



This monthly Tracker is produced by UNESCO to monitor culture in public policy with regards to the UN Sustainable Development Agenda. It highlights developments within national and regional contexts, as well as emerging debates on culture's contribution to sustainable development. Drawing on a variety of sources, it provides a broad overview of cultural policy trends worldwide at the national, regional and international level and looks at ways in which countries integrate culture into other policy areas.

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AT A GLANCE

Culture and education are critical pillars for human development. More than this, both are mutually beneficial, with synergies that offer crucial inroads to addressing complex challenges faced by societies. This is important in shaping COVID-19 recovery efforts, not only for regenerating the two damaged sectors, but for building solid and long-lasting public policies that better leverage the nexus between both development areas.

The **Cultural Policy Highlights** section presents the latest policy measures at national and local level.

The **Cutting Edge** section delves into the mutually-beneficial relationship between culture and education. Integrating culture in learning enhances quality education, while education strengthens heritage safeguarding and boosts creative skills for the future. Harnessing this alliance also equips societies with the relevant skills, attitudes, values and behaviours to be more agile and resilient to rapidly-changing environments. How can we better harness this resource to generate the human capital for tomorrow, nurture peaceful societies that promote cultural diversity, and expand learning anchored in sustainable principles?

The latest policy developments at regional level are outlined in the **Regional Perspectives** section.

Culture in the 2030 Agenda examines how the ties between culture and education are being approached by Member States in their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to track progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

See **Find Out More** for recent publications and updates from UNESCO and its partners.





CULTURAL POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

This section showcases a selection of the latest developments in cultural public policy from UNESCO Member States. Whilst reactive measures to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cultural sector are expected to largely guide cultural public policies throughout 2021, there are positive signs that countries and cities are transitioning from recovery measures to longer term strategies to build resilience in their cultural sectors.

The President of **Ghana** Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo has stepped up efforts to support the local film industry by launching a US\$25 million Presidential Film Pitch Series that will back 25 feature films, short films, series and documentaries. The initiative is expected to create about 6,000 jobs in the industry.



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In **El Salvador**, the Trust Fund for the Economic Recovery of Salvadoran Businesses (FIREMPRESA), an initiative of the Development Bank of El Salvador (BANDESAL), has launched a line of credit to benefit artists and the cultural community. The registration processes for the initiative, which is a result of recent legislative reform, will be facilitated by "Casas de la Cultura" (Houses of Culture).



Vlad Ispas/Shutterstock.com*

In **Kuwait**, the National Council for Culture, Art and Letters and the Kuwait Society for Fine Arts have signed an agreement to increase engagement with civil society organizations in the field of culture and arts. It includes cooperation in a joint media campaign to promote cultural and artistic activities and training courses, and the exchange of scientific, research and training experiences between the two parties.

In **Spain**, the Municipality of Barcelona has launched the "Fem Cultura" Cultural Rights Plan 2021-2023 that aims to prioritize cultural rights alongside other fundamental rights. The Plan highlights the links between culture and education, culture and technology, culture and innovation, and culture and science as strategic spaces for development and the life of the city.



Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor (China)
Aaron Greenwood/Unsplash.com

China, Afghanistan and Pakistan have co-signed the first Asian bilateral cooperation agreements on Asian cultural heritage protection. The agreements bring together the three countries in joint efforts in archaeology, conservation and the restoration of cultural heritage, as well as exhibitions, new conservation technologies and the prevention of trafficking of cultural property.



CULTURAL POLICY HIGHLIGHTS



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In the **United Arab Emirates**, the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi has announced plans for a series of cultural initiatives to advance safeguarding intangible heritage. The initiatives - the Abu Dhabi Register of Artisans and the Abu Dhabi Crafts platform - will add to the recently reopened House of Artisans at Al Hosn to help heritage safeguarding efforts and support local artisans in developing their crafts and skills.

The Ministry of Culture of **Colombia** and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Colombia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage, as well as addressing inequalities through culture and the Orange Economy. The broad framework of cooperation for the next three years includes school workshops, gastronomy, cultural diversity and audiovisual training.



Saul Mercado/Unplash.com

In **Cook Islands**, Tauranga Vananga Ministry of Cultural Development and Cook Islands Tourism Corporation have launched a cultural tour guide workshop to bolster knowledge on marae protocols and cultural areas of significance in the Takitumu region. The workshop is the first activity of a five-year agreement signed by the two entities in February 2021 to provide Cook Islands Māori cultural training to local tour guides.



The Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth of **Georgia** has created a registry of certified craftsmen in view of revitalizing skills in heritage restoration and conservation. The action is a first step in addressing the lack of qualified local professionals working in the cultural heritage field, which was recognized during the recent rehabilitation of the Gelati Monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Gelati Monastery (Georgia)
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Riccardo Mayer/Shutterstock.com*

The Government of **Togo** has taken a major step forward in strengthening public reading and cultural policy through the creation of the National Centre for Reading and Cultural Animation (CENALAC). The policy is the result of staunch government efforts, which will bring together 66 public libraries in a single supervisory body and ensure the integration of digital technologies and Internet access in the institutions.



