



ROME

Leading City • culture 21

Leading city of the Agenda 21 for culture
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

**ROME DEVELOPS THE
RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE CULTURAL LIFE
OF THE CITY**

SUMMARY

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CHAPTER 1. Background

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), in the context of its goal to foster the implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture and Culture 21 Actions, implements a Leading Cities programme, aimed to support experienced cities and regions through activities in the fields of leadership, advocacy, communication, learning and cooperation. “Leading Cities” are those with experience in the implementation of the Agenda 21 for culture and possessing solid conceptual and practical experience as regards the place of culture in sustainable cities. As a result, they become leaders in the implementation of Culture 21 Actions and the advocacy activities of the Committee on Culture of UCLG. “Leading Cities” receive support from the Secretariat of the Committee on Culture of UCLG in the following domains: “Leadership and Advocacy”, “Communication” and “Cooperation and Learning”.

The Deputy Mayor for Culture’s Office in Rome is the key actor of local cultural policies in that city. It sets out the strategies for the cultural development of the city of Rome, and deploys policies and programmes concerning cultural activities, cultural institutions, and heritage preservation, enhancement and promotion. It primarily gives strategic and operational guidelines to three municipal Departments: the Department for Culture (which supports cultural activities initiated by local community groups, municipal cultural centers and those cultural institutions fully and partially owned by Roma Capitale), the Libraries and its network (40 libraries) and the Superintendence for Cultural Heritage (which manages, maintains and enhances the archaeological, historical, artistic and monumental heritage belonging to Roma Capitale both in its historical center and in the rest of the city).

CHAPTER 2. The context

In order to understand the new impetus given to the cultural policies of the city of Rome, it is necessary to place them in its broader context:

A. ROME

Like so many capitals, Rome has a double role of city and national capital. Everything that is done in the city is directed, therefore, both to its citizens and to the whole of the country and, beyond, to the world. This involves a double institutional dimension: national Italian authorities manage some of the major cultural institutions existing in the city, which coexist with the institutions of the city of Rome. This double institutional dimension goes largely unnoticed in everyday life by most of its inhabitants and visitors. It requires, on the other hand, an understanding and a permanent dialogue between the different levels of government which, despite being good, is not free from difficulties.

B. A VERY LARGE TERRITORY

The surface of the municipal district of Rome is 1,287Km², an extremely large extension if one considers most European capitals. Within the territory of the city there is the urban space of Rome, multiple segregated small and big towns, natural reserves, agricultural areas, etc. Both at the administrative level and in citizens' perceptions, the whole area is understood and referred to as "City of Rome". The city, when understood administratively as a municipality, borders with 29 other municipalities, the majority of them very small in extension. Furthermore, the City of Rome, with 91 other municipalities, makes up the Metropolitan City of Rome Capital, known as the Province of Rome until 2014. Further on, the region of Lazio, in addition to the City or Metropolitan Area, includes 4 other provinces, reaching 17,236 km² in total. The large extension of the municipality is one of the key elements that define the urban policies with city planning.



Municipality of Rome (red)
in metropolitan city (yellow)

C. A VERY POPULATED CITY

In 2019, Rome has 2,856,133 inhabitants (1,504,189 women and 1,351,944 men). This makes it the 7th largest city in Europe (the 8th city with St. Petersburg that is not a capital city). If the Area or Metropolitan City is taken into account, the population is 4,342,212 and the region of Lazio reaches 5,879,082 inhabitants. For all of them, the city of Rome is a cultural reference. Due to this large extension, the average density of Rome is low, because much of the territory is scarcely inhabited due to large portions of rural areas embedded in the city (Rome is the largest urban municipality in Europe). Like so many other cities, the density of the central area is higher whereas it becomes lower when moving away from the city center.

Table 1: Territorial data

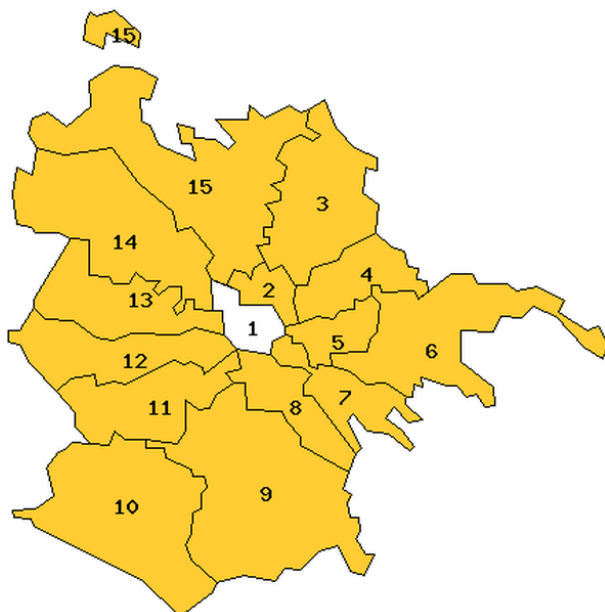
	MUNICIPALITY	KM ²	INHABITANTS	DENSITY
City of Rome	1	1,287	2,856,133	2,231
Bordering municipalities	29	2,466	3,616,164	1,466
Metropolitan city	121	5,352	4,342,212	812
Region of Lazio	378	17,236	5,879,082	341

Density = inhabitants per km²

D. 15 DISTRICTS MAKE A CITY

NB: The city of Rome is divided into 15 territories that the City Council calls municipalities but which in international terminology would be districts. Here we use the concept "municipality" for the city of Rome and the concept "district" to refer to the 15 smaller administrative entities.

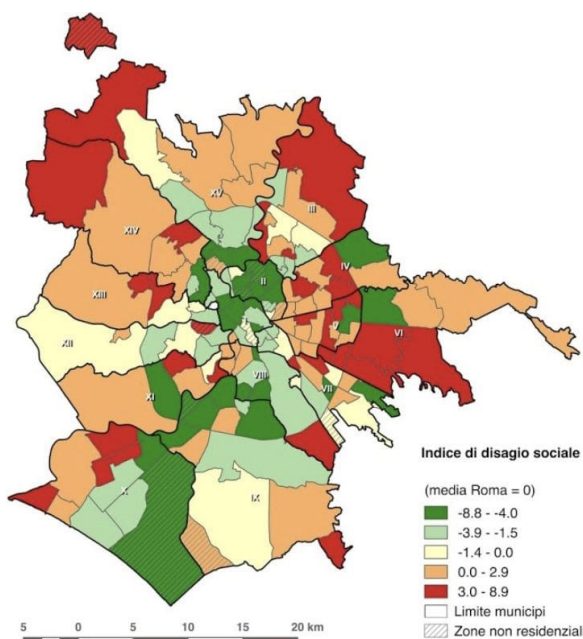
The city is divided into 15 districts (in Italian they are called municipalities). Two of them, numbers 1 and 2, are the center of the city. On the other hand, the vast majority of districts are radial and extend from near the center to the outer edge of the municipality. This means that each district has parts that lie very close to the center and others that are very far away. Districts, made up of different towns, despite having their own names, are referred to very frequently by a number, but these numbers have changed in recent years. Until 2013 the city was divided into 20 districts (formerly 21) that were later reorganized into the current 15. This means that it is, to a large extent, a division generally more administrative than based on history or identity. Some neighborhoods, villages or towns have a strong feeling of identity and pride, whereas the belonging to their administrative district is weak.



