E CULTURE 2

MPAIGN

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# EXECUTIVE
# SUMMARY

Taking into account the global "acquis" on culture in sustainable development and the body of existing knowledge and extremely relevant initiatives that are explicitly or implicitly connecting culture to the SDGs, it is sad to confirm that **the potential to relate culture to the SDGs appears to remain largely untapped in national strategies to implement the SDGs**. To a large extent, this results from the feeble presence of explicit references to culture in the text of the 2030 Agenda, but it is also because the implementation and reporting process does not necessarily include the communities, leaders and cultural networks who are most engaged in culture and who understand its impacts best.

**In a sentence: there is a gap between existing expertise and on-the-ground practices engaging culture for sustainable development and the reflection and prioritization of this in documents emerging from the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.**

The report also proposes some **key avenues of action** for all actors, in order to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda, as well as to prepare for an enhanced reflection of culture in future global agendas on sustainable development:

- All concerned parties should **consider culture from the outset in their national development planning frameworks for implementing the SDGs, as well as in their reporting through the VNR process**. In particular, they should use culture-related targets and their indicators more actively, and ensure that the role of culture is recognised in the plans for each relevant individual policy area.

- We encourage UN member states to foster **wider consultation and participatory exercises** in the elaboration of their VNRs and other planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the context of the 2030 Agenda. These exercises would be enriched by the engagement of cultural actors, who can help visualise how culture is, at the national and local level, relevant for the achievement of the SDGs, and to discuss what further opportunities may exist in this respect.

- We **commit to developing a coherent community around culture and sustainable development**. Such a community would build on and expand beyond each of our networks' scope of work, to mobilize the resources of international bodies, including UNESCO, governmental, non-governmental and business organisations that express their support. Thus, we will invite new networks to join in the #culture2030goal platform and to jointly explore the creation of a formal **'Major Group for Culture'**.

- We suggest that, taking the idea of convening high-impact meetings and taking the numerous UN resolutions on culture one step further, the UN devotes a **High-Level Meeting to Culture** within the next HLPF cycle of reporting (2020-2023), to create a global momentum for actors at all levels to coalesce.

- We require **better dissemination of already existing evidence and improved data** and call on governments and other organisations to support evidence-based research and the design and implementation of quantitative and qualitative indicators reflecting the place of culture in sustainable development, disaggregating the data wherever possible.

- We recognise the importance of cultural contexts in the **local implementation of the SDGs** and the crucial role played by local cultural actors, institutions and organisations. Therefore, in line with several cities' efforts to produce VLRs, we encourage the role of cities and local governments, as well as grassroots organisations and communities, in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda.

- We believe the **cultural sectors need to strengthen their own efforts towards the implementation of the SDGs**: cultural policies, institutions and organisations need to contribute to the response to our common challenges as one humanity, and be bolder and more explicit in annual and long-term programmes on issues such as human rights, gender equality, the fight against all inequalities and the struggle against climate change.

- We commit to continuing to **develop partnerships** at local, national, regional and global level to work with public authorities, civil society and communities to strengthen the integration of the cultural dimension in the SDGs.

**We need parties involved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to consider culture as an invaluable driver and enabler to help communities thrive and be sustainable. We need the cultural communities, sectors, actors and agents, to come closer together for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.**

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1
# BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

## 1.2
# CULTURE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A short overview is provided in this section of the main ideas about culture and development developed over the past decades, to set the context of the current status facing culture within the sustainable development agenda.

### 1.2.1_ How Culture is Defined

*'Culture' is the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a community, society or social group. It includes not only arts and literature, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs. Culture encompasses the living or contemporary characteristics and values of a community as well as those that have survived from the past.*
(Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies,

## 1.2.2_ Culture at Intergovernmental Level: UN and UNESCO Policies

Some of the most important policy documents of the United Nations in recent years have underscored the importance of culture. The analysis could begin in the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, **"The Future We Want"** (Rio de Janeiro, 2012), which highlighted the importance of **cultural diversity** and the need for a more holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development[1], and the UN General Assembly Resolution N. 65/1 (**"Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals"**, 2010). The Resolution states:

- "We acknowledge the diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations contribute to the enrichment of humankind. We emphasize the importance of **culture for development** and its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals" (para 16);

- "States should (...) take concerted, positive steps to ensure respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of **indigenous people**, on the basis of equality and non-discrimination and recognizing the value and diversity of their distinctive identities, cultures and social organization" (para 55);

- "the **cultural dimension** is important for development. We encourage international cooperation in the cultural field, aimed at achieving development objectives" (para 66); and

- "prevention programmes should take into account **local circumstances, ethics and cultural values**, including information, education and communication in languages most understood by local communities

In the process leading up to the end of the MDGs and adoption of the SDGs, the motto adopted was "Culture: Driver and Enabler of Development". This comes across in the organisation's statement: "Culture is who we are and what shapes our identity. No development can be sustainable without including culture. (...) From cultural heritage to cultural and creative industries, Culture is both an enabler and a driver of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development."[3]

In particular, cultural heritage and creativity have been highlighted as UNESCO's two main cultural entry points into the sustainable development debate: "Heritage constitutes a source of identity and cohesion for communities disrupted by bewildering change and economic instability. Creativity contributes to building open, inclusive and pluralistic societies. Both heritage and creativity lay the foundations for vibrant, innovative and prosperous knowledge societies. (...) UNESCO is convinced that no development can be sustainable without a strong culture component. Indeed only a human-centred approach to development based on mutual respect and open dialogue among cultures can lead to lasting, inclusive and equitable results. Yet until recently, culture has been missing from the development equation."[4]

Former DG Irina Bokova, at her statement at the 6th World Urban Forum in 2012, emphasized the point that 'we need a greater focus on dialogue, inclusiveness and participation, to make the most of rising diversity. These are sources for creativity and innovation that are essential for urban renewal, for more liveable, safer and productive cities. (...) Tangible and intangible heritage are sources of social cohesion, factors of diversity and drivers of creativity, innovation and urban regeneration – we must do more to harness this power."

Just as with the MDGs, there were e orts by UNESCO to have a single goal on Culture in the SDGs. The Hangzhou Declaration on Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies explicitly stated that: "the time has come for the full integration of culture (...) into agreed development strategies, programmes and practices at global, regional, national and local levels (...). Only such a concrete political and operational framework can ensure that all development initiatives lead to truly sustainable benefits for all, while securing the right of future generations to benefit from the wealth of cultural assets built up by previous generations." (...) "We therefore call on governments and policy-makers, (..) to integrate culture within all development policies and programmes; mobilize culture and mutual understanding to foster peace and reconciliation; ensure cultural rights for all to promote inclusive social development;

## 1.2.3_ We Are All Committed: Policies and Activities of the Members of this Campaign

While UNESCO, as the intergovernmental agency mandated by the UN to deal with cultural affairs, provides the fundamental framework for integrating culture and development, other international organizations working in culture-related fields, notably the members of the Culture Goal Campaign (the declaration of which was endorsed by over 900 organizations and thousands of citizens from 120 countries), are fully committed to cultural development and are making important contributions to the body of cultural policy and advocacy. Some of these are highlighted below.

**United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)** has been a major actor in the cultural policy field, through activities of its Culture Committee (Agenda 21 for Culture). The work of the UCLG Committee on Culture builds on its founding documents, the **Agenda 21 for culture** (2004) and **Culture 21 Actions** (2015). Both these documents connect culture and sustainable development at the local level and may be seen to provide guidance for cities aiming to understand how cultural aspects may be aligned with the SDGs.

Furthermore, the policy statement Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development (2010), adopted by the UCLG World Congress, entails the engagement of local governments across the world with the integration of cultural aspects in all approaches to sustainable development. This involves both the adoption of solid cultural policies and the inclusion of a cultural dimension in all public policies and development strategies.

Following its involvement in the #culture2015goal campaign, the UCLG Committee on Culture placed the issue of culture in the 2030 Agenda and beyond in the programme of the last two **UCLG Culture Summits**, held in Jeju in 2017 and Buenos Aires in 2019, involving several of the networks that had taken part in the previous campaign, but also trying to build bridges with civil society networks in other areas (e.g. gender, housing, environment). Plenary and parallel sessions were held to discuss how to strengthen the consideration of culture in the 2030 Agenda and ensure that future sustainable development agendas devote more attention to culture explicitly (using the #culture2030goal hashtag to this end).

In 2018, UCLG published the document **Culture in the Sustainable Development Goals: A Guide for Local Action**, which argues that cultural aspects will be essential to achieve the SDGs, even if this is not made explicit ("cultural aspects will play a pivotal role for the overall 2030 Agenda to be successful, including in areas where connections may only be implicit"), and that it is particularly at the local level where this connection can be observed. To this end, the Guide explains how culture is relevant to each of the 17 SDGs and what measures may be adopted to contribute to the SDGs at the local level, providing many good practices. The Guide was made available as a draft in mid 2017 and open for consultation, which served to identify more examples. Several of the examples included in the Guide come from the **Obs database of good practices on culture and sustainable development**, an online repository of examples from across the world on how12 (ontributr)18 (oac)12 (ed s )dware (serv)4 (ed)-15 ( )]Tn0tal role ( )]TJ0 (xamples include0.5lel)2121 ( )]TJar xamq(a

More specifically for the HLPF, the Committee on Culture has contributed to broader reports of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF) on SDG monitoring (see 2018 and 2019 reports), and produced individual reports addressing the targets with an explicit cultural dimension that came under review at the HLPF: see the reports for targets 11.4 (2018), 4.7 and 8.9 (2019) here.

The **International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)** has been another active member of the Culture Goal campaign. The global network of cultural heritage experts, which also advises UNESCO on World Heritage a airs, has increasingly shifted its global policy for cultural heritage toward a focus on sustainable development and mainstreaming the contribution of culture and heritage to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Through advocacy and knowledge production, ICOMOS is working for the e ective integration of culture and heritage into sustainable urban-rural development, tourism, climate action, disaster preparedness and other related policy areas. A milestone in ICOMOS doctrine was the 2011 Paris Declaration, "Heritage as a Driver of Development", which emphasised that "cultural heritage is not just monuments. It is identity, memory and sense of place. Heritage has a crucial role within the urban development process". ICOMOS is committed to the implementation and localizing of the 2030 Agenda , through Target 11.4 and companion Global Goals, the New Urban Agenda and other global mechanisms, having both adopted its own 'Action Plan for Localizing Cultural Heritage and the SDGs' (2017) and supported other roadmaps such as the 'Action Plan for World Heritage, Sustainable Development, and Civil Society' (2019), which focuses on how civil society organizations can support the implementation of UNESCO's Policy on the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention (2015). In addition to the ICOMOS Concept Note on 'Cultural Heritage, SDGs and New Urban Agenda' (2016), ICOMOS released the report 'Future of Our Pasts: Engaging Cultural Heritage in Climate Action' in July 2019.

Through its working groups on the SDGs, Climate Change, Rights-Based Approaches, and the Culture-Nature Journey, among others, ICOMOS has been developing a transversal approach to support synergies among its 100+ national committees and 28 international scientific committees (ISCs) focusing on various cultural heritage themes[7], in the silo-breaking spirit of the SDGs. Building external partnerships has also been a priority for ICOMOS, which has supported UNESCO not only through the processes of the World Heritage Convention and the Historic Urban Landscape recommendation, but also in the work of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and the World Heritage Centre for developing Thematic Indicators for Culture in Sustainable Development and developing Sustainable Tourism and Visitor Management Assessment Tool, within the scope of UNESCO's Focus Area "Integration of Culture into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Other key partners that ICOMOS collaborates with, on the basis of joint events and Memoranda of Understanding, include the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), UN-Habitat, Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) and UCLG among others. Part of the contributions ICOMOS makes to global policy is through inputs to various documents to partner international bodies; the compilation of inputs for 2019 include those for the Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming, the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights report on Public Spaces, and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR).

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7.  Among these, some ICOMOS scientific committees actively contributing to the ICOMOS SDG work have been on Cultural Tourism (ICTC), Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP), Cultural Landscapes (ISCCL), Historic Towns and Villages (CIVVIH), Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change (ISCES+CC) and Economics of Conservation (ISCEC) and Risk Preparedness (ICORP).

ICOMOS attended the HLPF in 2018 and 2019, organizing a side event in HLPF 2018 on 'SDG11.4: Heritage for Sustainability' (also featured as a World Urban Campaign web story) with co-sponsors UNESCO, UN-Habitat, IUCN, Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), UCLG and American Planning Association (APA); issuing the Statement "Is Heritage Left behind in the HLPF Ministerial Declaration?" with partners UCLG, GPN (Global Planners Network), IFLA and Europa Nostra to advocate for inclusion of cultural and natural Heritage in the HLPF 2018 Ministerial Declaration; and speaking on "Building Rural-Urban Equity through Cultural Tourism" on a HLPF 2019 side event "SDG 8, Leave No One Behind: The 2030 GDP Target - Vulnerable People and the Regions Where They Live". ICOMOS is a member of the NGO Major Group, and has contributed to its Position Statements in 2018 and 2019.

The **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA),** yet another active member of the Culture Goal Campaign, has placed a major emphasis on the 2030 Agenda, engaging from early on in the post-2015 process. This is in keeping with the mission of libraries to support individuals and societies better to achieve their goals by providing access to the right information, at the right time, in the right way. This work long pre-dates the SDGs, and includes work such as promoting literacy and reading, supporting research and innovation, and preserving and giving access to heritage. The SDGs have also proved a powerful thought tool within IFLA's field of work. The premises behind them – that they apply everywhere, that they are interlinked, that everyone has a role in delivering them – have meant that they also resonate with libraries. The framework they provide has helped libraries think methodically through how they are contributing to their communities, as well as engage more e ectively with governments.

While most of IFLA's work around the SDGs takes place on a day-to-day basis and at a national level, the organization has sought to make the most of the HLPF as a place to advocate for the role of libraries in delivering the SDGs, including in their delegations some national representatives with strong stories to tell (notably Serbia, Mexico, the Philippines, Senegal and Ghana in 2017 and Tunisia in 2019). IFLA issued a coherent summary of the issue of culture in its July 2018 blog piece 'Culture on the Agenda: Heritage in the Sustainable Development Goals'.

A key focus of IFLA's engagement has been the biennial Development and Access to Information (DA2I) reports, the result of a commitment in the Lyon Declaration on Access to Information and Development. This major e ort, undertaken in collaboration with the Technology and Social Change Group at the University of Washington, sets out a basket of indicators which allow for the measurement of progress towards meaningful access to information for all (Target 16.10). It also draws on expert authors to underline the contribution of access to information to the focus SDGs at that year's HLPF. Each year that it has published these reports (2017, 2019), IFLA has organised side-events, exploring di erent aspects of the findings (this and this in 2017, and this and this in 2019). We have been honoured to count member state and UN secretariat speakers among the panellists. The report underlines the need to address cross-cutting drivers of development, such as access to information, to unlock and accelerate progress elsewhere.

