REVIEW OF **NOVA GORICA'S** **CULTURE** 21: **ACTIONS** SELF-ASSESSMENT

NOVEMBER 2018

culture 21
UCLG Committee

As a new participant in the Agenda 21 for Culture Pilot Cities Europe programme, the City of Nova Gorica in October 2018 undertook a day of self-assessment of local policies and practices connecting culture as a pillar of sustainable development. The vehicle for this was a workshop of local stakeholders. The framework for this programme of work – known as 'Activity 1', is based on the '**Culture 21 Actions**' toolkit. These actions are published and described in fuller detail in a document adopted in March 2015 by the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). As such, they provide a template that cities and local territories across the world can employ, to support themselves in examining their strengths and weaknesses in this area. The framework also provides a standardising European and global measure by which cities may compare and contrast their own assessments with average ratings published in mid-2015 by a global panel of experts. (SEE BELOW Radar 1).

The workshop represented then a central plank in Nova Gorica of Activity 1 of the **Pilot Cities programme**. As such, it can be seen of a kind of transversal diagnostic analysis for the city. Furthermore, its secondary purpose will be to inform the design of a work programme of Pilot Measures that should, over the coming 12-18 months, enable the city to engage with a broader picture, while identifying elements that can both build on its perceived strengths and address some identified gaps or weaknesses.

The structure of the one-day workshop was informed by the published Terms of Reference of the Pilot Cities Europe programme. Accordingly, it brought together a diverse group of locally based or connected people, representing: the Municipality (across several departments and disciplines), civil society, education and independents. A full list of participants has been included as Annex 1 of this report.

This group considered, discussed and analysed where Nova Gorica stands today, in relation to nine broad themes ('Commitments', in the terms of Culture 21 Actions), broken down into 100 discreet 'Actions'. In almost all cases the groups were able to accord to these Actions a specific score that reflected a consensus about the relative state of development of the city, ranging from 'Emerging' (1/2/3), through 'Developing' (4/5/6) to 'Advanced' (7/8/9).

The workshop was initiated by the Municipality of Nova Gorica, under the direct leadership of Vice-Mayor Ana Zavrtanik-Ugrin, and coordinated by Mateja Zoratti. It was facilitated by Ivor Davies, Lead Expert of Agenda 21 for Culture, on behalf of Culture Action Europe, and Catherine Cullen, experts from the UCLG Culture Committee.

SELF-ASSESS

The workshop session was preceded by a preliminary visit in June 2018 and a preparation day prior to the day, that allowed time for a number of visits and discussions. Here the experts were able to gain experience and knowledge of a number of venues, sites and ongoing programmes and projects, as well as plans and ambitions for the City that highlight connections with the principles of Agenda 21 for Culture.

This report has been written by Ivor Davies, the lead expert appointed by the UCLG Committee on culture and Culture Action Europe to work with Nova Gorica on the Pilot Cities Europe programme.

WIDER STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS FOR THE CITY

Over and above this, it is significant that the involvement of Nova Gorica Municipality in the Pilot Cities programme coincides with the expression of other, connected ambitions by and for the City, in particular, the development of a Local Programme on Culture (Culture Strategy), and the City's aim to be a successful candidate city for European Capital of Culture 2025. Potential strands of interconnectivity between these three programmes of work were explored from the earliest meetings in June. Meanwhile representatives of the work steering the other two programmes were also present and active in the Workshop. It is assumed that these connections will be further explored and developed in the future Activity phases of the Pilot Cities Programme, and that a mutual influence will be felt, in every direction, between all three.

BROADER SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS ACTIVITY?

In a recent gathering in Timisoara of several Pilot Cities and Key Experts working in the Pilot Cities programme, I was given the opportunity to reflect further on the broader significance for all those cities participating in the programme. As this presentation followed soon after the Nova Gorica workshop, it was inevitable that it had some influence on the reflections that informed it. This being the case, it seems helpful to reproduce in this report some of the core aspects of what was presented.

The Agenda 21 for Culture and Culture 21 Actions offer a 'common ground' between what can be seen as three axes of 'Content', 'Context' and 'Contact'.

It is clear from the documentation about Commitments and Actions included in Culture 21 Actions that provides a framework for the programme that Pilot Cities offers an opportunity to amass a significant

body of understanding about the city and culture, in other words, 'content', all of which connects culture and the sustainability of the city. Additional meetings, visits and local documentation only serve to extend and enhance this content. In this way, Pilot Cities can offer an important one-off opportunity to bring into the open a rich and diverse range of content.

Further than this, however, it is important to recognise that any amount of **content** will be of limited value unless it is considered through the filter of its particular context (or contexts). These contexts may, for example, include:

- features and circumstances that apply locally – what might be termed factors that contribute to 'local distinctiveness';

- factors that may evolve and change over time (including, of course, their current impact or significance);

- factors over which we may have some leverage towards effecting some influence or change;

- factors that may be beyond our ability to exert such influence;

- diverse contexts, not only at a local level but also within the locality (e.g. different communities, cultures, levels of inclusion/exclusion, age and so on).

The relation between this binary of 'content' and 'context' is fairly obvious. However, Activity 1 adds a factor, that we can call 'contact': in other words the value that comes from bringing into the open conversations about content and context, among a range of local people with diverse perspectives and backgrounds: professional, personal, cultural, educational and so on.

The workshop in Nova Gorica felt like a good example of how, when a committed group of local people come together, in order to share in discussions from an equal and open starting perspective, then this can lead not only to broader perspectives and knowledge from all sides, but also offer a space where often challenging or even contradictory views and ideas can be aired and shared. The reasons for this are not entirely clear, but one contributory benefit from this methodology in practice seems to be that it can establish a shared, open space: where each participant has an equal opportunity to contribute, where expertise is valued, but also where it can be defined from a variety of perspectives: professional, representational, experiential and so on. This aspect of the

Pilot Cities method seems to provide an important contribution of added value through this work. Certainly, it was evident through the course of the workshop day.

So we can arguably view the Activity 1 process in Nova Gorica to date as an expression of an articulation between these three perspectives. These are early days to claim too much from the process. It does however suggest that this articulation could go on to make a significant contribution to rethinking the city and its surrounding areas, along with a resetting of the role culture plays at their heart. In other words, this significance may come, not only from what material is included and how it is included, but also from who is included. The process can bring benefits not only in what it brings out but, crucially, in the open methodologies it helps to instil.