15 municipalities or districts of Rome (red)

E. A CITY MADE OF 15 DISTRICTS: CHALLENGES AND PECULIARITIES

The welfare or social malaise map indicates that each district usually brings together extreme areas: more well-resourced residential areas and less-favored residential areas. Even so, there is a slight predominance of the most well-resourced residential areas in the city center, and also a tendency for the less well-off areas to be at the opposite ends of the center, in some, but not all, districts. If the whole city is divided into a hundred micro-zones or micro-communities it is easy to observe that there are small territories with low income everywhere but 4 large areas of low income predominate at the ends of 4 districts far from the center. It can be said that, globally, and apart from some specific and well-known cases, Rome stands out as a city with few internal territorial imbalances in terms of income, the origin of the population or social conflict.



Social malaise map by micro-communities or neighborhoods

F. THE CHALLENGES SEEN FROM THE CULTURAL POLICY PERSPECTIVE

- The great distances of many residential areas to the center, the difficulty of having an extensive underground network and the fact that some means of public transportation are limited to non-central areas have an impact on the cultural activities because most of the trips to the city centre are often made by car or motorcycle. This entails limitations and difficulties, especially to access a city center often congested by traffic.
- The municipal administration is scarcely decentralized throughout the 15 districts. Hardly any cultural facilities, nor municipal cultural professionals on the ground or a specific budget of the 15 districts exist. Developments within the districts depend very much on what is sent from the center, despite yearly negotiations on the overall district budget. The decentralized budget itself is virtually insignificant, as well as concrete distribution of power for the possibility to spend resources. The functioning of the Rome administrative machine is often bureaucratic and it also has an accumulation of levels (local, regional and national). This can make it difficult to adapt to the needs of the cultural sector, which often requires more dynamism, flexibility and risk. Both the professionals who work for the cultural institutions of the city and those in companies or associations receiving public support do not always find a strong ally in the administrative machinery.
- The cultural offer of Rome is impressive, but the majority of the city's public cultural programmes and facilities (theaters, museums, auditoriums, art rooms, etc.) are located in the centre. Only the 39 existing public libraries are distributed in the 15 districts. Public theaters, much smaller in number, also exist in some the districts, but not in all of them. This makes the overall institutional cultural offer (theater, music, cinema, visual arts, ...) reach a little part of the population in the districts.
- On cultural participation, it is clear that an important part of Roman citizens stands out for having high, demanding interests, needs and cultural practices. These groups are located mainly in the city center and in the most well-educated districts. This necessarily leads the City Council to offer high-quality, innovative and international programmes. Like in all major European cities, studies and estimates indicate that a high number of people (around 40%) is not involved in formal participation in cultural life throughout the year (e.g. visits to theaters, museums, art exhibitions, libraries, concerts, etc.).
- The heritage of ancient Rome as well as that of the Renaissance is totally present in every corner of the city center and in a part of the more distant neighborhoods. This enormous historical wealth gives the city an impressive appeal that attracts, in addition to the local population, a high number of tourists and visitors. But this historical heritage is also a challenge: it becomes more difficult to visualize the more contemporary and dynamic cultural side of the city. Culture in Rome has had a more classical humanistic tendency. In

addition, the difficulty of doing new public works in the city is added due to the “danger” of finding and damaging the subsoil, which is rich in archaeological remains. One of the great victims of this fact is the limited metro network of the city. This affects the ability to travel around the city to enjoy, for example, cultural activities.

- In Rome, as in most of European metropolis, cultural practices are mutating towards more technological forms, especially those of young people. Public authorities tend to follow a slow path of innovation and do not always find the suitable ways to understand, complement or support the more contemporary social practices.
- Although it may go unnoticed, Rome is a city that hosts a high number of scientific institutions both nationally and internationally. This vocation is not usually translated, however, in the existence of public programmes of dissemination, awareness- raising or direct involvement of citizens in science.
- In Rome the alternative cultural sector, outside the institutional channels, is very active. It offers many high-quality programmes and activities that reach an important part of citizens interested in culture.

G. THE CULTURAL POLICIES IN THE PAST

The results of previous cultural policies have been a reinforcement of activities in the centre of Rome. The municipal economic support to the cultural projects (again, as in many European metropolis) has been influenced by a distributive approach (“support to almost all activities”) than the search of innovation, the fight against inequalities or other qualitative criteria based on policies. In fact, only at the time of Renato Nicolini (Councilor for Culture of the Municipality of Rome in 1976–1985), and Gianni Borgna’s first term as Councilor for Culture of the Municipality of Rome (1993-1997) can one speak of an attempt to develop an effective cultural policy. Besides, the rehabilitation and maintenance of cultural infrastructures has been a changing priority in the programmes of previous governments and many of the cultural facilities (libraries, museums, etc.) are still in delicate situation. The impact of tourism needs also to be taken into consideration: attracted mainly by the past of ancient Rome and the Renaissance, since the new millennium public cultural policies have focused on heritage to strengthen tourism, leaving aside the concerns of the local population. Finally, policies have been based more on the initiative of each department, programme or venue with a very low level of coordination and internal transversal work. It is also important to state that the contribution of patrons or private sponsors to cultural activities, as well as media attention and support to cultural life, showed low levels when compared to other European metropolis.