Additionally, IFLA is also member of the NGO Major Group, and exploring possibilities to work more closely with the Education and Academia and Science and Research Stakeholder Groups. In this, we feed into statements, both on thematic sessions and increasingly in VNRs, drawing on the experience and views of our members to shape commentary. Throughout HLPF sessions, IFLA communicates with our own community through blogs, social media and news stories, as well as reporting at their annual congress.

In 2016, IFLA decided to re-orientate its pre-existing International Advocacy Programme around the Sustainable Development Goals. Instead of looking at a range of issues, it instead now focused uniquely on the SDGs, organizing train-the-trainers workshops around the world, whereby participants were empowered to raise awareness of the SDGs among colleagues and communities, and to build up stronger relationships with decision-makers, with a view to creating partnerships for development. To support this work, IFLA developed a suite of tools, including guides to advocating around the SDGs, briefings on key parts of the 2030 Agenda, and background research and other papers that can be used in discussion. The results of this work have been impressive. People from 70 countries took part in the original workshops, and representatives of a further six then committed to promote the SDGs. Through further sub-regional workshops, another thirty countries were engaged. Overall, over 20 000 librarians learned about the SDGs, and almost 70 000 citizens.

IFLA have published summaries of the activities carried out by our participants so far and will develop a further one in the autumn. The programme has also been independently evaluated and judged to be a success, and we continue to see impacts in the work of our members to join o cial committees and activities around the Agenda.

IFLA has also looked to mobilise at the regional level, using regional forums on sustainable development and organising the Forum of Ministers of Culture of Latin America and the Caribbean with the kind support of the Library of Congress of Argentina on 22 May 2019. There, ministers and representatives from 13 countries explained how they were, through libraries and culture, delivering on the SDGs, and set out their commitment both to the 2030 Agenda, and the libraries as partners for development. They shared this engagement with the world through the Buenos Aires Declaration. IFLA has seen initiatives by libraries regionally, notably in Africa (the Durban Communiqué, the result of work by the African Library and Information Association with ministers), and the Santiago Declaration (which has been signed by almost 200 libraries and library associations in Latin America and the Caribbean).

The **International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD)**, as member of the Culture Goal Campaign, has undertaken actions at international and regional level in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda. The IFCCD was founded in Seville on 19 September 2007 to replace the International Liaison Committee of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (ILC). This Committee was created in 2003 at the initiative of the Coalitions for Cultural Diversity to facilitate cooperation and the development of common positions and actions. In particular, the ILC encouraged the elaboration of UNESCO's Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions by coordinating the participation of civil society representatives and professionals from the cultural sector in international negotiation sessions. Since then, the IFCCD takes part to the discussions and work to implement the 2005 UNESCO Convention mentioned above. The Federation has namely contributed as Civil Society to the drafting of the Operational Guidelines on the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment to ensure that creators and cultural professionals can sustain in the digital world.

Further, the German Commission for UNESCO, founder and coordinator of the German Coalition for Cultural Diversity and member of the IFCCD has started in 2018 a reflection on "Fair Trade for Culture". Its purpose is to strengthen the principles of the Convention and to help the implementation of SDGs (e.g. 8 and 10) by taking into account the concept of "fair trade" and sustainable supply chains in other sectors to understand the benefits, as well as the specificities and challenges for the cultural sector. The IFCCD will also organise a congress in Togo in October 2019 to assess and formulate how cultural policies could be developed and improved in the region, in the light of the principle of the 2005 UNESCO Convention and the SDGs.

On September 4th, 2018, Culture Action Europe (CAE), together with Freemuse and MEP Julie Ward (S&D) organised a debate on the state of artistic freedom in Europe. Held in the European Parliament, the event was based on Freemuse's The State of Artistic Freedom report, 2018, which exposes how freedom of expression of artists and art communities are being violated in Europe at an alarming scale. Representatives

# 2

# REVIEW OF PROGRESS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS, 2015–19

# 2.1
# OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

A breakdown is provided below of each year's major events related to the SDGs, including the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), with their overarching theme, SDGs selected for review, Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) (in terms of exemplary content, and keyword analysis), as well as other key documents and activities, including the outcome declarations and the presence of culture sector actors, analysing these with a critical cultural perspective.

To recall the basic characteristics of the process, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven". These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the HLPF. The VNRs aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.[8]

The HLPF, which adopts a Ministerial Declaration, is expected to provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations on the 2030 Agenda's implementation and follow-up; keep track of progress of the SDGs; spur coherent policies informed by evidence, science and country experiences; as well as address new and emerging issues.[9]

A **special analytical exercise** has been conducted for this report, comprising the measurement of **frequency for certain keywords**, both for culture and related concepts, and for other concepts with particular a    nity with, or mentioned in conjunction with culture in the VNRs prepared for all HLPF, 2016-19.[10]

To make the keyword counts meaningful, we have set them as **comparable analyses**, including:

- the distribution of terms within the culture field,

- the comparison of the 'cultural' with the other three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e. 'social', 'economic' and 'environmental',

- the comparison of culture-related terms when used directly in cultural contexts and when used with other, more generic meanings,

- the comparison of countries in terms of their level of usage of the terms 'culture' and 'cultural'.

The '**culture-related terms**', numbering 21 as main headings (in bold) and 100 as broken down into sub-terms, include:

8.  https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/
9.  https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2016
10. Only full VNR reports (with the exception of China's Executive Summary), in the English, French and Spanish languages, were taken into account, due to resource constraints.

- **archaeology/ archaeological, architecture/ architectural\*, archive/ archival\*, art(s)/ artist(ic)\*, buildings, character (of culture, areas), conserve/ conservation\*, creativity/ creative industry(ies)/ creative economy/ creative professionals/ creators\*, cultural**, cultural activity(es), cultural area(s)/ site(s), cultural background/ character(istics), cultural change, cultural development, cultural dimension/ field, cultural diversity(es), cultural education, cultural environment, cultural experiences, cultural expression(s), cultural heritage(s) / historic heritage, cultural industry(es), cultural institution(s)/ organization(s), cultural landscape ('cultural heritage and landscape'), cultural life, cultural management, communication and animation, cultural ministry (or equivalent), cultural objective(s), cultural o er, cultural pertinence, cultural practice(s), cultural program(me)(s), cultural relations/ cooperation, cultural resource(s), cultural rights, cultural segment, cultural sensitivity, cultural skills, cultural space, cultural theme(s), cultural tourism, cultural values (inc. socio-cultural values), **culture(s),** culture (stand-alone) (including of national, ethnic, social groups), cultures (stand-alone), culture(s) with descriptive adjective (organizational, business, etc), culture(s) of (green entrepreneurship, cycling, sustainability, peace, recreation, understanding of rights, preservation of life, etc), local culture(s), **local products, design/ designer(s),** design\*, product/ interior/ architectural/ city/ urban/ eco-/re- design, designer(s), **designation (status to areas), folk/ folklore, heritage (stand-alone, architectural, sustainable, national), historic buildings, historic records, identity\* (national, sexual, indigenous), indigenous** , indigenous community(es), indigenous people(s), indigenous traditional knowledge (itk) , indigenous status, sami, **intangible\*, knowledge, language, library/ libraries, literature\*, monument, museum(s), music, preserve/ preservation\*, protect/ protection\* (environmental, social), recreation(al), restore/ restoration\*, rehabilitate/ rehabilitation\*, safeguard\* (environmental, social), tradition(s)/ traditional\*,** tradition(s), traditional buildings/

"Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", i.e. Resolution RES/70/1 adopted at the 70th UN General Assemby (UNGA) on September 25, 2015, ushered in the post-2015 development agenda and with it, the new era of the SDGs.

This new agenda continues to build on the vision of sustainable development with three dimensions, developed in the second half of the 1980s, namely: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental balance. The report Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report (1987), enshrined these **three dimensions** as the pattern to be used in local, national and global strategies for development. The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 1992 consolidated these three pillars as the paradigm of sustainable development.

However, **these dimensions alone do not reflect the complexity of current society**. Many voices have been calling for the inclusion of **culture** in the sustainable development model, since culture ultimately shapes what we mean by development and determines how people act in the world. The world is not only facing economic, social, or environmental challenges. Creativity, knowledge, diversity, and beauty are the unavoidable bases for dialogue for peace and progress, as these values are intrinsically connected to human development and freedoms. The **world's cultural challenges are too important not to receive an equal amount of attention** to that accorded to the original three dimensions of sustainable development (the economy, social equality and environmental balance). This fourth pillar [now increasingly referred to as 'dimension'] creates solid bridges with the other three dimensions of development.[11] Indeed, among the many debates within the culture sector on how this dimension should be formulated (e.g. an identical pillar, an intersection of the three spheres, a brace encircling the three, etc.), what seems to be agreed on is that **culture needs to be explicitly added to sustainability**.

The current economic development models, which prey excessively on natural resources and common goods of humanity, are the cause of increasing concern for the environment. Rio de Janeiro 1992, Aalborg 1994, and Johannesburg 2002, have been the milestones in a process of answering one of the most important challenges facing humanity: environmental sustainability. Both culture and the environment are common assets of all humanity. The current situation also provides su cient evidence that cultural diversity in the world is in danger due to a globalization that standardizes and excludes.[12] There is also a growing awareness of a need to act to protect the cultural diversity that enables progress in so many other areas. Just as there is now a clear understanding of the need to act to preserve the environment, we need the same investment for culture.

The nature of the process leading to the adoption of Transforming Our World, with wide consultations involving regional, national and local organizations and civil society actors, should be welcomed. A global community has been able to discuss its vision for sustainable development in a broad forum of relevant stakeholders. Such participatory exercises should also be applied in the future, not least when preparing National Development Plans, which will implement the 2030 Agenda on a national level.

When compared to their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the **SDGs represent a significant step** forward with regard to the acknowledgment of the role of culture in development processes. The following elements are noteworthy:

• The **Preamble** refers to the need to respect cultural diversity (para. 8) and pledges member states to foster inter-cultural understanding, tolerance and mutual respect, while acknowledging the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognizing that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development (para. 36). Other aspects highlighted by the Preamble, such as the vision of enabling a world of universal literacy (para. 7), are also essential to foster access to culture and promote cultural understanding.

• **Target 2.5** touches on the need to ensure "access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge", in order to achieve the goal of ending hunger and achieving food security.

• **Target 4.7** stresses the need for education to promote "a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

• **Target 8.3** suggests that "creativity and innodnca2009>>>cd4 .6 y the Pr"009-oried]TJ0 Tw T*[(goal of polici5 ( )]

## 2.3.1_ 2016: Leaving No One Behind

### a_ Overview of HLPF 2016

The HLPF 2016, the first since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, was held on July 11-20, 2016, with the overarching theme: "Ensuring that no one is left behind". The session included voluntary reviews of 22

Society/Social   Economy/Economic   Environment/Environmental   Culture/Cultural
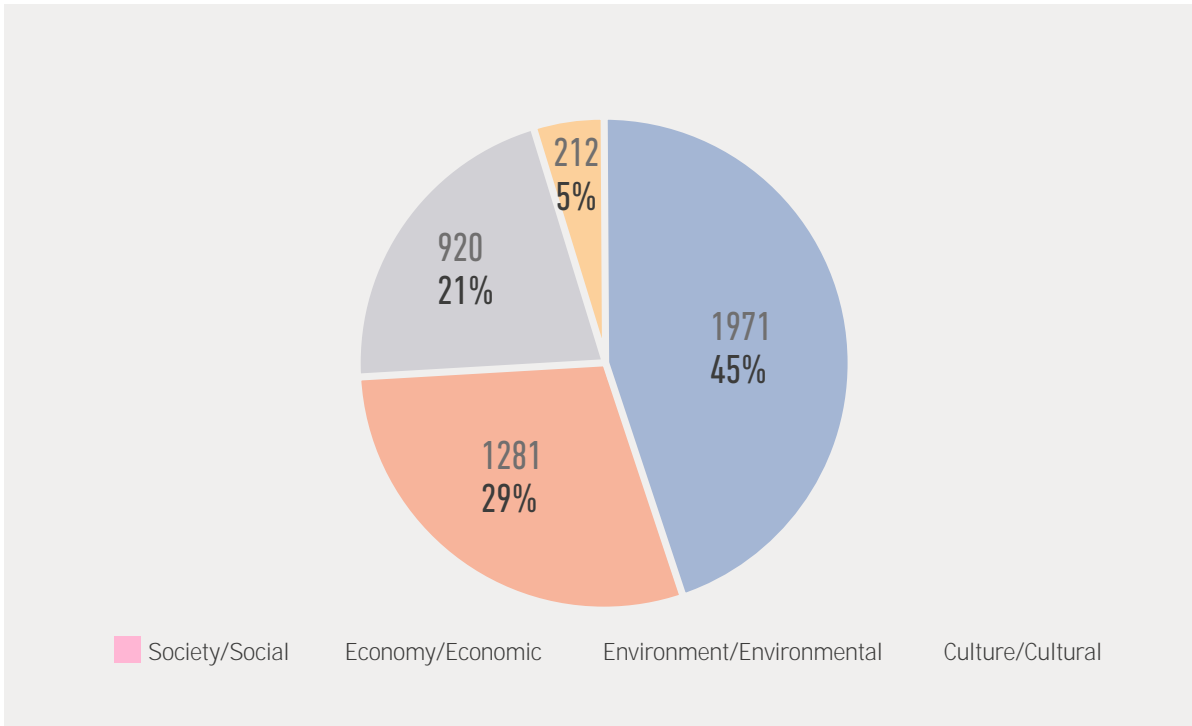
- Policies and Enabling Environment: Baseline: Main trends for Targets 4.7, 8.9, 11.4: "**Strategic goals** (...) to "Improve the importance of **culture as fundamental value of spiritual, social and economic development** which enhances significantly **citizens' quality of life",** "Establish e   cient and contemporary system of integral protection, management and sustainable use of **cultural heritage** and landscape".

