



**COMMITTEE ON CULTURE
UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS – UCLG**

REPORT 2024



The UCLG Committee on Culture is co-chaired by Buenos Aires, Lisbon and Mexico City, and vice-chaired by Barcelona, Bilbao, Bogotá, Brazzaville and Jeju.

PRESENTATION

The Committee is the global leader of “Culture in Sustainable Cities”. Our narrative is based on human rights, good governance, people-centered development and the co-creation of the city. The Committee on Culture of UCLG is a unique meeting point. There is no other structure at the global level that gathers cities, organizations and networks that foster the relation between local cultural policies and sustainable development.

Mission. The mission of the Committee on Culture, approved in Mexico (2010) and extended in Rabat (2013), Bogotá (2016), Durban (2019) and Daejeon (2022) is “To promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development through the international dissemination and the local implementation of Agenda 21 for Culture”.

Main activities. The UCLG Committee on Culture leads the organisation of the [biennial International Award "UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21"](#), the database [“OBS” of good practices](#) on culture in sustainable cities, as well as the [UCLG Culture Summit](#). It offers learning and capacity-building programmes on cultural policies (15 [Leading Cities](#), 24 [Pilot Cities](#), 5 [Culture 21 Labs](#), and 10 [Seven Keys](#)) and participates in [international advocacy campaigns](#) (such as the [#Culture2030Goal](#) campaign), advocating with other global cultural networks for an explicit place of culture in the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UCLG considers that cultural dimension plays a key role as the fourth pillar of sustainable development, due to its capacity to promote the dialogue and debates on the values of society and, at the same time, to place memory, heritage, creativity, indigenous peoples, diversity and knowledge at the heart of public policies.

Leadership. The Committee on Culture is co-chaired by Buenos Aires, Lisbon and Mexico City, and vice-chaired by Barcelona, Bilbao, Bogotá, Brazzaville and Jeju. These cities are the “Board” or governance team of the Committee.

Secretariat. The Committee on Culture has a Secretariat located at the premises of UCLG World Secretariat in Barcelona.

The year 2024, in one page!

- 6th edition of the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21: [Award Ceremony](#) in Mexico City, and International Seminar '[Cultural Innovation and Prospective for Cities and Territories](#)'.
- Culture 21 Plus, our global toolkit on Cultural Rights in Sustainable Development: second draft and call of expressions to "test" the toolkit worldwide (physical / online).
- Culture 21 Plus workshops in [Bogotá](#), [Elefsina](#), [Esch-sur-Alzette](#), [Paris \(FNADAC\)](#), [Puebla](#), [Ségou](#), [Bandung](#) and [Thailand](#).
- Report of the webinars "Culture 21 Plus. Testing a new guide for Cultural Rights and Cities".
- Leading Cities Workshop in [Jinju](#).
- Preparing the UCLG Culture Summit in 2025: [Website](#), [background document](#) and [programme](#).
- Support to the project "Culture Capitals Working Together", with the involvement of European, African and Latin American cities: [Seven Keys workshop in Brazzaville](#), Youth CreaLab in Brazzaville, draft Terms of Reference for the new Capital and [webinar on "Culture Capitals for a Culture Goal. Working to Boost the Connections between Regional Initiatives and Global Challenges"](#).
- The [OBS of good practices](#): new good practices in 2024.
- Culture2030Goal campaign: Statement "[No Future without Culture](#)"; Statement "[Culture2030Goal welcomes progress in mobilising culture to achieve development goals in latest Pact for the Future draft](#)"; Statement "[The Missing Goal](#)"; Report "[Culture in the 2024 Voluntary National Reviews](#)"; Statement "[From Summit to Substance](#)", institutional document "[New Governance Framework](#)".
- Global advocacy on Culture Goal: Seminar "[A Culture Goal in the SDGs: context, actors and challenges](#)" in Bilbao; and #Culture2030Goal side-events "[From Summit to Substance](#)" at the UN Summit for the Future, and "[Centring culture in reinforcing SDG delivery and achieving the goals of the Pact for the Future](#)" in the context of the UN HLPF.

1. ACTIVITIES

KEY:

In bold, name of the activity, as written in the annual programme agreed in January 2024.
In blue, IMPLEMENTATION of the activity.

Main activities of the Committee in 2024

(Organised according to UCLG's strategic priorities)

A. Implementation

A.1 International Award UCLG - Mexico City – Culture 21

- To organise the 6th edition of the Award, including the Award ceremonies (July 2024, Mexico City).
- To promote the “best” initiatives on the local promotion of cultural rights that can be replicated or transferred to other cities, contexts or territories.

The 6th edition of the Award was a success, with 87 candidacies. A large number of candidacies were recognised as “good practices”. Applications and nominations were received between 29 November 2023 and 3 April 2024. A document with the abstracts of each candidacy is available [here](#).



The members of the Jury: Serhan Ada (President of the Jury), Iseult Dunne, Yarri Kamara, José Antonio Mac Gregor, and Arturo Morell.



Serhan Ada (President of the Jury)

Professor at the faculty of Arts and Cultural Management Department, Director of Cultural Policy and Management Research Center, and the Head of UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Cultural Diplomacy at Istanbul Bilgi University.



Iseult Dunne

Project Director and Producer, CEO of Dublin City Council Culture Company, and leader of the 2015 team for Dublin's European Capital of Culture 2020 bid process.



Yarri Kamara

Cultural policy researcher, writer, member of the UNESCO 2005 Convention Expert Facility and former member of the selection panel for UNESCO's International Fund for Cultural Diversity.



José Antonio Mac Gregor

Professor and Cultural Manager at the Autonomous University of Querétaro.



Arturo Morell

Coordinator of Advisors and International Affairs of the Government of Mexico City.

The winners of the Award were:

- In the category "[Cities / Local governments](#)": "Capital of Youth Culture", presented by GwanakGu (Seoul, Republic of Korea), and "Traditional medicine information and guidance centres – Qullañ Uta", presented by La Paz (Bolivia).
- In the category "[Individuals](#)": Milena Dragičević Šešić and Alfons Martinell Sempere.
- [Special mentions](#) of the Jury: Bilbao, Brazzaville, Esch-sur-Alzette, Novi Sad, Ramallah, and Xi'an.

The Award Ceremony took place in Mexico City on 25 July 2024 in the context of a special event organized by the Secretariat of Culture of Mexico City.



A.2. UCLG Culture Summit

- To disseminate the results of the 5th UCLG Culture Summit that took place in Dublin (28 November – 1 December 2023).
- To identify the host city of the 6th UCLG Culture Summit (to take place in 2025).

The Call for members interested in the organisation of the 6th UCLG Culture Summit was released in May 2024. The UCLG World Secretariat and the UCLG Committee on culture received numerous expressions of interest, which finally led to the declarations of interest (31 May 2024) of the cities of Ankara, Balıkesir, Cascais, Edmonton, Jeonju and Heidelberg and to the formal candidature (5 September 2024) from one local government, Jeonju. Jeonju won the competitive process to host the Summit, and it was announced at the UCLG World Council in The Hague in October 2024.