CHAPTER 3. The current operating structure

AN INTERNAL ORGANIZATION IN NEED OF A RESTRUCTURING

The work structure of the Department of Culture is made up of 3 large institutional bodies, a Department of Cultural Activities, the Libraries institution and a Superintendence, addressing respectively cultural activities, libraries and heritage, as described hereafter:

Firstly, the **Department of Cultural Activities** (Dipartimento Attività culturali) coordinates this set of artistic institutions (they include five public associations and four foundations):

- Teatro di Roma (Associazione Teatro di Roma)
- The Opera (*Fondazione Teatro dell'Opera di Roma*)
- Roma Europe (*Fondazione Roma Europa*)
- Music for Rome (*Fondazione Musica per Roma*)
- Santa Cecilia (*Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia*)
- The Cinema Foundation
- Palaexpo (*Azienda Speciale PalaExpo*)
- Roma-Lazio Film Commission
- Zetema

Teatro di Roma Association is a historical public institution that acts as a network of theaters with different backgrounds. It currently oversees five theaters and theater institutions in Rome: the Teatri in Comune (a sub-network that includes the Lido di Ostia Theater, the Quarticciolo Theater Library, the Tor Bella Monaca Theater and the Villa Pamphili – Scuderie Villino Corsini Theater), the Argentina Theater, the India Theatre, the Villa Torlonia Theatre and the Globe Theatre.

The **Opera Foundation** is a non-profit body aimed at promoting all aspects of opera and music. With two venues, it stages operas, ballet and concerts in Italy and abroad and it promotes musical research, as well as the musical education of the general public.

The **Roma Europa Foundation** is a prestigious cultural institutions in Italy and in Europe. It is actively involved in promoting and supporting contemporary art, theater, dance and music. It is a dynamic centre of cultural production. The Foundation operates with the aim of sharing culture through international and local networks with partners ranging from cultural institutions, embassies and cultural centers also engaged in the production and spreading of contemporary artistic creativity.

The **Music for Rome Foundation** aims to promote culture at large. It was established in 2004 by the City Council and its governing bodies include also the Chamber of Commerce, the Province of Rome and the Lazio Region. It currently runs two cultural complexes: the Auditorium Parco della Musica (designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano, the Auditorium is a multi-functional complex meant also as a tool to regenerate the urban area in which it was built) and the Casa del Jazz (a complex dedicated to every jazz genre with a cutting-edge acoustics auditorium).

Santa Cecilia is one of the oldest musical institutions in the world. Over the centuries, it has organically grown from a “forum” for local musicians and composers to an internationally acclaimed academy active in music scholarship (with 100 prominent music scholars forming the body of the Accademia), music education (in its role as a Conservatory) and performance (with an active choir and a symphony orchestra, the National Orchestra of Santa Cecilia). It is located in the Auditorium Parco della Musica.

The **Cinema Foundation** organises the Rome Film Festival, a one-week event held at the Parco della Musica Auditorium and since 2018 in other venues throughout the city. The Film Festival includes screenings, master classes, tributes, retrospectives, panels, and special events. The Cinema Foundation is also in charge of the programme “UNESCO Creative City of Film”.

The **PalaExpo** is a special entity (Azienda Speciale) operating under the City of Rome, which manages a multidisciplinary cultural programme in three venues: the Palazzo delle Esposizioni (the largest interdisciplinary exhibition area in the center of Rome: over 10,000 square meters on three floors), the MACRO, and the Mattatoio.

The **Roma-Lazio Film Commission** encourages national and foreign film and audiovisual producers to invest and produce in Rome and the region. It promotes the image of Rome and Lazio, publicizes its natural and cultural heritage and encourages increased competition throughout the area.

Secondly, the **Libraries Institution** (*Istituzione Biblioteche Roma Capitale*) is the coordination body of public libraries, with 39 public libraries spread across the city. The purpose of the Libraries Institution is to guarantee the right to culture and information by promoting the development of communication in all its forms. It also coordinates major events for the promotion of literature (for example, the “Letterature”, Rome’s International Literature Festival). The Libraries Institution is the instrumental entity of Roma Capitale for the management of cultural services.

Thirdly, in the area of **heritage**, the Superintendence Capitolina is in charge of the system of municipal museums (*Musei in Comune*), made up of an extremely diverse

group of 18 museums, including the oldest in the world – Musei Capitolini - and many archaeological sites, of unique artistic and historical value such as the Roman Fora, the Trajan's Markets, Ara Pacis or Mausoleo d'Augusto.

Finally, it is important to mention that there is Zetema, a limited liability company fully owned by the City (Zetema Progetto Cultura) devoted to management of services. It is in charge of the management of the system of municipal museums. It formally reports to the Department of Cultural Activities but it gives services to libraries and heritage structures as well, including other Municipality departments (see tourism, youth and social services departments). It also manages the use of public spaces for events, culture and tourist reception. It is also in charge of the MIC Card. The Zetema is also able to support any municipal department.

Over time, some dysfunctions have been identified. As examples, one can refer to the fact that the Rome Film Festival had no organic link with the Rome Lazio Film Commission, or that the Jazz Festival was organized by the body in charge of exhibitions and not by the Music Foundation of Rome. In a sentence: the organic location of the programmes did not always correspond to the sectoral logic. Of course, this was the consequence of very particular circumstances that were shaped in the past, without a well-founded institutional sense. In addition, the coordination between the Municipality and the cultural actors and key stakeholders (that is, an obvious step of good governance) was practically nonexistent or depended to a great extent on the personal will of officials in charge of the three bodies.

Last, but not least, it is surprising that the 3 bodies that run the different municipal cultural sectors are referred to by 3 different terms that reflect different organizational levels. There is a "department", an "institution" and a "superintendence" (which by the way despite the different name is in fact a city department). It is an evidence of institutional inheritance and not an example of rational organization.

CHAPTER 4. Guiding principles of the new cultural policy

Since September 2016, the Deputy Mayor for Culture's Office has placed the local implementation of the Right to Participate in Cultural Life at the center of its policies. This ambition is to massively involve citizens in the cultural life of the city. Policies and programmes are being implemented through institutional and organizational changes. The changes are guided by some key principles that can be summarized as follows, in these five concepts:

1. **Empowerment**
2. **Accessibility**
3. **Networks and systemic thinking**
4. **Governance and accountability**
5. **Leadership**

4.1. EMPOWERMENT

One of the most difficult aims of public policies at all levels, and in all fields, is the involvement of people in the stages of the policy. This fact is relevant in the public policies that have a long track as core components of the welfare state at a national level (education or health), as well as in other policies that rely more on the will of local policies (such as social services, culture or urban planning). The difficulty relies on many factors, being the "expertise" an important one. A top-down approach would say that policies must be conceived by experts and implemented to the people. Today, in 2019, it is obvious that this approach is not operational any more, and it seems imperative that public policies involve people in all the stages of the policy-making (the design, the implementation and the evaluation).

