

[Working Group on Culture]

- **Report presented at UCLG Executive Bureau**
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Presentation

The city of Barcelona has the honour to chair the Working Group on Culture for the period 2005-2007, with vice-presidencies in Stockholm and Buenos Aires. The Working Group is developing the Programme for 2005-2007, whose central objective is:

“To promote the role of culture as a central dimension of local policies through the dissemination and implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture”

What is the Agenda 21 for culture?

The Agenda 21 for culture is the first document with worldwide mission advocating for an undertaking by cities and local governments for cultural development. It consists of 67 articles, distributed in three large blocks: “Principles”, “Undertakings” and “Recommendations”.

168 cities, local governments and organisations from all over the world are linked to Agenda 21 for culture.

UCLG’s Working Group on Culture is the meeting point for the cities and local governments that place culture at the heart of their development processes.

Culture and cities

Today, more than ever, cities require more culture. Why? Culture today is at the centre of urban strategies. It is essential for promoting human rights and democracy, for shaping the knowledge society and improving the quality of life for everyone. Culture makes an unequivocal contribution to job and wealth creation, promotes social inclusion and is a necessary dimension in the processes of urban regeneration.

Some cities consider culture as the fourth pillar of their development.

Culture is also one of the challenges of globalisation today. Intercultural dialogue and the promotion of cultural diversity are among the greatest challenges of humanity. The international cooperation and development programmes are paying increasing attention to the heritage, the arts and the creative industries.

Cities need solid cultural policies, jointly elaborated with the inhabitants, creators of freedom and promoters of intercultural dialogue.

UCLG's Working Group on Culture

It was constituted at the statutory meetings of UCLG held on 9 and 10 June 2005 in Beijing. It consists of fifty cities, local governments and organisations from all over the world.

The first meeting was held on 23 and 24 October 2006, in Barcelona, with the participation of over forty delegations.

The main agreements reached at the first meeting of the Working Group, structured from the four sub-objectives of the Programme 2005-2007, which will be valid until the UCLG congress in Jeju (October 2007), are the following:

1. To develop the institutional framework of cities and local governments

- To obtain the participation of cities and associations from the less represented regions.
- To carry out an intense lobbying campaign to make culture one of the priorities of UCLG after the congress in 2007.

2. To guide the development and implementation of services to cities

- To update the database of all the cities and organisations developing Agenda 21 for culture
- To continue to publicise Agenda 21 for culture, and increase the number of translations of the document into other languages. At present, it is available in English, French, Spanish, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian and Portuguese.
- To publish the two documents approved in Barcelona, called "Cultural indicators and Agenda 21 for culture" and "Advice on local implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture"
- To improve the circulation of information among members and other interested people through a bulletin.
- To distribute the report done at the request of UNESCO on "Local policies for cultural diversity".
- To update and maintain the website www.agenda21culture.net.
- To disseminate the corporate image of the Working Group.

3. To develop institutional partnerships in culture

- To continue the relation with national and international associations and networks engaged in cultural policies.
- To deepen the relation with the Culture Sector of UNESCO
- To explore the feasibility of a joint celebration by cities each 21 May, World Day for Cultural Diversity, from 2008.
- To explore new alliances with the private sector and NGOs
- To promote the presence of Agenda 21 for culture in international forums.

4. To promote research and development in culture

- To promote research work on the following subjects: "Culture and sustainability", "Creative industries and local development" and "Culture and social corporate responsibility".
- To hold a seminar on "Agenda 21 for culture and local cultural management", in Lyon, in February 2007.

Contact

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Annex - Some dates in the process

2006

- On 23 - 24 October 2006 the first meeting of the Working Group on Culture takes place in Barcelona.

2005

- On 9 -10 June 2005, during the statutory meetings of UCLG in Beijing, the constitution of the Working Group on Culture was approved by the Executive Bureau and ratified by the World Council.

2004

- On 7 October 2004 the Executive Bureau of UCLG, meeting in Sao Paulo, adopted the Agenda 21 for culture as a reference document for its programmes on culture and assumed the role of coordinating the processes subsequent to its approval.
- On 15 September 2004 the document was presented to United Nations – Habitat and UNESCO in a symposium organised by the World Urban Forum, as part of the Universal Forum of Cultures – Barcelona 2004.
- On 8 May 2004 the Agenda 21 for culture was approved by the 4th Forum of Local Authorities, meeting in Barcelona as part of the Universal Forum of Cultures - Barcelona 2004.

2003

- Between January 2003 and May 2004, prior drafts of the document were discussed in municipal networks like Interlocal, Eurocities, les Rencontres and Sigma. The document was also discussed in meetings such as the European Forum of Local Authorities, Interacció, the Euroamerican Campus on Cultural Cooperation, Forum Latino-Americano da Agenda 21 das Cidades para a Cultura and Delibera.info.

2002

- In September 2002, in Porto Alegre, during the 1st World Public Meeting on Culture, the idea of drafting an Agenda 21 of cities for culture is brought up.