CULTURAL POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, the Ministries of Tourism and Culture have set up a joint programme to safeguard cultural heritage and enhance cultural tourism. The programme includes workshops and short films to build awareness of tangible and intangible heritage as part of foreseen tourism routes to archaeological sites.



Site of Palmyra (Syrian Arab Republic)
Joe Planas/Unsplash.com



Davyb/Pixabay.com

Creative **New Zealand** and the Māori Language Commission – Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori have joined forces to develop a bilingual music industry. Through the pilot programme “Pokapū”, artists will work with language experts to translate existing songs from English into te reo Māori and to record and perform “waiata” (songs).



The **Netherlands** and **Turkey** have launched the digital platform “Arts Map” to establish a cultural bridge between the two countries. The project seeks to bring together cultural actors to create a sustainable cultural ecosystem, strengthened by networking, capacity-building, training of trainers and information sharing.



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In **Paraguay**, the Minister of Culture, the Secretariat for Language Policies (SPL) and the Ministry of Labour have announced plans to ensure stronger protection for the Guaraní language and heritage through training programmes and initiatives to fight discrimination in the workplace. The three institutions will also establish a shared complaint reception system in order to detect and prevent conflict and discrimination.



Emily-Jane Proudfoot/Shutterstock.com*

In **Senegal**, the Goethe Institute has partnered with the National Archives of Senegal and the House of Oral Traditions and Heritage “Kër Leyti” to launch the podcast “Xam sa Demb, Xam sa Tey” (“Know your past to know your present”, in Wolof). The podcast aims to boost young people’s access to and knowledge of Senegal’s history.



CULTURAL POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

The Ministry of Education and Culture of **Indonesia** has adopted two major music policies. The policies focus on intellectual property protection for traditional Indonesian music, and contextual learning materials for music education in schools.



Rendy Novantino/Unsplash.com

The Ministry of Culture of **Peru** has taken action to strengthen artists' rights and labour regimes by bringing together over 200 independent artists and representatives of cultural organizations to develop a new Artist Law. To date, three roundtables have been held with the technical support of UNESCO, as well as two working groups with indigenous populations in Quechua and Aymara languages. The process intends to revise the current Law No. 28131 of the Artist, Interpreter and Performer.



Deb Dowd/Unsplash.com

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of **Egypt** has launched the initiative "Our Story," in coordination with the Ministry of Education to encourage heritage awareness among school students through visits to tourism and archaeological sites in different Egyptian governorates.

In **Mauritius**, the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage has introduced the COVID-19 Artists Support Plan 2021 to provide grants for the cultural and creative industries and the creation of new artistic works. The Government also intends for the selected works to contribute to enhancing cultural tourism.



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The **Swedish** Arts Council has scaled-up support of its "Creative School" programme by allocating SEK 196 million (US\$23.5 million) of grants for the next school year. For the 13th year running, the grants help students to expand opportunities for creation through meetings with professional cultural actors and cultural activities.

In **Belize**, the Community of Artists for Cultural and Historical Endeavors (CACHE) organized the Post-COVID-19 Online Literary Festival (20-24 April 2021) in partnership with the Belize Book Industry Association (BBIA), the National Library Service in Benque Viejo del Carmen, CUBOLA Publishers, and BRC Printing Ltd. The Festival involved online workshops, expert panels, a reading competition and other cultural events.





Culture & education: a strategic investment for inclusive and sustainable development



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The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the culture and education sectors worldwide. Widespread lockdowns have heavily impacted access to culture and the livelihoods of cultural professionals, calling for policies that promote cultural diversity and boost mechanisms for improved social and economic conditions. The closure of places of formal and informal education have left millions of people out of schools and training, resulting in significant losses to learning, employment and well-being. The wide-ranging impacts of the crisis have weakened human rights, including the rights to education and culture, the scars of which will be borne for years to come. Recovery is not only a question of independently regenerating the two damaged sectors, but of building solid and comprehensive public policies that strengthen the synergies between both development areas, while ensuring full compliance with a human-rights based approach.

While it is increasingly recognized across the globe that culture enriches education, this relationship must be revisited in order to better adapt to today's opportunities and challenges. Whereas substantial data are available on education, there is a deficit of research and figures that demonstrate the ways in which culture is integrated in education. This is a broader reflection of long-standing policy priorities that undervalue culture and its contribution to learning processes. A paradigm shift is needed to allow for agile, adaptive and innovative societies.



