



CULTURE AND ANTIRACISM. SEMINAR AND PEER-LEARNING SESSION

21-22-23 September 2022
Malmö

ABSTRACT

This document introduces a seminar and a peer learning session on cultural policies and antiracism, with a focus on combatting anti-Muslim and anti-black racism, that the Department for Culture of the City of Malmö and UCLG, through its Culture Committee, will organise on 21-22-23 September 2022, in Malmö.

Cities the world over have begun taking action in this field, with new initiatives, inspirational leadership and a will to change. The seminar and peer learning session in Malmö are designed to connect those cities and to promote exchange and knowledge transmission.

If your city wishes to attend, please express your interest [through this form](#) as soon as possible, certainly before 15 June 2022.



1. THE LOCAL CONTEXT OF MALMÖ


Malmö is Sweden's third largest and fastest growing city, with a relatively young population of approximately 350 000 residents, of whom roughly half are under the age of 35. People from 183 different lands live in Malmö, and around one-third of residents were born in another country. Nearly 25% of Malmö's children live in poverty.


Cultural life plays a crucial role in Malmö's growth and attractiveness. The city's social and economic sustainability depends on creativity produced in the cultural sphere. Cultural life offers public spaces for relaxation, entertainment and fellowship. The meeting places of independent cultural life are important to people of all ages and with different backgrounds and interests. The independent sector is driven by a strong commitment from both professionals and community-based culture. It embodies an entrepreneurship that is beyond the monetary, encompassing values such as community and understanding, curiosity and questioning, alternatives and new perspectives. The small scale of independent cultural life creates space for participation, personal preference and involvement, individual development and increased knowledge. In addition, culture can play a compensatory role, particularly for children and young people who lack social and economic opportunities.

2. MALMÖ IN THE UCLG CULTURE COMMITTEE. A LEADING CITY

Cities are the locus of international frames of development, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda or Climate Action, and connect the major challenges of sustainable development (social justice, environmental balance, cultural vitality, economic progress, inclusive governance). The first years of the 21st century has shown how fundamental is to localise development, that is, to empower local populations with the capacities to hold rights and unfold freedoms.

UCLG – United Cities and Local Governments is the leading global network on the place of culture in sustainable development. Through its Culture Committee, UCLG promotes the organisation of the biennial International Award "UCLG - Mexico City - Culture 21", the database "OBS" of good practices on culture in sustainable cities, as well as the UCLG Culture Summit. It offers learning and capacity-building programmes on cultural policies (15 Leading Cities, 24 Pilot Cities, 3 Culture 21 Labs, and 6 Seven Keys) and participates in international advocacy campaigns (such as the #culture2030goal campaign), advocating with other global cultural networks for a clear place of culture in the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UCLG considers that cultural aspects play a key role as the fourth pillar of sustainable development, due to their capacity to promote debates on the values of society and, at the same time, to place memory, heritage, creativity, indigenous peoples, diversity and knowledge at the heart of public policies.





In this frame, UCLG's Culture Committee runs a programme of "Leading Cities", with UCLG members that hold the conceptual and practical experience in placing culture in sustainable cities. As of December 2021, the Leading Cities programme includes Abitibi-Temiscaminge, Barcelona, Bilbao, Belo Horizonte, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Concepcion, Izmir, Jeju, Lisbon, Malmö, Mexico City, Porto Alegre, Rome, Vaudreuil-Dorion and Washington DC, while Esch-sur-Alzette, Jinju and Terrassa are expected to join in 2022. The local teams of these Leading Cities have profound knowledge of the UCLG founding documents (Agenda 21 for culture, 2004; and Culture 21 Actions, 2015) and challenge this acquis with new questions related to the cutting-edge initiatives they are undertaking. UCLG responds to this challenge with the cultural-rights frame, and in several formats (research, reports, coaching, webinars, peer-learning events and/or conferences). The Leading Cities naturally become the most visible cities of the network.

3. MALMÖ IN THE WIDER WORLD


UCLG's Culture Committee has been working with the Department for Culture of the City of Malmö since 2016. In the year 2022, the work of Malmö as a Leading City will focus on cultural policies and antiracism, with a focus on combatting anti-Muslim and anti-black racism. This work began in February 2022 and will become very visible on 21-22-23 September 2022, in Malmö, with these two activities:


- A one-day seminar on the role of culture in combatting anti-Muslim and anti-black racism, on Wednesday 21 September 2022, which is also the European Action Day Against Islamophobia.

followed by

- An in-depth peer learning session with cities that are working in this field, on Thursday 22 and Friday 23 September 2022.

