

#HLPF2019
#LISTEN2CITIES
#CULTURE21ACTIONS



SDG 8.9
**DEVISE AND IMPLEMENT
POLICIES TO PROMOTE
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THAT
CREATES JOBS AND PROMOTES
LOCAL CULTURE AND PRODUCTS**

 **culture 21**
UCLG Committee

 **UCLG**
United Cities
and Local Governments

· **DISCLAIMER**

· Since 2017, UCLG has been given the mandate by the
· Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments
· (GTF) to report every year to the High Level Political
· Forum of the United Nations (UN-HLPF) on the
· assessment of the Sustainable Development Goals
· (SDGs).

· This report has been elaborated by UCLG Committee
· on Culture with the aim to inform the 3rd report of
· Local and Regional Governments to the HLPF 2019,
· entitled "XXXXXXXXXX", on the state of cultural
· aspects regarding the SDGs, and more specifically
· on the assessment of Target 8.9: "devise and
· implement policies to promote sustainable tourism
· which creates jobs, promotes local culture and
· products".

· This report has been elaborated by Jordi Baltà,
· expert of the Agenda 21 for Culture.



8.9

LOCAL CULTURE AND TOURISM

SDG Target 8.9 addresses the need to devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. This is one of the most explicit references to cultural aspects in the 2030 Agenda, alongside those presented in SDGs 4.7, 8.3 and 11.4. However small, the 2030 Agenda still amounts to a step forward in the extent to which cultural aspects are considered and included in sustainable development agendas. When the MDGs were adopted in 2000, for instance, no explicit references to cultural aspects were included: only in their subsequent implementation was the cultural dimension effectively explored and included (UNESCO, 2012).

This minor step ahead is consistent with the progressive recognition of the importance of cultural aspects, including heritage in sustainable development, as well as the specific implications that these can have at the local level.¹ Cultural rights specifically are often exercised at the local level:² accordingly, local governments have a very significant role in the design and implementation of cultural policies. Since the adoption of the Agenda 21 for culture in 2004 (UCLG, 2014), UCLG has advocated for the strengthening of local cultural policies and participatory governance frameworks connected to sustainable development. The 3rd UCLG World Congress, held in Mexico City in 2010, adopted a Policy Statement entitled “Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development”. This initiative was followed by the adoption of the Culture 21: Actions toolkit in 2015, allowing cities across the world to share a common framework for the operationalization of culture in the way

they approach sustainable development, innovating, evaluating and exchanging their policies and programmes.

Evidence collected by UCLG over the years suggests that cultural aspects will play a pivotal role for the 2030 Agenda to be successful, even in areas where the connection between the cultural dimension and the SDGs is often only implicit.

The UCLG Committee on Culture has two specific outputs to highlight this commitment – the document *Culture in the SDGs: A Guide for Local Action*, and the *Agenda 21 for culture Good Practice database* (see box).

CULTURE AND TOURISM: EXAMPLES

Countless cities and territories are implementing “policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products”. What follows is a quick overview of some initiatives illustrating this commitment.

In the region of **Abitibi-Témiscamingue**, the CULTURAT project is a participative process, involving local governments and civil society, including Indigenous communities, which involves citizens in the definition of priorities and has contributed to enhance quality of life through the promotion of sustainable cultural tourism.

In **Cêsis**, the “Culture for a Sustainable Growth” strategy aimed to improve the quality of life of local citizens via culture, capitalising on local cultural heritage, including the links between community-building, sustainable cultural tourism, and social and economic innovation.

In **Bilbao**, local development strategies have recognised the importance of cultural activities, infrastructures and stakeholders in order to contribute to better quality of life

¹ Duxbury, N.; Hosagrahar, J.; and Pascual, J. (2016), “Why must culture be at the heart of sustainable development?”, article, Barcelona: UCLG.

² Martinell, A. (2014), “Cultural life, local life”, article, Barcelona: UCLG / Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments.

and to social and economic transformation, with clear impacts in terms of employment and tourism attractiveness. Yes, it is the Guggenheim Museum, but the strategy goes far beyond this equipment.

The promotion of tourism around cultural heritage in **Nevşehir** relies on the active involvement of the local community, including volunteer cultural and history researchers, teachers and elderly citizens who share their own experiences and knowledge.

A long-term vision of culture and local sustainable development has enabled **Yarra Ranges** to foster economic opportunities for local artists and creative businesses and to strengthen the area as a tourism destination, while taking into account the preservation of cultural and natural heritage and involving local communities.

In the 'Sensitive Urban Zone' of Haute-pierre, **Strasbourg**, a venue specialised in digital technology provides young people with expression and digital creation skills and contributes to broadening their employment opportunities.

In **Kanazawa**, policies have fostered synergies between local artisans and other creative areas, thus combining tradition, innovation and the new technologies and strengthening economic development around traditional culture.

International platform **Sound Diplomacy** provides research and advice to cities in order to explore the potential of local music ecosystems for economic and cultural development.

The **UNESCO Creative Cities Network** promotes cooperation among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development and which can exchange expertise around 7 creative fields (crafts and folk art; design; film; gastronomy; literature; music; and media arts).



ILLUSTRATING THE LINKS BETWEEN CULTURE AND SDGs

The UCLG report *Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals: A Guide for Local Action* (2018) identifies connections between cultural aspects and all SDGs. These are illustrated with examples from cities across the world, which serve to stress the importance of decentralisation, localisation and participatory governance, as well as to highlight participation in cultural life, cultural liberties, heritage and diversity as fundamental values on their own and as enabling factors for other areas of sustainable development.

