

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES IN 2025 COMMITTEE ON CULTURE

Mission

The mission of the Committee on Culture, approved in Mexico City (2010) and extended in Rabat (2013), Bogotá (2016), Durban (2019) and Daejeon (2022) is “to promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development through the international dissemination and the local implementation of Agenda 21 for Culture”.

1. The report of the activities in 2025

A. Implementation		
UCLG Culture Summit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To organise the 6th UCLG Culture Summit. 	<p>The 6th Culture Summit took place in Barcelona on 26-28 September 2025, in the frame of UNESCO’s Mondiacult and its Civic Agora organised by the Catalan institutions.</p> <p>Release of the Declaration “Culture is Always in the Answer”. All the outputs (Report, Declaration, and videos) are available here.</p> <p>The preparation of the 7th Culture Summit in Jeonju (September 2027) is ongoing.</p>
International Award UCLG - Mexico City – Culture 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To promote the winners of the 6th edition of the Award. - To promote the “best” initiatives (good practices) on the local promotion of cultural rights that can be replicated or transferred to other cities, contexts or territories. - To prepare the 7th edition of the Award (to be launched in November 2025). 	<p>Preparation of the new edition of the Award. The call opened on 2 December 2025.</p> <p>The website of the Award is here.</p>
The “OBS” database of good practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To consolidate the dedicated website “OBS” presenting our more than 400 good practices, searchable per 17 SDGs, the 9 Commitments of Culture 21 Actions and more than 100 keywords, including new good practices coming from the 6th edition of the Award (2023-2024). - To consolidate partnerships (examples: British Council, Metropolis’ USE platform and CHN), to explore a connection with the UNESCO Creative 	<p>OBS consolidated. More than 50 new good practices uploaded to the website in 2025. See the OBS here.</p>

	Cities Network – UCCN and to analyse possible specific “sponsorship” for the database.	
The Rome Charter	- To promote the Rome Charter and use it as one of the modules of the new framework document, that is, Culture 21 Plus.	Integration of the Rome Charter as a module of Culture 21 Plus, ongoing.

B. Advocacy		
Towards a Culture Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue the work to achieve a Culture Goal in the post-2030 Development Agenda, with the #Culture2030Goal campaign; launching a full version 1 of the “Culture Goal” proposal in June 2025, so that it can influence Mondiacult 2025 in September 2025. - To ensure a wide dissemination of the version 1 among partners, members, experts and all relevant possible contributors; possibly with regional/national seminars in key cities. 	<p>With the name “The Culture Goal: From Necessity to Reality”, the version 1 (with one Goal, ten Targets and several indicators per Target) was published on 27 September 2025 and launched at a high-level event in the UCLG Culture Summit.</p> <p>Also published “The Analytical Report on the Culture Goal, its Targets and Indicators”, with details of the stakeholder consultation, the survey, and the indicator mapping the campaign completed from December 2024 to July 2025.</p> <p>Also published a summary infographic.</p>
Mondiacult 2025	- To participate in the UNESCO Mondiacult 2025 Conference, to take place in Barcelona on 29-30 September and 1 October 2025, as well as in the events prepared around Mondiacult.	Participation carried out, with a complete side-event. See the page dedicated to our partnership with UNESCO .
UN 2030 Agenda, SDGs and New Urban Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure a strong presence in the UN World Summit for Social Development (4-6 November 2025), fully aligned with the UCLG’s Local – Social Covenant. - To participate in the UN HLPF (July 2025) in several formats, including the dissemination of the “Culture in the VLRs and VNRs” reports published in 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and the “Culture Goal” document version 1 (to be launched a few days before the HLPF, see above). - To be visible and active in global initiatives that relate culture and sustainable development. 	<p>Presence of the UCLG World Secretariat at the UN World Summit for Social Development (Doha Summit).</p> <p>Presence of the UCLG World Secretariat at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum.</p>
G-20 and U-20	- To reinforce and promote the	Presence of the UCLG World

	presence of culture as a key dimension of sustainable development in the debates generated by these networks.	Secretariat at the G20 and U20
Global civil society networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue our committed membership in the #Culture2030Goal global campaign. - To work with the Climate Heritage Network and its "Race to Resilience" process, reinforcing the presence at the COPs. - To consolidate an operational connection with the most relevant global civil society networks in the field of culture, such as ICOMOS, IFLA, IMC, IFCCD and Culture Action Europe. - To contribute to the Mayor Paweł Adamowicz Award. - To explore new partnerships. 	<p>Work carried out, with meetings of the Leadership Group and the Agora of the campaign, and publication of the three documents mentioned in point B1.</p> <p>Contacts with main actors around the COP (Climate Heritage Network, Race to Resilience, Preserving Legacies, Heritage Adapts...)</p> <p>Contribution, as members of the advisory committee, to the Mayor Paweł Adamowicz Award.</p>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To consolidate long-term partnerships with the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, UNESCO and the EU. 	<p>Presence of the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, as well as of the UNESCO DGA for Culture, at the UCLG Culture Summit.</p> <p>EU: progress of the "Capitals of Culture" program, which ends in May 2026 (see below).</p>
City networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To consolidate an operational connection with all global / regional networks concerned by "culture in sustainable cities", including WCCF, Eurocities, ICLEI, GPM, World Heritage Cities – OWHC, European Network of Cultural Centres (ENCC), Culture Next and Ibercultura Viva, as well as INTACH, CDN and LAV. 	<p>Ongoing contacts with all networks, which have been present at the UCLG Culture Summit, at Mondiacult or at the Agora Civica (depending on their own agenda).</p>

