

## A CALL FOR A LESS CARBON-INTENSIVE AND MORE INCLUSIVE CULTURE: BETWEEN GLOBAL AND LOCAL



### AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



### CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

4. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABLE, INSTITUTIONAL,  
ENVIRONMENT, EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE, PEER-TO-PEER,  
RESILIENCE, GOVERNANCE, NETWORK, COOPERATION



## 1. Lille and culture

Located in the heart of Europe, with a population of 234,475, Lille is a young and diverse city. It was the European Capital of Culture in 2004, and following the adoption of its Agenda 21 for culture in 2005, the city is making culture a vector for territorial development and social cohesion. There are more than 80 cultural facilities throughout the city, 28 of which are municipal:

- 3 French museums
- 2 exhibition venues
- 6 multidisciplinary cultural venues
- 9 libraries
- 10 music schools and a regional conservatory

In order to contribute to the cultural vitality of the region, the city subsidises more than 150 cultural associations, including lille3000, which organises three-yearly seasons to keep alive the heritage of the European Capital of Culture. For 20 years, the City of Lille has pursued a cultural policy that is consistent with ecological and social justice imperatives.

The Call Project of Lille, launched in cooperation with Eurocities, aims to share common priorities on a European scale and to strengthen local transitions in the cultural sector.

**ONE OF THE AXES OF THE SHARED SUSTAINABLE CULTURE STRATEGY IS TO ENCOURAGE CULTURAL ACTORS TO TRANSITION TOWARDS A LOW-CARBON SECTOR.**

## 2. Objectives and implementation of the project

### 2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The general aim of the Call of Lille and the municipal Shared Sustainable Culture initiative is twofold:

- i. Decarbonising cultural activities and productions in line with the city's overall objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030 and becoming carbon neutral by 2050.
- ii. Promoting the inclusion of the cultural policy aligned with the municipality's social priorities.

These two objectives complement each other: the experiments carried out under the Shared Sustainable Culture policy feed into the international working group, and feedback from the experience and good practice exchanges at international level facilitate the implementation of the commitments made by the Lille Declaration. In order to achieve these objectives, the city has structured its action in:

- » Supporting the professional practices of the 600 employees of the Culture and International Relations Department, and further encouraging good practice exchanges among cultural actors of the Lille area via the Shared Sustainable Culture mission.
- » Sharing the results of this international strategy within a working group made up of the signatory cities of the Lille Declaration in conjunction with the Eurocities network.



**THE AIM IS TO TRANSFORM PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES, SHARE BEST PRACTICES AND ACHIEVE RESULTS AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL AND AMONG THE SIGNATORY CITIES OF THE CALL OF LILLE.**

### 2.2. Development of the project

Having signed in 2005 the Agenda 21 for Culture, the city has set high standards for its cultural policy and has always affirmed the role of culture and artists in responding to major ecological and social challenges. Its approach is based on the major areas of municipal action, such as the Lille Climate Plan (the first version of which was signed in 2008), the Plan to Combat Exclusion and the Global Education Project. To consolidate this cross-functional approach and provide better support for the staff of the Culture and International Relations Department, a Shared Sustainable Culture mission was set up in 2021.

In 2022, at the Eurocities Forum, Lille launched a Call for a less carbon-intensive and more inclusive culture to reiterate the potential and responsibility of local and regional authorities to lead and organise transitions, and to support a European momentum through local political commitments to a more sustainable culture.

This Call, signed by more than 50 European towns and cities, identifies 16 priorities at European level, which each local authority is invited to implement locally.

The City of Lille initially identified 51 commitments to encourage the transformation of professional practices in its territory. A 2-year experimental phase was launched in the city to implement the actions resulting from these commitments. This phase will result in the enhancement of existing virtuous practices prior to the launch of the policy, the identification of obstacles in the implementation of certain actions, and the launch of new projects.





At the end of the trial period, the working group reorganised itself to go beyond and broaden its commitments in order to define a more flexible framework to work together in the territory, and to share it with the actors in the territory.