CUTTING-EDGE

Today's societies are increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Through globalization, urbanization and migration, cultural diversity is an intrinsic component of our societies, generating vast opportunities for creativity and innovation and for engagement across cultures. At the same time, the global landscape is increasingly complex, uncertain and precarious, marked by social and economic disparities that are exacerbating divides, tensions and conflicts. At the same time, global challenges brought about by migration and accelerated climate change are further jeopardizing peace and stability in some parts of the world, both across and within countries. Digital transformation has opened up new opportunities for jobs, learning, dialogue and creative expression, but many people remain out of reach of its benefits. As many countries may struggle to keep up with the speed and expansion of technological advances, digital communication, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology are also bringing serious ethical and governance concerns into mainstream discourse. While the world may be increasingly interconnected, inequality and poverty are threatening peace and sustainability. These challenges have revealed deficits in education systems and human skillsets, which are insufficient and ill-adapted to societal needs. **Similarly, education systems need to build critical skills and competencies to nurture adaptability, agility, inclusivity, social responsibility and global citizenship.** This calls for determined efforts and policy adaptation to shape holistic education systems that: address learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment in formal, non-formal and informal settings; enable learners to transform themselves and society; contextualize learning that is adapted to local needs and cultural realities; integrate value-based pedagogies that promote universally-shared values, such as non-discrimination, equality, respect and dialogue; and commit to promoting inclusive, equitable quality education.

“

**If we teach today as we taught yesterday,
we rob our children of tomorrow.**

John Dewey, American philosopher and educational reformer



UNESCO's Global Citizenship Education (GCED) programme upholds the above-mentioned values that promote peace and human rights education, prevent violent extremism through education, teach about the Holocaust and genocide, as well as promote multilingualism, which all form part of the Education 2030 Agenda and Framework for Action, notably Target 4.7 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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Over
1.5
BILLION
learners

in
165
countries

have been affected
by school closures
(UNESCO)





New capacities and skills are required to navigate these shifts and shape inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable societies. Harnessing the synergies between culture and education better equips societies – through formal and non-formal education, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), as well as lifelong learning – to be more agile and resilient to rapidly-changing environments. Through developing creative skills in cultural and artistic fields, it opens up new avenues to boost livelihoods in the creative economy and forge much-needed adaptation and innovation skills across other sectors. Culture enriches the education system making its content and context relevant. Culture should therefore pervade and enrich pedagogies, educational contents and learning contexts as a positive resource. It connects people to their history and heritage, gives a sense of meaning and self-confidence, and nurtures qualities of empathy and critical thinking. Equally, education supports culture-related activities, employment and institutions. This co-dependence of culture and education is vital to human development and advances several areas of development in a cross-cutting way. It contributes to both achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and addressing gaps in SDG implementation, notably with regard to sustainability.

Leveraging UNESCO's mandate in culture and education



UNESCO is the only United Nations agency with a mandate in culture and education, which is built into the UNESCO Constitution that affirms that culture and education are essential for the dignity of humanity. Building on its mandate in education, UNESCO has focused its commitment to raising global awareness about the nexus between culture and education, notably in three complementary strategic directions: driving the global efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education for all; stimulating global reflection on knowledge and the future of education; and promoting education for sustainable development (ESD) and GCED. Through these efforts, UNESCO advances quality education for all through leading the global coordination of SDG 4 and to ensure the achievement of the new global vision for education as set out in the 2030 Agenda. Launched in September 2019, the "Futures of Education Commission: Learning to Become" advances a broad consultative process on how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity and the planet, and recognizes cultural diversity as a fundamental feature of strong societies. As the lead UN agency for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), UNESCO manages, coordinates, implements and monitors the global framework ESD for 2030, and supports culture as an important component that informs the cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral dimensions of learning. Equipping learners of all ages with competencies and the skillset to be informed, engaged and empathetic citizens are central priorities of UNESCO's work in GCED, which supports Member States in the development of appropriate education policies, contents, teaching practices and enabling learning environments. The Organization also monitors progress of Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 4.7.1 through periodic reviews of the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, for which a working group has recently been established.



Education is built into UNESCO's normative framework in culture to support the promotion of cultural diversity, strengthen heritage conservation and broaden creative horizons. UNESCO's 2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity encourages linguistic diversity and access to digital technologies, and states that education that respects cultural identity is a guarantee of cultural rights. All UNESCO's main Culture Conventions have educational components among their provisions, thereby demonstrating the solid normative basis for harnessing the synergies in these domains. As a direct response to the 1972 World Heritage Convention, the World Heritage Education Programme (WHE) was created to provide young people with the knowledge, skills and networks to become involved in heritage protection and conservation through various activities and initiatives, including youth fora, international volunteering, educational kits and capacity-building training. Through incorporating intangible cultural heritage - or living heritage - in formal and non-formal education, links with local communities can be strengthened, which is, in turn, integral to safeguarding strategies in the context of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. UNESCO has stepped up its engagement in this area by recently launching an online Clearinghouse on living heritage and education, which provides an open-access platform to tools, resources and case studies from around the world. Education has been increasingly reflected in developments of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. This includes underlining the importance of the inclusion of culture in educational delivery in relation to sustainable development, and the role of education in the Guidelines on the Implementation of the Convention in the Digital Environment, approved in 2017. The pedagogical function of museums is central to the 2015 Recommendation concerning the protection and promotion of museums and collections, their diversity and their role in society, which also emphasizes the role of museums in developing education policy. These instruments call on countries to ensure that culture and education directly contribute to the advancement of human rights, development and peace.