C. Monitoring and follow-up

<p>Key narrative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To adopt the UCLG global framework document "Culture 21 Plus" on Cultural Rights, the Transitions and Care, based on the UCLG Pact for the Future – Daejeon Declaration, and on the acquis of the UCLG Committee on Culture, including Culture 21 Actions and the Rome Charter. - To ensure a wide co-construction process of Culture 21 Plus among the cities of the Committee (with tests held worldwide). - To prepare thematic modules of Culture 21 Plus, so that this toolkit offers a wide range of options for UCLG to engage (examples of possible modules: heritage, climate change, gender equality, the Rome Charter, etc.) and to respond to specific circumstances (e.g. smaller cities, rural areas or metropolises). - To elaborate key briefings / new research on issues related to culture and sustainable cities, for example (a) the relation culture – migration - anti-racism, (b) the cultural dimension of metropolitan policies, (c) culture, emergencies and eco-transition. - To explore the elaboration of the 2nd part of the report on Culture, Cities and the COVID-19 Pandemic. 	<p>Adoption of Culture 21 Plus at the UCLG Executive Bureau in April 2025 (document "FRAME", available in the website)</p> <p>Completion of the "EXTENDED" module (available internally to Leading and Pilot Cities, as well as to cities involved in capacity-building programmes).</p> <p>The Essentials, Climate Change and Gender Equality modules are in progress.</p> <p>Also exploring a module on "Culture, Health and Wellbeing" in partnership with the City of Bogotá.</p>
<p>Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To consolidate the website as a true portal to knowledge on "culture in sustainable cities". - To analyse in-depth our presence on social media (TW, FB, Flickr, Instagram, Youtube) and explore other media (LinkedIn, BlueSky, Mastodon). - To continue publishing the Info newsletter twice a month, and the biennial Culture 21 Review. - To align the communication programmes with the #Local4ActionHub. - To continue supporting UCLG major initiatives and activities towards our networks and audiences. 	<p>Communication activities have increased significantly, without innovating in the formats.</p> <p>Culture 21 Review 2022-2023, published (see here).</p>
<p>Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure the full involvement of all members of the Governance Team in the leadership of the Committee. - To invite new cities or 	<p>Celebration of 22th the annual meeting of the Committee on 27 February 2025 (see this page).</p>

	regions to become active in the Committee.	As a decision of the annual meeting 2025, the governance Team now includes Izmir Metropolitan Municipality as vice-president.
Budget	- To consolidate a balanced budget.	An adequate budget has been consolidated.

D. Learning		
Leading Cities	- To use the new Culture 21 Plus in the work of the "Leading Cities", as this is the prestigious label that recognises the work of the most advanced cities in specific areas, with contents adapted to each city.	Ongoing work with 12 leading cities. The "Terms of Reference" for Leading Cities has been adapted to Culture 21 Plus (see here).
Pilot Cities and Culture 21 LAB	- To use the new Culture 21 Plus in the work of the Pilot Cities, both for self-evaluation of the current "state of affairs" in a place (Culture 21 LAB) or for the design of new policies for a local government.	Ongoing work with 6 pilot cities. The Secretariat is adapting the "Terms of Reference" for Pilot Cities.
The "Seven Keys"	- To launch a new series of workshops of our capacity-building programme "Seven Keys" on the localisation of SDGs with a cultural perspective, in close cooperation with UCLG Sections and UCLG partners.	Seven keys workshop in Brazzaville (July 2025) and another workshop in preparation in Nouakchott.
Online seminars	- To organise or participate in a wide number of online seminars, webinars and meetings on the role of culture in people-centred sustainable development.	The Secretariat has been present in more than 20 international seminars on cultural policies and development (all online).
Peer-learning and capacity-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To deliver the programme "Capitals of Culture, together" that relates the European, African and other regional initiatives among them, and with the global conversation on development (with funding from DG-INTPA). - To facilitate more peer-learning exchanges among cities and local and regional governments. - To consolidate a group of experts that work with the learning and capacity-building programmes. - To promote and disseminate the MOOCs designed in 2022 on culture and climate resilient development and culture and gender equality, connecting them to Culture 21 Plus. - To design and implement specific learning activities with local government associations 	The programme "Capitals of Culture Working Together" (phase 1) will end in May 2026. It has included: (a) capacity-building workshops and webinars, including the Seven keys, the Youth Lab and the Culture 21 Plus, (b) a structured methodology for a permanent "African Capital of Culture" initiative, (c) the connection with the global challenge through the Culture Goal, and (d) the participation of main actors in major international "City and Regions" Fora and events. All the outputs are available here .