The report draws on the over 130 examples on culture and sustainable development collected by the UCLG Committee on Culture, which are accessible via the Agenda 21 for culture Good Practice database (<http://obs.agenda21culture.net>). Examples are indexed on the basis of the 17 SDGs, the 9 thematic commitments of Culture 21 Actions, and a set of keywords.

Ségou has developed a range of initiatives under the banner of 'creative city', which have contributed to strengthening the local economy through decent jobs in the cultural and creative sectors, as well as increasing local self-esteem and identity.

The city of **Jeonju** has included the appreciation of traditional culture in education and lifelong-learning programmes, helping both children and adults understand the importance of traditional buildings, intangible heritage and other cultural dimensions of housing

Several cities, such as **Regensburg** have adopted World Heritage management plans³ and have been successful in involving local citizens and integrating cultural heritage in policy areas such as urban planning, economic development and tourism.



The example of **Pekalongan** recognizes itself as the 'City of Batik'. In 2011, the city decided to invest in the economic potential of its cultural heritage, the Batik sector, a sector in which 60% of the workers are women. This strategic decision contributed to promote decent work, empower women and, through them, improve the well-being of their households. It also improved municipal finances, generating even more capacity for public authorities.

Finally, it is important to underline there is a clear relation between sustainable tourism, cultural and natural heritage, and the preservation of ecosystems on land and under water (SDGs 11, 14 and 15). Traditional knowledge connected to the preservation of natural resources has been acknowledged by some local governments and deserves further attention. The Seed Swap Festival in Seferihisar and the Ha Long Ecomuseum, for instance, are unique cultural experiences that promote land and water preservation, while Jeju has committed to preserve the custom of haenyeo (women divers) as an eco-friendly sustainable fishing practice, rooted in traditional knowledge.

3
For more information, please see: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/globalstrategy/>.

Cultural Rights specifically are often exercised at the local level: accordingly, local governments have a very significant role in the design and implementation of cultural policies.



LOCAL CULTURAL POLICIES AND TOURISM: KEY CONSIDERATIONS ON WHAT “SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT” INVOLVES

In 2017 and 2018 the UCLG Committee on Culture and the City Council of **Barcelona**, through the Institute of Culture (ICUB), in the framework of the implementation of the Leading Cities Programme, analysed the culture-tourism relationship from the perspectives of cultural policies and sustainable development. Two reports identified the critical elements to be addressed locally and contribute to the reflection that this debate arouses at an international scale.

- Report 1: **The Relationship Between Culture and Tourism in Barcelona: Current Context and Challenges**, signed by the UCLG Committee on Culture; it focuses on the current state of affairs in Barcelona (key narratives and examples).
- Report 2: **Creating synergies between cultural policy and tourism for permanent and temporary citizens**, signed by policy advisors Greg Richards and Lénia Marques; this report includes case studies from other cities facing similar concerns (Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Montreal and Rome) and focuses on the driving factors which are currently bringing culture and tourism, and permanent and temporary citizens, closer together.

The reports suggest these six considerations on the relation “local cultural policies, tourism and sustainable development”:

1. **Approaches to cultural policies and sustainable development.** The relationship between cultural policy and tourism is extremely complex

and multidimensional and requires integrated policy approaches, in order to move away from urban policies developed in 'silos'. In this regard, the role of culture as a transversal element of urban policy needs to be established more firmly to be considered as a legitimate tool for tackling the externalities of tourism, as well as other city challenges. Cultural actors cannot be seen as mere content providers for tourism.

2. Reflecting on the model of the city from the perspective of culture.

The model of the contemporary city, and particularly the rising popularity of city centre and inner city spaces with residents and visitors alike, lies at the heart of debates on culture and tourism. Gentrification is a huge danger and needs to be seriously addressed. In parallel, cities are now starting to think about the cultural dimension of the metropolis, with measures relating cultural proximity and real decentralisation. Also, in the re-thinking of the city model, producing culture at night is also a specific emerging issue. Finally, city festivals can be seen as fora for cities to try out new ideas in urban management and social innovation.

3. Establishing meeting spaces for active participation in cultural life.

There is the need to preserve and create public space, since it provides the possibility to assess similarities and differences between the users of the city. The local policies for culture can provide city-wide programmes (not restricted to "the venue", that is, in as many public spaces as possible), and promote the active participation of citizens in local cultural life.

4. Influencing tourism through mediation and promotion.

In the past, strategies for influencing



tourists to act sustainably have been oriented towards communication, with promotional messages on the values of the city, clear regulation and more subtle mechanisms such as space design and management. New emphasis is placed on mediation, which allows local cultural intermediaries who interact with tourists, and local residents themselves, to act as ambassadors and educators.

5. Reinvesting economic gains from tourism in a sustainable cultural ecosystem.

As cultural resources are important in attracting tourists, reinvesting the benefits derived from tourist visits in the city's cultural ecosystem, helping to increase sustainability of grassroots creative initiatives and artistic education programmes is more than reasonable.

6. **Establishing new spaces for governance of culture and tourism.**

The complex relationships between public and private actors make it desirable to create specific spaces for dialogue and to strengthen the existing ones, including a shift towards metropolitan governance.

7. **Ways forward.** The basic challenge that cities and their citizens have to face is resolving the tension between the opportunities offered by increasing globalisation and mobility, and the essential support provided by embedding in the local context. Priority should be given to

maintaining diversity, supporting the links between heritage and contemporary culture, providing more resources to support local culture and developing an integrated approach (which requires collaboration across the culture-tourism divide, between culture, tourism and other areas of cultural, social and economic activity, and integration at different geographical scales). Last, but not least, this also means developing a new storyline for the city which both fits the needs of residents and matches the expectations of visitors. The city is the most important cultural entity created by the human.

