

Towards a New Global Policy Framework for Cultural Rights: *Culture 21 PLUS*

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Abstract

In the context of the efforts of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in the implementation of a new social contract that meets the needs and aspirations of cities and regions worldwide, “The UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity: for the People, for the Planet, for the Governments,” the UCLG Culture Committee is developing a new rights-based global framework for culturally vibrant and equitable sustainable cities, “Culture 21 PLUS,” as a renovation of “Culture 21: Actions,” the guide to implement Agenda 21 for Culture. This article presents the draft Culture 21 PLUS, a document to be published in 2025, which builds on research informed by UCLG and UCLG Culture Committee policy documents and resources, as well as contributions of UCLG members, consultation mechanisms, and partners on the latest elements of the international debate on culture, cultural rights and sustainable development, and provides insights on the ongoing drafting process. Elaborating on the interlinkages between current public policy-making and local cultural practices and their innovative approaches to local and global challenges, and providing the essential pathways for transformative cultural narratives in sustainable cities and territories, this article also shows further opportunities for testing the guide in cities and for enriching learning and capacity-building programmes on culture and sustainable development.

Keywords: cultural rights, cultural policies, sustainable development agendas, local and regional governments, global challenges, Culture Goal

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1. Introduction

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a global platform of cities which represents, defends, and amplifies the voices of local and regional governments at the international level. An unequivocal commitment to sustainable development and cultural rights is reflected in numerous UCLG documents. In 2004, UCLG adopted the founding document of the UCLG Culture Committee, the Agenda 21 for Culture. This is a declaration with 67 articles that prove the relationship between local cultural policies and human rights, governance, sustainable development, participatory democracy, and peace.

Over the years, the UCLG Culture Committee has reinforced its commitment to strengthen cultural rights in local and regional policies and decision-making and promote their acknowledgement as fundamental elements of peaceful, diverse, and flourishing cities and territories. Significant steps towards this goal include: Culture 21: Actions (2015), the Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals guide (2018), the observatory of good practices “OBS,” the UCLG Culture Summit, the UCLG–Mexico City–Culture 21 International Award, the Rome Charter (2020), and the Seven Keys programme. These provide resources to operationalize innovative cultural policies based on human rights that place cultural rights at the core of the global conversation on sustainable development.

As a step forward in the development of transformative cultural policies based on cultural rights, and with the commitment to uphold the “UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity: for the People, for the Planet, for the Governments” (hereafter referred to as “UCLG Pact”), the UCLG Culture Committee has started shaping a roadmap for local cultural policy-making in the next few years. As a new rights-based global frame for culturally vibrant and equitable sustainable cities to be published in 2025, the new “Culture 21 PLUS” contributes to this endeavour. Culture 21 PLUS stems from the work and efforts of cities such as Jinju, a Leading City of the UCLG Culture Committee that committed to mainstreaming cultural rights in its local policies, and will have an influence on local cultural policies in the world’s cities in the coming years. The first-ever workshop to test

Culture 21 PLUS was held in Jinju on July 6, 2023, marking the launch of the Jinju Leading City programme of the UCLG Culture Committee. To date, other tests have been held in Mexico City (on September 8, 2023) and Lisbon (on November 13, 2023).

2. A Rights-based Approach to Cultural Policies: The UCLG Culture Committee's Founding Documents and Learning Programmes

In the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the right to take part in cultural life was recognized as a human right, leading to several implications on cultural policies. In the last decade, the successive UN Special Rapporteurs in the field of cultural rights have unfolded the specific connotations of a human rights-based approach to cultural policies. Farida Shaheed stressed the right of individuals and groups, the majority and minority, citizens and migrants, of access to, identification, interpretation, development, and enjoyment of cultural heritage connected the design and implementation of preservation/safeguard policies and programmes (Shaheed, 2011). Karima Bennoune emphasized the impact of the destruction of cultural heritage on the right to take part in cultural life (Bennoune, 2016) and Alexandra Xanthaki addressed the role of cultural resources and cultural rights in the pursuit of a more sustainable development as well as the crucial contribution of cultural awareness to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to implement the 2030 UN Agenda (Xanthaki, 2022).

