



IMPLEMENTING CULTURE 21 ACTIONS

LISBON PILOT CITY PROGRAMME 2015 – 2019

DECEMBER 2019

As a Pilot City the ambition of our project has been to create better conditions in our city. To think strategically our cultural policies, to create programmes, contemporary art and conditions for the cultural agents, and share culture communicating and diffusing knowledge through our cultural equipment, our libraries, archives, street art, theatres or big festivals in the public spaces. With an alive and dynamic cultural ecosystem which includes the multiplicity of its actors both public (national and local level) and private (artists and cultural agents; audiences; foundations and other agents).

As far as culture is concerned, we went through a first stage, of diagnosis and strategic redefinition, of creating and rehabilitating infrastructures, of reorganization, so that we can now go into a stage of consolidation, where local public authorities in the area of culture act as a facilitating and capacity building agent and work to bring culture closer to people and vice versa, to bring people closer to culture, in order to combine the attraction for culture with the need for culture. The public space has been one of the priority areas of our intervention: open to all, present in all parts, without social or economic barriers.

Our work in the City Council includes a cycle of 3 political mandates: from 2009 to 2013, and from 2014 to 2017 and 2018 to 2021. But until the end of 2014 it was marked by the strong economic crisis in the country that influenced our activity and was decisive to our action even in the simple possibility to travel. Therefore, the decision to participate in the Pilot-cities programme was related to the fact that finally we had the possibility to participate actively in an international network capable of advocating for culture in the global agenda; and mainly because we identify entirely with the principles of the Agenda 21 for culture promoted by the UCLG Culture Committee.

FINAL REPORT

Agenda 21 for culture provides a very clear and solid conceptual framework for the implementation of local cultural policies and supports the idea that sustainability can only be achieved through this multidimensional approach.

Its adoption and promotion in the city of Lisbon pursues several objectives:

- Active participation in an international network capable of lobbying for the inclusion of culture in the global agenda
- Identification with the principles of the Agenda 21 for Culture
- Capacity-building and pedagogical approach for the cultural agents and within the City Council
- To seek methods of articulation with other areas of municipal intervention
- The assimilation of these issues by the staff and decision makers of the City Council, contributing to the internal capacity-building of our municipal organization.
- The need to raise awareness and conscience in all the different professions of the cultural sector and public opinion on the importance of the relation between culture and sustainable development.
- To boost political awareness for one of the central questions of public policies of our time which Agenda 21 for Culture approaches in a clear way: the multidimensional reality of any human activity and the need to articulate the vertical dimension and the horizontal dimension of any activity.
- To promote culture in its intrinsic (elemental) value and how to promote culture in its relationship with other dimensions of life: economy, social inclusion, education, urban planning, etc.

This article will explain the main steps of the programme with these 3 headings: (1) desk analysis, preliminary visit and the Culture 21 Actions workshops, (2) the work plan and the implementation of the pilot measures, and (3) peer-learning visits.





DESK ANALYSIS, PRELIMINARY VISIT AND THE CULTURE 21 ACTIONS WORKSHOPS

We started in October 2015 with the **desk analysis**. This first step was very useful to assess the current situation. It resulted in a portrait of the city and a draft plan to organize the future work. It was followed by a very important **preliminary visit** by our external expert (Catherine Cullen), involving several Deputy Mayors of the City Council (that is, Culture and other areas), and several visits when it became clear to us that much of the work, we had been doing was already fulfilling many of the principles of Agenda 21 for Culture.

The next step was the organization of a **first workshop with 27 external stakeholders** from all areas (Environment and green spaces/ education and Social rights/ mobility/ Urban Planning/ Economy/ Sports). The format of the workshop enabled the participants to analyze in a very practical way the necessary actions to achieve better results and to include the 9 Commitments and the 100 Actions of Culture 21 Actions in their plans. After this event, we felt the need to do the same exercise internally, including 27 workers of the municipality, from all different areas. This **second workshop** was also very useful, not only as a means disseminate the 100 Actions but also to see if the perception inside and outside the City Council was very aligned.

Figure 1 reproduces the **Radar** with the results of the first workshop. The output is very favorable with a very positive general view. The Radar points out as the weakest areas: Governance; Culture and Economy; and Culture and Education. As strong points of the city: Culture equality and social inclusion, Cultural Rights and Culture Heritage, diversity and creativity.

