in the event that similar challenges are identified. Each visit will close with an internal meeting to discuss the lessons learned and potential transferability of relevant initiatives.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **A visit to another pilot city, providing relevant lessons to reflect on the issues of interest to the beneficiary city.**
- **A report of the visit, to be elaborated by the peer 1 local focal point, with the support of the external expert.**

### 3.3 PEER-LEARNING (HOSTING ANOTHER PILOT CITY)

The beneficiary city (peer 1) will host at least another city (peer 2), in order to present and discuss the areas where strengths have been identified. As mentioned above, the possibility of organising visits involving more than two cities will be considered, where this is relevant to the topics identified.

A seminar providing the occasion to discuss issues of common interest to the participating cities as well as the implementation of the work programme derived from Culture 21 Actions, will be organised in this context.

#### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **The final agenda of the seminar, to be elaborated by the local focal point.**
- **Organisation of a seminar involving relevant actors from local government, civil society and the private sector in the beneficiary city (peer 1), as well as representatives from at least another pilot city (peer 2).**
- **A report of the seminar, to be elaborated by the local focal point, with the support of the external expert.**

### 3.4 ORGANISATION OF PARTICIPATIVE DIALOGUES WITH LOCAL CITIZENS

In occasion of the “peer-to-peer” visits and exchanges, participatory meetings with civil society representatives at large will be organised in the hosting city to allow a broader exchange with citizens. Topics are related to relevant issues of the hosting city to inform the development of the beneficiary city’s implementation work.

In addition, other meetings open to the local citizens will be held in the course of the implementation of the work programme. These activities will be aimed partly at informing of developments in the context of the work programme and identifying synergies with other ongoing activities, but they can also be understood as fostering capacity-building (on the Agenda 21 for culture, Culture 21 Actions and the values and objectives related to culture and sustainable development) and opening the way to participative governance. Besides being a way for involving citizens in the municipality endeavour, they are also meant to be an occasion to empower citizens on the role of culture in shaping sustainable cities. Ultimately, this should contribute to strengthening the understanding of the connections between culture and local sustainable development and ensuring long-term ownership and sustainability of the relevant approaches.

These “dialogues” will be co-organised with the help of the expert/s and promoters that will contribute both to shaping the issues to be discussed and to designing participatory formats.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- One participative dialogue held in the context of the hosting of another city.
- Other participative events open to the public at large held over the course of the implementation of the work programme.
- Increased understanding of the relation between culture and sustainable development and its local implications, enhancing the adoption, ownership and sustainability of relevant approaches in these areas.

## 3.5 MONITORING

The work programme will be locally monitored throughout its duration, with regular meetings involving participants in the initial workshop as well as other relevant agents. The aims of the monitoring process include, firstly, to identify challenges and achievements in the implementation of the work programme and, secondly, to draw lessons from the experience, in the form of written outputs which can be shared within the city and beyond, thus contributing to the learning process promoted by Culture 21 Actions. Expert/s will be involved where/when possible.

In the last meeting (lasting for one day), a document with updated analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the city's cultural policies, on the basis of Culture 21 Actions' "circular radar" will be produced. This 'Radar 2' will provide a picture of the progress made and any other relevant changes identified throughout the work programme. On the basis of the observations made at this point and the lessons drawn from participation in the programme, a set of 'feasible pilot projects' should be identified, which the city could implement in the subsequent period.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- At least 6 local meetings (including those held in other phases of the implementation), chaired by local focal point and involving (at least) the 12-20 local stakeholders.
- A one-page report will be written by the local focal point, after each one of these meetings. They will summarise the progress in the implementation of the work programme, with an identification of needs and issues to address.
- 'Radar 2', accompanied by the identification of a set of 'feasible pilot projects' which the city could implement in the subsequent period.

## ACTIVITY 4 FINAL CONFERENCE, ASSESSMENT AND REPORT

A final 1-day conference involving participants to the initial workshop, the external expert/s, promoters and other relevant agents (possibly also citizens involved during the “dialogues”) will be organised in order to evaluate the results of the work programme.

After this event, the external expert/s will prepare a short internal report with recommendations for follow-up work. This report will stress in particular: (a) recommendations for further local action; (b) the lessons learned through encounters between the participating cities, and (c) the relevance and contribution of the issues raised to the global agenda on culture and sustainable development.

The local government, in dialogue with other local stakeholders where necessary, will also produce a short article assessing the programme’s implementation.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A 1-day final public conference.
- A final (internal) report written by the external expert/s, providing recommendations and guidance for subsequent local and international activities.
- A final (short and public) abstract of this final report.
- An article, prepared by the local focal point, explaining the main results of the programme, and providing feasible ideas for the future continuation of the work, at a local scale.
- A press-release
- A video recording.