- Policies and Enabling Environment: Areas of success and milestones: key issues of national development
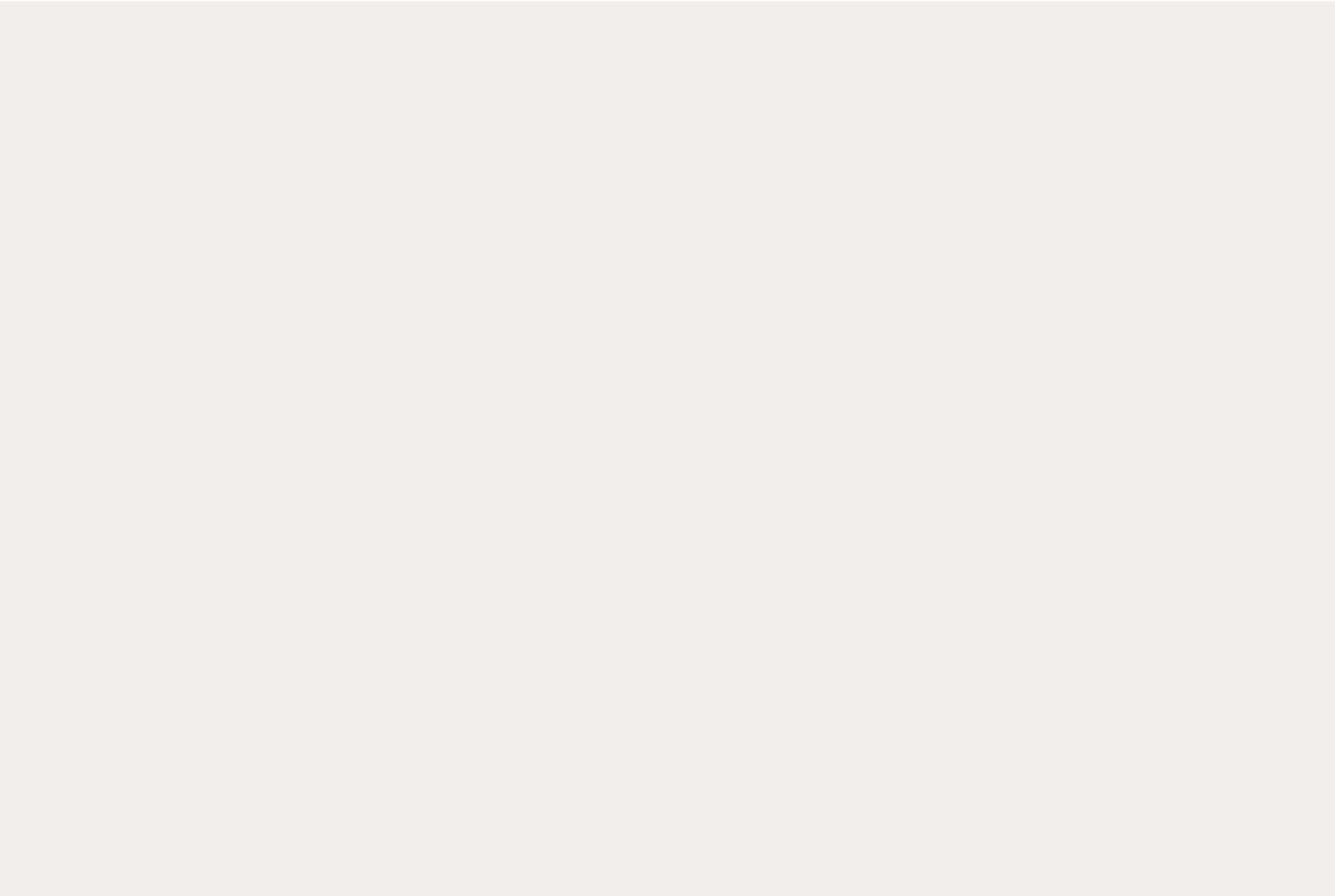
**Morocco** (translated from French):

- "The United Nations country team with **UNESCO**, as lead agency, and the **Ministry of Culture** led, in 2014,
  a series of national consultations to gather the views of the Morocc, in  pn021 ( inler th th )13<</ActualText<nk be9

**Venezuela** (translated from Spanish):

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## d_ Other Documents and Activities of 2016

The HLPF 2016 Ministerial Declaration

Beside the first HLPF, another event that made 2016 an important year for sustainable development was the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, or **Habitat III,** held in Quito, Ecuador on 17-20 October 2016. In Resolution 66/207 and in line with the bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996, and 2016), Habitat III was convened to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization, and produced the milestone document, New Urban Agenda, building on the Habitat Agenda of Istanbul in 1996.

**Culture in the New Urban Agenda is significantly stronger** than in the 2030 Agenda, as the preamble includes among its 10 paragraphs, one devoted to culture: "culture and cultural diversity are sources of enrichment for humankind and provide an important contribution to the sustainable development of cities, human settlements and citizens, empowering them to play an active and unique role in development initiatives. (...) Culture should be taken into account in the promotion and implementation of new sustainable consumption and production patterns that contribute to the responsible use of resources and address the adverse impact of climate change" (para 10).

Culture is a central theme in six further sections, i.e. 38 (leveraging of natural and cultural heritage), 45 (developing sustainable urban economies, building on (...) cultural heritage), 60 (urban economies to transition to higher productivity through (...) cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism, performing arts and heritage conservation), 97 (planned urban extensions and infill, prioritizing renewal, regeneration and retrofitting (...) while preserving cultural heritage), 124 (include culture as a priority component of urban plans and strategies) and 125 (support the leveraging of cultural heritage for sustainable urban development and recognize its role in stimulating participation and responsibility).
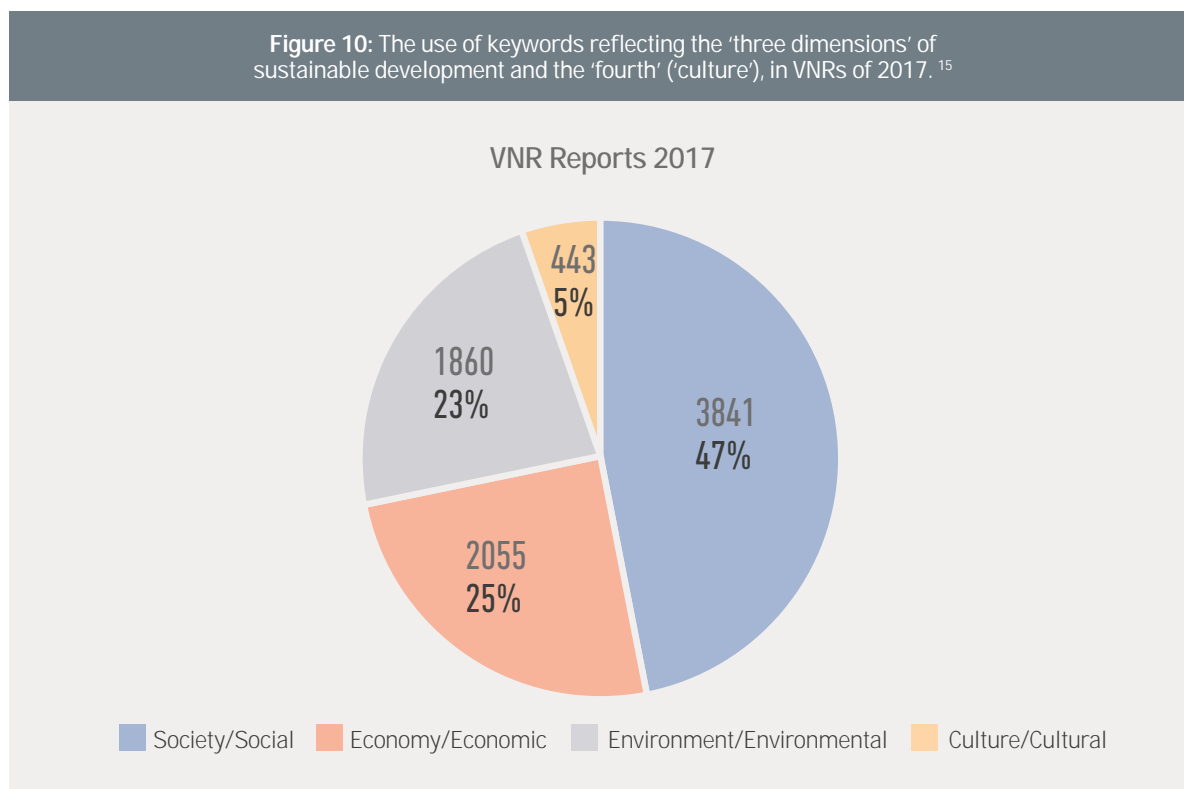
Habitat III was also the occasion for UNESCO to launch their Global Report, Culture: Urban Future in a high-level side event. Members of the Culture 2015 Goal Campaign (i.e. from UCLG( )]r.un( fr)18 (OS pr)e]TJ0.23TJ-0.

The 43 countries that volunteered to present VNRs in 2017 were Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Monaco, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Slovenia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe.

## b_ Keyword Analysis of 2017 VNRs

The 2017 analysis that the 5 countries out of 45 with the most frequent references to 'culture' and 'cultural', in terms of number of keyword occurrence proportional to total number of pages, were Italy, Cyprus, Portugal, United Arab Emirates and Argentina (see Table 1: Use of keywords 'culture' and 'cultural' in VNRs by country, 2016-19.)



**Figure 10:** The use of keywords reflecting the 'three dimensions' of sustainable development and the 'fourth' ('culture'), in VNRs of 2017. [15]

VNR Reports 2017

443 — 5%

1860 — 23%

3841 — 47%

2055 — 25%

Society/Social    Economy/Economic    Environment/Environmental    Culture/Cultural

15. Note: The frequency of the term 'socio-economic' has been
    equally divided and added to those of 'social' and 'economic'

## c_ Selections of Exemplary Content on Culture in 2017 VNRs

Below are excerpts from the VNRs with exemplary approaches to engaging with culture for the SDGs focusing on the five highest scorers in the Keyword Analysis.

### Italy:

• Sustainability Vectors: I. Common Knowledge (objectives aimed at improving the state of knowledge, with special attention to the areas where more e ort is required to complete the current information framework): "This refers to environment and **culture** (natural ecosystems and related services, preservation and exploitation of **natural and cultural resources**) and to society (human equality and dignity, migrations, social inclusion, legality)." (...) Cross-cutting goals: I.2 Improving knowledge on quantitative and qualitative status and exploitation of natural, **cultural** and landscapes resources.

• Sustainability Vectors: IV. Education, awareness and communication: "The "**culture of sustainability**" must be spread at all levels (...), in a life-long learning perspective. This is the most important vector to trigger the transformation of the current development model and the dissemination of **knowledge**, skills, lifestyles and best practices for sustainable production and consumption."

### Cyprus:

• Executive Summary: Enabling environment: "Following an extensive promotion (...) to the Cypriot public, an e ort undertaken in the framework of the European Year for Development by the Ministry of Foreign A airs in cooperation with the **Ministry of Education and Culture** and the Cypriot NGOs, the Cypriot civil society carried out numerous projects, promoting all or specific SDGs."

• Integration of Sustainable Development Issues: The Republic of Cyprus' Sustainable Development Policy: "A focus on youth has been set as a general priority (...). The National Youth Strategy (NYS) of Cyprus for the period 2017-2022 defines, for the first time, the vision of the state for its young people (...) under eight main fields of action: Education and Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Health and Wellbeing, Participation, Volunteerism, Social Inclusion, Youth and the World, **Creativity and Culture**.

• Goals and Targets: SDG4: "The main mission is the continuous upgrade of education in order to ensure the provision of learning opportunities to all learners, through the implementation of an educational policy which embodies the **values** of equality, inclusivity, creativeness and innovation, aiming at a life-long, balanced and wholesome development, while, in parallel, strengthening **culture** and supporting **cultural creativity**. Cyprus aims towards the formulation of literate citizens with skills, responsibility, democratic ethos, **historical identity** as well as respect for diversity. Citizens with a holistic personality, capable to **creatively** contribute to the development of society and to cope with the challenges of the future, as well as to the improvement of citizens' quality of life through education and **culture**."

• Goals and Targets: SDG11: Protection of **cultural heritage**: "Cyprus strongly supported the development of the new **Convention of the Council of Europe on O ences relating to Cultural Property**."

• Goals and Targets: SDG16: **Illicit tra cking** and destruction of **cultural goods**: "Cyprus has extensive activity in the field of protection of cultural property at domestic and also at international level, as described in SDG 11, and also promotes cooperation between law enforcement agencies and (...). Upon initiative of the Cyprus Police, an informal network of Law Enforcement Authorities and Expertise in the Field of Cultural Goods was set up in 2012."

- CARDET: Civil Society's action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Cyprus: Educational Projects: "the project '**Education for a Culture of Peace as a Vehicle for Reconciliation** in Cyprus' aims to bring a societal change and transform the current status-quo through a bottom-up

(2013), the Cante Alentejano, polyphonic singing from Alentejo, southern Portugal (2014) and Falconry,

- Sustainable Development in the UAE: The Story So Far: SDG4: National Qualifications Framework: Sectors of Industry: **Arts, culture and entertainment.**

- Sustainable Development in the UAE: The Story So Far: SDG10: Tolerance: "In February 2016 a Cabinet-level position of Minister of State for Tolerance was established to promote tolerance, inclusion and peaceful coexistence and instill its core principles as a fundamental **value** of the UAE society. Since then, UAE government entities have invested close to US$ 108 million in **cultural understanding** initiatives. (...) "UAE Ranked # 2: **National Culture** is Open to Foreign Ideas - World Competitiveness Yearbook by IMD 2017". ()... Social Integration and Empowerment: "In 2017, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum launched a national policy in which he gave people with special needs the title 'people of determination' in praise of the spirit of courage and resilience they bring to society. (...) The policy cover-Mage and Pzca

Some noteworthy covers and pictures from the 2017 VNRs are given below.

**Figures 11-16:** Belgium 2017 VNR, back cover, smurfs cartoon; Cyprus 2017 VNR, cover, 4 photos out of 9 with archaeological sites; Czech Republic 2017 VNR, cover: stylized image of a monument, within mosaic of images; Jordan 2017 VNR, cover, ancient site of Petra; Malaysia 2017 VNR, cover, Petronas towers (a unique identifying landmark) and people in traditional costumes; Uruguay 2017 VNR, cover, traditional theatre performers, wedding ritual, carnival dancers
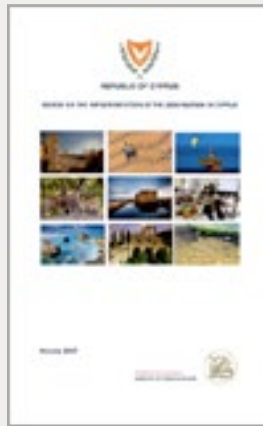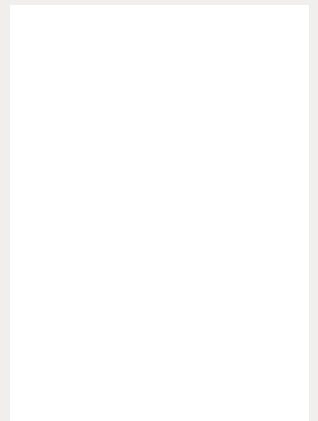
### c_ Selections of Exemplary Content on Culture in 2018 VNRs

Below are excerpts from the VNRs with exemplary approaches to engaging with culture for the SDGs focusing on the five highest scorers in the Keyword Analysis.

**Qatar:**

• SDG11: Second: Strengthening the e orts to protect and preserve the world's **cultural and natural**

**Andorra (translated from French):**

- Means of Implementation: SDG11: Protection and preservation of the **cultural and natural heritage**: "Cultural heritage is one of the main **witnesses of history, of the identity and creativity of a country**. It is an essential duty of society and public authorities to preserve this collective wealth and pass it on in the best conditions future generations. (…) the 2003 Act stipulates that the Government must provide for annual investment program at least equivalent to 0.5% of the budget planned for public construction to grant **conservation aid** for integrated, restoration and improvement **cultural heritage (immovable, movable and documentary)**." (…) "On July 1, 2004, the **UNESCO World Heritage** Committee approved the inscription of the Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley on the Heritage List, in the category of cultural landscape. It is (…) also recognized as a Ramsar site and Category VI by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature."