Since the adoption in 2004 of the foundational document of the UCLG Culture Committee, Agenda 21 for Culture, a solid narrative has been developed at local and global levels, affirming cultural rights as inherent of sustainable development. This narrative has gained a vital importance over the years, consolidating culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development and placing it at the heart of local action and global development agendas. Innovative approaches have also been

promoted, such as a new concept of “circular culture” presented in the final declaration of the 4th UCLG Culture Summit in Izmir, which can be explained as “Harmony with nature, Harmony with the past, Harmony with each other and, last but not least, Harmony with change” (UCLG 2021b). The Leading Cities, Pilot Cities and Culture 21 LAB programmes are some of the operational driving forces behind this process. They are geared toward increasing knowledge, connectivity, and the operational capacity of cities that work on the relationship between citizenship, culture, and sustainable development. Such programmes are based on the international guide, Culture 21: Actions (UCLG Culture Committee 2015). From October 2013 to November 2014, debates, discussions, and dissemination of Culture 21: Actions took place in cities worldwide with local debates on its contents and implementation organised by Pilot Cities.

The adoption of Culture 21: Actions during the first-ever UCLG Culture Summit, held in Bilbao in 2015, has allowed active cities to further develop the exercise of public policy-making and local cultural practice. Cities and regions have designed innovative and effective cultural policies, programmes, and actions in the context of crisis that address local challenges and the needs of inhabitants, paying particular attention to disadvantaged and structurally discriminated groups and ensuring the right to participate in cultural life as a vital condition for democracy and sustainable development (Barbieri 2021). Culture 21: Actions provides a detailed and concrete framework supported by “9 Commitments and 100 Actions” that are both achievable and measurable. It systematically addresses the relation between culture and sustainable development in cities and allows self-evaluation and peer-learning.

The “Seven Keys” learning and capacity-building programme, based on the document *Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals: A Guide for Local Action*, published by UCLG in 2018, has also contributed to strengthening the role of culture and cultural rights in sustainable development agendas, namely the 2030 UN Agenda and the 17 SDGs, by making explicit the cultural perspective in the localisation of these goals. The Culture 21 PLUS builds on all these acquis and resources to shape a new global policy framework for cultural rights for cities worldwide.

3. Culture 21 PLUS: Towards a New Rights-based Global Frame for Culturally Vibrant and Equitable Sustainable Cities

In the same way that Culture 21: Actions came about in 2013 when cities asked for a guide that could operationalize the Agenda 21 for Culture, cities are now calling for deeper understanding of global challenges and their connection to local policies. Local and regional governments are asking for a renewed guide to broaden the interlinkages of sustainable, equitable, and vibrant cultural ecosystems with cultural rights and issues such as inequalities, health, gender, and climate change. With this commitment, the process of elaboration of Culture 21 PLUS has started in 2023, based on the experiences drawn from the implementation of Culture 21: Actions. Culture 21 PLUS will use local knowledge and the specific experiences of territories by carrying out pioneer tests in the cities of Jinju, Mexico City and Lisbon, just as Culture 21: Actions did 10 years ago with almost 30 cities around the world such as Belo Horizonte, Bogotá, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Concepción, Dakar, Gabrovo, Lyon, Milan, Montréal, Newcastle, Rabat, Talca, Tunis, Haikou, Santiago de Chile, and Vaudreuil-Dorion (UCLG Culture Committee 2018).

The objective of Culture 21 PLUS is two-fold: by examining Culture 21: Actions, it shapes the roadmap for local cultural policy-making in the coming years, thus renovating the learning and capacity-building programmes offered by UCLG to cities and Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) worldwide. It responds as well to the necessity of unfolding with care-based and rights-based concrete actions the current political mandate of the UCLG Pact, adopted in October 2022 at the UCLG World Congress in Daejeon.