The [Dublin Statement](#) was widely disseminated, as well as the final [report](#) and [video](#), and the [speech](#) delivered by Dublin's Councillor Cat O'Driscoll at the 2023 UCLG Retreat & Campus.

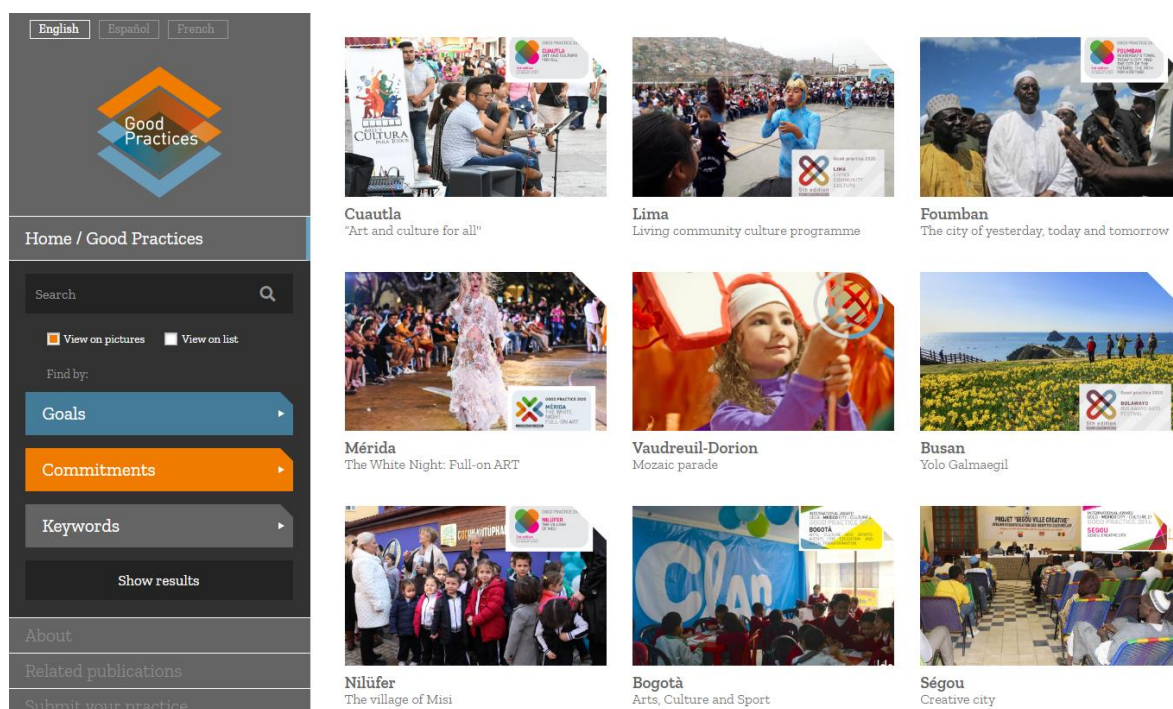


A.3. Database of good practices – the OBS

- To consolidate the dedicated website “OBS” presenting our more than 300 good practices, searchable per 17 SDGs, the 9 Commitments of Culture 21 Actions and 104 keywords, including new good practices coming from the 6th edition of the Award (2024-2025)
- To align the OBS with the #Local4ActionHub.
- To consolidate partnerships (examples: British Council, Metropolis’ USE platform and CHN), to explore a connection with UNESCO Creative Cities Network – UCCN and to analyse possible specific “sponsorship” for the database.

[The OBS](#) is a unique open database of good practices on “Culture in Sustainable Cities”. It is searchable per 17 SDGs, the 9 Commitments of Culture 21 Actions and 105 keywords.

On 31 December 2024, the OBS hosts 365+ good practices from cities and local governments from across the world, available online in English, French and Spanish. In 2024, many new good practices have been added to the database; most of them generated in the frame of the 6th edition of the Award.



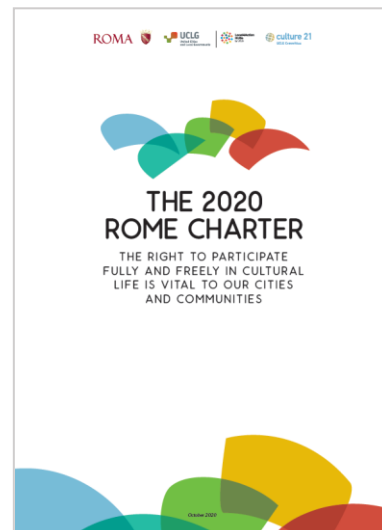
A.4. The Rome Charter

- To promote the Rome Charter and use it as reference for the new frame document, that is, Culture 21 PLUS (working title).

The [Rome Charter](#) was elaborated through a consultation process, and presented in a Hybrid International Conference held in Rome and online in October 2020. The Charter was later approved in November 2020 as an official UCLG document at the World Council, held in Guangzhou and online on 9-13 November 2020.

The Rome Charter has been used as one of the fundamental references in the first draft of Culture 21 PLUS, the new frame document of the Committee, to be approved in 2025.

The Culture 21 Plus - Rome Charter module, to be elaborated alongside other independent modules of Culture 21 Plus, will be based on the Rome Charter and its five cultural capabilities, on the basis of which it is structured: Discover cultural roots; Create cultural expressions; Share cultures and creativity; Enjoy the city's cultural resources and spaces; and Protect the city's common cultural resources. It focuses primarily on the exercise of cultural rights, the recognition of cultural diversity and the fight against discrimination.



B. Advocacy

B.1. UN 2030 Agenda, SDGs and New Urban Agenda

- To ensure a strong presence in the UN Summit of the Future (September 2024).
- To participate in the HLPF (July 2024) in several formats, including the dissemination of the "Culture in the VLRs and VNRs" reports published in 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023 and the "Culture Goal" document launched in 2022 both by the #Culture2030Goal campaign.
- To capitalise on the UNESCO Mondiacult+40 Conference, which took place in Mexico City on 28-30 September 2022, and to promote a strong place for cities and culture in the post-2030 frameworks and development agendas.
- To be visible and active in global initiatives that relate culture and sustainable development.

On 9-10 May 2024, The UCLG Committee on Culture participated in the 2024 Pact for the Future NGO forum, in Nairobi.

#Culture2030Goal side-events:

- In the **High-level Political Forum (HLPF)**, in July 2024, the Committee on Culture co-organised an event with other members of the #Culture2030Goal campaign in order to explore what the world would look like if culture was fully integrated into sustainable development policy: "Centring culture in reinforcing SDG delivery and achieving the goals of the Pact for the Future". The campaign presented its latest Statement, released in June 2024: "[Culture2030Goal Welcomes Progress Made in Mobilising Culture to Achieve Development Goals in Latest Pact for the Future Draft](#)".

On the previous days, the Campaign the campaign worked on a [communication toolkit](#) aiming at promoting messages of the campaign through some of its most active supporters.