RADAR 1
This report, known as 'Radar 1', has been prepared by Ivor Davies, Key Expert appointed by the UCLG Committee on Culture and Culture Action Europe to accompany Nova Gorica through the Pilot Cities Europe programme. It is based on the outcomes of detailed and engaged discussions within the three groups that participated in the workshops and, in particular, draws on notes taken by workshop rapporteurs from each group. These were subsequently collated and forwarded as material for the report by Mateja Zoratti, Project Officer for the Municipality of Nova Gorica and key contact for the Pilot Cities project. Subsequently, these notes were analysed in further detail by Ivor Davies and synthesized into the form of report seen here.

Broadly speaking, the report summarises assessments and observations made by the workshop participants. Over and above this, it compares results with those of the 2015 Global Panel. In addition, it serves as a vehicle to highlight any particular strengths, on the one hand, or weaknesses and gaps, on the other.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Figure 1 (below), represents, via one composite image, the self-assessment results from the workshop in Nova Gorica.

A notable result revealed from Radar 1 is that, with just one exception (Culture and Economy, where the outcome is broadly level), the outcomes for Nova Gorica stand above those of the Global Panel. In fact, Nova Gorica outcomes sit above 50% in every case. That the outcome is above that of the Global Panel is not an exceptional outcome; however to have achieved this number above 50% is quite unusual.
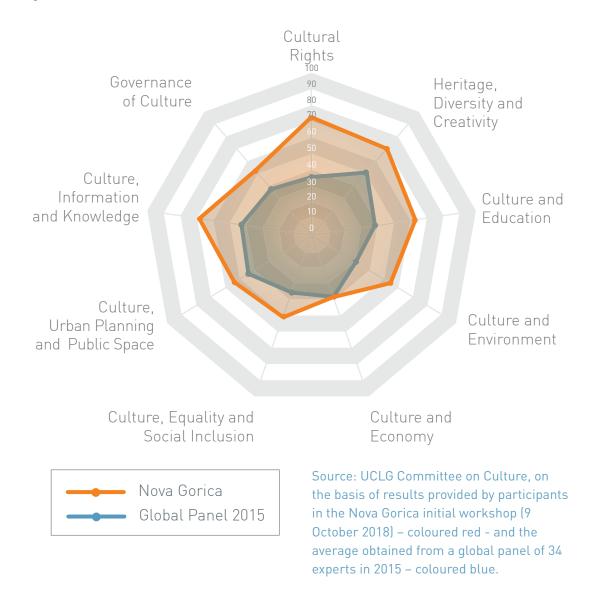
Indeed, comparisons drawn with cities globally that have so far been evaluated (over 25 in total) place-Nova Gorica in the top five or ten, with regard to most individual commitments. This does not imply any cause for concern about the quality of the process outcome. It may nevertheless be something that peer activities will enlighten further, in the course of the later Activity stages of the programme.

The highest scores in Nova Gorica were attributed to: *Cultural Rights*, *Heritage, Diversity and Creativity*, *Culture and Education* and *Culture, Information and Knowledge*. Also scoring reasonably highly in real terms, but occupying a relative mid-range of scores, were: *Culture and Environment*, *Culture, Equality and Social Inclusion*, *Culture, Urban Planning and Public Space* and *Governance of Culture*. Finally, a relatively more modest score level was afforded to *Culture and Economy*.

The nine Commitments

This section of the report sets out and analyses the information provided by the self-assessment workshop, summarized in terms of each of the nine Commitments (each comprising a number of Actions, amounting to a total of 100).

Figure 1 : Nova Gorica's Self Assessment and data from the Global Panel 2015

Source: UCLG Committee on Culture, on the basis of results provided by participants in the Nova Gorica initial workshop (9 October 2018) – coloured red - and the average obtained from a global panel of 34 experts in 2015 – coloured blue.

1 CULTURAL RIGHTS

In Nova Gorica, the group that discussed Cultural Rights scored it amongst the highest of all nine Commitments, and considerably higher than the Global Panel score. There were in total six Action scores in the category of 'Advanced', indicating both that there were a range of measures being undertaken in this field and that these were underpinned by a relevant policy and strategic frameworks. In particular this level of scoring was applied to: a) cultural policies (in the city and surrounding area) based on cultural rights; d) minimum service standards to ensure basic cultural services; g) policies to allow free expression, including the most vulnerable; and h) policies and programmes to promote civil society engagement in culture. Also scored as 'Advanced' but with some reservations – possibly around breadth of access, was c), the Action connected to local policies and measures promoting participation in decision-making and evaluation of cultural policies by citizens and civil society.

Two further Actions were scored as 'Developing', suggesting that progress with regard to each was more based on evidence of practice in this field, rather than relevant underpinning policy and strategic frameworks. Both Action e), related to detailed analysis of obstacles to citizen access and participation, and f) progress towards broader citizen involvement in cultural practices and creation, were scored as 6, suggesting that, despite these limitations there were positive signs in each case pointing toward further development and progress.

By way of contrast, the group scored Action b), related to local government guidelines on cultural rights, freedoms and responsibilities, just 1, reflecting a judgement that there was currently no such guideline document. One further Action, i), relating to local civil society organisations working in human rights including cultural rights among their priorities, was left unscored, presumably on the basis that the group were not aware of any such examples among local groups.

This overall positive scoring outcome raises two questions in particular. Firstly, cultural rights, as a subset of human rights, is typically a field that is covered by legislation at national level. Under these circumstances it is understandable that local actors at all levels feel they have limited leverage to make change in this field. This is of course understandable; however cultural rights actions do not always work along lines of fixed legislation, in particular since this is a field that is not well defined in much legislation and since there still remains the question of local monitoring of progress, any abuses, etc. This is important to enable local actors to identify the need for, and implement local actions and strategies for change, or to address perceived issues.

1 CULTURAL RIGHTS

Despite the high scores, there may still be scope for some development work locally on the question of cultural rights – for example, towards clarifying what precisely it involves (e.g. in its own right and in relation to human rights in general), and the value of developing and publishing local guidelines, including frameworks for monitoring.

HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY

Scoring by the two groups who simultaneously discussed this Commitment was similarly high, although there was a slightly greater range of scores between individual actions (4-8). The comparison with the Global Panel score is a little closer, but largely because the Global Panel Score for this Commitment was nearer (mid-range).

Eight of the Actions included in this Commitment were scored as 'Advanced' (in this case, 7-8); whereas four further Actions were scored as 'Developing' (in this case, 4-6). No Actions were scored as 'Emerging' (1-3), although there was some group discussion in relation to local budgets for culture (under b), that these were insufficient – leading to a small divergence of views in this respect (between 3 and 4).

More specifically, a wide range of views were expressed throughout the discussion:

a) **A local authority department or entity tasked with culture and culture in relation to other public policies – Advanced stage:**
Nova Gorica has a department for social activities, with a senior advisor covering the area of culture. There was some discussion about to what extent the focus of this Action was on heritage, diversity, creativity or cultural policy in general.

b) **A local budget dedicated to culture, in line with responsibilities and national/ international norms, and adequate to sustain local cultural development (including research, development and innovation) – Developing stage:**
Views were expressed that there was insufficient money in general available, and no investment in buildings, and that public calls were sporadic and dispersed.

c) **Support for various accessible spaces for culture to encourage training, creation and production – Developing stage:**
Nova Gorica was felt to be making relatively strong progress towards establishing a range of support mechanisms, particularly in recent times.

d) **The Municipality promotes contact between different social groups through cultural events – Advanced stage:**
Paradoxically, while Nova Gorica was seen by the group to be strong in the area of promoting contact between social groups through culture, there was nevertheless some feeling that this practice remained too divided according to genres. There was a strong 'Mediterranean' context for this, but still some room for further improvement.

e) **Policies and programmes with citizens and their initiatives, to build excellence – Developing stage:**
Nova Gorica was seen to lack permanent policies in relation to building excellence

through interaction with citizens, especially among NGOs. In particular there did not appear to be a focus in this work on promoting excellence. There was a local offer of courses and workshops targeted at vulnerable groups, but this was not applied systematically.

f) **Policies and programmes explicitly encourage the mutual recognition of the diversity of cultural expressions and intercultural projects – Advanced stage:**
The question of mutual recognition of cultural diversity received the widest range of divergent opinions across the two groups that discussed this Commitment. This threw up some interesting contrasts of perspective, for example: the relative invisibility of different identities, the ever-presence of the border with Gorizia, the challenges for cultural actors of creating a profile and of recognizing, where to place oneself. On the other hand, this context was seen to offer many options for cultural practice.

g) **Policies and programmes that protect and promote linguistic diversity (especially minority languages) – Advanced stage:**
Minority languages were not seen to be a significant presence in Nova Gorica, although the question of the use of sign language was raised in this regard.

f) **Policies that support the arts across disciplines – Advanced stage:**
In relation to local cultural policies, there was a draft of a strategy that is currently being worked on, but this needed to be seen in the broader context of a dominating influence of state support. Supporting mechanisms existed in Nova Gorica, and more had been added recently, but there was still seen to be room for further progress.

i) **Policies to support tangible and intangible cultural heritage – Developing stage:**
The question of policies to protect cultural heritage were seen to be dealt with at National level (e.g. tenders and funding), with no significant level of authority locally. Results on the ground were not seen as ideal, in particular a lack of focus on sustainability.

j) **Transdisciplinary policies and programmes that link science, culture, art local history and everyday life – Advanced stage:**
With regard to arts and science, it was noted that major initiatives are in planning (e.g. Interreg, Sirius). From a NGO perspective it was suggested that more connections and more intensive inclusion in this field of work would be welcome.

k) **A significant presence of local products in the city's overall activities – Advanced stage:**

HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY

On the question of local cultural products, it was felt that there was plenty of space for this, however maybe a lack of cultural management to capitalise further on this potential, for example, more focus on local appreciation and support for production.

l) **International cultural cooperation projects that connect local life to the protection and promotion of cultural diversity – Advanced stage:**
The question of international cultural cooperation was viewed as underway and with some support, but to a limited degree at present. (NOTE: this comment seems, on the face of it, to suggest that the scoring in this case is somewhat generous, although the conversation may have covered wider aspects of the question.)

The groups identified the following as good practice:
- A large and diverse number of festivities and events, such as at Rihemberk Castle. This benefitted from being: locally recognized; viewed strategically as part of a Sustainable Urban Strategy; transferred to local responsibility by the state;
- The use of former border crossing facilities;
- Darko Bratina festival, the free summer cultural programme: Poletna scena, Mostovna, Music of the world in Kromberk Castle;
- A year dedicated within the municipality to one special topic.

Several measures were noted that could be adopted to address gaps or weaknesses identified in the field of heritage, diversity and creativity:
- Increased transfer of state responsibilities and budgets;
- An EU Office;
- Increased support for NGOs;
- A more open dialogue between public authorities and NGOs;
- Finding better ways of making culture more visible;
- Working on making people aware that payment is the most direct contribution to the development of culture and the cultural offer.
- The need for earlier and more strategic planning in relation to culture.

Finally, the group identified the following as issues relevant for Nova Gorica but considered they were not adequately reflected in Culture 21: Actions:
- The need for supporting mechanisms for the use of public projects, resources and heritage;
- Support in public policies and strategies for using facilities;
- More shared involvement in the economy, for example via cooperation platforms.
- A framework for cooperation of a direct, cross-border nature.

CULTURE AND EDUCATION

The overall score afforded to this Action was mid-range, but some way above that of the Global Panel.

Individual Action scores ranged fairly evenly between 'Developing' (six actions) and 'Advanced' (four actions).

a) **Local cultural strategies valued in education and training strategies – Developing stage:**

The group felt that, as there was no real development programme for this in Nova Gorica, we were in the 'developing' phase. There was evidence of cooperation with cultural institutions, such as the theatre, library, House of Culture, cinema, as well as outside Nova Gorica, but a general lack of recognition in education of a local cultural context.

b) **A local strategy linking educational and cultural policy – Developing stage:**

In cultural and artistic institutions, connections were noted between culture and education, for example: the National Theatre, House of Culture, Libraries. The Municipality itself was seen as active in this field, with several examples of connection. The will existed among employing institutions to establish occupational and professional integration and networking. Further, there was some evidence of progress in the way the local programme on culture now included more non-governmental actors. However the group felt that more cooperation was needed, especially since most such activities were undertaken by NGOs.