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In **2020**

European museums reported a **64%** drop in cooperation with educational institutions (NEMO)



UNESCO spearheads an interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to culture and education to reinforce quality education and ensure that education systems equip learners with the relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours. This approach is structured around four axes of work: enrich learning contents and approaches through culture; promote respect for cultural diversity based on human rights; broaden perspectives of sustainable development; and harness and strengthen adaptability skills. Cooperation is strengthened in these domains to provide solid policy advice and technical support. This also includes reinforcing the role of cultural institutions and museums as spaces of non-formal education and life-long learning, including educational programmes related to the UNESCO Culture Conventions and Recommendations.

Despite this momentum, the potential of the culture and education alliance remains underrecognized and underutilized. Education systems may not be structured in a way that can readily adapt to rapidly-changing contexts and societal needs. Perceived hierarchies may exist between formal and informal education systems. There can be tensions between culture and education that may stem from education systems established under colonial rule, and educational policies may be slow to adapt to the evolving environment and societies. Culture is often insufficiently mobilized in learning processes, contents and pedagogies. In addition, culture and the arts are often at the margins of education systems, or perceived as a luxury addition, which is subsequently mirrored in political will and investment despite the high financial dividends produced by the cultural and creative sectors across the world. Furthermore, historically, progress has long been enshrined in educational and cultural advances that are synonymous with human progress rooted in critical thinking and ensuring that there is no opposition between technological and humanistic progress. From the perspective of teaching, educators may lack the training needed for pedagogies that fully engage cultural dimensions and ensure that it is relevant and meaningful. Therefore, in moving forward, concerted efforts are needed to ensure that education is comprehensive and relevant, and that people of all ages have access to the tools and pedagogies needed to flourish in today's societies and to shape their futures.

Rethinking the culture and education nexus

Developing the synergies between culture and education re-evaluates traditional pedagogic frameworks and generates new perspectives for learning.

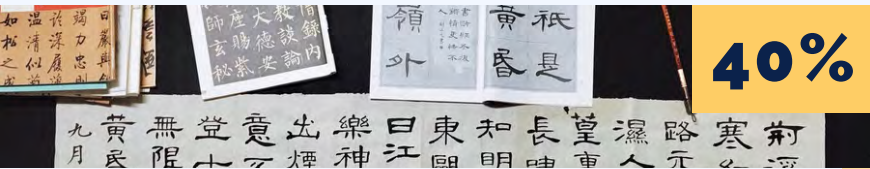
Education is cultural by essence, as it is influenced by environment, history, identity and culture. On the one hand, culture enhances the plurality and richness of learning processes, pedagogical spaces and approaches, and ensures comprehensive education that is contextually relevant. On the other, education is a powerful vehicle for strengthening knowledge across culture, promoting cultural diversity and supporting future generations in employment, innovation and critical thinking. Harnessing the mutual benefits of culture and education creates opportunities to advance individual and collective development aims.





CUTTING-EDGE

There is ample evidence that culture enhances the quality of education and facilitates learning outcomes, offering an in road to meeting diverse learning needs and approaches. Culture not only creates context, boosts meaning and relevance, but improves academic outcomes, critical thinking skills and learning motivation. **Integrating linguistic diversity into curricula has also generated positive dividends in learning.** In Mozambique, the recognition of Mozambican languages, culture and history was laid out in the country's education law in 2018. Linguistic diversity has provided a conduit for inclusion of indigenous peoples in education, such as in Belize, where three community high schools have been created for the transmission of Maya and Garifuna language, cultural practices and beliefs. Indigenous knowledge systems, intercultural education, culture diversity, arts education and heritage education draw upon intersecting dimensions of culture and education, and can offer potential avenues to incorporate cultural education programmes in formal education settings.



40% of the world's children don't have the chance to learn in their mother tongue

(UNESCO)

Raychan/Unsplash.com

Learning is no longer focused on formal settings in schools. It can be online, in cultural institutions, such as museums, through cultural tourism, or in local communities through intergenerational learning, among others. UNESCO has expanded the education offer through its working partnership with Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) and Coursera, providing professional courses in areas from tourism management of UNESCO World Heritage sites to ICTs in education for teachers, leaders and policymakers. Museums, as centres of formal and informal education, increasingly provide spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural and inter-generational dialogue. In China, for example, museum education is integrated in primary and secondary education systems, while in Indonesia, the Batik Museum in Pekalongan is a key partner in non-formal education and training of Indonesian batik textiles, thus instrumental in ensuring its sustainability. This is also reflective of the greater recognition of the pedagogical role of museums around the world, not only as spaces of non-formal education and life-long learning, but in their capacity to spark debate and encourage the public to ask questions about social issues and develop critical thinking. In Mali, the National Directorate for Cultural Heritage (DNPC) contributes to raising youth awareness of cultural heritage through educational guided tours to cultural sites and spaces. Spaces, contexts and stakeholders involved in learning are enlarged through integrating cultural dimensions. Taken together, the changing nature and purpose of education shows that today, more than ever, learning is a continued process, and societies need the knowledge and skills to adapt to fast-evolving contexts.



