

CULTURE 21 LAB SUMMARY

REVIEW OF KAUNAS' CULTURE 21: ACTIONS SELF-ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 2018

This report has been prepared by Ivor Davies, policy expert appointed by the UCLG Committee on Culture, and builds on detailed notes and observations by a wide range of local actors in the Municipality from cultural and related fields.

On Wednesday 19 September 2018, the City of Kaunas carried out a “Culture 21 Lab”, a one-day self-assessment workshop, reviewing its policies and actions in the broad area of culture and sustainable development. The framework for this self-assessment was Culture 21 Actions, a document adopted in March 2015 by the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Culture 21 Actions is a common toolkit for cities and local governments areas across Europe and worldwide, to examine their strengths and weaknesses in this regard. It also provides a common framework by which cities and other local government may compare their own assessment with both other cities self-assessment outcomes, and with the ‘benchmark’ provided in mid-2015 by a global panel of 34 experts.



C21LAB



CULTURE 21 LAB. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS

- » To foster **local learning** on how culture plays a role in the promotion of sustainable cities.
- » To **obtain a complete analysis**, obtained through participation, on where Kaunas stands as regards the integration of culture in its approach to sustainable development.
- » To **identify good practices and lessons** learned in Kaunas that could be relevant to other cities.



CULTURE 21 COMMITMENTS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT APPROACH

The Culture 21 Self- Assessment exercise involves a detailed scoring sheet, organized around nine themes or 'Commitments', each of which translates into an average of 10 to 12 'Actions'. The Commitments are:

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1. **Cultural rights**
 2. **Heritage, diversity, and creativity**
 3. **Culture and education**
 4. **Culture and environment**
 5. **Culture and economy**
 6. **Culture, equality, and social inclusion**
 7. **Culture, urban planning, and public space**
 8. **Culture, information, and knowledge**
 9. **Governance of culture**

Discussions were structured around the nine Culture 21 Commitments, and participants were asked to score each individual Action as 'emerging' (1 to 3 points), 'developing' (4 to 6) or 'advanced' stage (7 to 9). At the end of each session, participants were asked to identify 'good practices' and 'measures to address weaknesses'.



CULTURE 21 LAB, CULTURAL STRATEGY AND KAUNAS 2022

The workshop was based on a well established, broadly self-contained, framework of local self-analysis on the basis of the strong interconnections between the **Culture 21 Actions** toolkit, the Strategic Development Plan: 2015-2022, the Culture Strategy and Kaunas 2022 (European Capital of Culture), via its bid book. It is an obvious, but important point to underline that all of these central strategic pathways for the city connect back directly to the same city and district, the same peoples, local cultures, histories, challenges and opportunities.

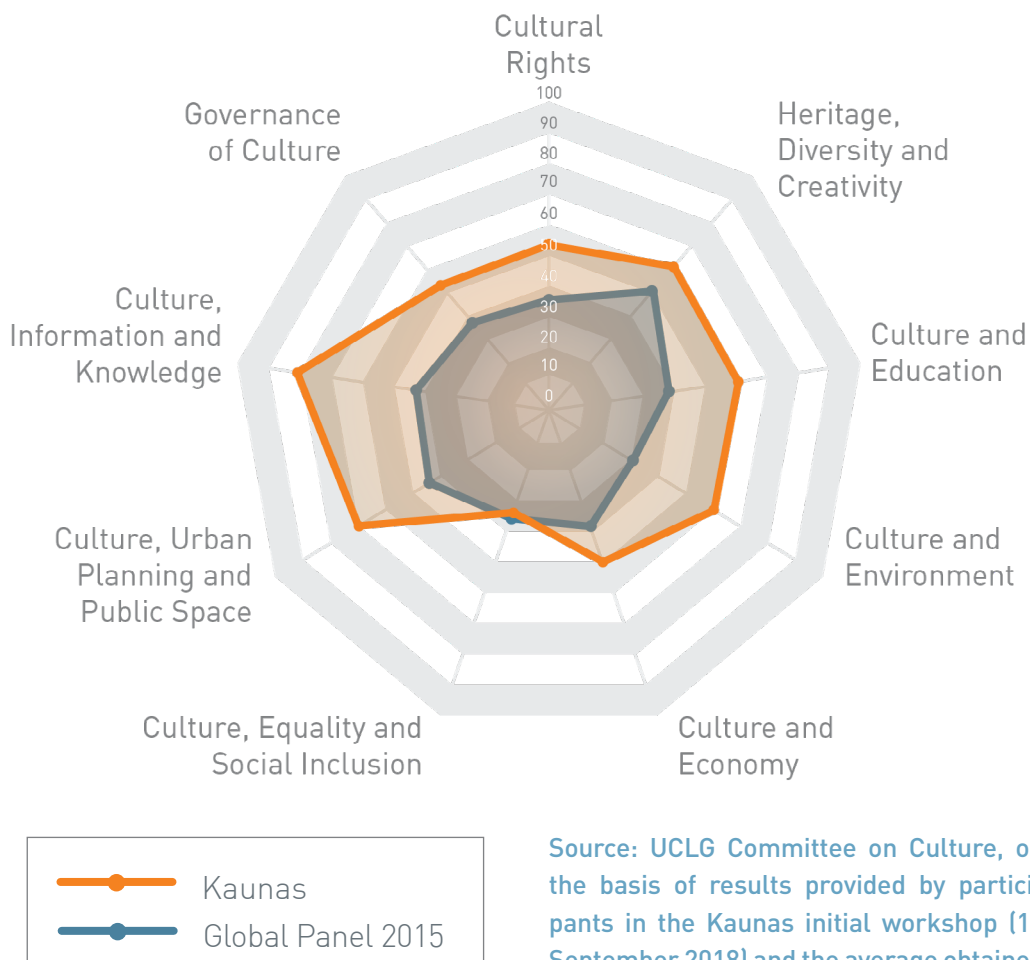
The structure of the workshop was informed by the published **Terms of Reference of the Culture 21 Lab** of United Cities and Local Government (UCLG). It brought together a diverse group of 54 participants: representatives of different areas of the municipality, members of civil society, education and private organisations. The participants in the workshop examined and assessed the current status in Kaunas with regard to each of the nine 'Commitments' (thematic areas) that constitute Culture 21 Actions. They subsequently attributed a score to each of the 100 Actions contained within these areas. Scores range between 1 and 9, and are ranked within three broad stages of progression: '*Emerging*' (scores 1-3), '*Developing*' (scores 4-6) and '*Advanced*' (scores 7-9).