In cultural policies, this shift is enshrined in documents such as Culture 21 Actions. Let us recall that one of the Principles is that "Local governments should promote the participation of everyone in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies, including cultural policies, and aim to facilitate cultural democracy". This is why one of the guiding principles of the new cultural policies in Rome is empowerment. This concept is being unfolded with the participation of citizens, an emphasis in cultural contemporaneity and the inclusion of science in the cultural policies.

a. Boosting the participation of citizens

The relationship between public institutions and culture was traditionally one-way: top-down. The new cultural policy is seeking to provide more spaces for citizen participation, generating bottom-top processes. The City Council has been introducing more and more practices that involve cultural operators and citizens in the making

of programmes, activities and schedules of these institutions. In the future, this could lead to another structural governance change – something which is difficult to predict at this stage. In other words: the cultural institutions are opening up to citizens through special formats, policies and events. Cultural institutions are invited to become more alive thanks to the participation of citizens in their schedule by, for example, using institutional spaces for other purposes. The key idea is that “people must own their cultural institutions”. For this specific objective, some institutions are building capacities in the field of “community development”.

An example of this is the case of the Aquila (eagle) cinema.

In the neighborhood of Pigneto, there is a public cinema seized from the Mafia in 1996. After years of activity, it was closed due to some irregularities in management. In order to deal with the tensions and fragmented interests around this closed space, in October 2016 the Municipality began a 75-day participatory process with the aim of identifying the guidelines for the new management project of the Cinema. The process was articulated in a series of laboratories dedicated to citizens and families to design the guidelines, which were better discussed through open meetings with organized interests' representatives and local policy makers. Ultimately, the guidelines were defined by means of an online laboratory. The whole process involved over 300 active participants from the neighborhood and offered inspiration for the public call that was then launched to identify the new management of the Cinema. The process also stimulated the creation of a new model for a challenging business such as the one of public cinema and stimulated the design of a participatory process that collectively evaluates the impact of the process itself over time.

b. The contemporaneity: changing the times, shaping the future

Rome is too often associated only with the assets of the past. Contemporaneity has difficulties in expressing itself and being seen – yet the City Council believes that in this field shall have a more central space. Therefore, in the new municipal policies, a Pole of contemporaneity and future is strengthened with new programmes devoted to the most avant-garde, innovative and risky options. Thus, around the already existing Special Company Palaexpo, the Palace of exhibitions is associated to the most experimental cultural centers in Rome, such as the Mattatoio (former slaughterhouse converted into multisectoral cultural center) and the Macroasilo (previously known as the Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome), turned into an arts centre, more innovative in the forms and the contents.

Playing with the double meaning of the Italian “asilo” (asylum / kindergarten), MACROasilo was launched in October 2018 as an innovative two-year project in the field of contemporary arts. Mapping all of Rome’s cultural institutions and private museums dedicated to such a discipline, the Municipality identified the need for a cozy, residential, usable, creative, permeable, light and multi-disciplinary open studio where contemporary arts could be co-created, discussed and put at the service of the city. Previously a civic museum spread over 10,000 square meters, MACROasilo was meant

to be the space where local, national and international artists - attracted by the process - will dialogue with citizens while creating their work, will contribute through their knowledge to a better understanding of the city, while being stimulated by the city itself. Artists and citizens will be welcomed and encouraged to collaborate with each other.

c. Breaking the limits for cultural programmes with more science, thought and knowledge

Everywhere, cultural programmes are widening their limits and embracing contemporary thinking. Increasingly, there is more cultural action in sectors that until now were seen as being far from the reach of cultural actors. Science, thought, knowledge, economics, the environment, social issues and others receive greater interest from cultural actors and shall have a more visible place in public cultural programmes. Today, a cultural center should be able to organize a series of conferences, exhibitions, films or publications on artistic, historical or contemporary thinking alike. In Rome, this new orientation of cultural policies is especially suitable for breaking away from the well-established image of a city centered on the historical past.

4.2. ACCESSIBILITY

Cultural policies are not implemented in vacuum. In fact, cultural institutions and programmes have a historical background (they were created at some point in the past) and they need to adapt to the circumstances of today, mainly serving the specific population that lives in a place.

The Culture 21 Actions toolkit offers interesting guidance of the need that cultural policies are people-centred (that is, devoted to the needs and responsive to the expectation of the people living in a place). As an example, we can quote one of the Principles of Culture 21 Actions: "Cultural rights guarantee that everyone can access the resources they need to freely pursue their process of cultural identification throughout their life, as well as to actively participate in, and reshape, existing cultures. Cultural citizenship implies rights, freedoms and responsibilities. Lifelong access to, and participation in, cultural and symbolic universes are essential factors for the development of the capacities of sensitivity, expression, choice, and critical thinking, which allow the construction of citizenship and peace in our societies." Accessibility is a fundamental consideration of cultural policies in Rome, in every way, promoting the city as an enrichment, the existence of all forms of diversity: territorial, socio-economic, gender, sexual orientation, origin, social belonging, etc.

When it comes to promoting accessibility, it is necessary to see all the actors involved in cultural institutions and programmes: the citizens, the artists and the professional teams. Everyone must recognize their right to be an active actor of culture in the way each one decides. New, specific, attractive programmes must be designed by the local cultural policies in order to connect (or reconnect) everybody with the outstanding cultural resources of Rome.

a. Families are audiences for culture

Over the past few years, Rome has seen an increasing development of cultural projects dedicated to families: opening hours, facilities and the very nature of activities are designed to better engage both parents and children. This tendency is visible in institutions, and especially in the programmes of some private cultural actors, possibly due to demographic factors such as the age range of the operators and the fact that they have families themselves.

Free entrance as an access strategy

The City Council of Rome has made free access to many cultural activities a fundamental strategy to facilitate people's access to culture.

The MIC-CARD, a tool that facilitates access to culture

A card is created that allows anyone residing in Rome to access all of the city's municipal museums. Knowledge of heritage is stimulated as a result, and it reaches all citizens.

Kicked off in spring 2018, for the first time ever the MIC Card allows all permanent and temporary citizens of Rome to have free and unlimited access to the network of 21 civic museums. While easy access for tourists is already in place and membership cards are primarily meant for special discounts, this card allows over 2 million local citizens to also access without limits both permanent and temporary collections and exhibitions with the payment of a nominal fee of 5 euro per year. The aim: increasing access to culture and reducing barriers to the perception of museums as exclusive spaces. Together with this initiative, new content activities are developed specifically for museums following last years' experiments (e.g. "Musei in Musica"), as well as radically new occasions for cultural amateurs (in the field of dance, theatre or music) to make use of these spaces for rehearsal. The key idea is that going to a museum should not be perceived by citizens as a mere consumption action but rather to become a habit to be developed, nurtured and inspired.

b. Indirect work on cultural diversity

Between 2001 and 2011, an estimated increase of 44% in regular immigrants was registered in Rome. According to municipal data, this new population is uniformly distributed throughout the entire municipality without any huge divide between city center and peripheral neighborhoods. The City Council believes an indirect approach is the most suitable strategy at this stage: acting on the whole municipality is also acting on the whole of the population, including all vulnerable groups and new citizens that have an immigrant origin.