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elements inscribed on UNESCO's Lists of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage have links to inclusive, equitable and quality education

(UNESCO)





Safeguarding living heritage offers ways of embedding diversity in pedagogical approaches and systems. As part of the UNESCO-EU project “Teaching and Learning with Living Heritage” carried out in 10 school teams from the ASPnet schools in the European Union, a set of resource and guidance materials for teachers were produced. Such efforts show how culture and education can work together and expand the scope and variety of pedagogies as a result of investing in culture. Experiences around the world carried out by Member States illustrate alternative modes of integrating culture in formal, non-formal and informal education, generating a multiplying effect that has benefits for both education and safeguarding strategies. For example, it provides a conduit to strengthening community education and locally-led initiatives, which reinforce connections with local communities and contexts. Nevertheless, while these actions demonstrate that education is diversifying, it is not sufficiently captured.

Online access to culture – ranging from museum sites, social media, television and radio – has opened up new avenues for learning and sharing culture, and has enlarged access to online content and educational resources. For instance, Hmong artisan women in Northern Thailand have benefited from training in digital and entrepreneurship skills to help safeguard their living heritage through the UNESCO project “Women e-nspire Culture”. During the pandemic, numerous initiatives emerged that accelerated digital transitions to ensure the continuation of learning. Since its launch at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic the “Shaghafi” platform, launched by the Jordanian Ministry of Culture, has offered 150 courses in visual arts, music, handicrafts, theatre, prose and poetry. Despite the great strides that have been achieved through digital technologies, not all people are able to access the benefits of the digital age; a deficit that was brought to the fore during the pandemic.

Innovation and creative skills are prerequisites for the future workforce. The cultural dimension of education is necessary to build these competences, and in turn create opportunities for employment and economic growth. Livelihoods can be boosted by linking the arts and heritage to non-formal educational settings through vocational and professional skills training by also engaging local communities and their ownership of local culture. In response to the lack of professional recognition of heritage specialists, UNESCO has developed a “Competence Framework for Cultural Heritage Management” to help guide universities in designing qualification standards, training programmes and curricula in cultural heritage management and conservation. The contribution of TVET to developing cultural professions and skills cannot be underestimated. From graphic design and web creation to music and fashion, TVET can provide important skills in entrepreneurship and self-employment for young people, and contributes to developing the creative economy. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) will this year measure students’ innovation and creativity, thus pointing to the increasing recognition of the transversal importance of skills in innovation and creativity in broader policy frameworks.



**24
MILLION**
children & youth

globally are at risk of not returning to learning due to the economic impact of the crisis

(UNESCO)



Arts education can be a major catalyst for both developing these skills, and advancing education outcomes in other areas of education curriculum. In this respect, UNESCO follows two main approaches: learning the arts and learning through the arts. In recent decades, these efforts have been strengthened, beginning with the 1972 Faure Report and the series of World Culture Reports that acted as important turning points in a shift in understanding and awareness of the interwoven nature of education, arts, creativity and culture. Between 1999 and 2010 global momentum in arts education was punctuated by two world conferences on arts education, and the development of the UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education in 2006, and the Seoul Agenda in 2010. More recently, resolutions adopted by UNESCO's General Conference on World Art Day and on Arts Education have served to reinforce "the links between artistic creations and society, and [...] highlight the contribution of the arts to sustainable development. In April 2021, the UNESCO Executive Board approved the United Arab Emirates-led decision "A Framework for Culture and Art Education," to enhance cooperation between culture in education across a range of disciplines, from heritage to the cultural and creative industries (CCI), including digital technologies.

Arts education has a positive impact on...

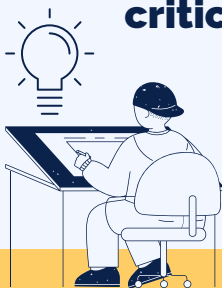


subject-based skills, including in non-arts subjects

critical thinking skills and creativity

behavioural and social skills

(OECD)



Arts and cultural education are essential for the protection of cultural rights and creating the building blocks for inclusive societies. Culture and education can be a way to overcome social, economic and gender inequalities, and fight against stereotypes, extremism and discrimination. Living together with other cultures is a skill set required in diverse societies to advance human rights as well as peaceful, inclusive and sustainable development – an approach that has notably been harnessed at regional and sub-regional levels. The strategy on culture and education for regional integration of The Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination (CECC/SICA) launched in 2020 aims to guide countries of the region in developing educational models that integrate culture for sustainable and peaceful cooperation and integration. In contexts of insecurity, fragility, and political and social tension, culture can support the positive transformative power of education. In the Sahel, culture acts as a powerful lever to improve the relevance of education in countries, such as through engaging local content in teaching.



More broadly, in Africa, culturally-adapted education has also been recognized as a way to address the tensions and stigma left by the impacts of colonialization, while looking to the future and the potential of the continent.

Culture and education connects learners to their communities, heritage and environment, strengthening cultural identity and a sense of belonging. From early childhood education through to lifelong learning, this union promotes the appreciation of cultural diversity, creative expression, heritage and the environment. Countries around the world approach this through formal to informal education systems. Japan has a long-standing commitment to incorporating heritage in the national formal education system, and an intangible cultural heritage curriculum is provided at all stages of Japanese education. Meanwhile in Algeria, the Ahellil of Gourara, inscribed on UNESCO's 2003 Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity is taught in schools in the region where it is practiced. By strengthening quality education through culture, it acts as a "win-win" situation that both ensures sustainable solutions for promoting cultural diversity and improves heritage safeguarding.