## PROJECT PHASES

- 2021: Creation of the Shared Sustainable Culture mission.
- 2022: Each department in the Culture-International Relations department will define a roadmap, co-constructed with the city's Ecological Transition and Resilience Mission, which will set targets for progress and monitoring indicators translated into concrete actions to be implemented from 2023.
- September 2022: Hosting of the Eurocities Culture Forum with the European Metropolis of Lille and launch of the Call of Lille.
- September 2022 - June 2023: Contribution from European cities to revise the priorities of the Call of Lille.
- June 2023: Launch of the final version of the Lille Declaration at the Brussels Urban Summit with 24 other European cities.
- 2024:
  - » Review of the 2-year trial of the implementation of the 51 commitments.
  - » Deliberation at the City Council meeting on 7 October to make the Shared Sustainable Culture a historic and reaffirmed commitment.
  - » Restructuring of commitments/measures to make Shared Sustainable Culture the backbone of municipal action and publication of a common reference framework inspired by the 17 SDGs.
  - » Signing of a manifesto for local cultural actors
- 2025-2026: Continuation of the local approach and exchanges between European cities to produce shared tools.



## KEY ACTIONS

- Organisation of several seminars bringing together the department's staff and the Sustainable Culture Mission to support change management, the sharing of obstacles and successes, and the definition of indicators.
- Support by the Sustainable Culture mission to the staff involved by facilitating the engineering of their ecological and social transition projects, and by leading communities of professionals to encourage circularity.
- Definition of a repository of 20 thematic entries to facilitate the process of change in the region.

## PARTNERSHIP LOGIC

This approach is based on a working ecosystem that includes a European network of major cities, Eurocities, designed to encourage good practice exchanges internationally. It also relies on the expertise of other thematic networks to support changes in professional practices, such as ECHO Culture Durable Hauts-de-France, Les Augures, ICOM, Collectif HF+, ARVIVA and the Institut Français. The region can also count on actors and operators involved in and that have been exemplary in the transition process (Aéronef, Opéra, Zénith, Attacafa, lille3000, etc.) which are driving forces and inspiring the sector.

# 3. Impacts

## 3.1. Direct impacts

Governance within the department has changed since 2022, with a view to working more transversally and horizontally, relying on the Sustainable Culture Mission in constant interaction with agents in the thematic departments and facilities. At the local level, practices are gradually changing. For example, the eco-designed exhibitions at the Palais des Beaux-Arts are inspiring other venues in their own eco-design practices. Culture is becoming a vehicle for raising awareness among local residents. For instance, the last cultural season of lille3000, entitled UTOPIA and devoted to nature and the relationship between humans and their environment, reached nearly 2 million visitors and offered more than 970 events in 2022.





### 3.2. Evaluation

The evaluation of projects launched as part of the Lille Appeal was discussed at a seminar attended by project leaders, who were asked to define and compare the relevance of impact indicators and indicators of progress on commitments. When the mission was restructured, evaluation was identified as a priority area for supporting the Shared Sustainable Culture approach. In order to familiarise local actors with the evaluation process, a self-assessment tool has been offered to 150 local cultural actors to help them collect the data they need to assess their ecological and social impact.

### 3.3. Key factors

The main factors behind the success of the Shared Sustainable Culture policy are:

- The strong political commitment of the Mayor and her elected representatives.
- A horizontal governance.
- The promotion and enhancement of actions implemented in an international working group.
- The best practices exchanges.

**THE SHARED SUSTAINABLE CULTURE MISSION REPRESENTS A NEW FORM OF GOVERNANCE, MORE AGILE AND SKILFUL, IN ORDER TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL TRANSITION.**

### 3.4. Continuity

Support for change management in the professional practices of the department's employees will be provided over time by encouraging continuity in the transition process through the production of cross-disciplinary methodological tools and guides. To encourage replication, the Working Group on Sustainable Culture, which is being run in conjunction with Eurocities, will compile and share best practices in line with the priorities of the Lille Declaration to facilitate replication across the region. For example, the City of Munich has created a similar post to coordinate a local action plan for sustainable culture.

## 4. Further information

Lille was a candidate for the sixth UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award (November 2023 – March 2024). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June 2024, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Christophe Turon, Project Officer to the Deputy Director General of the Culture and International Relations Department, Lille, France.

Contact: [mesteves@mairie-lille.fr](mailto:mesteves@mairie-lille.fr) / [mdabetic@mairie-lille.fr](mailto:mdabetic@mairie-lille.fr)

Web site: [www.lille.fr/Votre-Mairie/Lille-en-bref/Economie-culture-et-sport/La-culture-durable-partagee](http://www.lille.fr/Votre-Mairie/Lille-en-bref/Economie-culture-et-sport/La-culture-durable-partagee)