The Municipality was making strenuous efforts to support the cultural and educational sphere, via local government initiatives, but unsupported by integrated strategies.

Last year's commemoration of seventy years of Nova Gorica offered funds for NGOs, and it was felt that this could be a model for the future, although this perhaps worked more effectively among public institutions than NGOs.

c) **A local, transdisciplinary shared platform for culture education and lifelong learning – Developing stage:**

In relation to this Action, the group identified a number of individual short-term and sectoral connections, unsupported by long-term strategies.

d) **Dedicated programmes and budgets among cultural institutions for educational activities – Advanced stage:**

The group agreed that cultural institutions both received public support for this and offered educational activities. This placed the Action as 'Advanced', yet a lack of funds prevented this Action from achieving the highest score. Cooperation existed,

and was growing, and the situation was developing, in a context of, sometimes more, and sometimes fewer funds.

e) **Processes for sharing information between culture and education – Advanced stage:**
The group felt that, while information was widely spread, there was an outstanding question about how this was received. The continuing issue was that there was no single vehicle or portal with which to convey all information. As there were several vehicles, information was often duplicated.

f) **The presence in school curricula of cultural skills and knowledge, intercultural dialogue, diversity, cultural heritage and digital tools – Advanced stage:**
The group agreed that primary and secondary education curricula included acquiring cultural skills and knowledge pertaining to intercultural dialogue and the recognition of the value of diversity, creativity, tangible and intangible heritage and digital tools. Primary and secondary education programmes placed culture and arts very highly. While this is the general position, however, things may not work as well locally, for example provincial museums may not be involved in the mandatory schools' curriculum, where the educational plan may not incorporate museum visits. In practice, this was instead included in the framework of extracurricular activities. A further example was that pupils attending the house of experiments in Ljubljana, might not be aware of the one in Nova Gorica.

Given the national framework within which this sits, the group felt that the focus of this question was too general and not appropriate. Had it been focused just on the local environment the group would have opted for a lower score. On the other hand, in the way the Library cooperated so well with schools, it would deserve a maximum score of 9.

In general, the group felt that schools should themselves recognize the value of culture. There should also be a balancing level of initiative from the cultural side, via events for schools to attend. This was about bringing culture to schools and schools to cultural institutions, recognising that this was not straightforward - for example, in terms of costs and organization.

g) **Cultural, creation, distribution and mediation activities involving Schools, education centres, associations and businesses – Developing stage:**
The group found that there were many one-off partnerships, but an absence of a scheme and integrated strategy in this field.

CULTURE AND EDUCATION

h) Artistic education for all in local schools, regardless of background – Advanced stage:

The group agreed that artistic education was indeed provided in local schools at all levels, and accessible in full to all.

i) Local training in cultural management and cultural policies emphasizing the cultural factors of human development – Developing stage:

The group did not feel that this was well developed among local educational institutions.

j) Cultural and human rights included in educational programmes and training in cultural sector – Developing stage:

There was a long group discussion about this action, partly to ensure a common understanding of what it was suggesting, and partly to identify its presence in Nova Gorica. It was eventually agreed that this action tends to be included implicitly within the cultural sector, but is neither explicit nor understood as a discreet, separate question.

The group then went on to draw some common theads from this discussion.

They identified as good practice that the cooperation between cultural and educational institutions and schools was improving.

A possible area for improvement that was identified was the level and quality of integration involving NGOs (professionals) and amateurs (non-professionals or semi professionals).

In addition, a number of other unresolved issues in relation to culture and education were identified, as follows:

- Castle of Kromberk – how schools could access this, given there was no morning bus transport. In general, if bus transport were an option, then cultural, sporting and other activities would become more accessible. School transfers currently drew the largest amount from School Funds;
- The City Gallery offered a solution, in terms of offering free workshops;
- Also in terms of transport, the group asked how schools could access more cultural possibilities around Nova Gorica;
- In short, all these things were recognised as interconnected.

CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Again, the overall score afforded to Culture and Environment was broadly mid-range (albeit a little lower than Culture and Education), and some way above that of the Global Panel.

Individual group scores for this Commitment were spread between 'Developing' (five Actions), and 'Advanced' (four Actions), while one Action (action i) was scored as 'Emerging'.

a) **Cultural factors included in local environmental sustainability strategies – Developing stage:**
The group scored this as Developing, reflecting the fact that, while there were a variety of individual measures locally, they saw no evidence of underpinning strategies for these. They agreed that our collective view on culture needed to be widened.

b) **Local cultural policies recognising the connections between culture and environmental sustainability – Developing stage:**
The group recognised a number of individual programmes, such as European Mobility Week, but found that these were not integrated and, once again that there was no underpinning strategic framework.

c) **A working group to link the work of local government departments of culture and environment – Developing stage:**
There was no existing group, although there were some individual collaborative initiatives.

d) **History and culture are included in guidelines on the promotion of the production and consumption – Developing stage:**
While there was no integrated strategy, the group identified a number of strong and varied individual activities.

e) **Gastronomy, based on local produce, is recognized as a constituent element of local culture – Advanced stage:**
The group felt that Nova Gorica was very strong and active in this field though, perhaps, that much emphasis was being placed on food in relation to culture.

f) **Steps by local goverment to facilitate and promote sustainable use of public spaces, especially via new gardening practices and ecological innovation – Advanced stage:**
The group identified a wide and diverse range of relevant practice in relation to this Action, for example, in promoting: gardening, social entrepreneurship, sustainable use of public surfaces, community gardens, exchange of seeds. It was felt that many

locations had been proposed for this, and that there are some initiatives, although a number of such activities had subsequently stopped.

g) **The local government establishes programmes to preserve traditional knowledge and practice on sustainable use of natural resources – Advanced stage:**
Few programmes were identified, although there were some workshops, along with some exhibitions on sustainable development. The group recognised that the Municipality supported and financed such programmes and connections.

h) **The local government recognises the cultural importance of natural spaces with specific programmes – Advanced stage:**
The group noted that cultural factors had been incorporated within a number of local environmental sustainability strategies, such as those for: Park Sabotin, Soča River, WWI and natural places.

i) **Evaluation of environmental impact by cultural organizations receiving public support – Emerging stage:**
The group felt that there were currently no discussions locally in Nova Gorica around this question. It was understood that cultural organizations neither implemented these activities nor receive funds specifically connected to this.

j) **Platforms linking public and private civil society organisations, in the areas of culture and environment – Developing stage:**
This Action was scored as 'Developing', suggesting that, while there might be isolated examples of collaboration, there was, as yet, no broad platform or vehicle for this that crossed disciplines and interests.