Harnessing the links between culture and education is being channeled as a way to broaden the understanding of sustainable development. The Centre for Artistic Research of the National University of Costa Rica recently launched an awareness and capacity-building programme on the links between art and the SDGs in order to familiarize professional artists and students with the concepts of the 2030 Agenda so they can better understand how they can contribute as artists to sustainable development. Within the Finnish school setting, the Upper Secondary Education National Core Curriculum, introduced in 2019, integrates culture for sustainable development and transversal competences that are implemented across all teaching subjects. This set of competences includes culture, creativity, ethics, well-being and the environment. In March 2021, the NGO Eco Centre DELFIN joined with the Regional Development Agency for Herzegovina (REDAH) and two primary schools in the cities of Risan, Montenegro, and Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, to carry out an informal educational programme aligned with national goals in education for sustainable development. The learning content included environmental protection, natural and cultural resources and climate change, benefitting some 420 students and teachers in the two cities.



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Cities and local authorities can be crucial players in forging innovative solutions that bridge culture and education. UNESCO cities' networks, such as the Creative Cities Network (UCCN) and the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), have experimented with ways to build skills and foster job creation by supporting vocational training in the cultural sector, notably targeting vulnerable populations. Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), a Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art, created the Reemdoogo as an incubator for training and performance facilities in the music sector, while Santos (Brazil), a Creative City of Film, supports the employment of vulnerable youth through its Creative Ecofactory, an initiative focused on woodwork. Likewise, several creative cities of gastronomy have joined together in the Youth4Food project to align learning with the jobs of tomorrow across the food value chain. UNESCO Learning Cities have engaged with local cultural centres as spaces for learning and intercultural dialogue, and to establish volunteer schemes to boost the inclusion of vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and persons with disabilities, in cultural activities and training workshops. Hangzhou (China) has built on its commitment to lifelong learning by introducing a "15 minute cultural cycle concept" that ensures that each citizen has access to cultural resources, such as museums, theatres and libraries, within a 15 minute radius of their homes.



Curriculum, as well as curriculum-related matters, such as teaching and learning materials, classroom practices and assessment, need to be approached differently and in a systemic way. Business as usual needs to be replaced with creative solutions and flexible innovations. (UNESCO)

Vnwayne Fan/Unsplash.com



Given the changing needs of education, teachers are being prepared for the increasing diversity of education contexts. However, many education systems lack experienced arts teachers who may have limited connection to the wider community of artists. As highlighted in the recent European Council conclusions on equity and inclusion in education and training in order to promote educational success for all, teachers must be highly competent and equipped with the skills, competences and background knowledge needed to understand and tackle educational disadvantage and to teach in increasingly diverse, multilingual and multicultural environments. In Pakistan, UNESCO has collaborated with the provincial departments of education and tourism to integrate heritage into teaching modules and engage youth from local communities around selected sites in heritage entrepreneurship. Local communities living within the historic Rohtas Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage property, have been engaged in workshops based on heritage education, skills development and tour guide training. Turning to Ecuador, teachers of the technical arts baccalaureate and complementary arts baccalaureate are set to receive training in cultural industries, cultural entrepreneurship, cultural management and creativity through the course "InnovArte: arts education teachers for change", which will be launched in June 2021 and will be rolled out virtually.



Moving forward building on the synergies between culture and education

Culture and education are the foundations of human and societal development, whose combined dynamism has cross-cutting benefits that contribute to achieving all 17 SDGs. Together, culture and education generate the human capital for tomorrow, shape peaceful societies that respect and celebrate cultural diversity, and expand education models that are anchored in sustainable principles. Such synergies should be approached from both sides: by integrating dimensions of culture into education, and by incorporating educational and pedagogical approaches into the cultural sphere.

Policymakers today are increasingly looking to engage alternative and innovative approaches to strengthening education outcomes and thereby contribute to development. This momentum has increased in recent years, reflecting the growing conviction among Member States of the mutual benefits of culture and education. Concretely this has been demonstrated in regional and international processes, such as the aforementioned CECC/SICA sub-regional strategy, by positioning culture and education as a central tenet of the G20 process launched under the Italian presidency, and a growing number of strategic decisions by UNESCO's governing bodies in this area of work.

Integrating culture in education should be recognized, systematized and harnessed as a crucial inroad to re-imagining education. This entails tapping into diverse cultural contents that can support and enrich learning experiences, and provide relevancy to learning contexts. Culture contributes to the cultivation of knowledge, skills and values, as well as the creation of job and professional opportunities, thereby strengthening pathways towards sustainable development. Such engagement should be further supported by investment in data collection and analysis to strengthen evidence-based policies and actions.