- In the framework of the **UN Summit of the Future**, on 20 September 2024, the Committee on Culture and other members of the #Culture2030Goal campaign organised the [side event](#) "No Future Without Culture: Reflecting and Imagining on the Place of Culture in Delivering the Pact for the Future". The Campaign presented the work around a Culture Goal, notably from Mondiacult 2022, including the Zero Draft; celebrated good practice from countries which have already made culture central to their approach to development, and discussed how to act on references to culture in the Pact for the Future.

The Campaign also released the [statement](#): "From Summit to Substance: An Action Plan for Culture to Deliver on the Pact for the Future", in relation to the final version of the UN Pact for the Future. The statement affirms that the UN Pact for the Future (and the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations) does mark a valuable step forwards, although still falls a little shorter than it could have done in raising culture to the same level as other policy areas. The statement proposes a ten-point plan to help achieve this.



FROM SUMMIT TO SUBSTANCE: AN ACTION PLAN FOR CULTURE TO DELIVER ON THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE

SEPTEMBER 2024

On 27 September 2024, the City of Bilbao hosted the [seminar](#) "A Culture Goal in the SDGs: context, actors and challenges" at Askuna Zentroa. The aim of this seminar, co-organized by the UCLG Committee on Culture, was to present the international actions that the Culture 2030 Goal campaign is carrying out to include culture as a Goal in the SDGs, and, in particular, the document "[A Culture Goal](#)" that was presented in Mondiacult.

On 17h October 2024, in Cluj-Napoca (Romania), the UCLG Committee on Culture took part in the [13th Culture Next conference](#), as a member of the Culture 2030 Goal campaign, at the panel discussion: "Culture as SDG in the next UN Agenda". The conference gathered representatives from 50 European cities and the most important cultural networks, together with representatives of the European Commission, local artists, and cultural organisations from Cluj.

In 2024, the global conversation on development continued to evolve in a positive direction, with the [G7 Ministerial Declaration](#) "Culture, common good of humanity, common responsibility", released in September 2024, in which the Ministers for Culture commit to "promote the inclusion of culture as a standalone goal in future discussions on how to advance sustainable development beyond 2030".

B.2. G-20 and U-20

- To promote the presence of culture as a key dimension of sustainable development in the debates generated by these networks.

In September 2024, the Urban 20 Summit was organized in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, Brazil. The UCLG Committee on Culture contributed to the [U20 Communiqué](#) of

the Summit, which was submitted for endorsement to U20 Mayors and subsequently handed to the G20 Presidency in November 2024. The communiqué urged to recognize the role of culture and cultural factors – such as creativity, heritage, diversity and the transmission of knowledge and the establishment of a culture goal in the next global agenda for sustainable development – as essential to deliver a new, inclusive, people-centred, peaceful, and climate-resilient development paradigm.

B.3 Global civil-society networks

- To support the #Culture2030Goal global campaign.
- Work with the Climate Heritage Network and its “Race to Resilience” process, reinforcing the presence in the COPs
- To consolidate an operational connection with the most relevant global civil-society networks in the field of culture, such as ICOMOS, IFLA, IMC, IFCCD and Culture Action Europe.
- To explore new partnerships: UNESCO 2005 Convention Group of Experts or Harvard’s “cultural agents” initiative.

On the Culture 2030 Goal, see below (B.6).

In 2024, UCLG consolidated an operational connection with IFLA (MoU signed in November 2023, in the frame of the UCLG Culture Summit).

In 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture supported CHN members’ work through the [Global Call to Put Cultural Heritage, Arts and Creative Industries at the Heart of Climate Action](#) to secure a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action decision (JWD) at the UN Climate Change Conference - COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. CHN launched a one-year consultation on culture and climate leading designed to lead to the adoption of the first-ever Work Plan on Culture for the UNFCCC (the UN's climate agency) in 2025 at COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

In 2024, the UCLG Culture Committee was involved in the assessment of the [Mayor Adamowicz Award](#), as part of the Jury. This initiative is a partnership between the City of Gdańsk, the European Committee of the Regions, which Mr Adamowicz was a member of, and the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN). Paweł Adamowicz was the long-serving Mayor of the City of Gdańsk when he was murdered in January 2019 whilst carrying out his public duties. The Award represents a strong signal of hope for all elected representatives, officials and ordinary citizens who, despite the risks, live to make democracy work at a local level by supporting better and more open communities.

B.4. Partnerships

- To consolidate long-term partnerships with the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, the UNESCO and the EU.

In 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture has worked with UNESCO on the following issues: (a) the activities related to the UNESCO Network of Creative Cities; (b) the statutory meetings of the 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and (c) the work of UNESCO in the preparation of Mondiacult 2022 (see above). In this frame, the UCLG Committee on Culture was invited to take part in the following high-level events and activities:

- On 15-16 April 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture participated in the International Forum of NGOs in Official Partnership with UNESCO on “Sustainable Cultures: NGOs towards a Culture Goal in the post 2030 Agenda”, in Abidjan.
- In November-December 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture participated in the [UNESCO Regional Consultations](#) towards Mondiacult 2025 (21-22 November 2024, Western Europe and North America States; 9-10 December 2024, Latin America and the Caribbean States; 12 December 2024, Eastern European States).

On 21-22 March 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture participated in an [Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Tourism](#), organised in Bilbao by UN-Habitat, UN-Tourism and UNESCO. Entitled “Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories”, the meeting served to discuss how to improve urban tourism governance and develop best practices for cities. Its conclusions were presented at a [side-event at UN Habitat’s World Urban Forum](#) (WUF12), celebrated on 4-8 November 2024 in El Cairo.

On 2-4 July 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture participated in the meeting of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network held in Braga, and on 19-21 November 2024 the Committee participated in the UNESCO Creative Cities Arabic World meeting in Tetouan.

On 15-16 July and 18-19 July 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture co-organised the Brazzaville Seven Keys and African Capital of Culture, and the Brazzaville Youth Lab and African Capital of Culture, respectively. Also, on 11 December 2024, The UCLG Committee on Culture organised the webinar “The Culture Capitals and the Culture Goal. Working to Boost the Connections between Regional Initiatives and Global Challenges” online. This work is framed within the partnership with the European Union on the “Capitals of Culture Working Together” programme, which connects the several initiatives (European, African, Iberoamerican) among them, and with the global conversation on culture in sustainable development.

On 1 June 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture was invited to participate in the European Development Days (EU DevDays) in Brussels. The event focused on the theme of inequalities, exploring their structural causes and how to address them through more effective policies.

The UCLG Committee on Culture is in close contact with the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights, Alexandra Xanthaki. In 2024, the Committee: (a) disseminated Alexandra Xanthaki’s keynote speech at the Summit held in Dublin (29 November 2023), and (b) contributed to call for input on the right to access and take part in scientific progress.



B.5. City networks

- To consolidate an operational connection with all global / regional networks concerned by “culture in sustainable cities”, including WCCF, Eurocities, ICLEI, GPM, World Heritage Cities - OWHC, or European Network of Cultural Centres ENCC and Ibercultura Viva, as well as INTACH, CDN and LAV.