Several examples of good practice were identified, for example:
- Panovec Forest
- The Aleksandrinke Trail
- Educational trails
- Night in a library
- The Herb garden of Grgarske Ravne, and so on.

Meanwhile among the weaknesses noted in relation to culture and environment was the feeling that some projects were not integrated, with no strategic framework.

CULTURE AND ECONOMY

This was the lowest scoring Commitment in Nova Gorica, achieving the lower end of mid range, and almost entirely in line with that of the Global Panel.

This group scored no Actions as 'Advanced', while eight were seen as 'Developing' and four as 'Emerging'.

This suggests overall that it is a field that receives relatively little attention locally.

a) **Local economic development strategies take the cultural economy into account and work with its participants to ensure it is a key local economic sector – Emerging stage:**
The group scored this Action as 3, with no further comment, suggesting that local economic development strategies do not specifically address this issue, and that there is at best only limited local attention to it.

b) **There is regular analysis of the contribution of cultural actors to the local economy, including direct and indirect impact to the creation of wealth and employment – Emerging stage:**
The group identified no measures or mechanisms for evaluating economic contribution, either at local or state level.

c) **Appropriate contractual terms and salary levels for cultural actors and authors' and related rights are enshrined in law – Developing stage:**
The group found the field of salaries and conditions of employment to be well regulated on a national level through state legislation. On the other hand they felt that this was not appropriately evaluated in financial terms. They also noted that there was a difference between the status and conditions between the employed and self-employed (self-employment being particularly prevalent in the cultural sector).

d) **There is information and training on authors' rights, shared production models and new distribution systems – Developing stage:**
The group scored this Action as 4.

e) **Employability programs cover cultural knowledge and skills – Emerging stage:**
The group scored this Action as 3.

f) **There are various financing mechanisms for for-profit cultural projects – Emerging stage:**
The group noted that investment in culture is relatively rare in Nova Gorica, and did not identify any particular and appropriate financing mechanisms for the sector.

CULTURE AND ECONOMY

g) **Public or mixed programmes exist to increase donations and volunteering for culture – Developing stage:**
This action received a mixed response, according to its various elements: a high score for volunteering and public programmes, but a low score in relation to support for mixed programmes. The score then logically reflects a combination of the two.

h) **Partnerships between the cultural sector and business exist, including residencies, innovation systems and knowledge transfer – Developing stage:**
The group explored underlying reasons why Nova Gorica should be relatively weak in this field, identifying, for example, that it was a young city, whose tradition was based less on business than on industry.

The four remaining Actions, namely:
- The value in maintaining traditional local trades and crafts (including the development of innovation, as required) is recognized;
- j) Local tourism is sustainable, balanced, locally connected and interactive with cultural ecosystems;
- k) Corporate social responsibility programmes include cultural projects, and engage with local cultural values and cultures; and
- l) Local business organisations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, have specific cultural policies and programmes, were all scored in the 'Developing' stage without further comment, as follows: i) 5, j) 6, k) 5, l) 4

The group identified the following as good practices:
- Public work and volunteering.

Measures that could be adopted to address the weaknesses identified in the field of culture and economy included:
- An Office for Economy, to be included in the Department for Social Activities, dealing with cooperation and coordination - helping with tenders, programmes, initiating, developing and launching ideas.

Other issues relevant for Nova Gorica in this field but not reflected in Culture 21: Actions include:
- Research.

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CULTURE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The scores applied by the group to this Commitment were mid-range, but comfortably above those of the Global Panel.

Within this a wide range of individual Action scores were applied, suggesting a wide range of stages of development in relation to this field.

Scored as 'Advanced' were four Actions; meanwhile, three actions were considered to be in the 'Developing' stage and a further three as 'Emerging'. In addition, the group did not apply a score to two further Actions.

a) **Local social policies (health, employment, welfare, social inclusion) include culture as a dimension for combating discrimination – Emerging stage:**
The group scored this Action as 3, without further comment.

b) **Regular analysis of factors determining culturally vulnerable individuals or groups, via processes directly involving them – Developing stage:**
The group noted that there were few such groups in Nova Gorica. (NOTE: from an external perspective it could be worth analysing more closely to what extent this also applies in relation to vulnerable individuals).

c) **Regular analysis is undertaken of the relationship between personal welfare, health and active cultural practices – not scored**
This Action was not scored by the group, on the grounds that members were not familiar with this field. The group pointed to the possible role of the Statistical Office at the national level.

d) **Capacity-building programmes exist for social service professionals and organisations, enabling them to identify cultural factors that impede access to public services – Emerging stage:**
The group scored this Action on the basis that the museum of the Municipality has practices that are disability-friendly. The Municipality holds the title of being the disabled friendly municipality. It also noted that further practices exist at a National level, for example, in the form of cultural guides.

e) **Municipality budgets and resources actively promote women's participation in cultural activities and organisations, particularly at high-profile and senior levels, and promote the visibility and status of cultural activities already carried out predominantly by women - not scored:**
The group noted that this Action was unnecessary in Nova Gorica, given that there were more women in leading positions in the cultural field than men. Accordingly,

they did not score this Action. (NOTE: the comments did not directly address the slightly different question of visibility and status of cultural activities carried out predominantly by women - though they may have felt that the same point applied to both). This question would merit some further exploration.)

f) **Publicly supported cultural institutions programmes for disadvantaged groups, including work in neighbourhoods with high levels of poverty and exclusion – Advanced stage:**

The group noted that there were some public institutions that pursue such programmes of work. In general, they interpreted this question as one about disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and concluded that, in a narrow interpretation of this commitment, one could argue that there were no such neighbourhoods in Nova Gorica. These comments do not however explore the broader question of disadvantage that may be identified in ways that are other than neighbourhood based, such as e.g. age or disability. (NOTE: this may be a result of the dual context of the question: including both neighbourhoods and particular disadvantaged groups that appears to link the two, whereas in reality, they can be quite distinct, with quite particular characteristics and needs).

g) **Steps have been taken to ensure public buildings are accessible, including for people with disabilities – Advanced stage:**

The group scored this Action as 'Advanced' without further comment, suggesting that cultural facilities were, by and large, accessible to all. (NOTE: while we do not necessarily challenge this assumption, we could question whether it may be based on a somewhat narrow definition of 'accessibility', in terms of physical access to buildings).

h) **Local conflict resolution strategies take into account and recognise the potential of culture – Emerging stage:**

The group scored this Action with a 1, on the basis of noting that there were no local conflict resolution strategies in Nova Gorica. (NOTE: it would be interesting to explore behind this, to what extent this reflects an integrated community where there is little conflict, or whether conflicts that may exist locally are left to resolve themselves in other ways).