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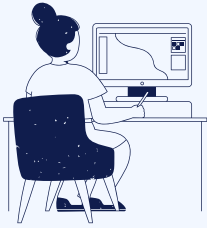
Only **12%**

of low-income countries
can provide
remote learning in TVET

(ILO-UNESCO-
The World Bank
survey, 2020)



Learning loss skills and productivity loss



estimated

1.5%
drop in GDP

**for most countries
for the remainder of the century
due to COVID-19**

(OECD)

Central to this discourse, education curricula must be first and foremost culture-sensitive and -responsive, which should be supported by adequate financial resources and capacity development. Such a broadened purview of culture and education in the formal school setting requires a widened stakeholder engagement, including a stronger inter-ministerial collaboration between ministries of education and culture, and the participation of cultural actors and institutions, such as museums, artists, cultural professionals and bearers of traditional knowledge in communities.

In the wake of UNESCO's landmark initiative on the Future of Education, it is equally imperative to reinvent the notion of schools by expanding places of learning to include cultural institutions and digital platforms. Such reflections spearheaded by UNESCO involve all actors in societies, with teachers, students and parents at the forefront of these efforts. For instance, from September 2020 until February 2021, UNESCO's Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) mobilized over 2,500 school leaders, teachers, students and their parents from around the world to engage in reflections about education in the future related to sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship (GCED). As digital transformation continues, it offers diverse means and opportunities to learners that extend beyond the conventional definition of schools, where four walls are no longer the only parameters for assimilating knowledge and skills. We need to draw on the many stakeholders, including museums and digital platforms, as well local communities, to create a pool of learning resources, and recognize them alongside teachers in supporting learning by all.

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On 25 May, celebrations around the world commemorated Africa Day, which marks the founding of the Organisation of African Unity, later known as the African Union (AU), on 25 May 1963. The historic event aimed to build greater unity and solidarity between African countries and its people. Throughout the month of May, recognized as Africa month, several activities took place to commemorate this occasion. The 2021 edition of the [Africa Dialogue Series \(ADS\)](#), the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA)'s flagship event, took place throughout the month. The theme of this year's ADS "Cultural identity and ownership: reshaping mindsets" celebrated Africa's identity, culture, history and achievements, and brought together key stakeholders to discuss challenges and opportunities for Africa.

In keeping with its 2021 theme "Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want", the AU joined Germany's Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to launch the ["Agenda 2063 Africa Photojournalism Project for African Female Journalists."](#) The project aims to leverage photojournalism as a storytelling tool that highlights Africa's rich heritage and cultural diversity, as well as an African-led development narrative. Kicking off the project, the Agenda 2063 Women's Photojournalism Award opened applications to female photojournalists from across Africa.



A UNESCO conference held online on 30 April 2021 presented the results of a pilot project carried out within the framework of the [2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#) and the UNESCO Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) programme on biodiversity conservation, climate change and disaster risk reduction. The project comprised case studies in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Seychelles and South Sudan, the results of which will guide national inventories and safeguarding strategies.





Sebasteia (Palestine)
UNESCO

The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) Observatory released a [report](#) on the development progress of Arab countries, particularly in relation to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report includes data and indicators on five categories: education, culture, scientific research, ICTs, and the economy, between the period 2014 and 2019.

UNESCO joined with the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to develop a [virtual museum](#) to support distance teaching and learning processes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual museum aims to present Palestinian cultural heritage through displaying selected artifacts from the Paleolithic era until the end of the British Mandate period in 1948. Through a web platform and mobile application, students, teachers and researchers can learn about each historical period.



ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



Gardens by the Bay (Singapore)
Coleen Rivas/Unsplash.com

During the 54th Annual Meeting of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), held virtually from 3 to 5 May 2021, ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa announced that it will step up efforts for climate change adaptation and resilience in response to the growing threat facing the Asia and the Pacific region. The announcement was made during the high-level event, "Raising the Bar on Climate Ambition: Road to COP 26" that discussed how green, resilient, and inclusive recovery can drive economic growth while moving towards net-zero emission. The ADB will invest in more projects focused on climate adaptation, and will integrate ecological, social, institutional and financial aspects of resilience across its activities in the region.

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) signed The Future of Tourism Coalition, joining almost 550 signatory organizations to the Coalition's 13 Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles are grounded on sustainable standards and local development, which place destinations at the centre of recovery strategies. The Coalition was created in 2020 by six global non-governmental organizations (NGOs).





Óbidos (Portugal)

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The “[Porto Santo Charter](#)” was the key outcome of the conference “[From Democratisation to Cultural Democracy: Rethinking Institutions and Practices](#)”, organized by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union on 27 and 28 April 2021. The Charter provides guiding principles and recommendations for cultural democracy in Europe, and calls on each European citizen to participate and take responsibility for shaping the cultural environment, in accordance with the [European Democracy Action Plan](#) put forward by the European Commission last December.

European institutions and organizations that gathered for the Porto Social Summit, held on 7 and 8 May 2021, agreed to the [Porto Social Commitment](#), which aims to give fresh political impetus and strengthen the commitment to the implementation of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#). The Commitment includes calling upon the European Union (EU) to boost investment in skills, lifelong learning and training, in order to achieve targets of at least 60% of Europeans participating annually in training, and at least 80% of people aged 16-74 with access to basic digital skills by 2030.