To be published in 2025 by UCLG, Culture 21 PLUS will establish a new rights-based global frame that is coherently aligned with the Pact: “(. . .) incorporating the right to the city as universal citizenship with renewed sets of cultural rights such as the right to discover, create, share, enjoy and protect the local community’s cultural roots, expressions and resources as a building block of peace and wellbeing in all cities and regions” (UCLG 2022). LRGs must guarantee the capabilities of all citizens to participate

fully and freely in the cultural life of communities, as stated in the Rome Charter (UCLG 2020).

LRGs and other local stakeholders are particularly well-positioned to identify obstacles to exercising cultural rights and to build the necessary capacities to fulfil such rights. In this regard, the guide is informed by the efforts made by UCLG cities and regions to adapt their policies and programmes in order to keep their communities alive, hopeful, and creative, preventing inequalities and exclusion, and promoting culture and the free exercise of cultural rights as an important part of the caring system in the face of global events such as health and economic crises, complex emergencies, and pressures threatening the protection of cultural and natural heritage (UCLG 2020).

The initial draft is also fed by the latest developments in global cultural policies, including key milestones for the UCLG Culture Committee such as the reports on gender equality and climate resilient development, written in 2021 by the former UN Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights Farida Shaheed (Shaheed 2021), and the former coordinator of the Climate Heritage Network Andrew Potts (Potts 2021). The 5th edition of the International Award UCLG–Mexico City–Culture 21 (2021) was dedicated to innovative cultural rights and policies based on care and the achievements of the Culture2030Goal Campaign, which presented a proposal for a “Culture Goal” (Culture 2030 Goal Campaign 2022) at the international conference on cultural rights “Mondiacult+40” in Mexico City in September 2022.

The contents of Culture 21 PLUS also draw on the founding documents and learning programmes of the UCLG Culture Committee. A swift comparison with its preceding document, Culture 21: Actions, reveals some upgrades: (a) Culture 21 PLUS updates Culture 21: Actions and explores the interaction of culture with other policy areas for the achievement of sustainable development, including both positive and negative impacts; (b) Culture 21 PLUS not only allows for self-assessment of cultural policies, but also includes new methodologies for policy design at different levels that are still being explored; and (c) Culture 21 PLUS not only strengthens UCLG’s vision of culture as a pillar of sustainable development, but also

aligns with the UCLG Pact and reinforces the international advocacy work for a stand-alone Culture Goal, reflecting the learnings that the #Culture2030goal global campaign has developed through the last 10 years.

Whereas both guides are applicable all over the world and their values are based on the practical experiences of cities and local governments, Culture 21 PLUS further expands the notion of culture, raising awareness on the role of culture as part of the solution to the challenges of humanity and offering pathways to achieve the goals towards sustainable development while also putting care at the centre of local policies. Culture 21 PLUS stems from the knowledge and know-how of cities like Jinju City that have recently developed rights-based cultural policies, programmes, and activities. It is based on a wide range of experiences at the local level of cities and regions with different sizes and geopolitical contexts that nevertheless share similar problems and interests affected by globalisation, such as health crises, immigration, digitalisation, job creation, social cohesion, use of public space, and public services provision.

3.1. Challenges

Cultural rights are a crucial element for an enhanced response to local and global challenges and crises, namely those related to diversity and inclusion, gender equality, and climate change, among others. The multi-dimensional rights-based perspective of Culture 21 PLUS,¹ including an intersectional and cross-cutting approach to policy areas, can rejuvenate the transformation of cities into territories of equal opportunities for the whole of society in its diversity and complexity.