The Committee’s interest in placing culture in any international debate on sustainable development, especially in relation to the SDGs, involves a close cooperation with networks:

- The partnership with Culture Action Europe (CAE) successfully continues on the Pilot Cities programme and within the #Culture2030Goal campaign.
- The partnerships with the Cultural Development Network (CDN) and Les Arts et la Ville (LAV) have MoUs, signed in 2019; the implementation is ongoing.
- Cooperation with INTACH is ongoing.
- Cooperation with World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF) and Eurocities is ongoing.
- Cooperation with ICORN is ongoing.

B.6. Towards a Culture Goal

- To continue the work to achieve a Culture Goal in the post-2030 Development Agenda, with the #Culture2030Goal campaign; possibly with a v2 of the Culture Goal proposal.
- To circulate and consolidate the “Culture Goal” proposal among partners, members, experts and all relevant possible contributors; possibly with national seminars in key cities.

The [global campaign #Culture2030Goal](#) is composed by the Arterial Network, Culture Action Europe (CAE), the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity

(IFCCD), the International Music Council (IMC), the International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Federation of Libraries and Library Associations (IFLA) and the UCLG Committee on Culture. The campaign is the continuation of the #Culture2015goal campaign, active in 2013-2015. In 2021, the campaign had released a "Strategy document" which includes clear wording on the need of a Culture Goal in the SDGs and the need of a Global Culture Forum. In 2022 the campaign released a "[zero-draft](#)" of the Culture Goal in the frame of Mondiacult (Mexico City) on 27 September 2022. In 2023, the campaign launched the Statement "Commitment to an explicit Culture Goal in Mondiacult Declaration welcome: Now is the Time to Deliver."

- On 23 January 2024, the Committee on Culture and other members of the #Culture2030Goal campaign organised the [webinar](#) "Looking Ahead Culture in Sustainable Development in 2024 and Beyond" with the aim of sharing the background and the achievements of the campaign, and opening a conversation with key partners and all global cultural networks. The workshop gathered key partners to think together about the next steps, including the UN Summit of the Future (September 2024), the road towards a "Culture Goal" as well as the ongoing efforts to include "culture in delivering across the SDGs".
- On 2 February 2024, the campaign published the statement "[No Future Without Culture](#)". In the statement, the campaign calls out neglect of culture in the Pact for the Future zero draft and invites UN member states to add specific wording.
- On 16 April 2024, the Committee on Culture and other members of the #Culture2030Goal campaign participated in the event "Our Goal – Culture in the post-2030 Agenda, in the frame of the "Sustainable Futures Conference – NGOs in partnership with UNESCO".
- In July 2024 the campaign published the statement "[The Missing Goal: Culture2030Goal urges strong and clear recognition of Culture in the Pact for the Future](#)". The statement affirms that the latest revision of the UN Pact for the Future makes welcome references to the need to integrate culture into development policies, but risks perpetuating the status quo by failing to underline the need for a standalone Culture Goal.
- The campaign also published the 2024 edition of the "Culture2030Goal Campaign's review of the place of culture in the Voluntary National Reviews submitted by UN Member States" for the year's High-Level Political Forum. The [report](#), coordinated by IFLA, provides an overview on how far and how culture is being integrated into national efforts to deliver on the UN 2030 Agenda, and it offers helpful evidence for a future revision of the Culture Goal, both in setting out the potential relevance of the targets in place, but also useful nuances to be taken into account in future.



C. Monitoring and follow-up

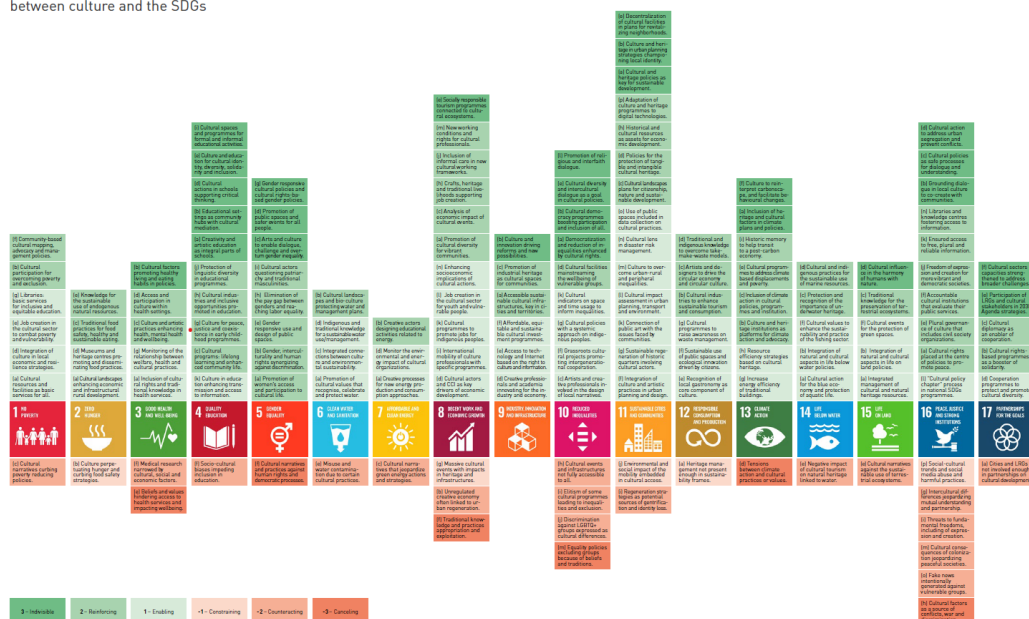
C.1. Key narrative

- To be self-critical and analyse weak / strong points of the narrative and methodologies.
- To disseminate the UCLG Pact for the Future published in October 2022.
- To elaborate key briefings / new research on issues related to culture and sustainable cities, for example (a) the relation culture-migration, (b) the cultural dimension of metropolitan policies, or (c) "Culture in the implementation of the SDGs: synergies (positive interactions) and trade-offs (negative interactions)"
- To explore the elaboration of the 2nd part of the Report on Culture, cities and the COVID-19 pandemic
- To consider a new Cultural Rights-based frame document for 2024-25 ("launch 2023" in Mexico City).

In 2023, the Committee on Culture published the report "[A Cultural Boost in the implementation of the SDGs](#)" which includes synergies (positive interactions) and trade-offs (negative interactions) between cultural policies, programmes and actions and the achievement of the SDGs. The report was launched in the frame of the HLPF, in July 2023. The report was informed by [the Izmir Declaration](#) (2023) and the [Rome Charter on the Right to Participate Fully and Freely in Cultural Life](#), which had been approved in November 2020.

In 2024, the Committee on Culture shared and disseminated the report and the graphic analysis of interactions between culture and the SDGs, through workshops, webinars and the Committee's communication channels.

Evidencing the potential of culture.
An analysis of the interactions between culture and the SDGs



The new frame document of the Committee on Culture on Cultural Rights and Sustainable Development will be approved in 2025, and has "[Culture 21 Plus](#)" as working name. It will include a series of areas and actions that explore the connections between culture, cultural rights, care, sustainability and the transitions. A first draft was published in July 2023 and outlines 6 blocks, with 30 key areas and 200 actions. It is useful (1) to carry out a self-assessment of the state of play of the cultural policies of a territory; and (2) to design local cultural strategies based on cultural rights and sustainability.