4.3. NETWORKS AND SYSTEMIC THINKING

Any new internal organization shall be accompanied by a new working dynamic. The importance of the changes introduced by the new cultural policies in Rome require a

new approach (understanding the cultural policies as a great network of actors) and need bold policies and programmes to multiply the connectiveness. There is no other way to respond to the new role for culture that our cities need.

Let us recall that this “networking and systemic thinking” is also one of the main axis of Culture 21 Actions, which states, for example, the need to activate “a local platform or network that brings together public, civic, and private actors in the field of culture, education, and lifelong learning” (Commitment 3, action “c”) or “a local platform or network of associations, cooperatives, and third sector organizations that carry out activities on the relationship between culture, equality, and social inclusion” (Commitment 6, action “k”), or even the importance to establish “an independent civil society platform, or network of civil society organizations that includes citizens and cultural professionals from all sectors” (Commitment 9, action “l”).

If until a few years ago each cultural institution had worked more individually, the new cultural policies aim at doing it more transversally, working in tight partnership with the other institutions and creating networking capacity. A new “way of working” with real collaboration among cultural actors, so that they tend to look at each other as partners rather than as competitors for resources.

The new cultural policy aims at changing the relation of cultural institutions with the central structure. Therefore, the new frame is providing with more autonomy in cultural management to each one of the cultural institutions and guarantee their accountability. The relationship between the central structure and the cultural institutions is becoming less managerial and more based on new competencies and in an explicit collaboration agreement to be developed by both sides. New formal and informal networks have emerged. Regular meetings of information and coordination have been created, entering into institutions that, over time, have led to greater collaboration and cooperation among them. This has resulted in common programmes and actions.

a. Libraries, cultural spaces in the territory

The new cultural policy requires libraries to be the main agents in the new orientation towards accessibility. It could be said that, for the first time, they are at the heart of the cultural system. The 39 public libraries are expanding their role, by becoming cultural antennas in the districts, beyond their traditional role linked to books and reading. Their spaces and the support of their staff are key to accommodating new cultural activities, both as central spaces in the neighborhoods and for being the only network present in the area. They play a unique role on the territory, guaranteeing an institutional presence where no other sector does, welcoming as no other venue is and enabling all other sectors of culture with concerts, performances, exhibitions, and other cultural activities. Of course, there is the need to improve the facilities and provide them with more resources, tools and professionals suitable to the new direction. The staff of the libraries has often welcomed with enthusiasm the new role as dynamic cultural facilities.

As it has been previously said, Rome is quite an extended city, and cultural institutions are mostly located in the city center. The 39 libraries are currently the only institutions distributed and well rooted in the peripheries. The municipality is working to create a stronger system of relationships between cultural institutions and libraries, transforming the latter into real “distributed cultural centers”. In addition, to have this feature structurally embedded in the system and its governance, the nature of one specific cultural institution needs being transformed: one of the city-owned companies - the Zetema, that became through the years the owner of a number of exhibition areas - is now being reshaped transforming itself into a “hub” that connects better and integrates libraries into the institutional cultural life of the city.

b. Neighborhoods, spaces of live and cultural meaning

One of the key purposes of the municipal cultural programming is to reach all the neighborhoods of the city, especially those lying further away from the center. In Rome, there are neighborhoods in which there is virtually no space for performing or visual arts public programmes.

An example of the innovative approach to neighborhoods is the Opera camion project. This project involves creating a mobile stage, adapted in a truck that travels through the neighborhoods with a young opera company. In this way, many people can attend an opera performance for the first time in their lives.

Rome is the largest municipality in Italy based on size, population and urban area. Considering that the city’s territory is divided between highly urbanized areas and a considerable percentage of areas designated for agricultural use, the population density is quite low. The long distances within the city contribute to a very complex and disconnected urban structure. Opera Camion was therefore conceived to allow public cultural institutions to reach faraway neighborhoods. Produced by Teatro dell’Opera di Roma with the network of Rome’s municipal libraries, Opera Camion is a mobile opera stage on a traveling truck that brings opera to public squares in the peripheral areas of Rome. The show is performed by young singers and Teatro dell’Opera di Roma’s youth orchestra and is developed along with the network of Rome’s municipal libraries, the most widespread cultural institution of the city. In summer 2017, this synergy allowed 10,000+ citizens to enjoy a free one-night opera in the areas where they live. This process aims both at creating a new opera audience for the future and at offering access to the cultural life of the city through widespread actions of central cultural institutions.

Another example of recent change in the current cultural policies of Rome is the aim to provide more opportunities in the neighborhoods to receive support for their proposals. Within the programme of economic support to the projects of local associations, it is established that at least two associations of each district or municipality receive this support, thus ensuring that the programme reaches the whole of the city. Earlier, with the same policy of support for associations, most of

the initiatives came from the center. The economic funds, therefore, remained in the center of the city. This is being reversed with the new policy. One of the observed effects is the increase of activities and audiences in the vast majority of the districts of Rome.

c. Seasons, the time is also meaningful

The new cultural policy structures an annual calendar on the basis of seasons or temporary periods. Thus, the year is divided in a set of great moments or “stations”, which allows the work to be better ordered and to gain more impact in the communicative aspect.

Despite the millennial history layered in the city, Rome is today a vibrant platform of cultural production. With hundreds of cultural organizations, artistic communities and scientific research hubs, Rome is potentially a leader in the fields of contemporary arts, science and culture at large. Following the natural convergence of homogeneous groups of activities in specific times of the year, since 2017 the Municipality of Rome has boosted and coordinated the creation of three main programming seasons dedicated to: scientific communication and dissemination in spring; cultural activities to foster a stronger sense of community in summer; contemporary cultural production in autumn. The New Year deserves special attention and is a programme in itself. With this mechanism and through public calls, € 2.5 million is annually allocated to private cultural operators for both annual and three-year projects to develop citywide activities with the aim of demonstrating their impact on local communities. Public institutions, research and education centers are invited to join each season’s programme for the benefit of citizens, of the whole city and its ecosystem. During the first two programmes (summer 2017 and fall 2017), over 1,600 events were produced and an average of half million people per season attended.