Global debates recognize the importance of cultural diversity in shaping human identities as a key factor for social harmony and peace. To achieve local sustainable development, it is vital that local cultural policies deeply consider diversity, heritage, and creativity, as stated by Culture 21: Actions. Culture 21 PLUS addresses the integration of multicultural,

1. See section 3.2. “Pathways” for more information on UCLG Culture Committee innovative approaches in the interaction of culture with sustainable development.

intercultural, and intergenerational strategies, with attention to indigenous peoples, minorities, and migrant communities including the issue of the legacy of colonialism in urban planning, public art, museums, and socio-cultural programming, as well as in economic and governance structures, and reconsidering the hegemonic narrative which takes into account the views built on the margins of official discourses.

From a gender perspective, since the adoption of the 2030 UN Agenda and the SDGs and the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, gender equality has progressed worldwide thanks to a multitude of efforts. Yet the COVID-19 crisis brought to surface the extent to which inequalities persist. In 2021, UCLG reiterated its championing of gender equality as a human right in *A Global Feminist Municipal Movement—The Transformative Commitment of Cities and Territories to Generation Equality* (UCLG 2021a). The UCLG Culture Committee is committed to strengthening women's leadership in cultural policies and decision-making and promoting the recognition of women's contributions to the cultural life and heritage of cities.

Culture 21 PLUS is aligned with this vision. Following the findings and recommendations of the report *Cultural Actions Supporting Gender Equality in Cities and Territories* commissioned by the UCLG Culture Committee and written by Farida Shaheed in 2021, it identifies a list of key actions to be considered first and foremost by cities and local governments in their policies relating to gender equality and culture. Special emphasis is put on planning cities from a gender approach, considering that city narratives and heritage—present in the names of streets, parks, buildings, monuments, statues, and public portraits as well as in stories and voices at public events such as concerts and festivals, and in local museums and cultural centres—reflect societal exclusions that must be addressed (Shaheed 2021).

UCLG committed as well to another major global challenge, climate action and the increased awareness of the impacts of climate change from a local perspective, through the principle of ecological transition in the UCLG Durban Political Declaration (2019) and the UCLG manifestos: “Ecology for the Future,” “The Future of Culture,” and “The Future of

Resilience”; the “Culture for Climate Agenda: Unleashing the Power of Culture as a Pillar of Climate Action,” elaborated by various civil society networks for the UCLG World Congress and Summit of Local and Regional Leaders in 2022;² and the commitments to transform the planet of the UCLG Pact.

The UCLG Culture Committee also moved towards engagement with climate action and its relation to culture in 2015, dedicating one of the nine commitments of Culture 21: Actions to “Culture and environment”, publishing the “Culture, Climate Change and Sustainable Development: Briefing” (2016), and commissioning the report *The Role of Culture in Climate Resilient Development*, written in 2021 by the former coordinator of the Climate Heritage Network, Andrew Potts. This report advances an understanding of the cultural enabling conditions of pathways towards climate-resilient futures and the potential of culture-based strategies to realise them. It draws on research and 33 summarised case studies, shares six policy areas for consideration by cities and local governments as well as relevant stakeholders in their local policies as entry points for further development: (1) Imagine New Futures; (2) Understand Climate Vulnerability; (3) Engage with Carbon; (4) Engage with Diverse Partners; (5) Seek out Synergies; Prepare for Trade-Offs; and (6) Pay Attention to Equity and Climate Justice (Potts 2021).

Grounded in the findings set out in this research and related documents, Culture 21 PLUS explores the often-forgotten cultural dimension of the ecological crisis and builds on the measures designed and implemented by local governments and civil society to help address the complex climate challenges that cities and regions are facing. It promotes

2. The Climate Heritage Network, Climate Chance, Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature, the International Indigenous Women’s Forum and MCR2030 formed the “Climate and Culture” Town Hall Track at the 2022 World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders and UCLG World Congress. The Town Hall Track was part of the structured dialogue between the local and regional governments constituency and internationally organized civil society. This dialogue was strengthened by the presence of 3 cross-cutting caucuses (youth, feminism and accessibility) and the contribution of UCLG UBUNTU Advisors.

a system of climate planning that can unlock the power of culture to drive climate mitigation, adaptation, planning for loss and damage, and action for climate empowerment. All those efforts focus on a necessary care-based perspective.