The draft is being "tested", in a process of experimentation, debate and shared cocreation with UCLG members, until its adoption in 2025. In 2023, tests took place in: Jinju (Republic of Korea), July 2023; Mexico City (Mexico), September 2023; and Lisbon (Portugal), November 2023. And workshops about the draft were held at the UCLG Culture Summit in Dublin (28 November – 1 December 2023).

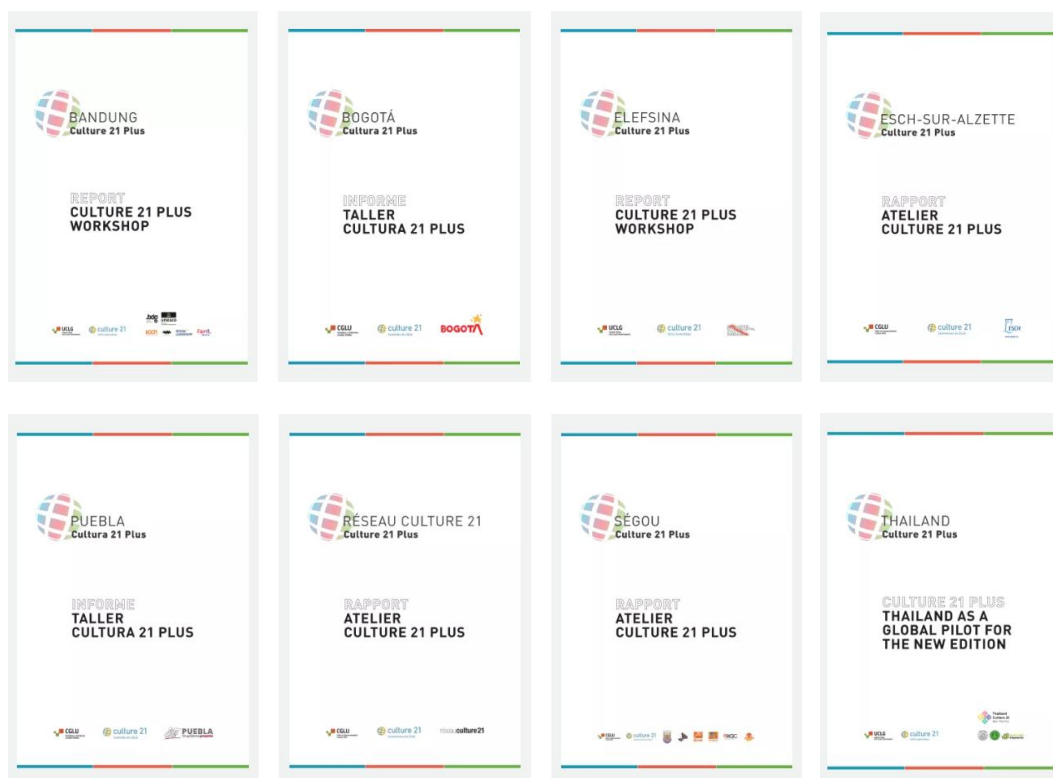


In February 2024, based on the tests in cities and contributions, a second draft and call of expressions to test the toolkit Culture 21 Plus worldwide was released.

New tests took place in:

- [Elefsina](#), March 2024
- [Esch-sur-Alzette](#), May 2024
- [Puebla](#), July 2024
- [Thailand](#), August 2024
- [Ségou](#), September 2024
- [Bandung](#), September 2024
- [Bogotá](#), November 2024
- [Paris](#), October 2024, Autumn University of [FNADAC](#), with the support of Réseau Culture 21.

The reports of the workshops organized on those occasions are available [here](#).



A presentation on the draft Culture 21 Plus was held as well in:

- Cluj-Napoca, at the [13th Culture Next Conference](#), organised on 16-18 Oct 2024.

On 5 June 2024, the Committee on Culture of UCLG organised 3 [webinars](#) "Culture 21 Plus. Testing a new guide for Cultural Rights and Cities", in English, French and Spanish. The webinars, attended by members and experts, served to discuss and receive inputs on the participatory process of [Culture 21 Plus](#). A report with the main results was published and is available [here](#).



C.2 Communication

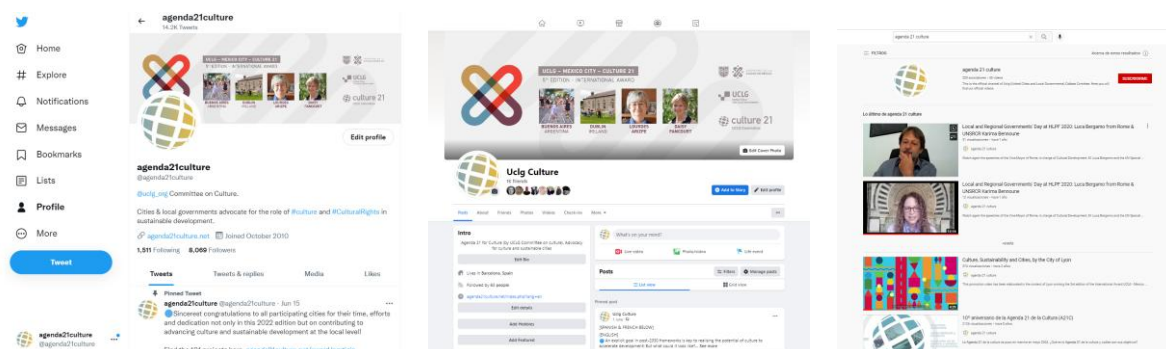
- To improve the website as a true portal to knowledge on "culture in sustainable cities".
- To consolidate the existing work on social media (X, FB, Flickr, Instagram, Youtube) and explore presence in new social media (LinkedIn).

- To continue publishing the Info twice a month, and the biennial Culture 21 Review (4th edition 2020-2021, and 5th edition 2022-2023 published in late 2023).
- To align the communication programmes with the #Local4ActionHub
- To continue supporting UCLG major initiatives and activities towards our networks and audiences.

The [website](#) continues to be the key reference for “culture in sustainable cities”. Within the main site, a dedicated web page is available for each one of the [Leading](#) and [Pilot](#) Cities, for those participating in the [Culture 21 Lab](#) and the [Seven Keys](#) programmes, and for the cities that are very active with the activities of the Committee. The website also includes a web page to monitor the [Culture 21 Plus](#) process, with tests in cities worldwide.

A [newsletter](#) is sent every two weeks to our partners, friends and all people interested in our work. In 2024, 25 newsletters were sent.

The interaction with some of the cities and partners is constant on [X](#), [Youtube](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).



C.3. Governance

- To ensure the full involvement of all members of the Governance Team in the leadership of the Committee.
- To invite new cities to become active in the Committee.

The 21st [meeting](#) of the Culture Committee of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) was held online on 8 May 2024, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Agenda 21 for Culture. The meeting took place after the webinar celebrating: “[20 Years of Agenda 21 for Culture](#)”.

