

Creativity

For the 10th anniversary of the Agenda 21 for culture, several thematic notes have been written.

Each note capitalizes our knowledge, quoting drafts we have produced during 10 years, and other basic documents.

These notes have been elaborated by Mariona Peraire and Joana Valent (Ramon Llull University, Barcelona) and Jordi Pascual (UCLG Culture committee coordinator).



“**Creativity, knowledge, diversity and beauty** are essential premises for dialogue for peace and progress, as they are intrinsically related to human development and freedom.” [Web Agenda 21 for culture: Cultural policies and sustainable development.](#)

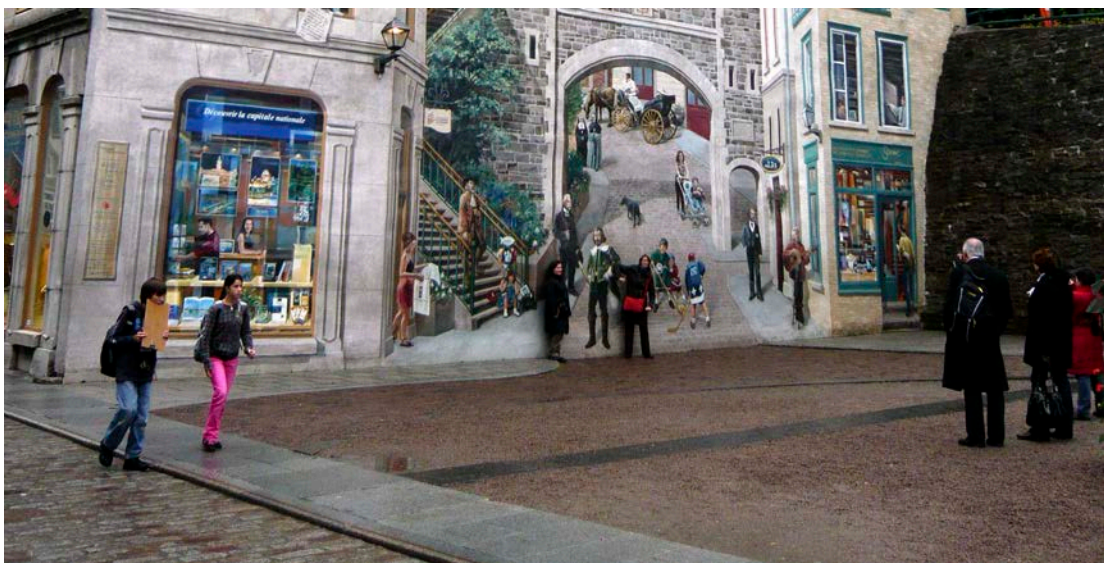
“**Cultural heritage, tangible and intangible**, testifies to human creativity and forms the bedrock underlying the identity of peoples. Cultural life contains both the wealth of being able to appreciate and treasure traditions of all peoples and an opportunity to enable the creation and innovation of endogenous cultural forms. These qualities preclude any imposition of rigid cultural models.” [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 9.](#)

“Access to the cultural and symbolic universe at all stages of life, from childhood to old age, is a fundamental element in the shaping of **sensitivity, expressiveness and coexistence** and the **construction of citizenship**.” [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 13](#).

“**Work is one of the principle spheres of human creativity**. Its cultural dimension must be recognized and developed. The organization of work and the involvement of businesses in the city or territory must respect this dimension as one of the basic elements in human dignity and sustainable development.” [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 15](#).

“Creativity has always been the **hallmark of the human spirit**, of our capability to imagine new forms of truth, beauty and justice. But today, creativity is also the **critical basis of diversity**, in the face of the forces of cultural homogenization. Creativity recognizes no border and thrives on dialogue, exchange and interaction. And creativity is always janus-faced, drawing on memory and heritage to imagine the new and the possible.” **UNESCO**, [Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity](#) (2001), accompanying document.

“**We live in the age of creativity**. Creativity is the core of capability in culture. Traditional models are not feasible any more. Creativity in any sense is an important part of the Agenda 21 for culture in the current post-industrial world which is virtually impacted by the changes in the global culture where top positions are given to the creative industry innovators and representatives.” **Biljana Mickov**, researcher and cultural manager, in [“The Agenda 21 for culture in the town of Novi Sad”](#), *Report 5: Cities, cultures and developments. A report that marks the fifth anniversary of Agenda 21 for culture* (2009).



The commitments of the A21C on creativity:

- a) To boost the strategic role of the **cultural industries and the local media** for their contribution to local identity, creative continuity and job creation. [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 30](#).
- b) To implement measures to **decentralize** cultural policies and resources, legitimating the creative originality of the so-called **peripheries**, favoring the vulnerable sectors of society and defending the principle of the right of all the citizens to culture and knowledge without discrimination. That determination does not mean avoiding central responsibilities and, in particular, responsibility for funding any decentralization project. [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 28](#).