- Means of Implementation: SDG17: Volunteering: "In order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, especially for young people from the Global South, Andorra finances, at each session, the travel and stay of a youth from a developing country at the **UNESCO Youth Forum**. (…) **Art Camp** - Andorra and Intercultural Dialogue: Since 2008, on the initiative of the Andorran **National Commission for UNESCO**, about thirty painters from around the world meet in Andorra every two years for artistic workshops."

**Bahrain:**

- Creating an enabling policy environment: Integration between dimensions and national adaptation: "Bahrain pays particular attention to **knowledge, innovation, and culture**, as there is no sustainable development without advances in science and knowledge, and in developing a **system of values, behaviours, and innovations** that achieve sustainable development."

- Issues central to a national perspective: Education, innovation and culture: **Culture**: (…) the **Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities** is promoting its cultural and historical heritage and advertising its natural landscape to stimulate tourism to support job creation and stimulate the national economy. Bahrain takes seriously its social responsibility to preserve the natural landscape and protect the environment and is committed to the principles of sustainability in the preservation of the environment and in understanding its economic and social impact. Initiatives and programs such as the "**Spring of Culture**" "**Pearl Road**" and "**Our Heritage is Our Wealth**" have been developed to promote tourism in Bahrain and to encourage tourists to visit the historical and archaeological sites of Bahrain, to promote cultural understanding and raise awareness of the need to preserve and maintain cultural heritage and natural landscapes."

- Thematic debate: Transforming into sustainable and resilient societies: Cities and urban development in Bahrain: "Muharraq was chosen as the **capital of Islamic Culture** for the year 2018 due to its historical importance, preservation of heritage, and the rich and distinctive culture of its ancient civilizations."

**Australia:**

- Forewords: "Australians have long recognised the need to manage the environment and the economy in a sustainable way. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concept of "Caring for Country" is a foundation of **Indigenous culture and spirituality** (…)".

Some noteworthy covers and pictures from the 2018 VNRs are given below.
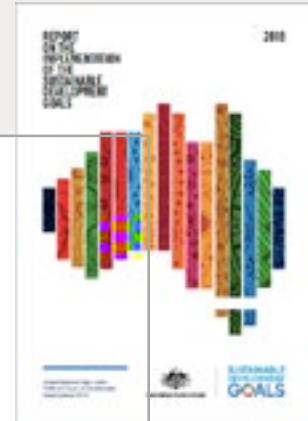
and inclusive societies. The indirect benefits of culture are accrued through the culturally-informed and e ective implementations of the development goals."
(Greece)

"For an innovative economy to succeed, society as a whole must be creative. Latest research shows that culture fosters the type of creativity and abstract thinking that brings excellence to STEM."
(Latvia)

**Figures 29-36:** Cabo Verde 2018 VNR, traditional terraced landscape mitigating climate change; Armenia 2018 VNR, photographic art to raise awareness on climate change; Bahamas 2018 VNR, student artwork; Malta 2018 VNR, cathedral interior; Malta 2018 VNR, historic armoury; Malta 2018 VNR, old anchor underwater; Bahamas 2018 VNR, handicrafts; Cabo Verde 2018 VNR, handweaving and handmade food; Mexico 2018 VNR, public artwork
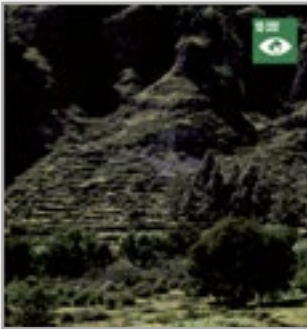
**Figures 37-47:** Lao PDR 2018 VNR, traditional temple roof; Lao PDR 2018 VNR, traditional temple; Latvia 2018 VNR, historic centre of Riga; Latvia 2018 VNR, historic cathedrals spires; Mexico 2018 VNR, traditional beadwork motif; Mexico 2018 VNR, historic building façade; Mexico 2018 VNR, handweaving; Mexico 2018 VNR, historic bridge/aqueduct; Mexico 2018 VNR historic townscape; Mexico 2018 VNR, conference in a historic building; Palestine 2018 VNR, traditional crafts
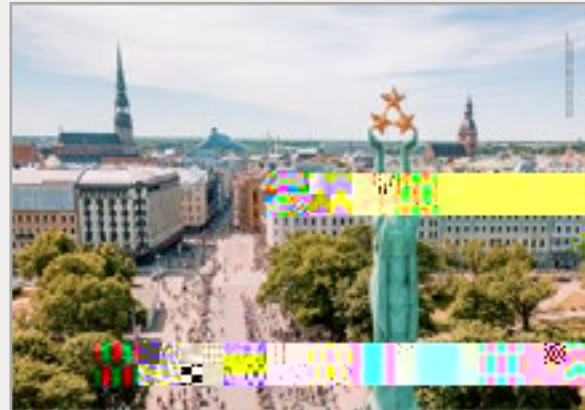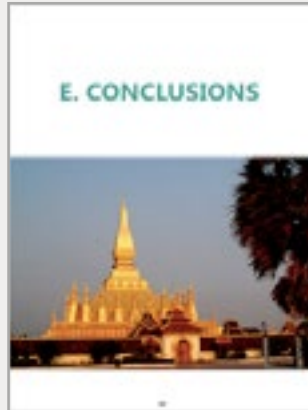
**Figures 48-56:** Palestine 2018 VNR, date palm harvest; Palestine 2018 VNR, historic building; Qatar 2018 VNR boys in traditional dress; Qatar 2018 VNR, building craft; Qatar 2018 VNR, traditional souq (bazaar); Qatar 2018 VNR, iconic façade of convention centre; Qatar 2018 VNR, architectural detail with Islamic motif; Qatar 2018 VNR, public artwork; Singapore 2018 VNR, musicians

**Figures 57-64:** Singapore 2018 VNR, images of children's book covers with artist illustrations; ; Ecuador 2018 VNR, traditional work with straw; Ecuador 2018 VNR, boy playing guitar and woman in traditional dress; Ecuador 2018 VNR, young classical music orchestra and name of Quito city as public art prepared for Habitat IIIColombia 2018 VNR, traditional boat; Colombia 2018 VNR,
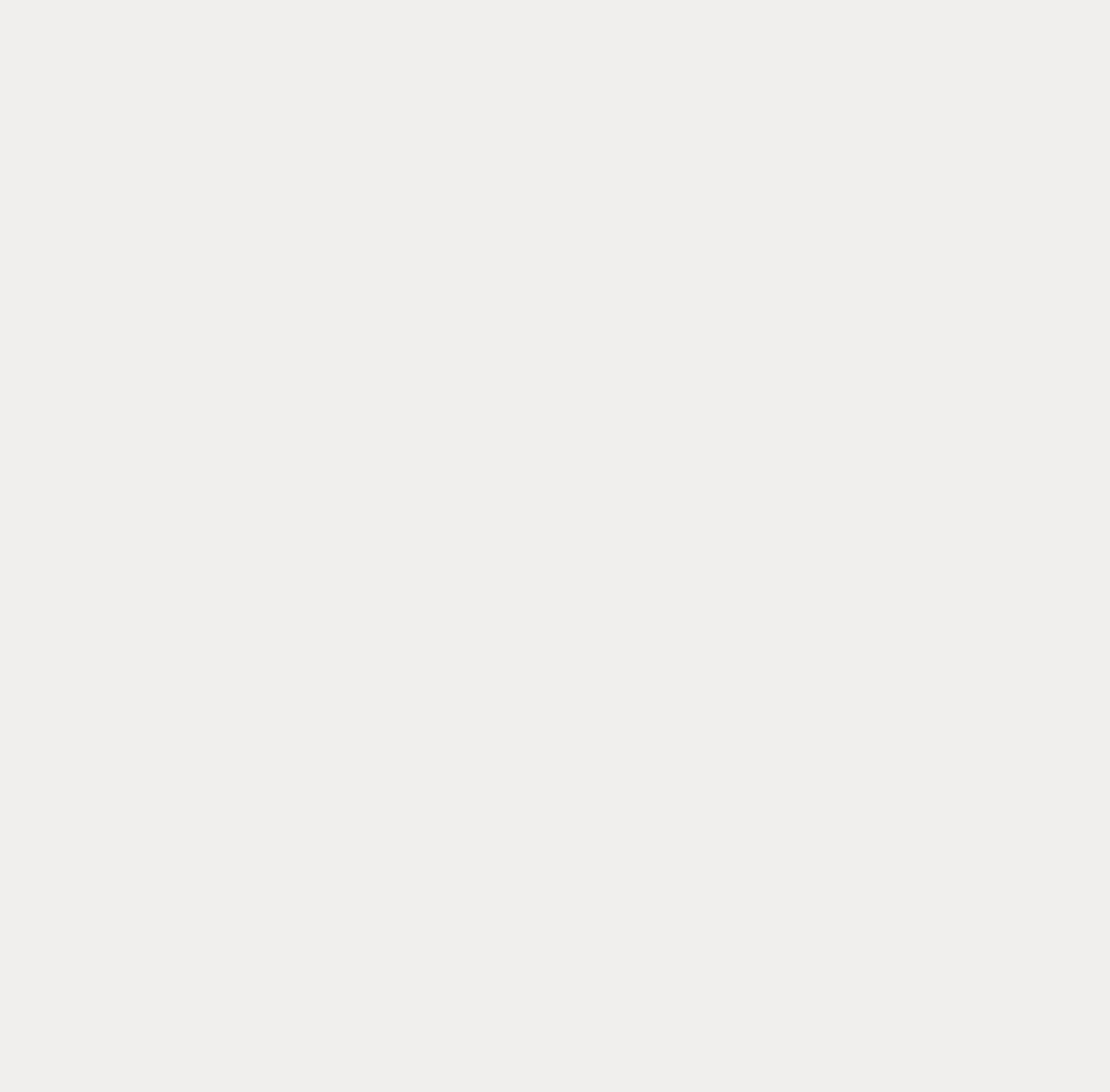
### d_ Other Documents and Activities of 2018

The Ministerial Declaration at HLPF 2018, consisting of 31 paragraphs in its adopted version, was a harsh reality-check for the cultural networks attending the forum, for the low level of recognition of culture in its text. This was limited to a reference on "cultural diversity" in context of human rights and the need for "a culture of innovation, sustainability and inclusiveness" (Paragraph 13).

Focusing on cultural heritage, **ICOMOS** drafted a statement titled "Is Heritage Left Behind in the HLPF Ministerial Declaration?", with UCLG (World Secretariat and Culture Committee), IFLA, Global Planners Network (GPN) and Europa Nostra joining as co-signatories. ICOMOS also organized the side event on 'SDG11.4: Heritage for Sustainability' with co-sponsors UNESCO, UN-Habitat, IUCN, GEN, UCLG and APA, a diverse range of speakers at international, national (US) and local (New York) level. Furthermore, as a member of the NGOs Major Group, ICOMOS contributed with culture-related content to the position statement of this Major Group.

Among the 113 inputs made to HLPF 2018, beside the 46 national inputs (VNRs), there are also 46 from Intergovernmental Forums and Bodies, 21 from Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS), (there were none from Partnerships and Voluntary Commitments). Some inputs with noteworthy culture references among the 22 results yielded by a 'culture' keyword search (based on the summary page, unless only the full report is available) include:

- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

- Position paper submitted to the High-Level Political Forum 2018 - GOAL 11: BUILDING INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES FOR ALL AGES, INCLUDING OLDER PERSONS (Stakeholder Group on Ageing - Position Paper) United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

- World Heritage Committee (policy recommendation: 2015 Policy for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the Convention) (it is interesting that this document was not included in the 'culture' keyword query)

- Non-Governmental Organizations Major Group - Position Paper (it is interesting that this document was not included in the 'culture' keyword query)

The **9th World Urban Forum** (WUF9) was held on February 7-13 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, as the first session to focus on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda adopted in Habitat III. WUF9 was instrumental to substantively feed into the inputs for the first report of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The Theme of WUF9, "Cities 2030, Cities for All: Implementing the New Urban Agenda", places the Forum's focus on the New Urban Agenda as a tool and accelerator for achieving Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration, the main outcome document, was a concise document of 40 paragraphs, in which the initial statement cited 5 key enablers for implementation of the New Urban Agenda, one of these being "adopting integrated territorial development, including (…) appropriate compactness and density, diversity of uses, and revitalization of cultural heritage." There are further mentions of 'cultural inequalities' and a 'culture of creativity and innovation' in the declaration text.

In 2018, the **UN Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights** devoted a report on how actions in the field of arts and culture can make significant contributions towards creating, developing and maintaining societies in which all human rights are increasingly realized. The report explains that actions in the field of culture "can open a space in which individuals and groups can reflect upon their society, confront and modify their perception of one another, express their fears and grievances in a non-violent manner, develop resilience after violent or traumatic experiences, including human rights violations, and imagine the future they want for themselves and how to better realize human rights in the society they live in".
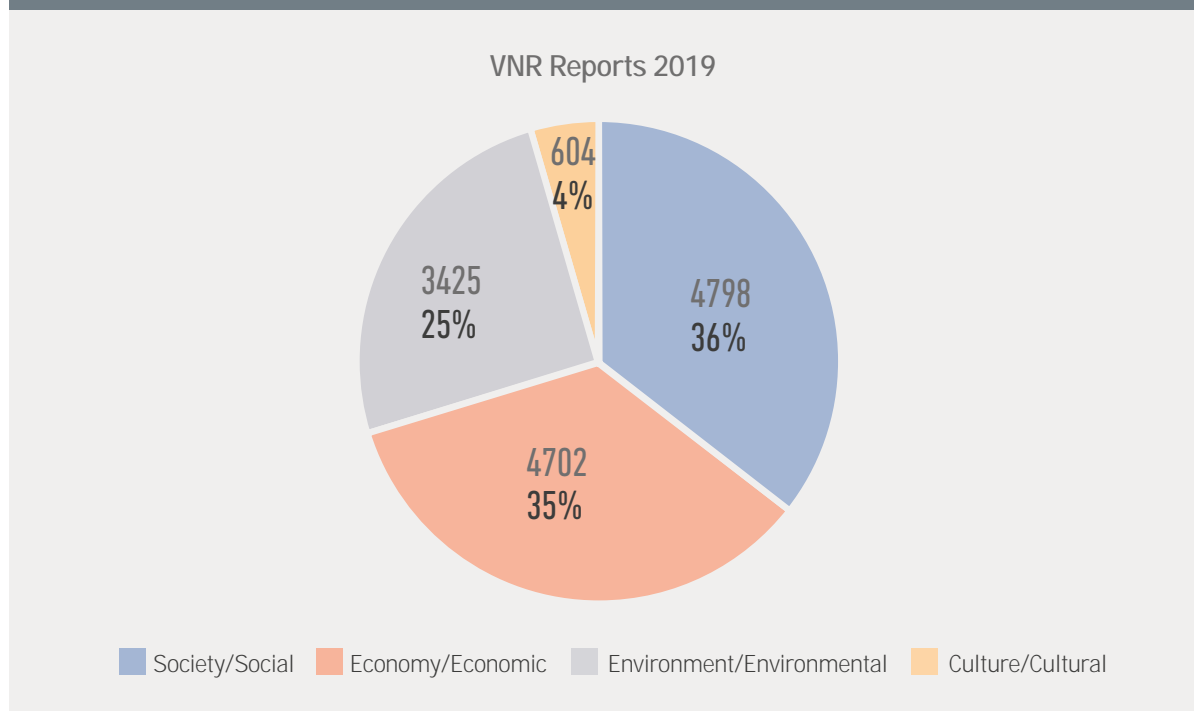
The UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/299 decided to review the format and organizational aspects of the HLPF at its 74th session, to benefit from lessons learned in the first cycle of the forum as well as from other processes related to the follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. An Expert Group Meeting was held in May 2019 with the aim to bring Member States, the UN system, experts, academia and other stakeholders together to prepare the discussions of the 74th session. The Summary of the meeting can be found here.