The meeting presented the status of the Committee’s 2024 work plan and its implementation. It focused on the 5th UCLG Culture Summit in Dublin, the 6th edition of the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21 and its Award Ceremony, the new toolkit “Culture 21 Plus” and the workshops to test this new frame, as well as the work towards achieving a standalone Culture Goal led by the #Culture2030Goal campaign.

The meeting also discussed and decided upon some changes in the Governance team of the Committee: Porto Alegre and Rome left, and Brazzaville was welcomed as new vice-president. The list of members of the Committee is available on [our website](#).

C.4. Budget

- To consolidate a balanced budget.

The Committee has consolidated a balanced budget. The Committee's learning programmes that have taken place since 2015, as well as the five editions of the Award and the five editions of the Culture Summit, are part of the activities of the UCLG World Secretariat. The contributions of the Co-presidencies are fundamental, as well as those from the Leading and Pilot Cities programmes, and Seven Keys and Culture 21 Plus workshops.

D. Learning

D.1. The Seven Keys

- To consolidate the capacity-building programme "Seven Keys" on culture in the SDGs, in close cooperation with UCLG Sections and UCLG partners.

The [Seven Keys](#) is a programme for cities and territories, prepared during 2019 and launched in 2020. It aims at the explicit integration of the cultural dimension in the localisation of the SDGs. The workshop relates municipal challenges with cultural assets, activities, and policies with the lenses of the [Guide for Local Action on Culture in the SDGs](#) and [the OBS](#). The participants discuss until reaching a manageable number of "Keys" (ideally, seven) that they can commit to localising the SDGs through culture policymaking. The most essential and concrete objective of the programme is that the seven keys are locally identified: each city / territory will have their own seven keys.

In 2023, the Committee published the report ["Localising the SDGs with a Cultural Perspective. Initial results of the Seven Keys programme"](#) that summarises the workshops implemented in Bulawayo, Burgos, Concepción, Izmir, Lilongwe, Lisbon, el Puerto de la Cruz, Saint-Louis, Yoff and Xi'an.





In July 2024, a Seven Keys workshop was organized in Brazzaville, in the context of the African Capitals of Culture programme.

The report of the workshop is available [here](#).

D.2. Leading Cities

- To consolidate the Leading Cities as a prestigious label that recognises the work of the most advanced cities in specific areas, with contents adapted to each city.

The programme of [Leading Cities](#) is open for UCLG members that have the expertise and the experience to implement local actions that explicitly contribute to the global conversation on culture and sustainable development. Some of the highlights of our work in 2024 are the following:

- Support to **Mexico City** in raising local awareness on culture in the SDGs, including the organisation of the Ceremony of the UCLG - Mexico City - Culture 21 International Award and the International Seminar 'Cultural Innovation and Prospective for Cities and Territories' in Mexico City.
- Support to **Bogotá** in the organisation of a Culture 21 Plus workshop, in the context of the [International Seminar](#) "Cultura Iberoamericana".
- Support to **Barcelona** in the organisation of a [peer learning visit](#) (with the cities of Lisbon, Vaudreuil-Dorion and Rio de Janeiro) in the context of the previous research on Cultural heritage and mediation", which included a report on the "State of the art and new perspectives on cultural mediation Barcelona".
- Support to **Lisbon** in raising local awareness on culture in the SDGs and disseminating the results of the Culture 21 PLUS workshop.
- Support to **Bilbao** in the organisation of the [Seminar](#) "A Culture Goal in the SDGs: Context, Actors and Challenges".
- Support to **Jinju** in the organisation of a [Leading Cities workshop](#) in Jinju.
- Support to **Esch-sur-Alzette** in the organisation of a [Culture 21 Plus workshop](#).
- Support to **Strasbourg** in the organisation of a [peer learning visit](#) on "How can culture be a vector for social and societal transformation", including SDG 18.

D.3. Pilot Cities and Culture 21 LAB

- To promote the Culture 21 Lab workshop as the entrance to local cultural policies and sustainable development.
- To evaluate and analyse the next steps of the Pilot Cities programme.

The programmes [Pilot Cities](#) and [Culture 21 Lab](#) are open for UCLG members that wish to begin the relation between cultural policies and sustainable development. Some of the highlights of our work in 2024 are the following:

- Organisation of a peer-Learning visit of **Baie Mahault** to Strasbourg.
- Ongoing contact with **Santo André**.
- Ongoing contact with **Vaudreuil-Dorion**.
- Organisation of a Culture 21 Plus workshop in **Elefsina**, including a report comparing the results of the previous Culture 21 Actions' workshop.

D.4. Online seminars

- To participate in a wide number of online seminars, webinars, and meetings on the role of culture in people-centred sustainable development.

In 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture was involved in around 20 different online seminars, webinars and meetings.

D.5. Peer-learning and capacity-building

- To facilitate more peer-learning exchanges among cities and local and regional governments.
- To consolidate a group of experts that work with the learning and capacity-building programmes.
- To promote and disseminate the MOOCs designed in 2022 on culture and climate resilient development and culture and gender equality.
- To explore specific webinars / MOOCs on the Rome Charter and cultural rights, with the UCLG Learning team.
- To design and implement specific learning activities with local government associations and key regional or national civil society networks on cultural policies, in close cooperation with UCLG Sections.
- To widely promote the practical toolkit "Culture 21 Actions" and the self-assessment Guide.

In 2024, the Secretariat of the UCLG Culture Committee has analysed all the activities undertaken under the lens of peer-learning exchanges, in order to multiply the opportunities for online and physical discussion among members and partners.

In 2024, the Secretariat of the UCLG Committee on Culture together with the Learning Team of UCLG organised a webinar to promote the MOOCs among new cities and local or regional governments of the network.

D.6. Seminars and events

- To actively take part in initiatives organised by our members and partners, such as the Global Young Creatives Residencies of Jeju, or the Creative Mobilities seminar.

The [Climate Heritage Network](#) (CHN) is a mutual support network of city, state/provincial, regional and tribal culture, heritage and historic preservation offices (together with related NGOs, universities and other organisations). In 2024, the CHN launched a one-year consultation on culture and climate leading designed to lead to the adoption of the first-ever Work Plan on Culture for the UNFCCC (the UN's climate agency) in 2025 at COP30 in Belém, Brazil. The CHN also launched the Global Call to Put Cultural Heritage, Arts and Creative Industries at the Heart of Climate Action to secure a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action decision (JWD) at the UN Climate Change

Conference - COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The [Global Youth Creative Residency \(GYCR\)](#) is a process and an event that relates culture to the sustainable development of Jeju. It is hosted by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, organised by UNITAR CIFAL Jeju / Jeju International Training Center, and supported by the Committee on Culture of UCLG.



The 6th edition of the GYCR took place from 25 - 29 September, 2024 in Jeju Island. Entitled "Rooted, Growing Island", the Residency brought together young cultural and artistic experts from around the world in Jeju to collectively explore the intersection between the arts and sustainability for the present and future.