Figure 2 illustrates the **comparison between the radars** obtained in the external and the internal workshops. The similarities are very clear: the same weaknesses and the same strong points. In fact, it was interesting to see that the internal participants were many times more critical than the external actors.

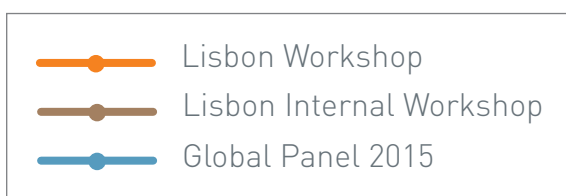
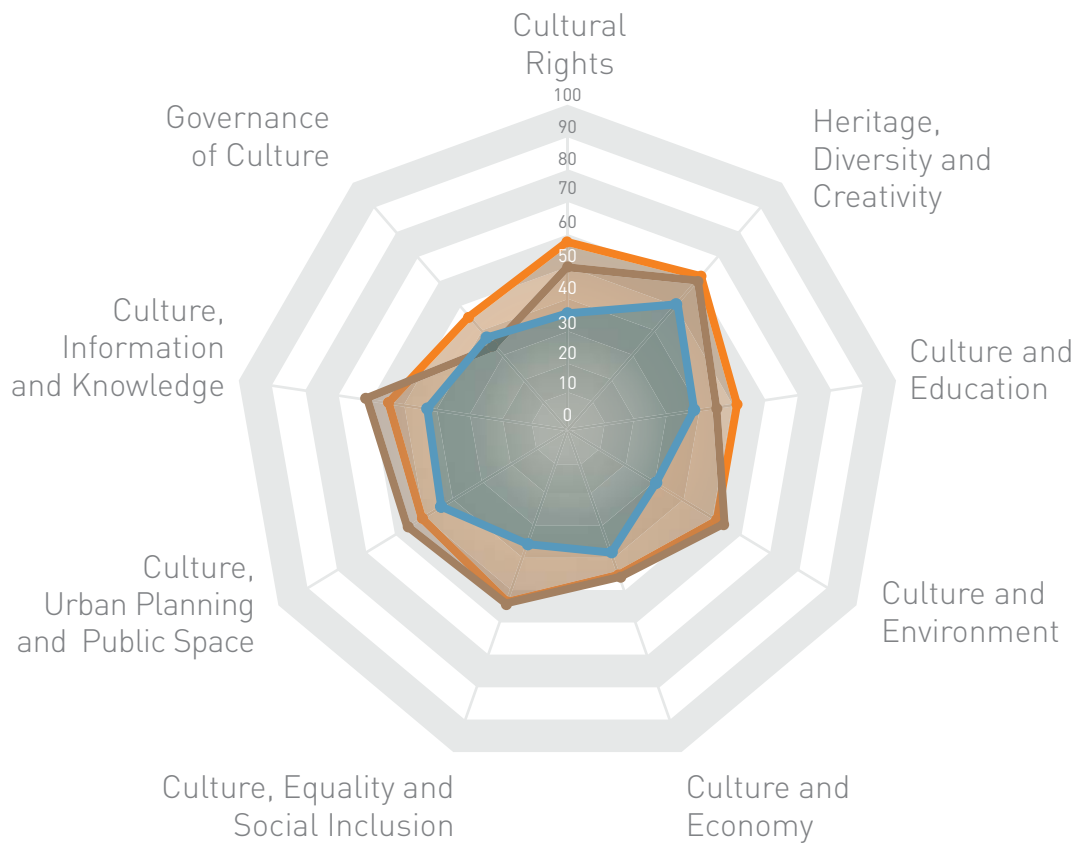


Figure 1: Lisbon's Self Assessment Workshop



Figure 2: Lisbon's Self Assessment Internal Workshop



The workshops were followed by a **public event** with around 200 participants mainly from the cultural area to present Agenda 21 for Culture and to collect their contributions for the future Strategies for Culture. At that moment, we felt it would be useful to replicate the exercise with participants from the 24 Lisbon boroughs, this time not so much with the objective of achieving a radar as a result but as a means to spread the message of Agenda 21 for Culture among the persons who work directly with the cultural agents on the neighbourhoods. The participants were specifically the workers from the boroughs in charge of the cultural departments. This was a very successful action as many of them had never met in person, didn't know the projects happening in the other boroughs and had never heard about Agenda 21 for Culture.