Science (February-June)

For 5 months, an extensive science dissemination programme is curated by the Culture Department, in line with the current global tendency to include these activities within local cultural policies. One of the factors to highlight is the involvement of multiple institutions that would not cooperate much among them otherwise: Roman institutions, international universities, cultural operators, etc. A figure illustrates well the impact of this programme: earlier, 200 activities were carried out for the dissemination of science annually, at present some 800 are done, in collaboration with public libraries.

The Roman Summer (June-September)

For 3 months the city of Rome lives a summer festival (Roman Summer – Estate romana) that occupies the whole city, making a special effort to reach all distant neighborhoods of the city center. Roman Summer stands out for the extension, quality and territorial distribution of its programming. Once again, the social and business operators of the city are involved, along with public institutions.

Contemporaneity (October-December)

During the last months of the year, the city of Rome makes a turn towards contemporaneity in all its aspects: visual arts, performing arts, music, etc. It is time to programme the most innovative and risky offers.

The Festa di Roma, the celebration of the New Year

Until 3 years ago, the New Year celebration (Capodanno in Italian) was basically celebrated, like so many cities, with a great concert on the night of December 31st. With the new cultural policy, the Festa di Roma is celebrated 24 hours a day, from 9:00 p.m. on 31st December, to 9:00 p.m. on 1st January. This allows everyone to find their time and preferred activity. During these 24 hours practically all public cultural institutions, social and business operators as well as embassies from other countries are involved in organising a very intense programme.

As a 24-hour event to welcome the beginning of the new year, La Festa di Roma is a unique format that gives citizens and tourists a huge and valuable area of the city through a series of cultural events that emphasize the location where they are set. From 9 pm on 31st December to 9pm on 1st January, La Festa di Roma aims to rebuild community trust and social fabric through the experience of a new way of living the city. This is especially relevant in a historical period characterized by anti-terrorism restrictions that are inhibiting the collective life of public spaces. Experimented for the first time in 2016 and nurtured throughout the year, this celebration is ignited by a unique marathon mechanism: while the show of December 31st is still organized and produced by a private partner willing to invest in the city for three years, the public cultural institutions of the city of Rome collaborate to collectively produce a coordinated set of free and widespread events from 3 am to 9 pm. In 2017 the celebration involved 155,000 square meters of the historical center (which was transformed into a car-free zone for the occasion) and offered over 100 shows with 1,000 international artists.

And meanwhile the cultural life continues ...

This structuring in seasons does not prevent all cultural institutions from developing their actions throughout the year. Theaters, museums, libraries, exhibition spaces, etc. have an annual programme. It is at the specific moments of the seasons when cooperation and transversal work between public cultural institutions and between them and the social and business operators of the city are further enhanced.

4.4. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The design and the effective implementation of cultural policies cannot happen unless they are shared by other municipal departments and also in close cooperation with all cultural actors of a city. In fact, this is a principle that, *mutatis mutandis*, can be generalized to any human endeavour aiming at providing a transformative impact in reality. Actions must be shared, and actions must be accountable.

The toolkit Culture 21 Actions provides some interesting wording to support good governance in cultural policies. One of its principles says “Local governments are applying multi-actor governance frameworks (governing in dialogue with civil society and the private sector), developing cross-cutting or horizontal forms of governance (that integrate the cultural dimension into public policy) and demanding multi-level or vertical governance frameworks (allowing them to coordinate and collaborate with other levels of government)”.

The new cultural policies of Rome have been aware of the need to drastically improve the governance system of the cultural policies in Rome, as well as to put in place mechanisms to guarantee a public accountability of these policies. Let’s see some of the examples.

a. Improving governance

Rationalization: the structure to become a more logical system

An important step was to change organizational structures by making an internal readjustment based on competencies and sectors. Structures have been rationalized to lead to a more logical system. For example

- all municipal theaters are now under the spectrum of the main big theater of the city
- the Casa del Jazz, which depended on Azienda Speciale Palaexpo, is now within the Music Foundation for Rome,
- the Mattatoio, a very broad and diverse cultural center that depended on Museums, now is grouped with Palaexpo, the institution that coordinates most contemporary exhibition and visual arts spaces.

This was quite a sophisticated exercise as the municipality had to act in terms of organizational design (for example many institutions have introduced the role of “network manager”), resources, administrative acts ...

Opportunities and public calls

In the same way, the relationship between the City Council and the local cultural agents is based on public calls for projects (from French *appel à projets*). This is done several times a year (previously it was done only once a year), the projects are presented and a rigorous selection is made to give priority to those who better contribute to consolidating the city’s cultural policies. The process closes with a performance of conceptual and economic accounts of the recipient of public aid to the City Council.

The budget: changing support for culture

Cultural policies, like all other public policies, shall be based on budgets that meet policy ambitions. The new Council has expanded the budget allocated to culture: as an example above all, from 2016 to 2019 the budget allocated to public calls has increased of more than +130%.

b. Improving accountability

The general mission of cultural institutions

The first internal message launched was the need to focus the mission of all cultural institutions that fall under the umbrella of the City Council: all cultural institutions shall focus on the accessibility to culture of the entire population of Rome. In other words, regardless of the place citizens live, everyone has exactly the same right to participate in cultural life and the City Council, with the cultural institutions, must guarantee this right. The territorial reach is connected to a social reach. This message was passed throughout the organization and all work teams, and this was subsequently received, understood and implemented.

The contract-programme as a model

The directors of the cultural institutions and programmes are selected with open and transparent calls and are required to present a contract-programme for their performance in the coming years. The City Council shall emphasize that the relationship between the cultural institutions, with their directors, and the City Council is based on a clear set of accountable commitments agreed in the contract-programme that are public and must be fulfilled.

Transparency: new procedures that improve quality

The cultural sectors are too often too relying on personal contacts, circles of influence and dynamics already established. The City Council shall guarantee that programmes and projects are open to all, with new, more transparent procedures that facilitate equal opportunities. This is especially true in the distribution of public funds (contracts and subsidies) to companies and cultural associations. The improvement in the procedures, making them more transparent, in the long term will benefit the quality of cultural activities. Moreover, the new procedures are also an opportunity to improve the municipal machinery (which is seen to be too difficult to navigate and unhelpful by many cultural actors); both at the level of permits, notifications, announcements, allocation of resources and payments, the City Council has considerable room for improvement.

Continuity: change takes time

Change, by definition, takes time. Therefore, any process to create a more logical system, to provide actors with more autonomy and to boost networking capacity, with specific collaboration agreements with the cultural agents, shall be planned to be implemented with suitable timing. Results cannot be achieved in one year. Continuity in projects is essential and shall be accompanied by a shared leadership. A measure taken in this new phase is to make partnership agreements for up to 3 years. This time span provides an interesting guarantee of continuity to cultural agents.