3.2. Pathways

Culture 21 PLUS offers solid pathways that can boost a cultural transformation to further advance towards sustainable cities and territories. This transformation may help address actions, beliefs, traditions, rituals, and customs which can legitimize discrimination, marginalization, and violence, preventing the inclusion of all experiences, views, needs, and aspirations, and which also can curtail the potential of human development, including meaningful engagement in cultural life (UCLG Culture Committee 2023). Acknowledging that “Culture is the core of being human: it embodies our collective humanity, with all its fragilities and imperfections: creative geniuses, pursuit of knowledge, innovation and pleasure but also the flip side: prejudices and exclusionary behaviours” (Shaheed 2021), Culture 21 PLUS focuses not only on what helps building inclusive and dynamic cultural ecosystems, but also on what prevents them from thriving. This idea is developed in a new analysis elaborated by the Culture Committee on the interaction of cultural elements with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 UN Agenda.

The “Analysis of the interactions between culture and the SDGs” (UCLG Cultural Committee 2023) was included in the recently published report “A cultural boost in the achievement of the SDGs: How local and regional governments are promoting cultural heritage and sustainable cities and territories,” as one of the papers of the Global Taskforce (GTF) of Local and Regional Governments’ 7th annual report *Towards the Localization of the SDGs*. This annual report was presented on 16 July 2023 at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) held in New York. In the culture paper, a series of short statements derived from a literature review of UCLG document illustrate real existing interactions among cultural policies, programmes, and actions, and the achievement

of each one of the 17 SDGs, using a seven-point ordinal scale from minus 3 (-3) to plus 3 (+3). This methodology, used by the International Council for Science in 2016 in *A Guide to SDG Interactions* (ICSU 2017, 23) allows a visual synthesis of the synergies in green and the trade-offs in red of cultural elements and the SDGs. In figure 1, statements are layered over each other at different heights, displaying colour grading according to their level of relevance.

As an example, the following are two of the 147 statements of the analysis. It shows the interaction of “Recognition of cultural diversity as a goal in cultural policies, and integration of intercultural dialogue and active participation to address migration, refugee and internal displacement” with SDG 10 at a score of plus 3 (+3); and the interaction of “Cultural narratives and practices that go against human rights and democratic processes and that legitimize the violation of the rights of women, girls and other people for their sexual orientation and gender identity” with SDG 5 at a score of minus 3 (-3).

This analysis provides a holistic overview of the role of culture in



Figure 1. Interaction of culture and the SDGs

sustainable development. Among positive interactions, it features culture and heritage as enablers and key conditions for sustainable development and the unique assets of cities and territories as well as the importance of cultural landscapes to strengthen the relationship between humans and nature and the relevance of cultural plans to revitalize neighbourhoods to promote decentralization. Among negative interactions, it includes the need for both the cultural sector and cultural policies to better address issues related to gentrification and the resulting loss of identity of urban areas, and the environmental impact of mobility for cultural purposes. The main conclusion lies in the consideration of cultural policies, practices, and actors as key for the achievement of all SDGs. Positive and negative interactions may be seen either as priority areas or as areas in which cultural elements need to be considered.

This research will continue until 2024, with the hypothesis that the best way to fully integrate culture into the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development is through the creation of a dedicated Culture Goal (SDG 18). This goal would enable the achievement of all SDGs, while providing coherence to policies and programmes and empowering all stakeholders with particular emphasis on the cultural sector.