PILOT MEASURES

The work programme was written in the last months of 2016, immediately after the visit to Buenos Aires (see below). The work programme included 4 Pilot Measures. In fact, designing the work programme was a slow process that raised many doubts. Lisbon decided not to multiply projects, but to focus in very concrete examples.

A. STRATEGIES FOR CULTURE.

A DIAGNOSIS AND REVISION OF THE STRATEGIES DEVELOPED IN 2009 PUBLISHED IN JULY 2017.

The publication “Strategies for Culture in the City of Lisbon 2017” is the result of the work of DINÂMIA / CET (ISCTE/IUL), developed over a year and a half, for the Department of Culture of the Lisbon City Council. The “Strategies for Culture in the City of Lisbon 2017” are contextualized within the scope of the work carried out over the last few years by the City Council of Lisbon in the area of Culture and for which the strategic reflection published in 2009 was an important support tool. Certainly, conditions had changed: in 2017, the city of Lisbon and its culture were not the same as they were in 2009. It was essential to look and understand the city again, defining new objectives and new goals, involving new people, and designing new areas of action. The methodology included desk research and the organization of focus groups (age group, territories, artistic areas) and interviews with the main actors of the cultural sector (especially those from the municipal cultural universe) and with other urban stakeholders. The “Strategies for Culture in the City of Lisbon 2017” is the result of this update. The Strategy is materialized with five strategic axes: (a) promotion of the experience of cultural enjoyment; (b) promotion of the capacity for cultural expression; (c) enhancement and reinforcement of the image, experience and collective memory of the city; (d) regulation of the external effects induced by cultural activities in the city; and (e) cosmopolitan mobilization of the territory and metropolitan area of Lisbon. These five axes include a total of 6 structuring programs and 35 measures.

B. RESOURCES OFFICE.

A NEW SERVICE OFFERED BY THE CITY COUNCIL TO ASSIST CULTURAL AGENTS IN AREAS SUCH AS FINANCE, LAW CONSULTING, ACCOUNTING, MOBILITY AND FUNDING.

The original name of the Resources Office is Loja Lisboa Cultura. It is located in the neighborhood of Boavista, at the Gaivotas Cultural Centre, one of the spaces provided by Lisbon City Council to the cultural sector in the city. The Loja Lisboa Cultura is a specialized service that provides information and helps to clarify specific issues related to the activity of professionals and organizations in the cultural sector. It opened in June 2017. The action of the Resources office consists of three main strands: (a) The

relationship with cultural agents within the scope of the competences of the City Council: it offers the possibility of delivery and registration of requests, with functions identical to a municipal desk in processes related to the area of Culture (requests for events in public spaces, requests for RAAML support); too, the Resources office provides assistance to the needs of the cultural structures (facilitation for the preparation of applications, information on financing, legal and accounting consultancy, etc.). (b) The relationship with other public bodies. The Resources office provides information and training on Social Security, Finance, Employment Institute, Entrepreneurship, Copyright and related rights. (c) International mobility. The Resources office provides information and support on partnerships with international networks (an example is the training project with the Festival Alkantara and its adhesion to the international network On the Move).

C. EMERGING LITERACY.

THIS ACTIVITY IS DIRECTED TO FAMILIES OF SINGLE PARENTS AND ADOLESCENT PARENTS WITH CHILDREN FROM 9 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS IN THE NEW MARVILA LIBRARY.

The Marvila Library is an ambitious, transformative project located on a divided territory with significant geographical and socio-economic barriers. The Library was inaugurated in 2016 and designed a work programme to serve the neighbours, with their specific needs and capacities. The activity “Emerging literacy” was implemented in close cooperation with local stakeholders. The activity is based on an in-depth work with families in 10 sessions (during 5 months), each Saturday twice a month for a group of 10 adults + 10 children to explore books through mediation activities that can be replicated outside the library within their families.

D. NEIGHBORHOOD SQUARES.

THIS PILOT MEASURE ARTICULATES WITH URBAN PLANNING BY ADDING A CULTURAL DIMENSION IN THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACE CREATING PROJECTS THAT MIRROR WHAT THE SQUARE MEANS TO THE LOCAL POPULATION.