## b_ Keyword Analysis of 2019 VNRs

The 2019 analysis reveals that the 5 countries out of 47 with the most frequent references to 'culture' and 'cultural', in terms of number of keyword occurrence proportional to total number of pages, were Palau, New Zealand, Serbia, Turkey and Vanuatu (see Table 1: Use of keywords 'culture' and 'cultural' in VNRs by country, 2016-19.)

**Figure 70:** The use of keywords reflecting the 'three dimensions' of sustainable development and the 'fourth' ('culture'), in VNRs of 2019.[19]

### VNR Reports 2019



| ■ Society/Social | ■ Economy/Economic | ■ Environment/Environmental | ■ Culture/Cultural |

604 4%
3425 25%
4798 36%
4702 35%

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19. Note: The frequency of the term 'socio-economic' has been equally divided and added to those of 'social' and 'economic'.

c_ **Selections of Exemplary Content on Culture in 2019 VNRs**

- Among the best results comes from the cooperation with the UNESCO Regional O ce for Science and Culture in Europe, through the project **"Culture for Development Indicators"- CDIS**. The objective is scientific proof that **culture contributes** to social and economic development. The project is aimed in its final stage to contribute to global reporting on the e ects of culture on development within the Agenda 2030. Although the sector of culture has been recognized earlier as significant for sustainable development, it was di cult to come up with accurate data and indicators of the specific scope of such impact or contribution to overall development. The seven dimensions and 22 indicators of CDIS can be links with 9 SDGs and 36 targets, which can be better achieved with the use of CDIS at national level. Evidence demonstrates that, even with the high level of national production, with a significant share of cultural activities in the gross domestic product (3.90% of the total GDP) and a relatively high share of employment in institutions of culture (5.3% of the total employed population), the share of culture (80.1%) should be additionally supported in order to **increase the consumption of cultural goods** in households (2.59% of the total household consumption), in order to facilitate higher **market potential of cultural industries**. Good results in the protection and valuation of cultural heritage, through the established multidimensional framework for protection, preservation and improvement of heritage sustainability (0.89/1), can be further enhanced through greater investments in youth education (4.0%), which would raise awareness among the youth and the whole local community of the significance of **preserving their heritage**, and would in the long term contribute to developing this sector, increasing employment and enjoyment of cultural contents, as well as through the reforms of the legislative framework in order to modernize the overall system of heritage protection in Serbia."

### Turkey:

- Integration of SDGs into National Agenda: Role of Local administrations on SDGs: "SDG Practices in Municipalities: Yenimahalle Municipality: Tutoring sessions to assist economically and **socio-culturally disadvantaged** children in their school courses and examinations as well as to support their social and **cultural development**; Adana Metropolitan Municipality: Refugee Assembly to form policies ensuring the social, **cultural**, political and economic integration of refugees into the city."

- Integration of SDGs into National Agenda: Integration of Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development: "The following is a summary of the reflections of sustainable development on the multi-sectoral NDPs that determine main goals and priorities for Turkey's development in **economic, social and cultural spheres** and constitutes a framework for institutional and structural arrangements. (...) The 8th NDP (2001-2005) adopted a sustainable development approach that was essentially based on protecting human health, ecological balance, **historical and aesthetic values** while achieving economic and social progress."

- Progress towards SDGs and Next Steps: SDG2: "The Environmentally-based Agricultural Land Protection Program (ÇATAK) is designed as a scheme where farmers who prefer to use environmentally friendly techniques and **cultural practices** are provided with land-based support payments." SDG5: "empowering women in its all dimensions including economic, social and **cultural aspects** and ensuring their active contribution to development is considered an essential component of our human-centred development approach." SDG8: Policies: "Increasing the tourism capacity of the country considering the social, **cultural and environmental impacts of tourism**. "SDG11: The main objective is to create **human settlements that preserve historical and cultural values**; are resilient to disasters and secure; have e ective waste management systems which minimizes the impacts of waste on environment; and are safe and accessible with integrated transportation networks and also to ensure that all segments of the

society, particularly elderly, persons with disabilities, women and children are safely included in city life." Policies: "Undertaking **urban regeneration** projects (...) compatible with the **city's historical and cultural background** and supports social integration" (...) "Protecting and restoring **cultural heritage** in line with **holistic protection** principle and increase public awareness." (...) SDG 11 is assessed on four focus areas: (...) and iv. **Protection of natural and cultural heritage**. In terms of protection of natural and cultural heritage: Turkey, (...) is strengthening e orts to safeguard its vast heritage resources' wealth **and bio-cultural diversity**. As of 2019, Turkey has 18 cultural properties in the World Heritage List and 77 properties in the tentative list. The latest to be inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List as was Göbeklitepe Archaeological Site. (...) 2019 was declared **Göbeklitepe Year** in Turkey. (... ) 10% of the property tax (approximately 100 million USD/ year in total) collected by local administrations, being the most important actors in protecting the cultural heritage, is allocated for protecting and benefiting from cultural heritage. In 2016, the ratio of total **cultural expenses** over Gross Domestic Product was 1.4%. Inventory and restoration works for registering and protecting our cultural heritage inside and outside our country continues. (...) With the Turkish National **Immovable Cultural Heritage Inventory System** Project implemented between 2011-2020, an archival index is being created to identify all registered immovable cultural assets (...) There is a comprehensive legislation that defines movable, immovable cultural and natural assets, protection measures of cultural and natural heritage, regulates actions and activities to be undertaken, identifies necessary principles and practical decisions. Cultural and natural heritage is protected through creation and supervision of land development plans as well as plans, research, control and supervision on special environmental protection areas where special natural and cultural assets are located.

- SDG12: Under Sustainable Tourism, Green Star certificate has been awarded to environmentally friendly accommodation facilities since 2008 to protect the environment, to reduce the negative impacts of the touristic facilities to the environment (...) contributing to the environmental, **socio-cultural and economic sustainability** of the tourism sector.

**Vanuatu:**

- As reflected in the cover of the report, Vanuatu has proposed a new formulation of sustainability goals, whereby 12 goals are divided into social, environmental and economic themes, and the **first goal, a social one, is titled 'Vibrant Cultural Identity'**.

- Introduction: "The design of the ted b 7Oo.In **uniqu** acti3.474f the tourism sNi-Wi(Theltd  T1_0 1 Tf -0.044 Tw-0.42

**Figures 71-79:** Mongolia 2019 VNR, cover, traditional decorative motif bracing the SDGs; New Zealand 2019 VNR, cover, Maori-inspired artwork; Vanuatu 2019 VNR, cover, a new formulation of sustainability goals prioritizing culture. Algeria 2019 VNR, cover, photo of public landmark, artwork; Cameroon 2019 VNR, cover, traditional pottery-making; Croatia 2019 VNR, cover, children artwork with images of monuments and historic coat-of-arms; Kazakhstan 2019 VNR, cover, detail from abstract artwork, and a traditional decorative motif; Palau 2019 VNR, cover, stylized graphics with traditional, vernacular house and historic monument; Rwanda 2019 VNR, cover, traditional decorative motif
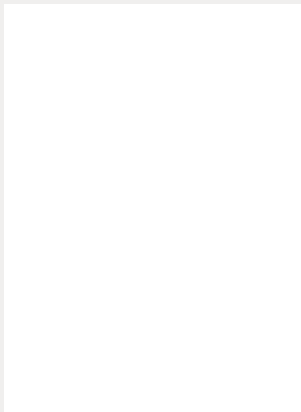
**Figures 80-90:** Croatia 2019 VNR, cartoon for children; Lesotho 2019 VNR, traditional straw hats; Kazakhstan 2019

**Figures 91-102:** Turkey 2019 VNR, whirling dervish, traditional cuisine; Iceland 2019 VNR, wooden bridge over river; Indonesia 2019 VNR, Borobudur ancient site, historic church buildings, ancient sites,; Israel 2019 VNR, Bahai Gardens, parliament building, World Heritage site; Kuwait 2019 VNR, water towers; Pakistan 2019 VNR, traditional animal husbandry, girls in traditional headwear
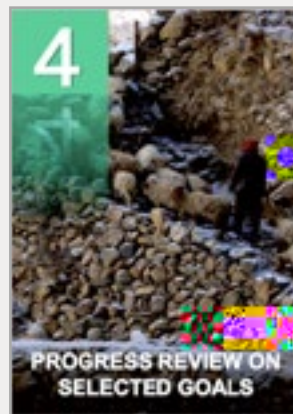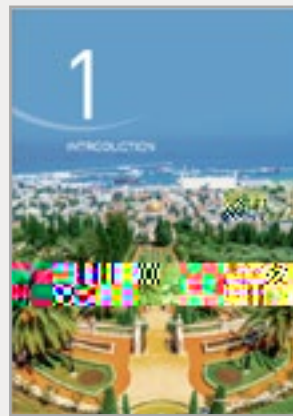
**Figures 103-106:** Cameroon 2019 VNR, minister headshot with traditional headwear; Cameroon 2019 VNR, public artwork and monument; Cameroon 2019 VNR, women in traditional headwear; Tunisia 2019 VNR, women in traditional headwear

## d_ Other Documents and Activities of 2019

Among the 148 inputs made to HLPF 2019, beside the 47 national inputs (VNRs), there are 67 from Intergovernmental Forums and Bodies, 33 from Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS), 1 from Partnerships and Voluntary Commitments. Some inputs with noteworthy culture references among the 37 results yielded by a 'culture' keyword search (based on the summary page, unless only the full report is available) include:

- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

- Non-Governmental Organizations Major Group - Position Paper

- Stakeholder Group on Ageing - Position Paper

- United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

- United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

- World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) - Para 89

- World Heritage Committee (policy recommendation: 2015 Policy for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the Convention)

At HLPF 2019, ICOMOS was present as a speaker at a side event "SDG 8, Leave No One Behind: The 2030 GDP Target - Vulnerable People and the Regions Where They Live"., and with its substantive contributions to the position statement of the NGO Major Group.

While the HLPF has been held July since 2016 under the auspices of ECOSOC, it is also scheduled to convene under the auspices of the General Assembly (in its 74th Session) as 2019 is also the time when the first cycle of review for all SDGs is completed. The so-called SDG Summit will be held on 24-25 September 2019, with the theme 'Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', whereby Heads of State and Government, as opposed to ministerial level delegates, will gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to follow up and comprehensively review progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The event is the first UN summit on the SDGs since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in September 2015.

This year in the July HLPF, there has been no Ministerial Declaration issued, as it has been deferred to the September HLPF (SDG Summit) to issue this outcome document, i.e. the **Political Declaration**. The final draft agreed by States Parties of the HLPF 2019 Political Declaration, issued in July 2, 2019, has no mention at all of culture or cultural themes. This disappointing result takes the status of HLPF declarations further behind than the previous year.

The UCLG 3rd Culture Summit was held on 3-5 April 2019 in Buenos Aires, tackling the key themes of 'Culture in the SDGs: towards 2030','A gender perspective in cultural policies', 'Implementing Culture 21 Actions',' Social Transformation and Culture' and 'Independent culture'. Held biennially, the UCLG Culture Summit is a unique global event, which sends strong messages on the role of culture in development and enables the sharing of experiences and innovations from cities across the world.