## ACTIVITY 5 COMMUNICATION

Each pilot city will be encouraged to disseminate the programme through its own and other relevant media, as well as through public activities.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- At least 3 press releases
- At least 100 twitter messages
- At least 5 short video recordings

A specific web page for each pilot city will be set up in the Agenda 21 for culture website. In the course of the project, this page will feature the following documents:

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Radar1 document (approximately month 7-8)
- Work programme (approximately month 8-10) and abstract
- The report of the visit to another city (date tbc)
- The report of the seminar hosting another city (date tbc)
- 2-3 good practices (published in the course of the work programme)
- Radar 2 document (approximately month 22-24)
- The final report written by the expert/s (approximately month 26-28) and abstract
- The final article written by the city (approximately month 26-28)

Each of these documents will be translated and published in the three languages of UCLG: English, French and Spanish. (In the case of the work programme and the final report, only its abstracts will be translated and made public.)

A customised version of the programme logo will be produced for each participating city, which will be able to use it on its own website and other media.

On the other hand, the UCLG Committee on culture will also consider additional opportunities to foster the visibility of pilot cities on its public events and media.

# F. RESULTS

The results of the programme for each pilot city will be as follows:

- Strengthening of local networking among relevant public, private and civil society agents in the cultural scene (so-called “cultural sector”), thanks to the joint design, implementation and monitoring of a common work programme.
- Increased awareness-raising and understanding, among public, private and civil society bodies as well as citizens (so-called “key urban actors concerned by the role of culture in development”), of the links between culture and sustainable development at local level.
- Dissemination of a range of public documents describing the connection between the city’s cultural policy and its sustainable development vision. These documents will combine conceptual aspects and illustrative examples, which may provide guidance to other cities. They will be translated into three languages and promoted in the media channels of the Agenda 21 for culture. The pilot city will be able to disseminate all of these documents through its own online and offline channels.
- An internal report with follow-up recommendations, prepared by the external expert/s, taking into account the evaluation of the work programme and other reflections derived from Culture 21 Actions.
- Enhanced networking at regional and international level, thanks to the participation in and hosting of at least two cross-national activities in the course of the programme.
- Membership of the Agenda 21 for culture’s ‘Pilot Cities’ network, with additional opportunities to take part in cross-national peer-learning activities.

## G. MANAGEMENT

The external expert/s dedicated to the pilot city will be jointly agreed by the relevant pilot city and the UCLG Committee on culture. Preference will be given to a member of the UCLG Committee on culture, or alternatively to independent experts perfectly familiarised with the Agenda 21 for culture and Culture 21 Actions. Generally one lead expert will be identified for each participating city, but other experts may be involved in the course of the programme in accordance with the needs identified (e.g. experts with specific knowledge in the priority areas identified may be involved for certain capacity-building or monitoring activities). Should this be the case, the same selection criteria outlined above will be applied.

The pilot city will appoint a single person to become the “local focal point”. During specific activities, other representatives of the UCLG Committee on culture as well as of cities involved in the implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture may also be involved.

## H. COSTS

Pilot cities must cover the costs of work related to their participation in the ‘Culture and Sustainable Cities. Learning with Culture 21 Actions’ programme, including travel costs, accommodation, translations, communication and experts’ fees. A standard amount has been established, which will be discussed and adapted if necessary in accordance with the number of participants in visits abroad. More detailed information will be provided to cities expressing an interest in taking part.

## I. CALENDAR

The ‘Culture in Sustainable Cities. Learning with Culture 21 Actions’ programme (“Pilot Cities 2015/2017”) will be launched in May 2015. Cities interested in participating should confirm their involvement before 19 June 2015.

The overall duration of the project is expected to be approximately 26-28 months for each participating city. This includes a preparatory phase (7-8 months) and the implementation of the work programme (19-20 months, including the organisation of the final conference and other dissemination activities). Initial workshops in each pilot city are expected to be held within 6 months from the agreement. The implementation of work programmes and parallel dissemination will take place between mid-2015 and mid-2017. Intermediate seminars and peer-learning activities, including visits, are expected to be held between late 2015 and early 2017.

In 2017, the preliminary results of the programme will be presented at the 2nd UCLG Culture Summit.

# HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Cities interested in obtaining further information about the programme may contact UCLG's Committee on culture (see details below).

In order to confirm their participation, each pilot city should provide a letter of commitment, signed by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor in charge of this area.

## CONTACT DETAILS

### Committee on culture of UCLG

Email [info@agenda21culture.net](mailto:info@agenda21culture.net)

Web [www.agenda21culture.net](http://www.agenda21culture.net)

Twitter [@agenda21culture](https://twitter.com/agenda21culture)

**Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any additional information.**



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