	and key regional or national civil society networks on cultural policies, in close cooperation with UCLG Sections.	
Seminars and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To actively take part in initiatives organised by our members and partners, such as the Global Young Creatives Residencies of Jeju, the IN SITU initiative or the Creative Mobilities seminar. - To promote meetings between cities that share similar objectives or commitments in order to create "portfolios" or "portfolios of evidence" to enhance action plans implemented in each city. 	The Secretariat has worked with the Global Young Creatives Residencies in Jeju and intense support has been given to the Climate Heritage Network (Call to Action of the COP 30 in Brazil - Amazonia).

E. Strengthening the UCLG network		
Within UCLG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To actively disseminate, promote and contribute to unfold the UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity: for the People, for the Planet, for the Governments. - To actively participate in the annual Retreat, the Executive Bureau and the World Council, as well as to contribute to UCLG Policy Councils and institutional processes. - To support all UCLG World Secretariat initiatives, including the Policy Councils and initiatives coming from other parts of the network such as Committees or communities of practices. - To actively participate in the Global Taskforce (GTF), and to strengthen its role in the current global debates on culture and sustainable development, building among others on its contribution to Mondiacult 2025. - To support the campaign 10, 100, 1000 on Human Rights in the Cities, coordinated by the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Human Rights and Participatory Democracy. - To support the OIDP annual Award on Participatory Democracy. 	<p>The Pact for the Future has been widely disseminated, which includes several statements consistent with the work of the UCLG Culture Commission.</p> <p>Active participation in all UCLG institutional processes and UCLG World Secretariat initiatives.</p> <p>Active participation in all GTF processes.</p> <p>Support to the campaign 10, 100, 1000 on Human Rights in the Cities, and to the drafting of the new Charter Agenda of Human Rights in the City.</p>
UCLG partnerships and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To contribute to reinforce UCLG specific and global partnerships. - To contribute to programmes led or endorsed by UCLG, such 	Work has been done closely with the other units (GOLD or Research, Learning, Statutory, Gender, Eco Transitions) within the UCLG world secretariat.

	as the Youth Climate Action Fund (YCAF) by Bloomberg Philanthropies, or the WYDE Women's Leadership initiative supported by the European Union and UN Women.	
UCLG sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To guarantee new areas of cooperation, with joint (advocacy and "on-the-ground") specific projects with all UCLG Sections. - To hold periodical meetings with UCLG Sections (especially important for those sections with an active Culture Committee). 	<p>Work has been done with the African section, within the framework of the African Capital of Culture initiative, especially with the presence at the Seven Keys seminar held in Brazzaville.</p> <p>Work has been done with the Culture Committees of MEWA, and Eurasia, including Culture 21 Plus workshops, and ASPAC</p>

2. Updates on the leadership of the consultation mechanism and any relevant information

The UCLG Committee on Culture is jointly chaired by Buenos Aires, Lisbon and Mexico City, and vice-chaired by Barcelona, Bilbao, Bogotá, Brazzaville, Izmir and Jeju. The list of members of the Committee is available on [this website](#).

Our narrative is based on human rights, good governance, people-centred development and the co-creation of the city. Our narrative is aligned with the UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity: for the People, for the Planet, for the Governments.

We are a unique meeting point: the global platform that unites cities, organisations and networks that foster the relation between local cultural policies and sustainable development. We are seen as the global leader of "Culture in Sustainable Cities".

The Committee on Culture has a Secretariat located at the premises of the UCLG World Secretariat in Barcelona.

3. Key outcomes in 2025

- UCLG Culture Summit in Barcelona (September 2025): [Statement "Culture is Always in the Answer"](#) and [Final Report](#).
- [Culture 21 Plus](#), our global toolkit on Cultural Rights in Sustainable Development: frame approved in UCLG ExBu, drafts of the thematic modules and AI-based tool to identify the suitability of Culture 21 Plus modalities and modules.
- "Culture Capitals Working Together": [Seven Keys workshops](#).
- Launch of the 7th edition of the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21.
- The [OBS of good practices](#): new good practices in 2025.
- Culture2030Goal campaign: launch of the documents "[Easy Guide](#)", "[The Culture Goal, from Necessity to Reality](#)" and "[The Analytical Report on the Culture Goal, its Targets and Indicators](#)", at the UCLG Culture Summit on 27 September 2025. Also, implementation of the "[Roadmap 2025](#)" and publication of the report "[Culture in the 2025 Voluntary National Reviews: Culturally informed, culturally grounded, culturally powered](#)".
- Global advocacy on the Culture Goal: #Culture2030Goal side-events in the context of the UN HLPF 2025 and UNESCO's Mondiacult 2025.

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