Bogotá organizes the [International Ibero-American Cultural Action](#) to strengthen ties and exchange experiences with other cities. In 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture participated in the official launch of this initiative, the seminar 'Ibero-American Culture: Conversations from Bogotá,' which was held on 5 and 6 November and featured the participation of experts such as Néstor García Canclini, Alfons Martinell, Aura Cifuentes, and representatives from Mexico City (Ana Francis Mor, Secretary of Culture), and Rio de Janeiro (Cintia Monsores, Secretariat of Culture), among others.

E. Strengthening the UCLG network

E.1. Within UCLG

- To actively disseminate and promote the UCLG Pact for the Future, for the People, for the Planet, for the governments.
- To actively participate in the annual Retreat, the Executive Bureau and the World Council, as well as to contribute to UCLG Policy Councils.
- To support all UCLG World Secretariat initiatives, including the Town Halls and the Policy Councils (especially the one on "Opportunities for All, Culture and City Diplomacy").
- To actively participate in the Global Taskforce, and to strengthen its role in the current global debates on culture and sustainable development, building among others on its contribution to Mondiacult+40.
- Support the Charter-Agenda on Human Rights in the City, whose renewal process is coordinated by the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Human Rights and Participatory Democracy.

In 2024, the UCLG Committee on Culture has widely supported and contributed to the unfolding of the UCLG Pact for the Future, for the People, for the Planet, for the governments.

The UCLG Committee on Culture supports UCLG's activities and teams (Statutory, Policy, Research, Learning and Communication) on a permanent basis. On January, the Committee contributed to the UCLG Future Envisioning Exercise on the Building Blocks of Peace, and to the UCLG Cities for Peace event in June. In February, at the annual UCLG Retreat & Campus in Barcelona, the work of the Committee was presented, with emphasis in the International Award UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21. The Committee was also active at the UCLG Executive Bureau, celebrated in April in San José de Costa Rica, and at the UCLG World Council, celebrated in October in The Hague.

E.2. UCLG sections

- To guarantee new areas of cooperation, with joint (advocacy and “on-the-ground”) specific projects with all UCLG Sections.
- To hold periodical meetings with UCLG Sections (especially important for those sections with an active Culture Committee)

The UCLG Committee on Culture is in close contact with UCLG sections on the implementation of Culture 21 Actions in Africa, MEWA, Eurasia, Asia-Pacific and Europe; ideally specific programmes in partnership with each one of these UCLG Sections could be implemented (see above).

Moreover, specific contacts exist with UCLG-MEWA (on the activities of its Committee devoted to Culture and Tourism), with UCLG-ASPAC (on the organisation of Jeju’s GYCR and on the activities of its Committee on Culture and Tourism) and UCLG-Africa (partnerships on the African Capital of Culture programme).

2. LEARNING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

Following the adoption of [Culture 21 Actions](#) in 2015, the UCLG Committee on Culture has established a set of capacity-building and peer-learning programmes. In particular, a wide range of cities in different world regions are currently participating in the following programmes:

- **Pilot Cities** is a learning programme based on the 9 commitments and 100 actions included in Culture 21 Actions. Lasting for approximately 30 months, it includes local awareness-raising, international peer-review, capacity-building, pilot local projects, public seminars and elaboration of good practices. As of December 2024, the Pilot Cities programme has been developed in Baie Mahault, Chignahuapan, Concepción, Córdoba, Cuenca, Elefsina, Escazú, Esch-sur-Alzette, Gabrovo, Galway, Jinju, Konya, La Paz, Leeds, Mérida, Muriaé, Namur, Nova Gorica, Santa Fe, Sinaloa, Swansea, the island of Tenerife, Terrassa and Timisoara.
- The **Leading Cities** programme gives support to cities that have experience in the implementation of culture and sustainability, through measures in the areas of Cooperation and Learning (technical assistance, capacity-building, good practices), Leadership and Advocacy (participation in international events and processes) and Communication (website, social media). As of December 2024, the Leading Cities programme includes Abitibi-Temiscamingue, Barcelona, Bilbao, Belo Horizonte, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Concepción, Esch-sur-Alzette, Izmir, Jeju, Jinju, Lisbon, Malmö, Mexico City, Porto Alegre, Rome, Vaudreuil-Dorion and Washington DC.
- **Culture 21 Lab** is a short workshop on "Culture in Sustainable Cities". It enables cities to self-evaluate their work in this field. It provides key basic information on the place of culture in sustainable development, and it is a useful way to raise awareness of this field among local stakeholders. As of December 2024, the programme has been completed in Greater Dandenong, Kaunas, Makati, Santo André and Sant Cugat del Vallès.
- **The Seven Keys** is a workshop to integrate the cultural dimension in the localisation of the SDGs. Participants learn the cultural relevance of the SDGs, share knowledge and agree on a concrete list of achievable actions, the local "Seven Keys", that will contribute significantly to the localisation of the SDGs through culture policymaking. As of December 2024, the programme has been developed in Brazzaville, Bulawayo, Burgos, Concepción, Izmir, Lilongwe, Lisbon, el Puerto de la Cruz, Saint-Louis, Xi'an and Yoff.

The Committee on Culture of UCLG also works with other cities, local and regional governments and the UCLG regional sections in order to tailor specific capacity-building and peer-learning programmes to their needs.

Detailed information on these programmes is available on our website and upon request.

3. AGENDA in 2024

18 January 2024, online

UCLG Future Envisioning Exercise on the Building Blocks of Peace.

23 January 2024, online

#Culture2030Goal Webinar "Looking ahead: Culture in Sustainable Development in 2024 and Beyond".

19-23 February 2024, Barcelona

UCLG Annual Retreat & Campus.

19 March 2024, Mons

Mayor Adamowicz Award.

21-22 March 2024, Bilbao

Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable tourism, organised in Bilbao by UN-Habitat, UN-Tourism and UNESCO.

15-16 April 2024, Abidjan

International Forum of NGOs in Official Partnership with UNESCO on "Sustainable Cultures: NGOs towards a Culture Goal in the post 2030 Agenda"

18-19 April 2024, San José de Costa Rica

UCLG Executive Bureau.

8 May 2024, online

Webinar that celebrates 20 years of the Agenda 21 for Culture.

9-10 May 2024, Nairobi

The 2024 UN Civil Society Conference

15-17 May 2024, Helsinki

LIVIND Final event

29 May – 1 June 2024, Malmö

Culture Action Europe Beyond the Obvious Conference.

29-31 May 2024, Copenhagen

ICORN Conference.

June 2024, Brussels

European Development Days (EU DevDays).

June 2024

UCLG Cities for Peace.

2-4 July 2024, Braga

UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

July 2024, New York

UN HLPF – United Nations High Level Political Forum.

15-16 July 2024, Brazzaville

Brazzaville Seven Keys and African Capital of Culture.

18-19 July 2024, Brazzaville

Brazzaville Youth Lab and African Capital of Culture.

30 August 2024, Online

Thailand Culture 21 Best Practice.

12 and 19 September 2024, Ségou and online

Culture 21 Plus Workshop.

13 September 2024, Bandung and online

Culture 21 Plus Workshop.

19-23 September 2024, New York

United Nations Summit of the Future, side event “No Future Without Culture”.