Given that Malmö operates in a global context, external monitoring and international inputs are an important part of the local anti-racist mission. The antiracist seminar and peer learning session will:

- Disseminate good practices in Malmö's anti-racist work, and position Malmö's anti-racist initiatives nationally and internationally.
 - Provide the opportunity to learn from other cities and cultural actors.
 - Make visible and initiate more collaborations.
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- Highlight the work and activities of local independent actors.
 - Place the city's anti-racist work in a larger context.
 - Highlight the role of culture and art in anti-racism.

Cities the world over have begun taking action in this field, with new initiatives, inspirational leadership and a will to change. Most of them have expressed the need to learn from others. The seminar and peer-learning activity in Malmö will be designed to match these needs.

4. DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE SEMINAR AND PEER-LEARNING SESSION

- Tuesday 20 September 2022: Arrival of participants.
 - Wednesday 21 September 2022: Seminar.
 - Thursday 22 and Friday 23 September 2022: Peer learning session.
 - Saturday 24 or Sunday 25 September: Departure of participants.
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ANNEX. CULTURE AND ANTI-RACISM IN MALMÖ

In 2021, the Municipal Executive Board of the City of Malmö decided to launch several initiatives to combat racism, including instructing the Department of Culture to produce programmes and exhibitions which aim to counteract Afrophobia and Islamophobia. The goal for the Department's anti-racist work is to:

- Develop Malmö's position as an anti-racist and open city: locally, nationally and internationally.
- Build further internal and external commitment to issues of anti-racism, especially anti-black and anti-Muslim racism.
- Involve those sections of Malmö's civil society who work against anti-black and anti-Muslim racism and who represent relevant groups in this anti-racist work.
- Stimulate and create conditions for sustainable work against anti-black and anti-Muslim racism.

We intend to do this by:

- developing programmes and cultural activities aimed at combatting anti-black and anti-Muslim racism.
- stimulating and creating conditions for the Department and civil society in Malmö, both separately and together, to implement cultural projects and initiatives against racism.
- increasing knowledge and understanding of various forms of racism, especially anti-black and anti-Muslim racism. Working at different levels and in different contexts both inside and outside the City of Malmö's organisation.

In 2021, the Department appointed a project manager whose focus so far has been on:

- anchoring, coordinating and systematising the department's anti-racist work.
- stimulating and creating conditions for the work.
- analysis, evaluation and follow up.
- working at different levels and in different contexts: with civil society, free cultural actors, experts and academia. As well as, internally within the Department, with other departments of the City of Malmö, nationally and internationally.

2022 will see a continuation of the Department of Culture's anti-racist work, based on international and national legislation for human rights, equality and democracy. The focus areas for the year are:

1. ISLAMOPHOBIA/ANTI-MUSLIM RACISM

Several anti-racist initiatives, collaborations and projects were initiated last year. At the same time, it became apparent that inclination to deal with the question of anti-Muslim racism is small when compared to other racisms. In 2022, therefore, extra focus will be put on strategies and initiatives for combatting Islamophobia. Examples of initiatives and strategies are:

- | 21 September European Action Day Against Islamophobia: promoting relevant programmes and activities, both internally in the city administration and externally towards Malmö residents. This will include arranging a seminar on Islamophobia/anti-Muslim racism in collaboration with relevant actors for both Malmö residents and City of Malmö employees.
- | Giving assignments to practitioners from the independent culture sector and civil society.

Expected effects internally


- Increased knowledge and understanding among city employees of anti-Muslim racism and its effects on society, as well as reduced anxiety about the issue of Islamophobia. This will in turn stimulate employees to create relevant programmes, content and activities for Malmö residents.
- September 21 will be a recurring day when the whole city administration engages against anti-Muslim racism.

Expected effects for Malmö residents

- Increased knowledge and understanding of anti-Muslim racism and its effects on society.
- More cultural content and activities that are based on the reality and experience of many Malmö residents.
- Reduce the feeling of exclusion and democratic deficit that many citizens with a Muslim background experience because of anti-Muslim racism.

2. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

According to several studies, racism is part of many children and young people's daily life. Surveys also point to a great demand and interest among young people in getting involved in various forms of anti-racism. During 2022, the anti-racist mission will become more closely linked to work with culture-driven development for children and young people. Examples of activities for 2022:


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- | A new round of the Young in Summer employment scheme KOLL, run by the City Library together with the anti-racist magazine MANA. Evaluation of KOLL 2021 found, amongst other things, that young people who participated gained an in-depth knowledge of racism, became more confident in discussions with family, friends and acquaintances, and more able to inform others and express their opinions on issues of racism. The young people frequently expressed that they had learnt more about anti-racism and discrimination issues through KOLL than they had done from their schooling.
 - | Workshop programme and summer holiday activities for children and young people at the city Art Gallery, in connection with the anti-racist exhibition of William Scott.


Expected effects

- By taking advantage of the interest in anti-racism, and showing that through culture you can work against racism, interest for culture and the Department's activities will increase among young people.
- More relevant and contemporary activities, based on the reality and everyday life of many young Malmö residents.
- Anti-racist educational activities for children and young people lead to development of the city's cultural institutions.
- The department's activities are firmly founded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 2.
- The creation of anti-racist and democratic ambassadors for the future.

3. THE PUBLIC REALM

Moving around in Malmö does not only mean moving between physical buildings, but also orienting oneself through several layers of history, including those shaped by public art. A city's public art provides clues as to which experiences and stories are made visible and, in the long run, which experiences represent the city's common history. The question of what and who is represented in a city's public space is an important democratic and anti-racist issue. In 2022, we will link the anti-racist mission to ongoing work with public art. Examples of activities linked to public art and anti-racism this year are:

- | A temporary exhibition featuring the works of Hanni Kamaly, Salad Hilowle, Simon Ferner and Ikram Abdulkadir. In the exhibition, artists from different fields meet to stretch the framework for how art can explore power structures in fields such as historiography, remembrance culture, racism and political geography. The exhibition is part of the development work for an anti-racist monument.
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- | Continued work for an anti-racist monument, with the aim of a permanent installation.
 - | Programme series to broaden and deepens the idea and understanding of art in the public realm, based on current research, proven artistic practice and contemporary cultural policy conversations. The series will deal with issues such as democracy, anti-racism and collective memory.

Expected effects

- Public art creates social contexts, contributes to how meetings take place or how the identity of places develops, challenges societal norms and structures. The public art that has been produced so far in Malmö does not reflect the contemporary composition of the population and more people should be able to feel connected to the city's expression.
- Create a place for stories based on the experiences and views of racialised people.
- Create space for a broader understanding of experiences of racism, through conversation, debate and dissemination of knowledge about contemporary art, public art, research and current social and cultural issues. How can we together think anew and broadly about the present, the public realm, memory culture and cultural heritage?
- By talking about the public realm and placing art within it, we can reach more Malmö residents and activate art in the city in new ways.
- Democratise the public realm and the conversation around it.

4. MALMÖ IN THE WIDER WORLD

Given that the city of Malmö operates in a global context, external monitoring and international inputs are an important part of the anti-racist mission that embraces initiatives, inspiration and change, alongside collaborations that position Malmö's anti-racist initiatives nationally and internationally. An anti-racist seminar in autumn 2022, together with UCLG and others will:

- | Disseminate good practices in Malmö's anti-racist work.
 - | Provide the opportunity to learn from other cities and cultural practitioners.
 - | Make visible and initiate more collaborations.
 - | Highlight the work and activities of local independent practitioners.
 - | Place Malmö's anti-racist work in a larger context.
 - | Highlight the role of culture and art in combatting racism.
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5. MAPPING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The level of ambition, commitment, familiarity with and ownership of anti-racist work is unevenly distributed among Malmö's cultural institutions. During 2022, the initiative will:

- | Map anti-racist activities and initiatives in the institutions, to analyse and present results aimed at quality-assuring the work, alongside an action plan for internal development.

6. FURTHER EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES FOR 2022:

- | Education and research linked to the assignment.
 - | Development of a package of internal training and good practices for the Culture Department, as requested by its employees.
 - | Anti-racist author talks that focus on current debates about racism, power and equality and that provide an in-depth understanding of racism, and how it can be combatted. The aim is to create a pulsating and inviting platform for conversations about anti-racism in Malmö.
 - | Initiatives with local Afro-Swedish actors.
 - | Financing of initiatives by free culture practitioners.
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