



8 July 2025

THE AGORA MEETING

[#Culture2030Goal](#)

On 8 July 2025, the [#Culture2030Goal](#) campaign held the second meeting of its Agora, bringing together partners and supporters to present and discuss the current draft of the Version 1 of the Culture Goal proposal. This proposal will be officially presented at the UCLG Culture Summit in Barcelona, within the framework of Mondiacult 2025 and the Civic Agora.

The session addressed different key topics, including the following:

1. FINALISING THE PROPOSAL

Jordi Pascual (UCLG) opened the Agora meeting by emphasising that the work of the campaign has proven that culture is both “goal-able and globable” (i.e. that it is suitable to be turned into a goal, and that it is globally relevant). He also noted that the current proposal should be finalised within the following 15–20 days.

John Crowley provided an overview on the status of the drafting process, underlining its emphasis on co-development, which draws on the collective intelligence of all those involved. The circulation of the draft before and after the meeting is intended to include as many inputs as possible from partners and diverse stakeholders, encouraging critical engagement and contributions that help shape a proposal that reflects shared reflection and collaborative inputs, as well as the ambition of the campaign.

Crowley also identified some challenges that emerged in the drafting process, including the need to more effectively address emerging issues such as artificial intelligence and heritage, as well as aspects of the cultural and creative economy that were not sufficiently developed in the initial draft.

2. INSIGHTS FROM THE SURVEY

John Crowley presented key findings from the global survey conducted from late February to early May 2025, which gathered 262 responses. Results showed strong convergence around the following points:

- I Widespread support for a standalone Culture Goal that would lead to greater recognition of culture in sustainable development.

- I Consensus on adopting a broad approach to culture, referring both to its intrinsic value and its contribution to development.
- I Near-unanimous agreement that culture should be integrated both as a dedicated goal and across other SDGs.
- I Broad belief that a Culture Goal would positively impact the achievement of other Goals.
- I A lack of awareness of successful examples of culture being integrated into broader development policies, underscoring the need for greater visibility and dissemination of existing good practices.

3. INDICATORS

In this segment, John Crowley emphasised that, in order to align with the logic of the SDGs and provide a usable basis for state-level reporting and a potential “shadow goal” scenario, clear objectives and robust indicators are crucial. He noted that indicators need to be quantitative —although acknowledging that many important things do not really fit into quantitative indicators— based on explicit, unambiguous definitions. Indicators also need to be straightforward and resource-efficient to collect and to compile. Finally, indicators should be universal in the sense that all states can report against them. While perfect universality is not possible, because circumstances differ, indicators should, at minimum, avoid being defined in terms of variables that only make sense in certain places.

Crowley explained that section four of the document contains the actual revised Culture Goal, including the proposed indicators. The approach taken has been one of minimum necessary change on the targets, with the goal of building a credible and coherent framework for the next phase of the campaign.

4. COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS FROM THE AGORA

As in the previous meeting, the Agora provided a space for participants to share feedback and exchange ideas in an open and constructive way. Several participants intervened during the session, and further proposals and comments are expected to be submitted by email to John Crowley as part of the ongoing revision process of the Culture Goal. The comments during the session included:

- I **Svetlana Hristova** suggested including “happiness” under cultural rights and proposed adding an element on developing human capital through arts and culture education, or even integrating it within cultural rights.
- I **Catarina Vaz Pinto** asked whether the wording of the goal remains unchanged. John Crowley indicated that some suggestions have been received and will be taken into account in what will be published.
- I **Francesc Vilaró** expressed the continued support of the Government of Catalonia to the Culture Goal, and shared that Barcelona will host the Civic Agora during MONDIACULT 2025. He invited all participants to take part.
- I **Aysegül Sabuktay** expressed the support of Izmir and offered to contribute with further details on indicators.

- I **Diego Benhabib** highlighted the concept of cultural citizenship and asked how it was reflected in the text. John Crowley responded that this is addressed primarily in targets 4 and 7, especially through the lens of rights and participation, but acknowledged that the notion could be further elaborated.
- I **Doreen E. van Norren** highlighted Bhutan's experience with measuring gross national happiness and community vitality, as well as indigenous rights. She also noted the value of concepts such as Ubuntu and Buen Vivir. She recommended including the concepts of "community" and "epistemic justice", and culture being key to identity and as a source of values.

The deadline for written comments and suggestions to the draft was fixed: 14 July 2025.

The document will be released on 27 September 2025, at the session fully devoted to the Culture Goal in the UCLG Culture Summit, from 11.30 to 13.30, at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Stephen Wyber (IFLA) closed the meeting by acknowledging the value of the collective reflection and emphasised that this work is helpful not only for advancing the Culture Goal, but also for the organisations involved in the process.