The Urban planning department of the City Council is undertaking a regeneration programme to create a public square in each neighborhood. While the Urban Planning Department was in the process of implementing the physical rehabilitation of a public space, the Culture Department wished to develop its participatory policies. One of the most interesting examples of this process took place in the neighborhood of Rossio de Palma, a popular neighborhood with a village-style square. From September 2018 until late March 2019, a series of meetings with the inhabitants revolved around the question ‘What do we want to do with our square?’. The participatory project was led by an anthropologist, Ana Catarino (who regularly held one-to-one meetings with the inhabitants), and implemented by a sociologist, Sofia Tempero (who, every Friday morning for several months, would stand in the Square and wait for the inhabitants

to bring her their souvenirs - stories, photos, objects and other memories of the neighborhood). Some of these photographs were then worked on by an artist, Camilla Watson, and by a group of architects from Colectivo Warehouse. The project ended in March 2019, with a new wooden sculpture with its photo installation, a documentary, the photos, and a public celebration. Many of the former and almost all the present inhabitants of the square were there, and extremely proud that attention was being paid to them and the square through an artistic reinterpretation of their shared memories.



PEER-LEARNING

In November 2016 we visited the city of Buenos Aires. This was a moment of debate within the team and allowed us to focus on the Pilot Cities programme. The peer-learning was a privilege moment, because all the team could witness firsthand examples of many interesting projects, asking difficult questions and obtaining insightful perspectives. Peer-learning and exchange of experiences is always very valuable. Both the similarities and the differences between the Lisbon and Buenos Aires helped us to understand what makes sense for our city, helping us in the conclusion of the work plan and the definition of the Pilot-measures.

In September 2017 a peer-learning visit to Lisbon was attended by the cities of Izmir, Terrassa, Rijeka, Swansea, Gabrovo, Cuenca, and Mérida. The fact that several cities in the Pilot Cities programme were interested in visiting Lisbon as a peer-learning activity was both a reason to feel proud and an interesting responsibility. The visit was organized in order to show examples of good practices, of municipal and private initiative, as well as ongoing experiences and problems that we face in the cultural area; projects that, we hoped, could be a source of ideas to the other cities. As a Pilot city we also felt it was important to present some of our pilot measures, particularly to share our experience in the process of the Strategies for Culture in Lisbon. We considered the characteristics and worries transmitted by some of the visiting cities, namely related with social inclusion, culture and economy and relation with the city's cultural agents. The fact that we had previously conducted our peer-learning visit to Buenos Aires (November 2016) helped in the conception of the programme. We prepared 4 days filled with activities between visits and meetings. The idea in designing the programme was to make every moment in Lisbon an experience of the cultural dynamic of the city, whether in the opening of an exhibition, in a meal, a visit to a neighborhood or just walk from one point to the other. Another detail taken into account was the importance to accompany every visit with a conversation with the person in charge of the project. The visits were planned in a way to include a diversity of places and neighborhoods of the city: from the historical center to Parque das Nações, Belém or Marvila. We suggested also one free day so that the representatives of the cities could experience the city on their own.



CONCLUSIONS

Lisbon has concluded all the steps designed by the UCLG Culture Committee in the programme of Pilot Cities. We believe that the experience has been very positive for all the actors involved. We understand the programme has been conceived to support the municipal teams in charge of culture, but we also notice that, if there is local will, the programme provides very valuable capacity to other areas of intervention of the city council as well as to cultural actors. We are aware that fostering participation requires time, and that obstacles emerge; however, when achieved it becomes an opportunity to make the projects stronger.

With regards to the pilot measures, we would also like to highlight that, although we were already undertaking many projects which incorporate the Culture 21 Actions, their joint consideration, as well as the external “mirror” provided by the programme created a “structured narrative” that enhances their importance.

Culture 21 Actions is a very useful tool. It is broad, and at the same time very practical. The way Culture 21 Actions is used as a methodology of self-evaluation is an important tool to create consensus. Since one of the main problems for many cities is the discontinuity in political cycles, the use of Culture 21 Actions can reduce the difference in policies from one mandate to the other because it provides clear “policy objectives” as well as very concrete actions, and invites for an in-depth local discussion on these 100 issues. In Lisbon, the use of Culture 21 Actions was very extensive: besides the internal workshop we could extend to many other groups that reached the civil boroughs, within different territories of the city, including the population in general. We are convinced of having planted a long-term seed in the technical staff and at a territorial level.



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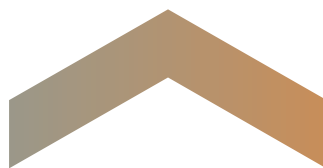
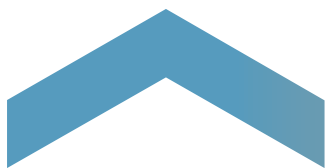
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