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the **Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights** examined the cultural rights approach to the universality of human rights and the close interrelationship between universality and cultural diversity. In her report, Karima Bennoune documents "di erent types of threats to the human rights system and cultural diversity, and in particular selective approaches to universality – excluding certain rights, certain persons or groups and recognizing only civil and political or economic, social and cultural rights as real human rights – and various cultural relativist arguments. While pointing towards abuse of cultural arguments to justify violations of human rights, she also demonstrates how cultural diversity and cultural rights contribute to strengthening the universal framework of human rights. She calls for a foundational renewal and vigorous defence of **universality that is grounded in cultural diversity**."
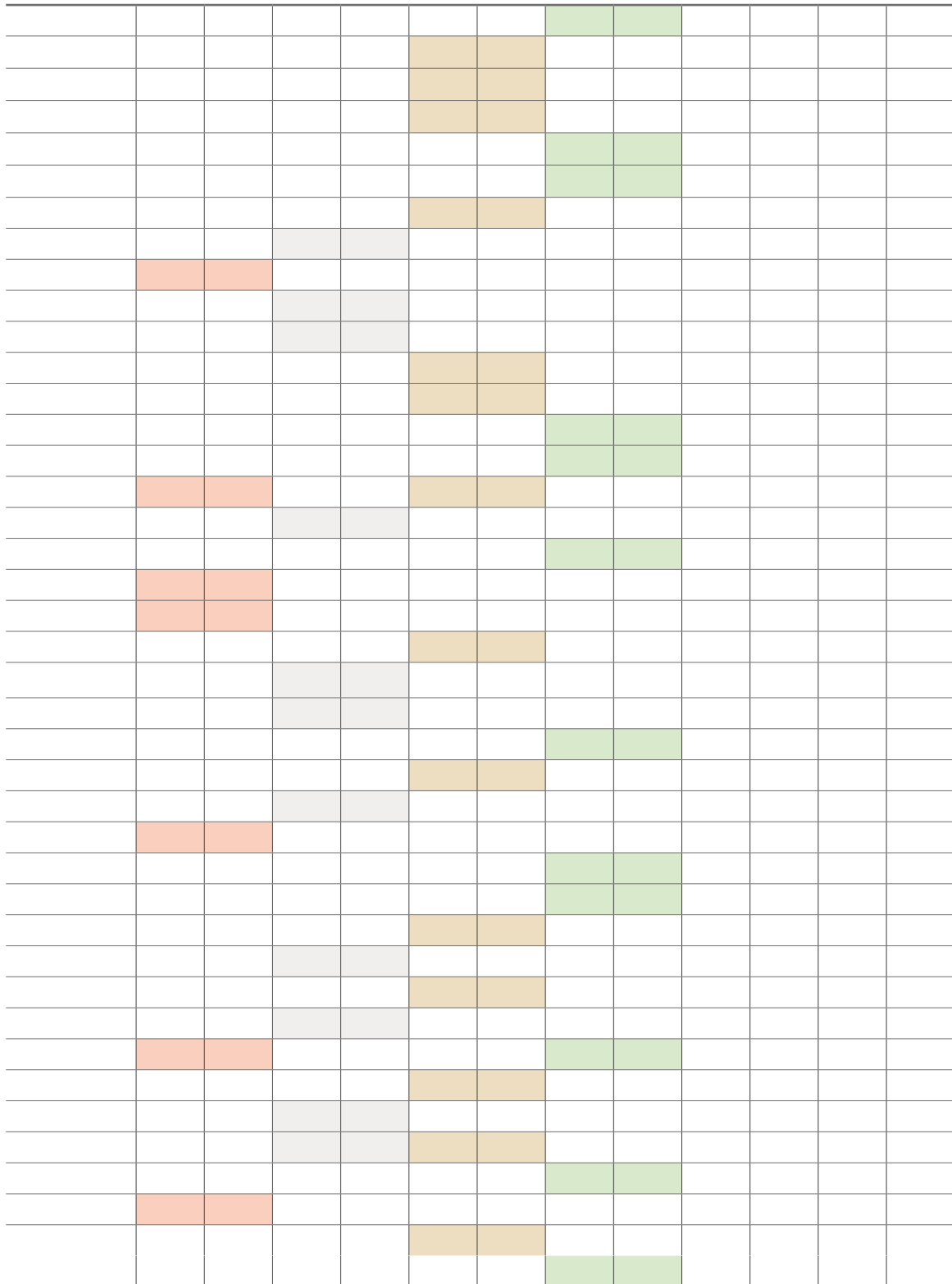
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Saint Lucia | | | | | | | 2 | 0.04 | **2** | 51 | 0.04 | 123 |
| Saudi Arabia | | | | | 30 | 0.31 | | | **30** | 96 | 0.31 | 23 |
| Senegal | | | | | 22 | 0.14 | | | **22** | 153 | 0.14 | 64 |
| Serbia | | | | | | | 59 | 0.57 | **59** | 103 | 0.57 | 7 |
| Sierra Leone | 3 | 0.05 | | | | | | | **3** | 56 | 0.05 | 112 |
| Singapore | | | | | 20 | 0.24 | | | **20** | 84 | 0.24 | 29 |
| Slovakia | | | | | 2 | 0.06 | | | **2** | 33 | 0.06 | 106 |
| Slovenia | | | 18 | 0.23 | | | | | **18** | 78 | 0.23 | 32 |
| South Africa | | | | | | | 4 | 0.03 | **4** | 130 | 0.03 | 129 |
| Spain | | | | | 61 | 0.34 | | | **61** | 181 | 0.34 | 20 |
| Sri Lanka | | | | | 6 | 0.05 | | | **6** | 115 | 0.05 | 114 |
| Sudan | | | | | 18 | 0.29 | | | **18** | 62 | 0.29 | 24 |
| Sweden | | | 13 | 0.15 | | | | | **13** | 88 | 0.15 | 59 |
| Switzerland | 2 | 0.07 | | | 6 | 0.21 | | | **4** | 28 | 0.14 | 65 |
| Tajikistan | | | 2 | 0.04 | | | | | **2** | 46 | 0.04 | 121 |
| Tanzania | | | | | | | 6 | 0.03 | **6** | 186 | 0.03 | 128 |
| Thailand | | | 10 | 0.11 | | | | | **10** | 94 | 0.11 | 85 |
| Timor Leste | | | | | | | 18 | 0.09 | **18** | 198 | 0.09 | 92 |
| Togo | 3 | 0.09 | 4 | 0.09 | 0 | 0.00 | | | **2** | 37 | 0.06 | 104 |
| Tonga | | | | | | | 11 | 0.13 | **11** | 84 | 0.13 | 72 |
| Tunisia | | | | | | | 27 | 0.18 | **27** | 148 | 0.18 | 37 |
| Turkey | 7 | 0.14 | | | | | 64 | 0.43 | **36** | 66 | 0.54 | 9 |
| Turkmenistan | | | | | | | 8 | 0.10 | **8** | 79 | 0.10 | 89 |
| Uganda | 13 | 0.11 | | | | | | | **13** | 118 | 0.11 | 83 |
| United Arab Emirates | | | 34 | 0.47 | | | | | **34** | 73 | 0.47 | 11 |
| United Kingdom | | | | | | | 38 | 0.16 | **38** | 235 | 0.16 | 50 |
| Uruguay | | | 59 | 0.19 | 54 | 0.17 | | | **57** | 316 | 0.18 | 40 |
| Vanuatu | | | | | | | 34 | 0.35 | **34** | 97 | 0.35 | 18 |
| Venezuela | 42 | 0.15 | | | | | | | **42** | 285 | 0.15 | 60 |
| Viet Nam | | | | | 15 | 0.16 | | | **15** | 94 | 0.16 | 51 |
| Zimbabwe | | | 10 | 0.17 | | | | | **10** | 58 | 0.17 | 44 |
| **TOTAL** | 227 | | 597 | | 1022 | | 890 | | 2736 | 14392 | | |
| **AVERAGE** | 11 | 0.13 | 14 | 0.17 | 23 | 0.21 | 21 | 0.16 | 19 | 107 | 0.17 | |

In comparing the top 20 scorers for the culture term in the VNR against UNWTO[21] and World Economic Forum[22] international tourism rankings, it is interesting to observe a small correlation, where three countries that scored high in the VNR also score high in tourism globally. However, the correlation of prioritising culture in VNRs and the role of tourism in the national economy may also be assumed for countries will smaller populations but still popular tourism destinations/tourism-dependent economies, such as Greece and Cyprus.

The fact that the cultural dimension of sustainable development lags significantly behind the other three recognized dimensions is evidenced in the keyword analysis of the VNRs, i.e. the number of mentions in texts of the full VNR reports. If one were to imagine a baseline of equal consideration of all four dimensions and examine how the VNRs deviate from this in their frequency, the total number of mentions, for all four years, stands at 5% for cultural, 39% for social, 31% for economic and 25% for environmental (See Figure 107). In other words, there are eight times as many references to social, six to economic, and five to environmental compared to cultural. We would like to see an increase in the share of the cultural dimension in the coming years, to a level closer to 25% of all dimensions, and at least as much as the environmental. As countries would internalize their consideration of culture in all its dimensions, we believe the VNR reports would reflect it in these figures.

Among culture-related terms encountered, keywords standing out, in order of highest to lowest frequency, are '**knowledge**' (2337), '**tradition**(al)', (1883) '**culture**(s)' (1178), '**buildings**' (958), '**character**' (792), '**heritage**' (753), '**design**(ers)' (714). In contrast, some other keywords that are central to cultural concerns, such as 'conservation' in the cultural sense, 'intangible', 'libraries', 'literature', 'museums', and 'music', are noticeably absent from most reports.

Mention of **UNESCO and World Heritage** would also have been expected to be featured more often, as World Heritage Sites, as well as other UNESCO labels, o er readily available ways for countries to promote their achievements as attractive and livable places.[24]

To delve slightly deeper into the usage of terms, '**culture**' is used most often by itself (including of national, ethnic, social groups) (718), '**culture(s) of**' (green entrepreneurship, cycling, sustainability, peace, recreation,

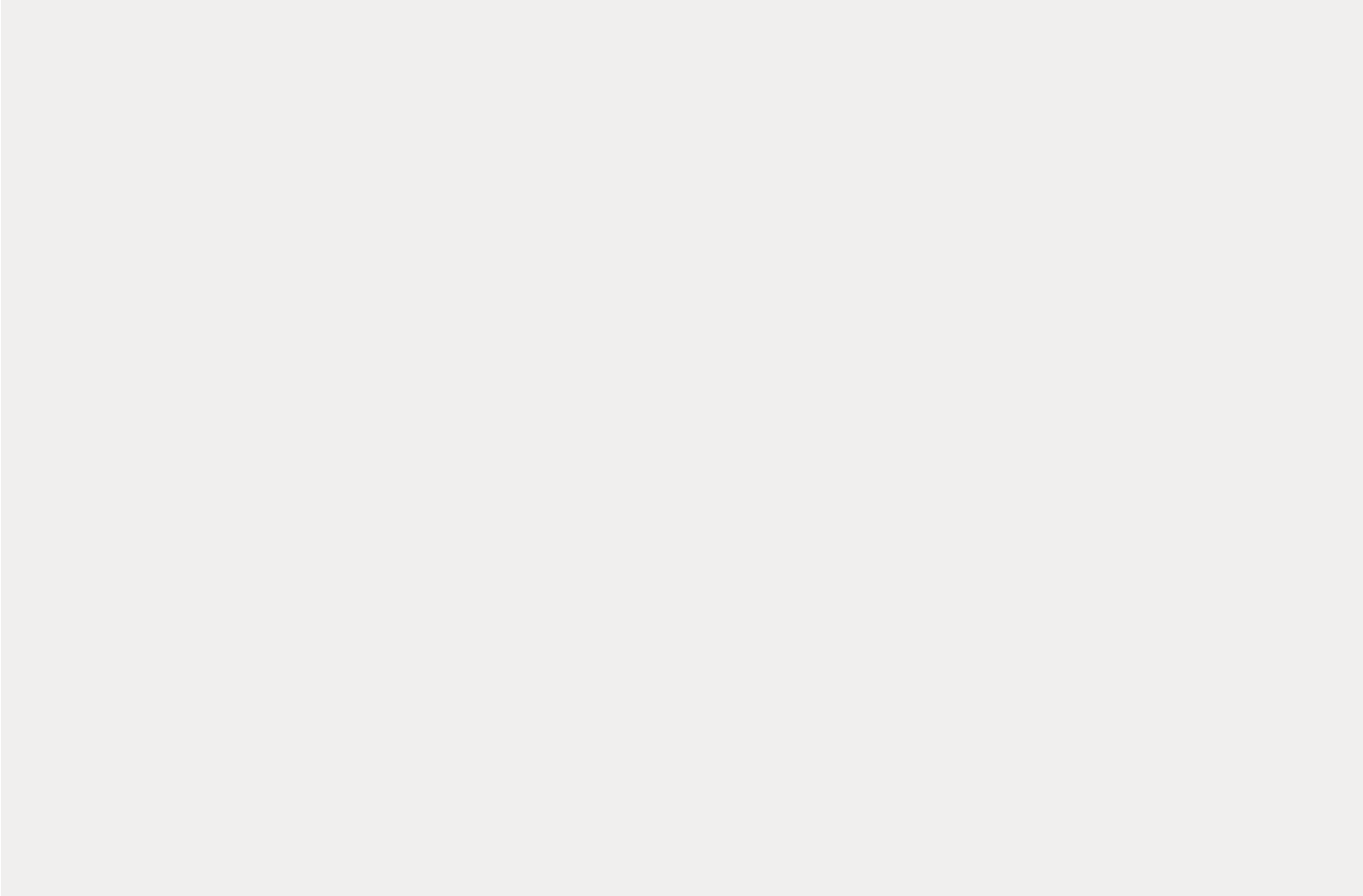**Figure 108:** Breakdown of culture-related keywords, 2016-19.
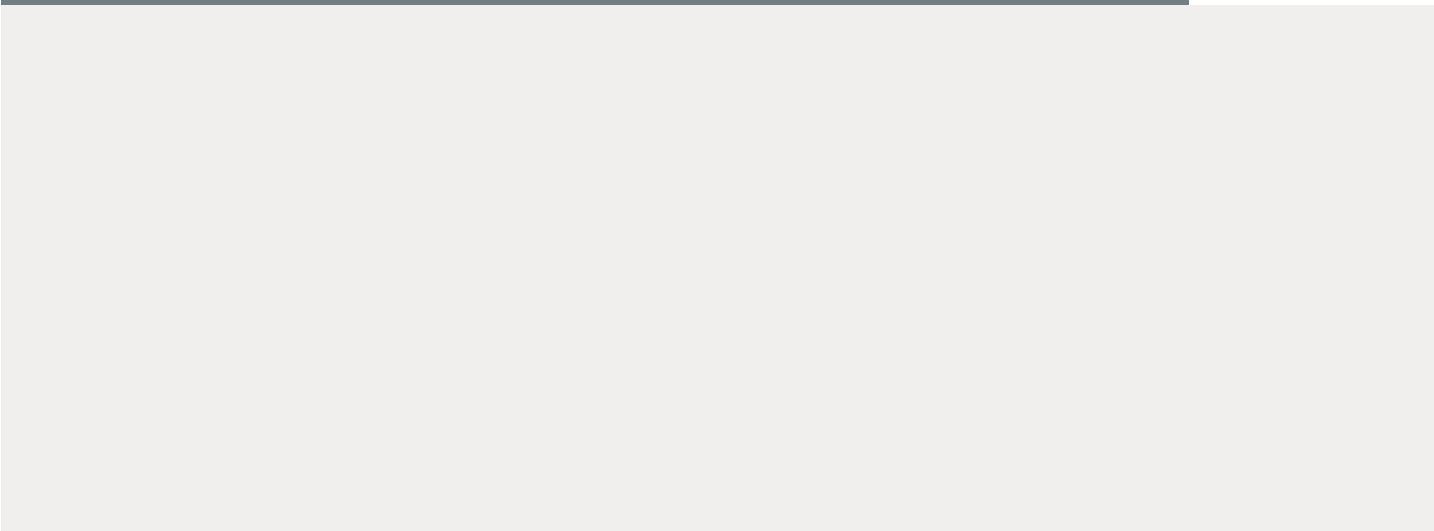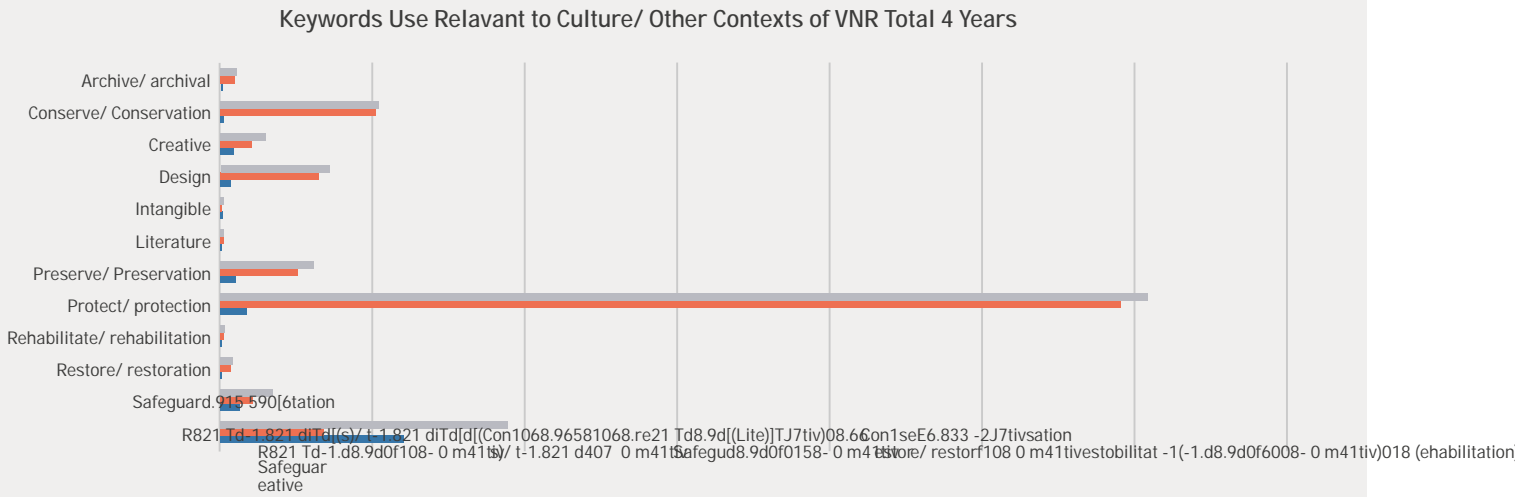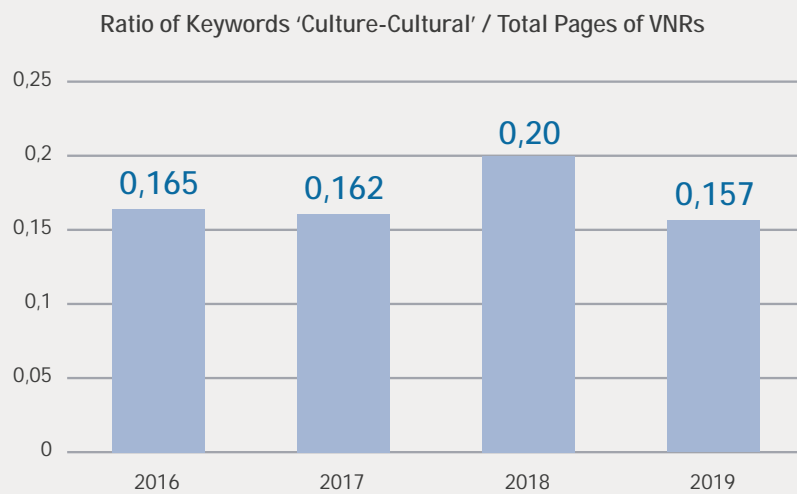
**Figure 109:**