After this final intervention, and with the shared commitment to moving the process forward, the second meeting of the Agora was ended.

BACKGROUND

During the process of creation and adoption of the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, several cultural global networks campaigned, under the banner '[The Future We Want Includes Culture](#)', for the inclusion of one specific Goal devoted to Culture, and the integration of cultural aspects across the SDGs. In the context of this #Culture2015goal campaign, 4 documents were produced: a [Manifesto – Proposal for a Goal](#) (September 2013), a [Declaration on the inclusion of culture in the 2030 Agenda](#) (May 2014), a [proposal of indicators for measuring the cultural aspects of the SDGs](#) (February 2015), and a [Communiqué on the final 2030 Agenda](#) (September 2015) which highlighted “progress made” but also noticed that “important steps remain ahead”.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the #Culture2030goal campaign released on 20 April 2020 a Statement entitled “[Ensuring culture fulfils its potential in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)”, which was [officially launched](#) on 21 May 2020, on the occasion of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. The Statement has been [endorsed by the President of the United Nations General Assembly](#) and signed by more than 280 individuals and organisations worldwide.

The campaign has published two analytical (and critical) reports on the cultural dimension of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: “[Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda](#)”, analysing the National Voluntary Reviews, in 2019, and “[Culture in the Localization of the SDGs: An Analysis of the Voluntary Local Reviews \(VLRs\)](#)”, in 2021. The campaign has also promoted several discussions in the context of the [2020](#) and [2021](#) United Nations High-Level Political Fora (HLPF).

In 2021, the campaign published its [strategic vision](#). The campaign wants a stronger place for culture throughout the implementation of the current UN 2030 Agenda, the adoption of an explicit Goal for Culture in the Post-2030 Development Agenda, and the adoption of an ambitious and comprehensive Global Agenda for Culture.

In 2022, in the context of the UNESCO Global Conference on Cultural Policies organised in Mexico City, Mondiacult 2022, the campaign launched a [Zerodraft of a future Culture Goal](#), and welcomed the undertaking in the Final Declaration of the Conference to integrate a specific Culture Goal in the post-2030 development agenda, with the Statement “[Commitment to an explicit culture goal in MONDIACULT Declaration welcome: now is the time to deliver](#)”.

In 2023, we have seen five key high-level, cross-governmental declarations that recognise the need for an explicit culture goal.

- I First of all, on 23 August 2023, the leaders of the [BRICS group](#) committed to integrate culture into their national development policies as a driver and an enabler for the achievement of the SDGs.
- I Second, on 9-10 September 2023, G20 heads of state and government released their [G20 Leaders Declaration](#) including a whole heading on culture as a transformative driver of the SDGs. In particular, they called to advance the inclusion of culture as a standalone Goal in future discussions on a possible post-2030 development agenda.

- I Third, all UN Member States, meeting at the [SDG Summit](#) on 18 September 2023, reaffirmed the role of culture as an enabler of sustainable development, contributing to more effective and sustainable development policies and measures at all levels.
- I The Ministers of Culture of the European Union adopted the [Caceres Declaration](#) on 26 September 2023, committing to work for culture to be recognised in and of itself as a new sustainable development goal.
- I The UCLG Culture Summit, on 30 November 2023, in the [Dublin Statement](#) reaffirmed the commitment of cities and local and regional governments in favour of a Culture Goal.
- I The [version 1 of the Pact for The Future](#) included the sentence "Integrate culture into economic, social and environmental development policies and strategies as a standalone goal, and as a central consideration to enhance implementation of the 2030 Agenda" in Action 7 "We will protect and promote culture as an integral component of sustainable development".

These declarations point to a strong and positive trend in favour of substantial efforts to integrate culture into development agendas.

The Culture2030Goal campaign and its members stand ready to accelerate work in this area, working in partnership with relevant actors at all levels. The campaign looks forward to leading cross-governmental work programmes around the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the Pact for the Future. This includes the publication of a more in-depth proposal of a Culture Goal (to be published in July 2025 and to be presented in Mondiacult 2025) and the exploration of the feasibility of a Major Group within the UN system.



| Arterial Network

Web: www.arterialafrica.org



| Culture Action Europe

Web: www.cultureactioneurope.org



| ICOM - International Council of Museums

Web: www.icomos.org



| ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites

Web: www.icomos.org



| IFCCD - International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity

Web: www.ficdc.org



| IFLA - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

Web: www.ifla.org



| IMC - International Music Council

Web: www.imc-cim.org



| UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) Committee on Culture - Agenda 21 for culture

Web: www.agenda21culture.net



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