Measuring the impact: changing tracking systems

The impact of cultural policies is not easy to measure. Policies are not often formulated in a way that allows measurement and (at a later stage) impact on

capabilities, lives and freedoms of people. The City Council is working to create a new methodology, with a mechanism to measure the cultural impact of the work of cultural institutions first, and, at a later stage, use the same approach to measure the impact of the work of cultural operators in the city. This methodology is still in a very early stage as it is important to create, at the same time, an observatory that works inside the administration and collects and analyzes data. This is recognized to be a huge challenge to be implemented step by step. The City Council is collaborating with universities and international networks to develop new indicators, too.

4.5. LEADERSHIP

Cultural policies (or “policies” in general) cannot be implemented unless there is confidence and coherence at the highest level in the hierarchy. An important difference in the new government team is the Mayor’s support for culture. This is seen in the support expressed in cultural policies, in the institutional position of the Councilor for Culture as Vice Mayor of the City Council, and in the budget increase.

In short, the new cultural policies of Rome aim at placing the Right to Participate in Cultural Life at the center. This ambition shall be complemented with institutional and organizational changes:

- The concepts of empowerment and accessibility become the main axis to refocus the mission of cultural institutions, with participation of citizens at all stages and searching to boost contemporaneity.
- The organization should become a real ecosystem, with several networks and real systemic thinking. The organisation needs a logical structure that provides more autonomy to cultural institutions. They shall have the capacity to collaborate among them and be welcoming to citizens, providing more opportunities for all actors in the city.
- The whole system should have a clear governance and be more accountable and more transparent, equipped with a suitable budget and truly able to measure the impact of cultural policies in society.
- Political leadership becomes fundamental to generate the confidence and to set the timing so that challenges are shared and changes be self-sustained.

CHAPTER 5. General recommendations.

The cultural policies in Rome are experiencing an enormous transformation. In the previous chapters the vision and key principles have been described and explained. In this chapter emphasis will be placed on some commitments and actions that are still needed to meet the outstanding challenges identified.

1. SHARE GOVERNANCE

Governance implies “good government” and “shared government”, and both are based on a shared responsibility of all urban actors. The following recommendations aim at reinforcing the long-term governance of the cultural policies in Rome.

Definition of cultural policy

There is no document explaining the cultural policy of the City Council of Rome. Only in a Plan of Action of the city a few pages are reserved to culture. In the short-term / mid-term, addressing this gap is an unavoidable step: a solid programmatic document that introduces the new cultural policies of Rome in the frame of the global, national and local challenges ahead is required. It could take the form of a Strategic Plan for Culture, a new Local Council for Culture, or both.

Debate on culture and cultural policies

The teams in charge of cultural policies in the City Council explain that their actions do not generate enough debate in the city. (In fact, this can be seen as the result of policies being generally approved by citizens.) But, of course, cultural policies also exist to nourish the overall conversation on rights, development and democracy. The lack of an explicit debate on the role of the cultural future of any city around the world, is much needed.

Involvement and participation

Today citizens are able to participate in the definition of cultural actions. Again here, the City Council could take a step further: and invite citizens to get involved in the definition of cultural policies. Cultural policies cannot work any longer on the basis of “everything for the people, but without the people”.

Measurement of the impact

Although there is a willingness to do so, more mechanisms, indicators and spaces for analyzing the results of cultural activities must be established. In this sense, an observatory would be the most appropriate institutional response, or at least, a shared programme of standardized collection of data and indicators.

A strong new model

The new cultural policy needs to become more solid and consolidate the human teams, the administrative procedures and the collaborative dynamics. The control of the timing is essential so that all changes are self-sustained and there is a range of multiple voices that share the new model.

A new governance to serve people

Society moves towards new models of governance and of relation between political powers and citizens. The participation of citizens in cultural life is a fundamental step towards more democratic societies. Cultural policies can become engines of empowerment.

2. BUILD CAPACITY

Building capacity is a never-ending story. Reality changes very fast (social and technological innovation, human mobility, threats to freedoms, ecological challenges) and cultural institutions and organizations that wish to play a role in shaping the future of Rome must be involved in constant processes of capacity-building. The following recommendations aim at reinforcing the tools available to all the members of the Roman cultural ecosystem to become more active players in the city, especially in the territorial dimension of the policies.

The territory

A new way to look at the territory is needed. The cultural policies need to better identify and empower micro-realities. It is necessary to define micro-communities within the districts, which have a greater identity of coexistence. Therefore, it is necessary to segment the territory of Rome much more, into one hundred neighborhoods, internally more homogeneous than the current 15 districts. At the same time, it is necessary to use a new terminology that breaks with the concept of center (where “there is a cultural life”) and periphery (where, often, “there are problems”).

Cultural infrastructure in the districts

A network of libraries already exists, and some districts have theatres; now, it is necessary to ensure that the districts have both multi-purpose and specialized cultural spaces to develop all kinds of cultural activity. These cultural centers should be at the service of the City Council of Rome, the cultural teams of the districts as well as local associations.

The presence of the City Council in the districts

The process of decentralization of the municipal structures is far from being completed. Each of the 15 districts should have staff attached to the

Department of Culture on the ground. Moreover, in the mid-term, the districts should have more autonomy and more budgetary resources to engage teams of professionals in cultural management who live and perform on the territory.

In the long-term, districts should have the capacity to apply a cultural policy adapted to the territory, always in accordance with the guidelines of the Department of Culture. (Today, some theaters in the districts far from the center have a large margin of action, more based on historical circumstances than on a political will to provide autonomy to the theaters of the territory.)

The role for libraries

Libraries play an important role on the territory, guarantee an institutional presence as no other sector does, welcome citizens as nobody else does and promote all other sectors of culture with concerts, performances, exhibitions, etc. Libraries are identified as the key cultural infrastructure for the new cultural policies of Rome. This role should be accompanied with decisions to improve the facilities and to provide them with more resources and professionals ready to become fully committed in the new direction.

3. ACTIVATE RESOURCES

Resources are fundamental for policies. They express the commitment of the government with the citizens and with the cultural actors. If the governance is shared, the capacity to identify new resources grows. The following recommendations aim at fostering the identification of new and suitable resources for the cultural policies in Rome.

External resources

The contributions of business agents to the cultural vitality of the city is important. Although private businesses are creating their own cultural events and projects, bridges need to exist between local cultural policies and those (mainly local or national) business and corporations that are not alien to authenticity. The programmes of corporate social responsibility that engage with the cultural values of the population and local culture, as well as the role of the local Chamber of Commerce, can be explored.