**Figure 110:** Comparison of culture-related keywords used in direct, cultural contexts and used with indirect, more generic meanings, 2016-19.



Looking at the use of the terms 'culture'/ 'cultural' over the four years of VNRs, one observes a steady rate of about 0.16 for most years, except for a slight increase in 2018 to 0.20, which should be a reflection of SDG11 and thus Target 11.4 being reviewed that year.

**Figure 111:** Ratio of the keywords 'culture' and 'cultural' within VNR reports over the years 2016-19.

We have also noticed that 32 'suggested keywords' are listed on the <u>VNR webpage</u>, but culture is not included among these.

**Figure 112:** Un Webpage of VNR reports, with 'suggested keywords' on the left section.

## b_ Approaches to Engaging with Culture in the VNRs

There is a great range and diversity of references to culture identified throughout the VNR texts. These are found in all sections of the reports, from executive summaries, leadership forewords, introductions,

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# 2.4
# PRESENCE OF CULTURE IN SDG REVIEWS AT LOCAL LEVEL (VLRS)

## 2.4.1_ Overview

Since 2016, the HLPF has involved member states in the submission of national reports – the VNRs – to assess the state of implementation of the SDGs. Member states have committed to present at least two VNRs each by 2030. To assist them, the office of the UN Secretary General (UNSG) issued a set of guidelines for the production of the VNRs. The VNRs submitted in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 have been analysed in previous chapters of this document, looking for evidences of involvement of cultural narratives, actors, policies and programmes in the reporting process.

A significant part of the SDGs are implemented at the **sub-national and local level**; thus, **cities and regions**, and their governments, play a vital role in the achievement of all 17 SDGs. This has prompted a number of cities to develop their own strategies to implement the SDGs, as well as many awareness-raising and capacity-building activities to ensure that local services align their work with the SDGs. Furthermore, some cities have increasingly engaged in monitoring and accountability initiatives, as the examples hereafter demonstrate.[26]

In **2017**, the city of **Deqing** elaborated a "Progress Report on Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

In **2018**, during the HLPF, some local governments took the initiative to present their own reports – a **Voluntary Local Review (VLR)** – to showcase their contribution to the realization of the SDGs.

• The city of **New York**, host of the UN, presented the 'New York City's Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' report to the HLPF.

• Three municipalities in Japan – **Kitakyushu, Shimokawa** and **Toyama** – also produced their own SDG reports.

• **Mexico City** elaborated a local review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the city.

• The City of **San Antonio** developed and implemented a methodology to map the Targets and Goals the city is already meeting and has begun an internal detailed review of specific programs implementing the SDGs. The goal is to create an SDG toolkit for other U.S. cities

In **2019**, other cities have joined this mechanism and published reports to showcase their contribution to the realization of the SDGs:

• **Helsinki** and **Bristol** elaborated and published documents presented as VLRs.

• The cities of **Buenos Aires** and **Santana de Parnaíba**, as well as the **State of Oaxaca** elaborated and published documents presented as VLRs.

• The city of **Los Angeles** also elaborated a document presented as VLR.

• **Barcelona** elaborated a local review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the city.

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26. Because of this, UCLG advocates for the 'localization of the SDGs', namely, for distinct local challenges and opportunities to be taken into account in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Some of these local governments have used the **UNSG guidelines** for the elaboration of the VNRs. It is interesting to highlight that, according to UCLG, "the idea of picking up the **same structure of the national reports** is in itself a testament to the ambition of local governments to take part as peers in the reporting process. It also allows for comparisons across the reporting activities of a very diverse – albeit small – sample of aware, active cities: New York's metro area has a population of over 20 million. Shimokawa is a 3,000-people village in a municipal territory larger than T ky 's in the middle of Hokkaido's countryside".[27]

UNDESA a  rms "local and regional governments have a wealth of valuable experience in the "**localization**" of the 2030 Agenda, where they provide **leadership in the mobilization** of a wide range of stakeholders".[28] The VLR and similar reports can be seen, as the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) states, as a mechanism that "enables local governments to engage citizens in the review process, strengthening accountability and inclusive governance".[29] Both UNDESA and IGES have interesting websites with collections of VLRs. The analysis of this chapter has included only the some of these cities and local and regional governments. We express our apologies for not having been able to analyse more documents, and keep open to engage with all cities that have produced VLR or similar documents.

## 2.4.2_ Analysis of VLRs

### a_ Covers and Pictures

An image, said to be worth 1000 words[30], is always a statement; this is why several cities have chosen images reflecting their cultural identities and assets in the covers of their VLRs.

- Some reports have covers that reproduce local cultural heritage or expressions. This is the case of the covers of Buenos Aires (the sculpture "Floralis Generica"), Oaxaca (its cultural heritage) and Helsinki (the central library "Oodi"). These reports include a great collection of images of their cultural heritage and expressions in the internal pages.

- The report of Shimokawa reproduces the natural heritage of the town.

- The reports of Mexico City and Santana de Parnaíba include pictures of the natural and cultural heritage of the city, including museums, monuments and sites.

- The reports of Bristol and Los Angeles include images of natural and cultural heritage, as well as cultural expressions (urban art, parades) that occur in the city.

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27. UCLG internal report on VLRs
28. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11/local
29. The IGES was established in March 1998 under an initiative of the Japanese government and with the support of Kanagawa Prefecture. The IGES promotes a VLR LAB
    (https://iges.or.jp/en/projects/vlr) and provides access to some of the reports
30. They are two di  erent, both valuable, ways of human expression

## b_ Introductions

Cities often write a presentation to present **their case for reporting** on the localization of sustainable development in their territory. In many cases, these include references to cultural aspects.

•

- **Deqing** introduces the city as "a land of harmonious livelihood integrated with its deep-rooted culture, with

### SDG4: Quality Education

- **Mexico City** includes the programme "Saludarte" that coordinates a group of 120 primary schools in which art is a tool to better health and education. Similarly, in Los Angeles "arts, culture, and services that enhance well-being" are mentioned as components of the local "Plan for a Healthy L.A."

- **Bristol** explains the "Knowle West Media Centre" provides training and education opportunities for people interested in getting involved in the creative and technology industries" (Targets 4.4 and 4.6)

- Bristol explains some education institutions have been a part of the "Film for Learning program", which involves film making to improve literacy attainment". This programme "is a key part of Bristol's international knowledge exchange as a UNESCO City of Film" (Target 4.7).

- Mexico City counts 697 public libraries that have been renewed as a contribution to "build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and e ective learning environments for all" (Target 4.a).

- **Barcelona** explains the alliance with CERN (the European Council on Particle Physics) to raise awareness on the interrelation between the arts and sciences, as well as the launch of the first-ever local Biennale on "Science and the City".

- Also, Barcelona monitors the implementation of SDG 4 with (among others) five cultural indicators: number of libraries and cultural users (libraries, museums, museums and performing arts).

- In its vision of the Secondary School of the Future, **Buenos Aires** a rms "It is a school that forms responsible people capable of making decisions, by promoting autonomous learning and teaching to study. In addition, it encourages creativity and research development, critical thinking, and teamwork". Los Angeles mentions its "pLAn Milestone" that includes "increase education and training through City science, arts, and cultural programming in its analysis of Target 4.1.

- In **Los Angeles**, the Mayor's Young Ambassador (MaYA) Initiative (a free international travel program for community college students) is connecting young residents with the international community. During the trips (so far, to Mexico, Egypt, Japan, France, and Vietnam), students engage with their international peers, visit historic landmarks, participate in cultural exchanges, meet government o cials, and take part in community service projects. This initiative is also strongly related to SDG17.

- **San Antonio** is working on a cultural heritage curriculum for its largest school district, serving students from pre-kindergarten to high school. The curriculum includes classroom study, as well as field trips to engage students in project-based learning

### SDG5: Gender Equality

- In **Barcelona**, the Plan on Gender and Justice mentions the importance of cultural narratives and cultural diversity, as well as to the participation of women in cultural life as key elements (SDG 5).

- In **Los Angeles**, the Department of City Planning aims to increase the number of landmarks, statues and public spaces named in honour of women "whose accomplishments and contributions to the city may have been previously overlooked". In 2018, a new framework to identify places associated with the long struggle for women's rights was approved (SDG 5).

### SDG6. Clean Water and Sanitation

- **Bristol** explains the role played by "We The Curious", Bristol's interactive science museum, in raising-awareness on water consumption (Target 6.4) and in Climate Change (SDG 13).

## SDG8. Decent Work and Economic Growth

- **Buenos Aires** explains the economic development of the city is supported (among other measures) with the so-called "districts", six territorial clusters devoted to Arts, Design, Audiovisual, Fashion, Sports and Technology (Target 8.3).

- Also Buenos Aires: "Addressing tourism from the sustainable development perspective is essential to protect the cultural, material and natural heritage of Buenos Aires" (Target 8.9); the report mentions the revamp of "Caminito" as an open-air museum.

- The report of **Los Angeles** refers to the importance of culture in sustainable tourism, the specific support for the Film Industry (including tax credits to qualified productions), and the specific "creative workforce development" program to expand "the existing cultural vitality of Pacoima".

- The report of **Kitakyushu** mentions the consideration of its World Heritage sites in the city as tourism resources.

- **Bristol** explains the existence of the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, which "aims to build a better Bristol by creating and celebrating arts, culture and heritage". It also mentions that in 2017 the city was designated as a City of Film in the UNESCO Creative City Network. This is connected to the importance that tourism has in the city (Target 8.9).

- **Helsinki** illustrates its sustainable tourism program, with the upcoming "Helsinki Biennale for Public Art" that will happen Vallisaari in 2020. The Biennale "is an essential part of the implementation of the marine strategy" and will reinforce "the appeal of Helsinki as a city of visual arts". Sustainability will be considered in the planning, implementation, and reporting of the event.

- Furthermore, Helsinki explains the cultural dimension of creativity and innovation (Target 8.3), with the schools, the Helsinki City Museum and the Oodi central library used as development platforms for "the development of new solutions with business potential".

- **San Antonio** created a Legacy Business Program intended to sustain small family-owned businesses that perpetuate the city's cultural authenticity. The program connects businesses to educational and promotional tools and strategies to keep businesses thriving

## SDG9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

- **Mexico City includes** the restoration of "historic buildings and façades" as a key activity in the development of "quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure" (Target 9.1).

## SDG10: Reduced Inequalities

- **Mexico City**

- **Barcelona** presents its programme of "Culture and Neighbourhoods" (with an accent on public cultural centres, artistic education and cultural events driven by communities) as a contribution to Reduce the Inequalities in the city. The "Intercultural Programme", the "Local Strategy with the Gipsy People" and the "Local Plan against Islamophobia" are also mentioned as a contribution to achieve the SDGs.

- Also in SDG 10, the City of **Buenos Aires** mentions the Policy "Capital of Encounter, Coexistence and Inter-religious Dialogue" and its standing programme "The Night of the Temples" (40 temples in the City open their doors to reflect the spirituality of their communities and become a witness of the cultural, artistic and architectonic heritage of the City). Buenos Aires mentions the Pride Week in support of SDG 10, because it "reflects the permanent commitment of Buenos Aires with the promotion of the LGBTIQ+ rights". Finally, Buenos Aires also relates under SDG 10 "the cultural heritage of more than 50 communities who live in the city" and the programmes to share history, culture and identity with all the neighbours.

- **Helsinki** devotes several paragraphs in its VLR to explain the importance of libraries in the city's policies to reduce inequalities. The 38 libraries are seen as "learning environments" that promote residents' skills regarding the information society: differences between population groups are identified, and services are targeted at high-risk target groups and people in need of special support. The programmes of the new central library Oodi, opened in 2018, are explained in detail in the VLR.

- Also under SDG 10, Helsinki explains the growing importance of arts education and targeted cultural activities in schools and day care centres.

- **Los Angeles** explains the existence of Citizenship Corners at each of the city's 73 public libraries, with library employees offering guidance on navigating the naturalization process.

