

A CREATIVE CITY: SOCIAL SCIENCES FOR 21ST CENTURY CITIZENS



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY, AND CREATIVITY
3. CULTURE AND EDUCATION
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING, AND PUBLIC SPACE
8. CULTURE, INFORMATION, AND KNOWLEDGE

PUBLIC SPACE, KNOWLEDGE, EDUCATION, HERITAGE,
COOPERATION, GLOBAL, PROMOTION, YOUTH, SUPPORT,
INSTITUTIONAL, PARTICIPATION

1. Context

Mar del Plata is a tourist region home to river mouths and beaches. Previously, it grew from an influx of Creole and immigrant populations who moved to the city for its diversity and employment opportunities. This turned it into a more socially complex place, and the region's seventh largest city. Industrial parks, market hubs, and several research institutes also began to appear.

2. Mar del Plata and culture

Local cultural policies depend on the different government administrations and as a result there is no consistent core focus for cultural policies over the long term. However, there is a great deal of activity in the sector.

"A Creative City: Social Sciences for 21st Century Citizens" is a project that aims to create awareness of the area's rich and diverse local cultural heritage with a global, dynamic, and participatory approach.

THE GOAL IS TO LEND VISIBILITY TO CULTURAL HERITAGE. THIS UNDERSCORES THE VALUE OF CREATIVITY, PROMOTES PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, EMPHASIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY, AND ESTABLISHES HELPFUL CONNECTIONS FOR BETTER, MORE THOUGHTFUL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION THAT FAVOURS SHARED GOVERNANCE.

In 2011, the region of the General Pueyrredon Partido successfully committed to Agenda 21 for culture. It conducted a Cultural Census and the local PBCultural was used as a benchmark to determine the contribution of culture to the local economy, how to create awareness of opportunities in the creative economy. This is consistent with the city's development plans as a Creative City and a City of Knowledge.

With specific reference to Culture 21 Actions, the project focuses on the city as a learning space for artists, cultural stakeholders, and teachers as mediators.

The project is based on SDG 11 of the 2030 Agenda, and works toward true integration without exclusion, and offers everyone equal rights. It also seeks to awaken public interest in valuable resources that could be used in a creative and innovative way (Target 8.3).

3. Project goals and implementation

3.1. Main and specific objectives

The goal of the project is to make the population aware that they live in a Creative City. This will lend visibility to, and inspire residents to embrace, cultural heritage, the value of creativity, personal and collective development opportunities, cultural diversity, and more thoughtful citizen participation that favours shared governance.

Specific Objectives:

- To strengthen citizenship by providing spaces for exchanging a plurality of ideas and critical thinking
- To establish more citizen involvement in the public sphere
- To view creativity as a central factor for development and to prioritize both local development policies and international cooperation related to creative industries
- To promote culture and creativity when creating public spaces, thereby aiming to improve the level of citizen participation and social cohesion



- To promote various gender perspectives about public space, transportation, security, and sex education, with equal rights and opportunities at the heart of public policy
- To promote a city that recognizes and knows the creative ecosystem, connects with it, and helps people network
- To co-create public policy with the city's creative class through dialogue with all areas that are required to solve multidimensional problems
- To promote pride in local identity, tradition, and heritage
- To attract the creative sector and encourage investment To increase tourism
- To encourage innovation, bold initiatives, and the search for new solutions alongside the community through critical thinking and creative processes
- To encourage the city to learn, and to value learning and knowledge, thus creating a place where talent is nurtured, supported, promoted, rewarded, and celebrated
- To educate and train residents to become entrepreneurs, giving them the necessary tools to become agents of change
- To encourage engagement among youth, artists, or other residents, so they share experiences and information with the organizations collecting data.
- To teach the importance of intellectual property and copyright to youth.
- To empower youth to have positive, educational, and creative interactions
- To inspire youth to take advantage of opportunities in the creative economy.

3.2. Project development

Beneficiary population

The program acts a mediator to serve the general population by training, teaching, and intervening so citizens can participate in courses, talks, and seminars. The goal is for people to both give and receive knowledge in interactions, while taking advantage of the changes that this will have on public spaces.

WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO CULTURE 21 ACTIONS, THE PROJECT FOCUSES ON THE CITY, ITS NEIGHBOURHOODS, AND HERITAGE SITES AS LEARNING SPACES FOR ARTISTS, CULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS, AND TEACHERS AS MEDIATORS.



Phases

- Mar del Plata: A Mosaic of Identities: This initiative worked with various sectors of the Old Centre to raise awareness about neighbourhood identity, and to embrace the importance of the founding families while preserving the buildings.
- Seminars, conferences, and talks on the Creative City, alongside Rayuela and Icons Local Identity projects, all helped raise awareness about the initiatives and principles behind them.
- The Municipal Council of Culture committed to preserving the former South Terminal Railway Station and building a Cultural Civic Centre (South Terminal Cultural Centre).
- Defend the heritage of the "Fisherman Neighbourhood" port, la Banquina, 12 of October Street, the Sagrada Familia Church, and the Old Port Power Plant. Law of the Provincial Senate to classify the Power Plant as a heritage site. Following this was to create the Fishing Pioneers Cultural Civic Centre.
- Competing for the CCI in 2011, based on the aforementioned project. Creation of the Cultural Centre was pending this.
- In 2011, the city partnered with Agenda 21 in Barcelona for three Cultural Civic Centres and the local PBCultural initiative.
- Dissemination of the Agenda 21 and Creative City programs, and promotion of public education around participation in 21st century citizen life.

Partners

The project collaborated with all municipal administrations, the Department of Culture, provincial public administration stakeholders, and private entities at UCIP. Some of the projects were transformed into ordinances or laws.

They received a budget from research grants, the UNMdP and CONICET, as well as a significant amount of support from volunteers.

Obstacles

The obstacles to its implementation were the economic crisis, which resulted in scarce resources to meet basic needs. It also led to discontinuity in the core sustainable programs under the Municipal Government, making it difficult to continue cultural projects. Further understanding on the subject would lead to the institutional adoption of public policies, as has been the case with a number of other UCLG cities.

4. Impact

4.1. Direct impact

Centres, and their contribution to a Creative City. As such, they partially implemented the program.

However, citizens have had increasing experience in active participation, which helps them further understand the way these initiatives protect their cultural and citizenship rights.

Cultural actors have supported the proposal and there has been a notable level of interest in the role of culture and civic participation.

Additionally, the city is focused on improving sports facilities. The program has started infrastructure projects in each area of the iconic Sports Park, as well as in sports centres and other spaces.

4.2. Evaluation

There is a planned evaluation of the project that will assess its impact, and make adjustments based on the different methods:

- In face-to-face training, for example, this would mean increasing the number of participants and the quality of the final project.
- Audiovisual media, participation in publications, meetings, dissemination proposals, and implementing actions for the Agenda 21 or Creative City initiatives.
- Using digital media tools to measure the impact or the ability to recreate the project.

4.3. Key factors

The vital factors for the success of the policy would be the expected transformation that would allow the population to learn about, enjoy, and take pride in their city. Another important element is the incorporation of a management model that could be monitored and used as a framework to be replicated in other cities or regions.

4.4. Continuity

The high season ended and the city was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in order to move forward and continue the project, the participation of local artists in the economy and development of the municipality, as well as the use of public spaces, are promising signs.

The Cultural Centres, museums, heritage sites, neighbourhood squares must be supported in order to create a better quality of life.

5. Further information

Mar del Plata was candidate for the fourth UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June of 2020, and requested that the UCLG Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices implemented under Agenda 21 for culture.

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