As regards actions:
- i) There are programmes to promote inter-generational cooperation;
- k) A local platform or network of different sectors works on the relationship between culture, equality and social inclusion;

CULTURE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The group scored both of these Actions as 'Advanced', noting in each case that there is a NGO network focusing on the question.

j) There are cultural innovation programmes for young people that promote social inclusion, knowledge of cultural codes, digital environments and gender equality – Developing stage:
The group scored this Action as 'Developing', without further comment.

l) Local civil society organisations carry out awareness-raising such as on promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and anti-racism, with support from public institutions – Developing stage:
The group noted that such campaigns take place at national level, and that civil society locally participates in these.

An area of good practice identified in this field was:
- Various well-operating and financially well-supported associations contributing to social inclusion and intergenerational connection;
- A disability-friendly Municipality, in terms of accessibility.

Among potential measures that could be adopted to address weaknesses identified in the field of culture, equality and social inclusion, the group identified one that, to some extent, qualified the perceived 'good practice' above, as follows:
- It is crucial in this work to consider all forms of disability.

Among other issues relevant for Nova Gorica in this field, but that may not be reflected in Culture 21, the group noted the need for:
- Improved cooperation in general;
- More cross-border projects in the area of culture and social inclusion;
- Public tendering for the financing of cultural projects for groups with disabilities;
- (specific for Slovenia) Strategies and actions to address the separation (seen by the group as 'parallel universes') between the conditions (status, regulations attitudes etc) of employment and self-employment.

CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

The scores applied to this Commitment were again mid-range but, in this instance only marginally above those of the Global Panel.

Scored as 'Advanced' were five Actions,; six were scored as 'Developing'; and one as 'Emerging'.

a) **Local urban planning or master plans explicitly recognize the importance of cultural issues and resources – Developing stage:**

It was pointed out that local planning automatically considered heritage. The Municipality issues calls for the financing of cultural heritage and one of the criteria for this is accessibility. Application processess are open, and both state monuments and those of local importance are eligible to be considered. This process spans all aspects of heritage, although the process is not integrated.

b) **A reference guide on cultural impact assessment exists, along with a suport training programme – Emerging stage:**

The group noted that there was no existing guide or supporting training programme, hence a score of 1.

c) **The Municipality keeps an inventory of tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage, and has mechanisms for preservation and conservation that meet international standards – Advanced stage:**

With regard to this, the group noted that this work did not operate on a local level, as inventories were kept by the state. Over and above this, heritage was protected by state law. While an inventory was kept however, and there were mechanisms for preservation, there was no promotion or encouragement towards this and, typically, no funds.

There were three levels of classification: national and local monuments and heritage. Almost all churches were classified as 'heritage', and there was a special and consistent procedure nationally to ascertain and secure whatever status.

On the other side, the group noted that there was no exercise of control, along with poor penalties for destroying monuments and heritage. (NOTE: given the reservations expressed within the comments, it would be reasonable to wonder whether the group's scoring of this Action may have been a little generous?).

d) **Local government supports the role of culture in the renovation of historic centres and in neighbourhood, district and regional development plans – Developing stage:**

The group agreed that there was some evidence locally that this was happening, but that it was not yet a sufficiently advanced or appropriate level.

e) **New cultural infrastructure is planned as part of a broader cultural ecosystem, including taking account of potential impacts – Developing stage:**

City planning was felt to sit broadly within a social, cultural and economic environment, however a view was expressed that, in many cases new infrastructural developments were not naturally perceived in terms of their potential as environments for culture – streets and squares could be an exception to this. Culture was generally considered, but despite this the biggest barrier could be lack of funds, and the group felt that much of the argument boiled down to reponse to the pressure to secure votes.

f) **The Municipality considers the notion of landscape in its policies, incorporating natural and cultural aspects of development – Developing stage:**

The group discussed the range of examples that exemplified what the Municipality might regard as 'landscape', for example, Skalnica (Sveta Gora – Holy mountain)? Sabotin? Rihemberk Castle? Lasciac villa? In other words, there was a debate about what to include or exclude from this categorisation and this seemed not to be always clear.

g) **Local government recognises public spaces for cultural interaction and participation – Advanced stage:**

The group felt that this interaction was of increasing importance, for example, Bevk Square (undergoing a process of revival), Silvan Furlan platform (open), the info point of the Cultural House, the Museum on the border and, most important of all, the Square of Europe.

h) **A range of public places are, thanks to their symbolism, regarded as public goods – Advanced stage:**

There was a list of public cultural infrastructure, catering for public institutions and NGOs, such as: the Square of Europe, Mostovna, Carinarnica (former customs house), industrial heritage, Kromberk and Rihemberk Castles, Park Rafut and so on. There was an inventory, but this did not necessarily imply that there were proposed measures. In fact, there were measures proposed for heritage only.

i) **Programmes to promote and manage development and preservation of public art – Advanced stage:**

The group noted that the Municipality did this on a permanent basis, together with the MKC, NGOs and other institutions. However, the group felt that this work was not undertaken in a systematic way. There was also a feeling of a lack of continuity in new initiatives, that might appear one year but disappear the next.

CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

j) **There are architectural guidelines for the renovation of existing and planning of new buildings and use of traditional construction techniques – Advanced stage:**
    The group recognised that these existed, although they were unconvinced that they worked very effectively.

k) **Policies for urban transport and mobility consider citizen access to cultural life, especially for those with particular obstacles to mobility – Developing stage:**
    The group recognised the local provision of free city public transport, but reflected that it was a challenge to include suburban areas within this, in a sustainable and reasonable way. Similarly, with regard to organising transport to large events, and to parking, there were felt to be discussions, but a lack of effective policies and measures to address the issues.

l) **Municipality policies and programmes promote active citizen participation in urban planning and regional development (e.g. urban design, architecture, public art) – Developing stage:**
    In discussion, the group agreed that plans were presented and discussed publicly, in the presence of experts, civil and other interested publics, for example, Tabor, Cankarjeva development and so on. They recognised that this process existed, but not in a fully effective way, in that it worked well for some, but less so for others.

Examples of good practice identified included:
- Renovation of Vipavski Križ, Goče;
- Recognition in urban planning of particular public places, squares, streets, etc.

Areas identified for further development in the field of culture, urban planning and urban space included:
- Poor communication between expert services and users;
- Measures based on analysis and studies.

CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

This Commitment received amongst the highest set of scores within the workshop, and well above those of the Global Panel. Eight Actions were scored as 'Advanced', while two were scored as 'Developing'; and just 1 as 'Emerging'.

a) **Legislation guarantees freedom of expression, opinion and information, and respect for cultural diversity and privacy – Advanced stage:**
This was felt by the group to be fully protected in national legislation.

b) **Public and civil society mechanisms monitor these freedoms – Advanced stage:**
Again, this was felt by the group to be fully protected in legislation. (NOTE: it would be helpful to explore or clarify what level of systematic local monitoring, including by civil society, exists. This is not a challenge to the judgement of the group, but a reflection on what could otherwise be a gap).

c) **Policies guarantee access to free and plural information and guarantee that information is harnessed to promote citizen's right to participate in cultural life – Advanced stage:**
The group agreed that Slovenia had a Libraries Act, and there was full internet access to public institutions.

d) **Local media reflect plurality of opinions, give voice to women and represent local and international cultural diversity – Advanced stage:**
The group felt that local media focused narrowly on Nova Gorica, and that where the neighbourhood was seen as the area across the border, matters became more complicated. The group also noted that the media expressed plurality and diversity, both local and international.

e) **There are systems that join up universities, governments and civil society to monitor, research and analyze cultural developments and their interaction with other areas of sustainable development – Developing stage:**
Surveys or Diploma and other theses are sent from faculties, and some studies were published, however there was not seen to be a system, connecting public government, universities and civil society.

f) **Obstacles to accessing and using information and communication technologies for cultural purposes are analyzed regularly – Developing stage:**
The group noted some activities in this regard, but were not aware of any research or studies on ICT for cultural purposes. Libraries overcame some obstacles, e.g. for the visually impaired, though not blind people. Issues were felt to be analyzed,

when there were groups available, allowing opportunities to review functionalities, for example the Exhibition for blind and visually impaired people in Nova Gorica. There had been research on accessibility in libraries, although this was not thought to have been implemented. It was felt that many institutions, including libraries, took care of this work individually and in their own way.

g) **Analyzing relationships between cultural processes and social innovation – Emerging stage:**
The group agreed that this function was missing in Nova Gorica.

h) **Policies and programmes exist that work on creation, production an digital distribuiton, centered on citizens and promoting cultural democracy – Advanced stage:**
Participatory budgeting and collecting stories were established as occasional initiatives, but were not in permanent practice.

i) **Cultural institutions receiving public support participate in debates on information and knowledge and provide consistent support for valuing culture as a common good – Advanced stage:**
The group felt this was a strength in Nova Gorica. Institutions were invited to participate in public discussions, proposals for the Local Programme on Culture, European Capital of Culture and so on.

j) **Training and raising awareness activities exist for cultural professionals on consequences of the cultural, social and implications of existing and emerging forms of cultural access and reproduction – Advanced stage:**
The group noted that there were opportunities for training, and that people within institutions were aware of the issue. The Library put materials online and made sure it was correct. Others did not do this, however, there was a widespread commitment to training and following these materials.

k) **Policies and programmes exist allowing cultural actors to participate in international cultural networks – Advanced stage:**
The group noted that there were many such opportunities, but that each institution tended to operate this individually, and the group felt that there was no overall strategy. The Library and schools trained their own people. Erasmus was used as a resource by the Centre for Youth.

CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

There was a constant participation in projects, though no permanent programmes were evident.

The group went on to discuss what international connections could contribute to Nova Gorica.

In discussion, the group noted as good practice the Library, where well-informed staff could provide up-to-date information, for example on authors' rights.

An area for development identified in the field of culture, information and knowledge was the need for up-to-date and accessible sources of information about changing legislation and relations.

GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

Group scoring of this Commitment was mid-range, though, once again considerably above that of the Global Panel.

Scoring was relatively consistent across almost all Actions, focussing predominantly on 'Developing' (eight actions). Other than that, Action a) was scored as 'emerging' and Action e) as 'Advanced'. One further Action, f) was left unscored.

a) **The Municipality implements a cultural policy based on A21C and Culture 21 Actions, bringing together initiatives for joint projects from a diverse range of partners – Emerging stage:**
The group scored this Action as 'Emerging' without further comment.

b) **The Municipality promotes cultural planning at neighbourhood and district level – Developing stage:**
The group agreed that, as a small city of local communities, this happened spontaneously, in the absence of strategies, or indeed the presence of tradition.
The group scored three Actions as 'Developing', but without adding a comment:
   - c) The Municipality creates public forums to steer cultural policy, such as local councils on culture, with broad and diverse participation;
   - g) Policies or programmes exist to promote the participation of citizens in the management of cultural institutions, programmes and events; and
   - h) The Municipality recognises and supports management practices that represent local culture and develops specific and appropriate management practices for common goods.

d) **Public projects generate permanent forums for consultation, negotiation and regulation of goals and methods with broad participation, foresight and reflexivity – Developing stage:**
This Action triggered some disagreement within the group, and one member regarded this as an 'emerging' (rather than 'developing') area. There were no further comments.

e) **Cultural institutions receiving cultural support are transparent, accountable and evaluate their public services, and citizens are represented on their boards – Advanced stage:**
This Action was scored as 'Advanced' (suggesting that the city fully met these criteria), with no further comment.