Dialogue with tourism

Although the current cultural policies of Rome place a great emphasis on putting residents first, it is obvious that strong relationships between cultural and tourism policies are needed. One of the results of the comparative report on cultural policies that are aware of the impact of tourism in European cities (undertaken by UCLG's Culture Committee in 2017-2018, see [here](#) and [here](#))

is the importance to understand that tourism follows the authenticity of local culture, and that cultural programmes and projects devoted to citizens can also be of interest to visitors.

Relationship with the media

The digital economy is based on cultural contents which are channeled mainly by private corporations such as Facebook or Amazon, which heavily influence the participation of citizens in cultural life. Besides, the media has still key actors (the critics) that prescribe quality. Public cultural programmes cannot avoid being active in all these channels.

4. CREATE NEW ENDEAVOURS

The conversations that lead to the elaboration and implementation of cultural policies often involve a limited number of the actors that are concerned by these policies. There are important actors, sectors or communities in Rome that can be invited to create new endeavours that are directly related to cultural policies. The following recommendations aim at identifying some of these endeavours.

Cross-sectional work

Many of the public cultural programmes of the city are today the result of collaboration and shared discussion. This approach needs to be continued and reach another step. The City Council should take a step further and carry out, every year or every two years, a shared city project based on culture. It can be an event, a celebration, an anniversary or a thematic year which brings together all the cultural agents of the city either public, private or civic. Each one should then introduce in its programming some element referring to this shared year. In some cases, choosing the topic could be decided with popular participatory systems.

Work on audiences

It is necessary to ensure that the new cultural policies, with innovative proposals, reach the segments of the population who, for one reason or another, have been left out of today's cultural participation. In some cases, the reasons for the lack of participation are related to age (e.g. teenagers or the elderly), to origin (e.g.: recently-arrived population), or to class (e.g. economically disadvantaged population), etc.

Attention to gender equality

Although there is a certain gender balance in terms of participation in cultural life, there is still room to improve in terms of the presence of elements related

to gender equality in cultural programmes. The majority of artists presented (concerts, plays, art exhibitions, etc.) are usually men. The same can be said about the management or direction of institutions or cultural spaces.

Attention to people's accessibility

The accessibility of the population with functional diversity (formerly known as physical, mental or intellectual disability) should be a basic priority for any government. These measures already exist in many countries and cities and include guaranteeing physical access for people with physical difficulties (ramps, special seats reserved in theatres, adapted WCs) and special projects for people with sensory difficulties (objects adapted to people with visual disabilities, subtitles for people with hearing needs.) and for people with intellectual or mental difficulties.

Mobility

The relation between participation in cultural life and territory brings mobility at the centre of the debate. Further to the improvement of its public transport services, especially the one that connects with the districts far from the center, Rome could imagine innovative ways to connect places and people. An example could be a special programme of cultural outings to discover new parts of the city to visit an exhibition, or attend a play or a concert. These activities, which could be organized together with neighborhood associations, have a high potential of social cohesion because of their relational nature. The outings could go in all directions: one evening at a theater in the center or a Saturday at a traditional party far from the center.

CHAPTER 6. Final words

The elaboration of the document you are reading is framed in the joint initiative of the local government of Rome and the UCLG Culture Committee on the feasibility of a “2020 ROME CHARTER” on the Right to Participate in Cultural Life. The analysis feasibility of this initiative began in September 2019 and was informed by the fact that the Statement of Local and Regional Group in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit that had taken place in New York in September 2019 (SDG Summit) includes this paragraph:

We commit to promote culture as the fourth pillar of development and as a core component of local identity, and its role as a strand of global solidarity, and as a vector for peace and human rights. We further commit to foster locally relevant cultural policies and programmes on memory, heritage, creativity, diversity and knowledge which are key for local sustainable development.

There is ground to support the initiative of the local government of Rome and the UCLG Culture Committee to elaborate a “2020 ROME CHARTER”, because (a) locally, the document would become useful, as a commitment of Rome with their citizens, for the long-term consolidation of a new wave of cultural policies, and (b) globally, the document would become an example that may inspire other cities around the world.

The contents of a “2020 ROME CHARTER” would (a) include the most compelling framework on cultural rights, (b) become prototype for a new narrative of cities and rights, that would include innovative and accountable targets and indicators, and (c) emphasize cultural rights in dialogue with the other rights, because all individual rights meet in the “life in the city”.

At the time of closing the document you are reading (December 2019) the preparatory work of a “2020 ROME CHARTER” has begun.

CREDITS

A draft version of this report was written by David Roselló and the Secretariat of UCLG Culture Committee on 7 November 2019. The final version of this report was finished on 12 December 2019.

The report is based on:

(a) Policy documents provided by Rome City Council

(b) Meetings held by David Roselló, as expert of the UCLG Culture Committee, on 23-27 September 2019 in Rome with:

- *Luca Bergamo / ViceMayor and Councillor for Cultural Development*
- *Francesca Corona / Co-director, Teatro India (Teatro di Roma)*
- *Luigi Corvo / Professor, Università Tor Vergata*
- *José Ramon Dosal / CEO, Fondazione Musica per Roma*
- *Fiorella Farinelli / Member of the Board, Istituzione Biblioteche Roma Capitale*
- *Alessandro Gisonda / IV Borough Deputy Mayor for culture*
- *Eleonora Guadagno / President of the Cultural Committee of Rome City Council*
- *Andrea Masala / Executive member of ARCI committee*
- *Fabio Merosi / CEO, Azienda Speciale Palaexpo*
- *Emiliano Paoletti / Chief of Staff, ViceMayor for Cultural Development*
- *Davide Paterna / President, Open House Roma*
- *Carla Schiavone / Senior Advisor, ViceMayor for Cultural Development*
- *Vincenzo Vastola / Director of Cultural Department Roma Capitale*
- *Maria Vittoria Clarelli / Superintendence Roma Capitale*

(c) Policy documents by UCLG Culture Committee

CONTACTS

For more information on this article:

Department of cultural development, Roma Capitale

Luca Bergamo, Deputy Mayor on Cultural Development

Web: www.comune.roma.it/web/it/roma-statistica-cultura-e-sport.page

Tw: [@culturaaroma](https://twitter.com/culturaaroma)

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

David Rosselló, Expert: david@nexecultural.com

Email: culture@uclg.org

Web: www.agenda21culture.net

Tw: [@agenda21culture](https://twitter.com/agenda21culture)

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