- The City of **San Antonio** introduced an equity-focused platform to inform the city's budget planning to ensure a fair and impartial use of city funds throughout communities. Additionally, ensuring translation services at all public meetings empowers all city residents to have their voices heard while improving their understanding of policy

### SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

- Under the Target 11.4, the only target that explicitly addresses "cultural heritage", **Deqing** mentions the "stylistic facilities" that have been built, the "five large public halls, including Cultural hall, library, museum, sports center and Grand Theatre". The report also mentions "other characteristic venues such as Civic Ethics Museum" and refers to the indicator of target 11.4 (budget devoted to natural and cultural heritage).

- **New York** devotes a full chapter to explain its cultural policies under the Target 11.4. Firstly, the report mentions the adoption of "CreateNYC", the City's first-ever comprehensive cultural plan, which had been built "on a deep public engagement process that included 400 live events and the feedback of nearly 200,000 New Yorkers". Several programmes are explained in detail: (a) the Building Community Capacity (BCC) program that operates in neighbourhoods and supports communities in creating their own cultural visions, because previous research has provided full evidence that "presence of cultural assets in low-income communities correlates with improved outcomes in education, health, and safety"; (b) the "PAIR" inter-agency initiative that embeds artists with New York City public agencies (example, Sanitation or Housing) in order to use creative, collaborative art practices to discover solutions to pressing civic challenges; (c) the "CycleNews", a collaborative art performance initiated by artist Tania Bruguera that opens opportunities for two-way dialogue between the local government (with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs) and the newest immigration communities, and (d) the activities of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, responsible for identifying and protecting New York City's architecturally, historically, and culturally significant buildings and sites (there are more than 36,000 designated buildings and sites in New York City, including 142 historic districts, 1,412 individual landmarks, 120 interior landmarks, and 11 scenic landmarks).

- **Los Angeles** explains several cultural programmes under Target 11.4, namely (a) the 35 Historic Preservation Overlay Zones that preserve and revitalize neighbourhoods of unique architectural, historic, and cultural significance (it currently protects over 21,000 structures), (b) the Triennial of public art, that

SDG16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

## 2.4.3_ Key Findings on VLRs

The analysis in this chapter shows that **culture is seen by cities as a crucial component** in the achievement of the SDGs. Explicit contributions can be found in almost all goals. Nevertheless, several factors are **preventing a more thorough** reporting by cities (through VLRs or similar exercises) of the role of culture in the achievement of the SDG, among others:

• the absence of a Goal dedicated to culture or more references to cultural aspects in other Goals,

• the nature of the VLR exercise (only some Goals are reported every year),

• issues of coordination among local government agencies (there is still a sub-representation of cultural voices), as well as

• a lack of dissemination of relevant guides (such as UCLG's document mentioned above).

There is obvious **room for improvement in awareness-raising** and the need to further mobilize local communities related to cultural policies (the local government, universities, activists and NGOs, as well as cultural institutions) in the 'formal' framework of the Goals.

This chapter also shows that the "**alignment**" exercises (Goals and Targets related to Local Plans and Policies) undertaken by cities in the elaboration of the VLRs can be **two-directional**: yes, all SDGs need to be related to local policies and programmes, and (also yes) key local priorities that are not explicitly present in the SDGs need to be highlighted in VLRs (as illustrated by Los Angeles with LGBTQIA+ persons, Shimokawa with cultural diversity, San Antonio with heritage or Oaxaca with human rights). In other words, cities and local and regional governments are invited to more explicitly highlight **local priorities on creativity, culture or heritage** in their future VLRs.

If taken as a whole, the collection of narratives, policies, programmes and projects of this chapter are totally **coherent with UCLG's document "Culture in the SDGs: A Guide for Local Action"**. Both the Guide and this chapter can be jointly used as a checklist to inspire future reporting by cities. Culture is an essential component of **subsidiarity**, and it needs to become more explicit to accelerate ownership and positive impact.

Last, but not least, global networks and research centres involved in the preparation of international templates for the VLRs may **consider explicitly including culture as a key dimension in the local implementation of the SDGs**. In fact, the UN Secretary General's Guidelines for Voluntary Reviews includes a chapter on the "Integration of the three dimensions" (the three currently accepted in the UN system dimensions of sustainable development are economic, social and environmental) and, at least locally, as some of the VLRs analysed illustrate, the local integration of the dimensions is impossible unless culture becomes **explicit and operational**. Therefore, international templates for the VLRs preparation may consider adopting the "**global acquis**", mainly developed by UCLG, on the place of cultural aspects in local sustainable development, which is based on the narrative that culture needs to be considered the fourth (or the first) pillar (dimension) of sustainable development. This narrative becomes obvious when policies and programmes are **implemented at a local level**: people inhabit places with history and understand cultural rights, including heritage, diversity, creativity and critical knowledge, as key components for the future.

# 3 CONCLUSIONS

# 3.1
# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS IN THE ANALYSIS

## 3.2
# KEY MESSAGES

The Implementation of the 2030 Agenda with the Sustainable Development Goals at its heart is the most important shared agenda that the humanity has ever adopted. But, as the UN Secretary General has aﬃrmed in his 2019 Report to the HLPF, the global response to the 2030 Agenda has not been ambitious enough... Four years after its approval in 2015, the challenges are even greater: growing inequalities, mistrust in policy systems, violence against vulnerable groups, military conflicts and climate emergency. **In the face of such urgency, culture should be at the heart of the response, as a crucial, needed force.**

(c) cultural practices convey forms of **expression, creativity and identity building** that relate to the core of **human dignity**, and as such embody **people-centred**, sustainable development. Libraries, museums and community cultural centres can be seen as basic services (SDG 1), while the interrelation between gender equality and culture holds potential for positive social transformation (SDG 5) and the integration of the arts and cultural knowledge, diversity and creativity can be seen as integral to inclusive education (SDG 4). Cultural facilities may also be seen as part of resilient, quality infrastructures (SDG 9), cultural programmes contribute to reducing inequalities (SDG 10) and the protection of cultural heritage is key to sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). Last, but not least, Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17) should foster more international cultural collaborations.

We require all parties involved in the implementation of the SDGs to take into account the above three essential considerations for an explicit presence of culture in the e orts to achieve the SDGs. This report provides the evidence that some organisations, governments and institutions are already working in this direction.

Our ultimate goal is for the achievement of a **full synergy of culture with all other dimensions of sustainable** development, for the well-being of '**People**' and the '**Planet**', for all human beings and societies to live materially and spiritually '**Prosperous**', '**Peaceful**' and fulfilling lives. This can only be facilitated with the exercise of **cultural rights for all**, including the right to take part in cultural life, and for a thorough engagement with culture in its di erent aspects, forms and elements – traditional and novel, material and immaterial, commercial and non-commercial – which involves a diverse range of '**Partnerships**', among all kinds of actors, at all levels.

This report needs to be understood as a strong message and a full commitment to the 2030 Agenda from

- We encourage **UN member states to foster wider consultation and participatory exercises** in the elaboration of their VNRs and other planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the context of the 2030 Agenda. We believe these exercises would be enriched by the engagement of cultural actors, who can help visualise how culture is, at the national and local level, relevant for the achievement of the SDGs, and to discuss what further opportunities may exist in this respect. There are hundreds of extremely relevant initiatives, in each one on UN member states, that are already connecting culture to the SDGs, but their communities, leaders and networks are not called to the table in which the reporting to the UN is designed and elaborated. These issues of coordination and involvement are crucial.

- The evidence presented in this report shows that **there is significant support from a number of governments and parts of the UN** for more work to take place on culture in the context of the SDGs (e.g. the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights or the World Bank-UNESCO partnership on Culture and Reconstruction). This is reinforced by the fact that in recent years several **high-profile, cross-cutting agendas** (in particular, the New Urban Agenda[32]) have been agreed by governments and with significant UN involvement that make it clear that culture has a role (e.g. New Urban Agenda, COP, *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* on Financing for Development, Convention on Biological Diversity, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 10 year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production) – it is worth noting that the adoption of these documents has involved engagement from many organisations and groups outside the cultural sector. Our presence at past HLPF meetings and other international forums has also provided evidence of the interest in culture existing in many parts of the UN and among other relevant actors. This potential is however hampered in practice by a number of factors, including the limited references to cultural aspects in the 2030 Agenda, as well as the absence of a Major Group or further stakeholder group presence. This means that the opportunity to make the voices of culture-focused organisations heard is too often lost, or the message is diluted, and culture risks losing ground as a result. This reinforces **our commitment to developing a coherent community around this issue**, and ready to respond to this demand. Such a community would build on and expand beyond each of our networks' scope of work, to mobilize the resources of international bodies, including UNESCO, governmental, non-governmental and business organisations that express their support. This would also enable heightened media attention, more floor time to speak at HLPF sessions, larger culture summits and meetings attended by a wider range of actors. Such a community – i.e. a renewed, more ambitious and numerous, **#culture2030goal platform** – would make an enormous contribution to the achievement of SDG 17. Thus, we will invite new networks to join in the #culture2030goal platform and to jointly explore the creation of a formal '**Major Group for Culture**'.

- Taking the idea of convening high-impact meetings and taking the numerous UN resolutions  [(#sas idea ofmgoal platf

- Because many SDGs are **implemented at the local level, the role of local governments, grassroots organisations and communities** needs to be further recognised in the monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda. In line with several cities' e orts to produce VLRs, we encourage global networks and research agencies to develop guidelines for the elaboration of VLRs that explicitly include cultural aspects in them. These guidelines should promote culture as the fourth pillar or dimension of sustainable development, recognising the importance of cultural contexts in the local implementation of the SDGs and the crucial role played by cultural actors, institutions and organisations.

- We believe the **cultural actors need to strengthen their own e orts towards the implementation of the SDGs**. Cultural policies, institutions and organizations need to contribute to our common challenges as one humanity, and be bolder and more explicit in our annual and long-term programmes on issues such as human rights, gender equality, the fight against all inequalities and the struggle against climate change. We are aware of the need to **broaden the conversation** outside the culture sector proper and are keen to engage in discussions with public, private and civil society organisations approaching cultural aspects from other perspectives. Among key topics with important and natural synergies with culture are sustainable cities and communities, quality education, gender equality, human rights, the knowledge economy, peace, resilience, resource conservation, biodiversity and tourism. As this report has shown, there is evidence to suggest that the e ective implementation and delivery of the SDGs on the ground involves culture. We will thus continue to make e orts to make this v]TJsst theup5 ( r Tw Tn7]TJ-0.(tur)18 )19.3scca, Para.71_0 0

# INFO ON 'CULTURE GOAL CAMPAIGN' MEMBERS

**Arterial Network:** Arterial Network is a dynamic network of non-government organisations, institutions, companies of the creative economy, festivals as well as individual artists and protagonists from the African cultural sector. It was founded in 2007 during the conference "Revitalising Africa's Cultural Assets" on Goree Island in Senegal. Today, 28 countries are represented within Arterial Network. The network has its headquarters in Cape Town, South Africa, additional regional chapters are currently in Mali and Kenya. Arterial Network's vision is to develop a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable African creative sector engaged in improving the living and working conditions of artists and cultural practitioners on the African continent and enhancing the quality in the arts. And within the cultural dimension of development, Arterial Network wants to initiate processes contributing to the implementation of human rights and democracy, and to the eradication of poverty on the African continent. With this aim, Arterial Network organises events, conferences and educational programs throughout Africa. The network is supported by the DOEN Foundation, the European Union and HIVOS among others.

Contact: www.contemporaryand.com/place/arterial-network/

President Mr Daves Guzha <dguzharooftop@gmail.com>

**Culture Action Europe:** Culture Action Europe (CAE) was established in 1994 under the name of European Forum for Arts and Heritage (EFAH) – Forum Européen pour les Arts et le Patrimoine (FEAP) under the Belgian law. Predominantly as 'network of networks', EFAH-FEAP aimed to maintain continuous dialogue and knowledge exchange between the cultural sector in Europe and EU policymakers. The association changed its name to Culture Action Europe in 2008 and diversified its membership, opening it up to public and private organisations, both large and small. This change was mirrored in the mission and advocacy policies of CAE. It adopted a new strategy, advocating for access to the arts and participation in culture as a fundamental right of every citizen. It has continued lobbying for public investment in culture and the arts as the main force for the development of a sustainable and more cohesive Europe. Today, CAE is the major European network of cultural networks, organisations, artists, activists, academics and policymakers. CAE is the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in the EU. As the only intersectoral network, it brings together all practices in culture, from the performing arts to literature, the visual arts, design and cross-arts initiatives, to community centres and activist groups. CAE believes in the value and values of culture and its contribution to the development of sustainable and inclusive societies.

Contact: www.cultureactioneurope.org/

Secretary General Ms Tere Badia <secretarygeneral@cultureactioneurope.org>; Policy and Advocacy Director Ms Rosa Perez Monclús <policy@cultureactioneurope.org>

**IMC - International Music Council:** Founded in 1949 by UNESCO, IMC is the world's largest network of organizations and institutions working in the field of music. The International Music Council promotes access to music for all and the value of music in the lives of all peoples. Through its members and their networks, IMC has direct access to over 1000 organisations in some 150 countries and to 200 million persons eager to develop and share knowledge and experience on diverse aspects of musical life.

**Contact:** www.imc-cim.org

Secretary General Ms Silja Fischer <s.fischer@imc-cim.org>

**Latinoamerican Network of Arts for Social Transformation:** This is a network that convenes 24 organizations working on art for social development in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Chile and Bolivia. It is a set of initiatives that do quality practices on the building of e ective citizenship, social integration, human rights, inter-cultures and global and social sustainability promotion. Part of the Art for Social Transformation action plan is to imagine projects that link with Europe and draw the attention of fundraisers, funding agencies and governments to invest in Art and Social Development. Therefore, understanding that this field is a relevant episode for the quality-life of the citizens and that it provides the necessary tools to build a socially sustainable world.

**Contact:** www.artfactories.net/Art-for-social-Transformation.html

Coordinator Ms María Emilia de la Iglesia <emisansi@yahoo.com.ar>

**UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) Culture Committee - Agenda 21 for culture:** The global network of cities and local and regional governments has a Committee on culture whose mission is "to promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development through the international dissemination and the local implementation of Agenda 21 for culture". The Committee is chaired by Buenos Aires, Lisbon and Mexico City, and vice-chaired by Barcelona, Bilbao, Bogotá, Jeju, Porto Alegre and Rome. UCLG has several key documents on culture: the Agenda 21 for Culture, approved in 2004 by cities and local governments from all over the world to enshrine their commitment to human rights, cultural diversity, sustainability, participatory democracy and creating conditions for peace; the political declaration 'Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development', adopted in Mexico City in 2010; and Culture 21 Actions, approved in Bilbao in March 2015 on the occasion of the first UCLG Culture Summit. UCLG organises the International Award "UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21" on Cultural Policies every two years, hosts a database of good practices on "culture in sustainable cities", convenes a globala37rsn1obala37rsustainable cist UCLgI915 ()]TJ (tur)24 (al.5 (suv)4 (e

# CREDITS

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The report expresses the consensus of the members of the campaign. The report does not necessarily reflect the exact views of each one of its members. Please refer to each one of the members of the campaign for these individual views.

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