- c) **To invite creators and artists to commit themselves to the city** by identifying the problems and conflicts of our society, improving coexistence and quality of life, increasing the creative and critical capacity of all citizens and, especially, cooperating to contribute to the resolution of the challenges faces by the cities. [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 35.](#)
- d) To generate **coordination between cultural and education policies**, encouraging the promotion of creativity and sensitivity and the relations between cultural expressions of the territory and the education system. [Agenda 21 for culture, Article 38.](#)



“Energetic local cultural production is the foundation of a healthy arts ecology. It is also at the foundation of much more: our sense of ourselves, our sense of each other, our collective memories, our collective problem-solving capacities, our pleasure in living. I simply do not understand how investment in local culture-making is not a top priority for any government committed to sustainability, social justice or democracy.” **Jon Hawkes**, Resident Cultural Analyst for the Cultural Development Network (Victoria) and author of ‘*The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture’s essential role in public planning*’, in [“Challenges for local cultural development \(abridged\)”](#), Report 5: *Cities, cultures and developments. A report that marks the fifth anniversary of Agenda 21 for culture* (2009)

“Local governors/policy and decision makers should incorporate the ‘arts and culture’ in their annual planning sessions. (...) Whether it is about restoring cultural heritage or developing a modern performing arts center, culture is central to local development from urban to rural and anything in between them.” **Nil Sismanyazici-Navaie**, Arts for Global Development, Inc., in [“Achieving Millenium Development Goals with local creativity”](#), Report 2: *Culture, local governments and Millenium Development Goals* (2009).

“The **creative economy** is not only one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the world economy, it is also a highly transformative one in terms of income generation, job creation and export earnings. But this is not all there is to it. For unlocking the potential of the creative economy also means promoting the overall creativity of societies, affirming the distinctive identity of the places where it flourishes and clusters, improving the quality of life there, enhancing local image and prestige, and strengthening the resources for the imagining of **diverse new futures.**”

Based in Pikine, Senegal, the association Africulturban has recently created a “Hip Hop Akademy” that offers training for young people in graphic design, sound design, music and video production (...). The objective of this original programme is to train future professionals so that they can perform in a market that is in perpetual artistic and technological evolution. (...) The Chiang Mai Creative City initiative, a think tank, activity and networking platform in the largest and most culturally significant city of northern Thailand, is a cooperative venture

managed by members of the education, private and government sectors, as well as local community groups. (...) The initiative aims to make the city more attractive as a place to live, work and invest in." **UNESCO and UNDP**, [Creative Economy Report \(2013\)](#).

"Cities are competing to attract the global tourist, the global investor and the global creative class. To withstand this competition, the cities and towns invest in a coherent identity and image policy. Culture is one important tool to be a successful competitor. Therefore, a lot of cities in Europe, including the city of Berlin, claim to be not only a metropolis but a cultural metropolis. (...) One can assume that without an identity policy that is dedicated to the city and its citizens, every image policy will fail: the more globalized our cities are becoming, the more individually-shaped city profiles are needed." **Bettina Heinrich**, Head of Department for Fundamental Cultural Policy Issues, Senate Chancellery of the Governing Mayor of Berlin (2007-2009), in ["Changing Cities and the New Role for Urban Cultural Policy – Perspective from Germany"](#), *Report 5: Cities, cultures and developments. A report that marks the fifth anniversary of Agenda 21 for culture (2009)*.

"Feverish instrumental overkill dries up these sources. Art, science, need **humble generosity**. Don't invest in quick returns only. (...) Indeed, recent years have seen a tremendous hype regarding the role of the 'creative class' in urban development contexts worldwide. (...) Fine, if we take that as an indicator of substantially greater attention being paid to the role of the arts and the cultural field in tackling pending urban dilemmas. (...) Of course, cities must forcefully develop their creative potential – without fooling themselves. There is more needed for growth than creativity and more than creativity prescribed by the fashion doctor. Cities must be generous and patient with their creative assets; gains can flow from the sources of the seemingly useless, unexpectedly and often late. Developing a viable urban cultural life which harvests creativity requires **strong, supportive and long-term policies**." **Gottfried Wagner**, Director of the European Cultural Foundation (ECF), and **Philipp Dietachmair**, Senior Policy Development Officer at the European Cultural Foundation (ECF), in ["The Morning After : Cultural City Development after the Creative Hype"](#), *Report 5: Cities, cultures and developments. A report that marks the fifth anniversary of Agenda 21 for culture (2009)*.

"Government may be the biggest threat to local cultural development, but it is also its greatest **hope**. State-supported creative approaches to facilitating local cultural development have the **potential** to take us many steps toward resolving the crisis we are in." **Jon Hawkes**, Resident Cultural Analyst for the Cultural Development Network (Victoria) and author of 'The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's essential role in public planning', in ["Challenges for local cultural development \(abridged\)"](#), *Report 5: Cities, cultures and developments. A report that marks the fifth anniversary of Agenda 21 for culture (2009)*.

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