f) **Programmes and institutions in receipt of public support develop and practice**

gender equality – no score was applied, however it was noted that, while no strategies exist in this context, there are examples of actions being implemented on the ground.

i) **An independent civil society platform or network of civil society organisations exists, that includes citizens and cultural professionals from all sectors – Developing stage:**
The group referenced the following practising examples in relation to this: ZKD, JSKD, Asociacija (NGO).

j) **There are measures such as training programmes in the field of culture to strengthen NGOs, trade associations, unions and other civil society organisations that contribute to cultural life – Developing stage:**
This was seen by the group as a function that operated at national level, via 6 junctions at regional level. There appeared to be no trade associations in the area of Nova Gorica.

k) **There are frameworks that assign responsibilities and foster collaboration for cultural policies between local, regional and national governments – Developing stage:**
The group felt that this question centred around a national tendency towards centralisation, and the responses to this tendency among other tiers of government and society. The score afforded to it though suggested that the position was not entirely a negative one.

CONCLUSIONS

Returning then to the outcomes of the Pilot Cities Workshop week, a number of strengths have emerged:

》》》 The city has shown that it can bring together and galvanise a diverse and engaged group of local actors from diverse backgrounds, as stakeholders in what are early steps in a collaborative process of planning and change. This bodes well, not only for Pilot Cities but, in parallel, the work that is underway towards both the Local Programme on Culture and the candidacy for European Capital of Culture 2025. It is our strongest recommendation from the workshop process that Nova Gorica builds on this (extending and broadening), and embeds it as a key structural element of the work. This principle could be usefully applied not only to all three of the above programmes of work but also, indeed, in other areas of strategic policy development within the Municipality.

Alongside these strengths, a number of weaknesses (or at least areas that seem to require early resolution or development) have also emerged through this process, for example:

Among other areas for development, identified by the three groups, the following additional recommendations stand out:

》》》 Mechanisms for increased support for NGOs, together with a more open dialogue between NGOs, the public and public institutions.

》》》 Addressing directly long-standing attitudinal barriers, related to individual or public payment for ('investment in') aspects of cultural activity – more specifically in relation to developing more sustainable economic models of production and distribution of culture and the cultural offer.

》》》 Encouraging more shared involvement via cooperation platforms and networks (across several fields of development), as a mechanism to build transparency, openness and broadening participation.

》》》 A public strategy to integrate public and private transport planning and the cultural offer, not only within the city centre but, crucially, in the suburbs and rural areas of the district.

》》》 An Office for Economy (or similar specialist function), to be included in the Department for Social Activities, dealing with creative and cultural economy questions, and developing programmes of local support.

》》》 A cultural research platform, possibly in partnership between the Municipality, university sector, national resources, local civil society and cultural businesses, to

CONCLUSIONS

research and deliver data in support of strategic developments – making the case.

》》 A particular focus on cross-border projects (with Gorizia, in particular) to build cooperation, confidence and shared working methodologies.

》》 A strategy and fund to encourage more international exchanges and cooperations – building the European dimension of culture in Nova Gorica.

This is simply a 'top line' list of strategic recommendations that have emerged from reviewing materials and compiling this report. It is important, however, to underline that the report offers a wealth of further analysis, much of which could be taken further forward, whether through Pilot Cities, the Local Programme on Culture, the bid for ECOC or other local initiatives.

We offer this Activity 1 report to the City of Nova Gorica for further consideration, in line with its participation in the Agenda 21 for Culture Pilot Cities Programme, and look foward with anticipation to undertaking together the next and subsequent stages of this work programme.

ANNEX 1:
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
WORKSHOP GROUPS AND PARTICIPANTS

NAME - SURNAME	POSITION
Group A. Culture and Education / Culture and Environment / Culture, Urban Planning and Public Space / Culture, Information and Knowledge	
Ivor Davies (animator)	Lead Expert of the Pilot Cities programme in Nova Gorica
Marjan Kogoj	Principal of the Solkan Primary School
Martina Trampuž	Public Fund for Cultural Activities
Majda Petejan	Senior Advisor for Social Activities in the Municipality of Nova Gorica
Majda Stepančič	Senior Advisor for Social Activities in the Municipality of Nova Gorica
David Kožuh	Curator at the Regional Museum "Goriški muzej"
Gorazd Božič	Member of the Association Glasbeno društvo NOVA
Lea Kosmač	Centre of the Youth
Irena Škvarč	Director of the Nova Gorica Public Library
Peter Tomaž Dobrila	Head of the Local Programme on Culture preparation team (rapporteur)
Group B. Heritage, Diversity and Creativity / Culture, Equality and Social Inclusion / Governance of Culture	
Ana Zavrtanik-Ugrin (animator)	Vice-Mayor, Nova Gorica Municipality
Mateja Zoratti (animator)	Project Officer, Nova Gorica Municipality
Neda Rusjan Bric	Head of the ECC preparation team, Director, Actress, Writer
Teja Gerbec	Custos at the Regional museum "Goriški muzej"
Barbara Kocjančič	Technical Advisor, Municipality of Nova Gorica
Tamara Simčič	Senior Advisor for social activities, Municipality of Nova Gorica
Robert Cenčič	Senior Advisor for social activities, Municipality of Nova Gorica
Sabina Volk Simčič	Head of the Regional Unit of the Public Fund for Cultural Activities
Jernej Skrt	Artist
Tereza Gregorič	Dramaturg

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Miha Kosovel	Member of the Local Programme on Culture preparation team, NGO representative
Peter Purg	University of Nova Gorica (rapporteur)

Group C. Cultural Rights / Heritage, Diversity and Creativity / Culture and Economy	
Catherine Cullen	Policy Expert on behalf of UCLG
Tina Mihelj	Tourist Information Centre (TIC)
Ines Beguš	Custos at the Regional museum "Goriški muzej"
Borut Koloini	Custos at the Regional museum "Goriški muzej"
Mateja Zorn	Project Manager at the Kinoatelje Institute (rapporteur)
Nika Simoniti Jenko	Public relations coordinator, Municipality of Nova Gorica
Nataša Kolenc	Technical advisor, Municipality of Nova Gorica
Sendi Mango	Artist
Edvin Pozderović	Director of Mostovna Cultural Centre

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