27 September 2024, Bilbao

Seminar "A Culture Goal in the SDGs: context, actors and challenges”.

September 2024

Urban 20 Summit.

8-11 October, The Hague

UCLG World Council.

14-16 October 2024, Strasbourg

Peer learning on culture and social inclusion and also SDG18.

16-18 October 2024, Cluj-Napoca

13th Culture Next Conference - Presentation of Culture 21 Plus.

17 October, Paris

FNADAC - Presentation of Culture 21 Plus.

30 October – 1 November 2024, Dubai

WCCF Congress.

5-7 November 2024, Bogotá

Seminar Culture 21 Plus and Acción Iberoamericana.

4-8 November 2024, Cairo

UN Habitat’s World Urban Forum (WUF 12).

19-21 November 2024, Tetouan

Meeting UNESCO Creative Cities Arabic World.

26-28 November 2024, Barcelona

Peer-learning on cultural mediation.

November 2024, Baku

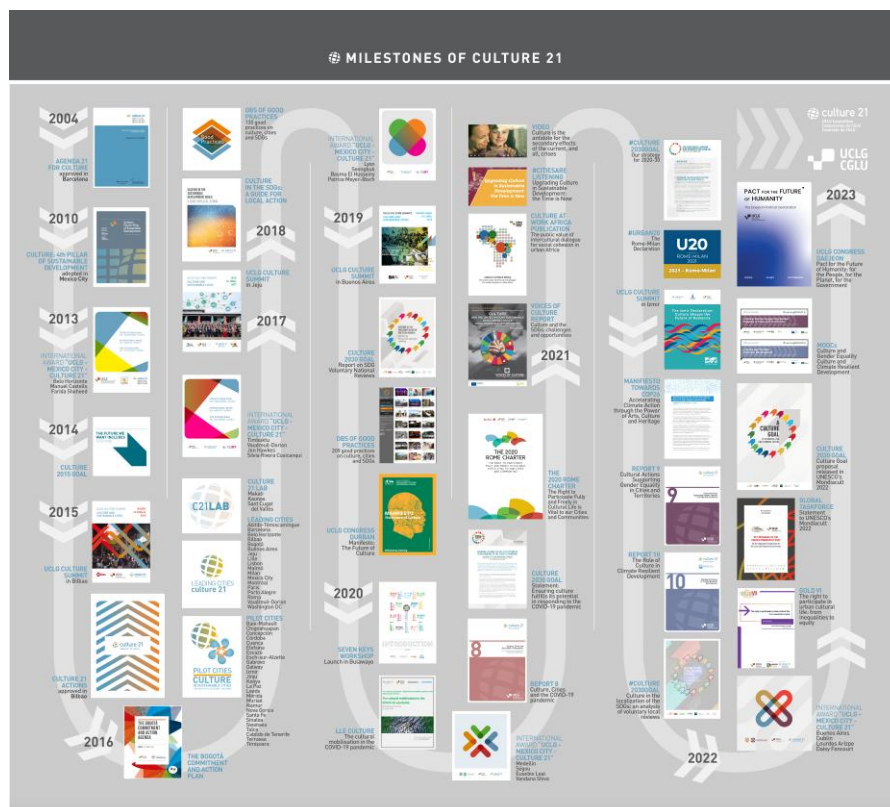
UN Climate Change Conference – COP29.

11 December 2024, Online

Webinar “Culture Capitals for a Culture Goal”.

A list of all events organised by the UCLG Committee on Culture since 2004 is available in [this page](#).

4. CULTURE IN UCLG: BACKGROUND



The mission of the world association of [United Cities and Local Governments – UCLG](#) is to be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests, through **cooperation between local governments**, and within the wider international community.

- UCLG has played an important role since 2004 in promoting the role of culture in sustainable cities:
- In 2004, UCLG adopted the [Agenda 21 for culture](#), a declaration with 67 articles that describes the relationship between local cultural policies and human rights, governance, sustainable development, participatory democracy and peace. In 2015, UCLG approved [Culture 21 Actions](#), a toolkit with 9 Commitments and 100 Actions: it is the most complete and practical document on the relation between culture and sustainable development in cities and allows self-evaluation, policy innovation and peer-learning.
- In 2010, the Executive Bureau of UCLG approved the document ["Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development"](#) in its World Congress held in Mexico City. This document engages local governments to explicitly include culture in a development model that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.
- Since March 2013, UCLG's role as facilitator of the [Global Taskforce](#) has included Culture in local and regional governments' inputs to the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. The [Statement of the 2nd](#)

[World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments](#) resulting from this work, adopted in Quito in October 2016, establishes a commitment to 'Integrate culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development and take action to foster heritage, creativity, diversity and peaceful co-existence'. In 2022, the GTF adopted a [Statement](#) calling UNESCO's Mondiacult global conference on cultural policies to call for a dedicated Culture Goal in post-2030 global development agendas.

- The document "[Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals. A Guide for Local Action](#)", published by UCLG in 2018, presents information on each one of the 17 Goals, helps to understand why cultural issues are important and provides relevant examples.
- The [OBS](#). The Committee has developed a database containing almost 300 good practices on culture and sustainable development. The tool allows searches according to 3 criteria: the SDG, the Commitments of Culture 21 Actions, and keywords.
- The [#Culture2030Goal campaign](#) includes global cultural networks. It advocates for a stronger place for culture throughout the current global development agenda (the UN 2030 Agenda), and for the adoption of culture as a stand-alone goal in the post-2030 development agenda. In 2022, the campaign launched a concrete proposal for the Goal.
- The 6th UCLG World Congress, held in Durban in November 2019, adopted the manifesto "[The Future of Culture](#)". It defends a fair cultural globalisation, based on the full exercise of cultural rights by peoples, communities, and individuals. It promotes cultural policies at a local, national and global scale to be explicit and operational.
- The [UCLG Presidency Decalogue for the COVID-19 aftermath](#), launched on 22 April 2020, identifies culture as one of the key priorities to guide the advocacy of UCLG in the coming years, as an "antidote for the secondary effects" of the crisis.
- The [2020 Rome Charter](#) was adopted by the UCLG World Council in November 2020 as a contribution to the global conversation on culture and development. The Charter describes the right to participate "fully and freely" in cultural life as vital to cities and communities, and promotes the cultural capabilities: Discover, Create, Share, Enjoy and Protect.
- The [Culture Goal proposal](#) was launched by the #Culture2030Goal campaign in Mondiacult, UNESCO's global conference on cultural policies, held in Mexico City in September 2022. The necessity of a Culture Goal for post-2030 sustainable development agendas was recognised and included in the Mondiacult final declaration.
- The [UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity: for the People, for the Planet, for the Government](#), was adopted by the UCLG World Congress celebrated in October 2022 in Daejeon (Republic of Korea), as a key contribution towards the UN SDG Summit, held in 2023, and the UN Summit for the Future, held in 2024. The Pact embeds local and regional governments visions and aspirations and serve as the strategic vision for the World Organization in the coming years. It promotes a sustainable local development based on communities and cultural rights, and advocates for cultural policies at a local, national and global scale to be explicit and operational.



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