

Culture in EU-LAC relations Culture as a driver for cities

Joint Declaration

On June 4, 2015, some 20 experts in the field of the arts, cultural policy and urban planning from Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean gathered to debate on the role of culture in cities. This event, an initiative of the Centre for Fine Arts Brussels (BOZAR) and the EU-LAC Foundation, with the valuable support of the European Commission (DG DEVCO), EUNIC and *MORE EUROPE – external cultural relations*, was a side event to the 8th EU-LAC / 2nd EU-CELAC Summit to further raise awareness on the role of culture for economic and social changes in cities, as well as on its importance for international relations.

We, the organisers of this event, strongly believe in the importance of continuing such a dialogue and setting up joint actions between Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. The event, organised around the topic “Urban development and public space: culture as a driver for cities,” has revealed the potential for future partnerships in this field as well as the importance of a structured and long-term dialogue between both regions.

We therefore draw the attention of the participants of the EU-LAC Summit to the following points and recommendations:

- Cultural and creative sectors should be taken into account in future EU-LAC relations;
- Cultural exchange and cooperation between the two regions are essential to enhance mobility, mutual learning and understanding, in particular in urban contexts and in public spaces;
- Partnerships, networks and pilot projects involving culture in urban contexts between the two regions should therefore be supported;
- A structured and inclusive urban planning and the exchange of cultural and societal values can have significant impact on social cohesion, as well as on the development of local economies and societies from both regions;
- A long-term strategy should be designed and established through a collaborative and inclusive approach, taking into account collective and specific memories, identities and cultures, as well as the complementarities of the different stakeholders (incl. cities), in order to ensure powerful and qualitative urban planning projects, where culture and the creative sectors play an essential role.

Therefore, we call on policy representatives of the EU and LAC regions to uphold the role of culture in the relations between the two regions, and its contribution to some key issues raised by the future EU-CELAC action plan.

Please note that culture is meant here in its broad meaning and includes heritage, arts, architecture, cultural and creative industries, relevant civil society, and cultural stakeholders.