The workshop was initiated and co-ordinated by Ms Virginija Vitkienė, Director of Kaunas 2022, under the aegis of the Municipality of Kaunas, and introduced by Ms Ina Pukelytė, Head of Culture and Education Committee at Kaunas Municipality. It was facilitated by Ivor Davies, Lead Expert on behalf of Agenda 21 for Culture, Jordi Pascual, on behalf of the UCLG Culture Committee and Ed Carroll, an independent artist and policy advisor based in Kaunas.

The workshop session was preceded and informed by a number of visits arranged during these few days for Ivor Davies, and facilitated by Virginija Vitkienė, Ed Carroll and several members of both Kaunas 2022 and Kaunas Biennial. Here we were able to explore the richness and complexities of a first experience of the cultural, historical and physical context of Kaunas and, in particular, connections with the principles of Agenda 21 for culture.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF OUTCOMES

As shown in Figure 1, the self-assessment results in Kaunas present a picture of Culture 21 Actions that broadly exceeds (at times quite considerably) the Global Panel Radar 1 average. These comparisons can be read along each axis of the diagram that radiates out from the centre, in relation to a particular Action. One can infer from this that the overall picture for Kaunas was broadly positive, but with some marked divergences between individual Commitment scores. The highest scores (both in real terms and in relation to the Global Panel scores) were attributed to: 'Culture, Information and Knowledge' and 'Culture, Urban Planning and Public Space'; however 'Cultural Rights', 'Culture, Equality and Social Inclusion' and 'Governance of Culture' scored a little lower in real terms. Interestingly, of these only 'Culture, Equality and Social Inclusion' failed to score higher than the Global Panel scores.



Source: UCLG Committee on Culture, on the basis of results provided by participants in the Kaunas initial workshop (19 September 2018) and the average obtained from a global panel of 34 experts in 2015.



CONCLUSION

The full report of the Culture 21 Lab is published in English and in Lithuanian. It explains:

- | The main results for each one of the nine commitments
- | The preliminary recommendations for Kaunas to progress in the place of cultural factors and actors in the long-term development of the city
- | Examples of good practice that Kaunas can suggest to the UCLG Committee on Culture database on Culture in Sustainable Cities.

As Ivor Davies, Lead Expert of the workshop writes in his report, “*there appeared to be a genuine appreciation from all sides that conversations of this kind provide an important opportunity to share a common space, to think and plan horizontally, and that further progress will be made if new horizontal processes are developed and sustained*”.



CONTACTS

For additional information about this exercise, please contact:



Municipality of Kaunas

Dr Virginija Vitkienė, Director of Kaunas 2022

Email: org@kaunas2022.eu

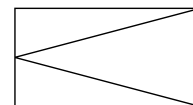
Web: www.kaunas2022.eu / www.kaunas.lt



United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) - Committee on Culture

Email: info@agenda21culture.net

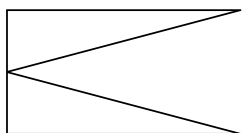
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