Such is the vision promoted by the #Culture2030Goal campaign, which was formed by global cultural networks that advocate for the role of culture in sustainable development since 2013. The campaign called for culture to be included in what would become “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. Through the years, the #Culture2030Goal campaign has produced a number of documents and organised high-level events to influence the global development agendas, including in-depth analyses of cultural elements in Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs),³ and the participation in

3. See the reports *Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda* (2019) and *Culture in the Localization of the SDGs: An Analysis of Voluntary Local Reviews* (2022), which show the growing presence of cultural elements in their implementation of the 2030 UN Agenda.

the Mondiacult+40 global conference, organized by UNESCO and the Government of Mexico in 2022. At this conference, the #Culture2030Goal campaign presented the document “A Culture Goal Is Essential for Our Common Future,” a zero draft of a dedicated goal to “ensure cultural sustainability for the wellbeing of all.” This draft includes 10 cultural rights-based targets (Culture 2030 Goal Campaign 2022).

In the last decade, LRGs have also put together a global vision that enhances the potential of cultural rights to meet the challenges of humankind, establishing a Culture Goal in the global development agenda that is indispensable for moving forward with care-based, democracy-based solutions. Since March 2013, UCLG’s role as facilitator of the Global Taskforce of LRGs includes promoting culture as part of LRGs inputs to the 2030 UN Agenda of Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda. In 2022, the Global Taskforce released a statement calling Mondiacult+40 to urge for a dedicated Culture Goal in post-2030 global development agendas. The final declaration of Mondiacult+40 featured a set of cultural rights that must be at the core of public policies, including the social and economic rights of artists, artistic freedom, the right of indigenous communities to safeguard and transmit ancestral knowledge, and the protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage. The declaration also affirmed the need “to firmly anchor culture as a global public good, and to integrate it as a specific goal in its own right in the development agenda beyond 2030.” Global progress in this direction is positive, and more recently, in September 2023, the G20 Leaders Declaration mentioned the need of a standalone Culture Goal as well.

4. Structure, Self-assessment and Policy Design Methodologies

In terms of structure, Culture 21 PLUS comprises six blocks—Rights, Communities, Prosperity, Territories, Nature, and Governance—and 30 areas. Each area incorporates a list of 200 specific objectives that provide detailed guidance for the work of local governments. All categories are

distributed under the three key cornerstones of the UCLG Pact for the Future of Humanity: People (blocks 2 and 3), Planet (blocks 4 and 5) and Governments (blocks 1 and 6).

- Block 1: “Rights” addresses cultural rights and the vitality of artistic ecosystems, with the concept of common good and co-management mechanisms for public services in culture as some of the key elements;
- Block 2: “Communities” focuses mainly on social issues, such as inclusion, health, education, gender equality, and peace, considering traditional knowledge and vulnerable and fragile groups;
- Block 3: “Prosperity” looks into economy, decent work, tourism, and technology, incorporating concepts such as gentrification;
- Block 4: “Territories” is about urban and territorial planning, including cultural heritage, public art, architecture, and design as well as approaches like decolonial narratives in the analysis of public space;
- Block 5: “Nature” addresses environmental issues such as natural heritage and landscapes, biodiversity, climate change, and ecological transition as well as food and gastronomy as some of its main elements; and
- Block 6: “Governance” looks at the core of cultural policies and participation mechanisms, including communication to enhance effectiveness, transparency, and trust.

As mentioned in section 3, Culture 21 PLUS not only allows self-assessment of cultural policies as does Culture 21: Actions, but develops new methodologies for rights-based policy design at different levels according to the needs and interests of cities. Cities are invited to identify local challenges and work with either the six blocks and 30 areas or the 200 actions, reflecting on their connection to cultural policies and programmes and prioritising some of them in order to agree on concrete and feasible actions for a cultural strategy based on cultural rights and sustainable development. The 5th UCLG Culture Summit, held in Dublin from 28 November to 1 December 2023, allocated one session to introduce Culture 21 PLUS to members and partners, and to showcase the first results of the tests conducted in Jinju City, Mexico City and Lisbon.



