

ÖSTERSUND DECLARATION X UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK ANNUAL MEETING

Östersund, Sweden
14-16 September 2016

We, the participants of the X Annual Meeting of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), held in Östersund, Sweden, from 14 to 16 September 2016, advocate the importance of culture and creativity as vital and transformative drivers of sustainable development.

Together, we have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development, which provides us with an inclusive framework toward the common objective of placing creativity and cultural industries at the heart of our local development plans and cooperating actively at the international level.

Throughout the X Annual Meeting discussions focused on the theme *Fostering the culture and creative sectors as drivers of sustainable development, maximizing the potential of urban-rural connections*, the delegates of the 116 UCCN Cities have reiterated the importance of the “Hangzhou Outcomes” adopted at the International Conference on “Culture for Sustainable Cities” in Hangzhou, People’s Republic of China, 10-12 December 2015.

In view of the adoption of the New Urban Agenda at the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III, Quito, Ecuador, 17 - 20 October 2016), Östersund’s meeting was for us the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to follow the guidelines of the New Urban Agenda including the integration of culture in urban and regional development in the following ways:

1. **PEOPLE-CENTRED CITIES:** Humanizing cities through culture to enhance their liveability and empower people to connect with their communities and shape their urban environments.
2. **SUSTAINABLE URBAN ECONOMIES:** Alleviating poverty and managing economic transitions by enhancing the cultural assets and human potential of cities.
3. **HUMAN SCALE, COMPACT AND MIXED-USE CITIES:** Promoting culture and creativity in urban development, regeneration and adaptive reuse.
4. **INCLUSIVE MULTICULTURAL CITIES:** Recognizing cultural diversity by promoting collaborative partnerships to encourage community participation and reduce inequalities.
5. **PEACEFUL AND TOLERANT SOCIETIES:** Building on the diversity of culture and heritage to foster peace and intercultural dialogue, and counter urban violence.
6. **SUSTAINABLE, GREEN AND RESILIENT CITIES:** Integrating heritage and traditional knowledge into innovative and culture-based solutions to environmental concerns.
7. **INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SPACES:** Leveraging heritage and cultural and creative activities to foster social cohesion and ensure access to well-designed quality public spaces.
8. **ENHANCED RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES:** Fostering respect for the cultural value of small settlements and landscapes, and strengthening their relationship with cities.
9. **IMPROVED URBAN GOVERNANCE:** Strengthening participatory mechanisms, capacity-building, and developing indicators to assess the role and impact of culture on urban development.

We also wish to reinforce the importance of enabling a diversity of cultural expressions and strengthening the connections between all parts of civil society.

We commit to integrate culture in initiatives, policies and projects towards the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the Agenda 2030, and to continue a close partnership with UNESCO in implementing them.