Figure 2. Blocks and areas of Culture 21 PLUS

4.1. Working with Culture 21 PLUS in Jinju City

The city of Jinju became a Pilot City of UCLG Culture Committee in 2019. During the course of this programme, Jinju, which was designed as a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art, conducted two self-assessment workshops that identified the strengths and weaknesses of its cultural policies in relation to sustainable development. This led to policy innovation in the form of specific measures: first, strengthening the local artistic ecosystem in the crafts field; second, encouraging the

participation of vulnerable social groups living in rural areas in cultural life; and third, fostering cultural and creative uses of public space (UCLG Culture Committee 2020b). Recommendations highlighted in the final conference organised on 28 June 2022 included the need to keep including marginalized groups in local cultural life, the internationalisation of the city's cultural assets, and the effective use of public space to promote cultural activities for all (UCLG Culture Committee 2022).

The success of Jinju's participation in the Pilot Cities Global programme allowed for its involvement in the Leading Cities programme, designed for cities with experience implementing cultural rights and sustainable development policies.⁴ In this framework, and as an activity of a Leading City, Jinju was the first ever city in the world to organise a consultation workshop, on 6 July 2023, to analyse the first draft of Culture 21 PLUS and to identify the connections of local cultural policies with the six blocks and 30 areas of the document. The inputs provided by the participants to the questions: "What is the block with the highest relevance for Jinju?," "What are the areas with the highest relevance for Jinju," and "Which areas could be worth deepening in the framework of the Jinju Leading City programme?" will be reflected in the final version of the document and will nurture the ongoing consultation process and a longer-term plan for Jinju based on the collective reflections, experiences, and lessons learned.

The results of the workshop, held at the Jinju Culture and Tourism Foundation premises, show that "Prosperity" was chosen by participants as the most relevant block, followed by "Rights" and "Territories." Regarding the most meaningful areas of Culture 21 PLUS at present, participants chose "Decent work and socioeconomic conditions for artists and cultural workers" in first place, "Culture and citizen participation" in second place, and "Social cohesion, inclusion, poverty and inequalities" and "Culture and education" tied for third place. The area with most votes for improvement

4. See the webpage <https://www.agenda21culture.net/our-cities/jinju> for more information on Jinju's developments as a Pilot City and a Leading City of the UCLG Culture Committee.

in the framework of the Jinju Leading City programme was “System of cultural public management,” followed by “Culture and education,” “Cultural and creative industries, employment and livelihoods,” “Decent work and socio-economic conditions for artists and cultural workers,” “Culture and sustainable tourism,” and “Culture and climate change.”



Figures 3 and 4. Culture 21 PLUS workshop in Jinju, July 6, 2023

Participants also linked some local cultural policies and programmes to relevant areas, such as the Artists-in-Residence Programme, the Jinju Folk Art Dissemination Project, and the K-Entrepreneurship Centre. These results were presented on 7 July 2023, at the 8th Jinju UNESCO Creative Cities International Forum, entitled “Establishment and Vitalization of Cultural Ecosystems,” and the formal UCLG Leading City Opening.

5. Conclusions

Cultural rights are the key for sustainable cultural policies, thereby creating peaceful, diverse, inclusive, and thriving cities and territories. Establishing and sustaining a vital cultural ecosystem takes time, resources, resilience, willingness, and a sound rights-based local policy framework grounded on the experience of cities and regions around the world. By guaranteeing cultural rights, local and regional governments enable the capacities of people to discover, create, share, enjoy, and protect common cultural expressions and resources (UCLG 2020) and to imagine collectively and creatively a better future for humankind.

Culture 21 PLUS is a new global policy framework for cultural rights that builds on the acquis and experiences of UCLG cities that updates the UCLG Culture Committee guide Culture 21: Actions for better local sustainable cultural policies through concrete and measurable actions aimed at addressing the most urgent global challenges.

With commitment and determination, cities such as Jinju are shaping this new policy framework for cultural rights, Culture 21 PLUS, which is aligned with global development agendas and upholds the UCLG Pact. Cities from around the world are invited to test the guide and co-create a suitable framework ensuring cultural rights for all.

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