The Executive Committee of the [Conference on the Future of Europe \(CoFoE\)](#) launched the multilingual [digital platform](#), which invites European citizens to contribute to shaping the future of Europe. The initiative – for the first time at a transnational EU level – focuses on a citizen-led approach to policy-making processes. Available in all 24 EU official languages, it also aims to be a tool for information on the CoFoE’s set up and proceedings. The digital platform follows on last month’s official launch of the CoFoE by the European Parliament, Council of the European Union (EU) and the European Commission.



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The Ibero-American Strategy for Culture and Sustainable Development was approved by the Heads of State and Government at the 27th Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Culture, held in Andorra on 21 April 2021. The document, approved by the 22 member countries of the Ibero-American Conference, will soon begin implementation. In October 2019, member countries entrusted the design of the Strategy to the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) in coordination with the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), to advance the social, economic and environmental transformation of Ibero-America, with a special focus on cultural diversity, cultural and creative industries, cultural heritage and gender equality.

Around 60 professionals working in cultural institutions in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay have received specialized training to boost skills in risk management of contemporary art collections. The training workshop held on 15 and 16 April 2021, was organized by the Ministry of Culture of Argentina with the support of UNESCO and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM).

As a follow up to the Central American Ministerial Agreements on Culture, the 32nd Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Culture of the Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination of the Central American Integration System (CECC/SICA) was held on 20 May 2021. Ministers of Culture from the eight countries of the SICA - Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Belize, Panama and the Dominican Republic - discussed progress in cultural policies and strengthening the CECC, and UNESCO updated participants on preparations for the next World Conference on Cultural Policies: Mondiacult 2022.



CULTURE AND EDUCATION IN THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

Culture and education are cross-cutting competencies for achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are the mutually-reinforcing building blocks needed to nurture the skills to deal with today's complex challenges. Within their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), which are submitted by Member States to monitor progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, several Member States cite training initiatives to boost cultural employment, in line with SDG 8. Most VNRs, however, refer to SDG 4 as the primary reference point for the linkages between culture and education, in particular Target 4.7, which calls for education to promote a culture of peace and non-violence, appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development. The VNRs demonstrate that many Member States are approaching this through teaching in and through the arts and culture in formal (in school) settings.

CULTURE AND EDUCATION: CRUCIAL NEXUS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Several countries cite culture and education as mutually-reinforcing components of national development strategies. The Vision 2030: National Sustainable Development Strategy of **Romania** incorporates entrepreneurial and intercultural education as part of the sustainable development component of the school curriculum, starting in early childhood education. Stronger linkages between education, culture and media are also integral to preventing the spread of extremist ideologies, as highlighted by **Bahrain**, which also calls for greater focus on the relationship between culture, behaviour and values and how this impacts national development.





FORMAL EDUCATION: ARTS AND CULTURE IN SCHOOL CURRICULA

Countries are forging closer ties between culture and education through improving the quality of education offer, promoting languages, inclusion and, notably, strengthening cultural diversity to build skills at early age that can equip them for society and in future work. In **Lesotho**, for instance, the Ministry of Education and Training states that it ensures that pre-primary education and development services are high quality, universal, comprehensive and respond to local needs, language and cultures. Within the school curricula, **Morocco** encourages inclusion and cultural diversity in textbooks, and prepares guides for teachers to promote living together and interculturality. **Singapore** relates to culture in education in its Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) that emphasizes cross-cultural skills, where children are taught to value Singapore's socio-cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development. Maori identity, language and culture is a focus of local curricula in **New Zealand**, which applies its "Tapasa" framework to support teachers in strengthening Pacific cultural competencies.



Megan Escobosa Photography/Unsplash.com

CULTURE AND TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)

Building technical and vocational skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship, the elimination of gender disparity and ensuring access for the vulnerable is a consideration in culture and education strategies. In **Guatemala**, the Ministry of Culture and Sports runs the Vocational Training Programme for the Arts to develop child and youth skills in music, visual arts and textiles, among other disciplines. As crafts play an important role in **Croatia's** implementation of SDG 4, the country granted EUR 1.4 million to 188 craftspersons and entrepreneurs with the aim of encouraging apprenticeships. **Kuwait** also notes its project "Development of the Crafts and Economic Skills of Kuwaiti Women" that aims to increase women's economic participation through vocational training, exhibitions and media.





PARTNERSHIPS TO STRENGTHEN CULTURE AND EDUCATION

The VNRs demonstrate that Member States are increasingly harnessing partnerships as a way of boosting quality education. **Central African Republic**, for example, highlights how a programme, led by the Ministry of National Education in partnership with UNESCO and UNICEF is ensuring students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for sustainable development, including the appreciation for a culture of peace and cultural diversity, as well as the contribution of culture to sustainable development. In **Portugal**, the 'Museum goes to School' project involves workshops in the school context or in museums, theatres and other cultural establishments. Certain governments have entered into partnerships with the private sector and civil society to improve education access and quality. The Government of the **Philippines**, for example, recognizes partnerships with the private sector, CSOs and NGOs as an integral component of delivering education services. The T'Boli Senior High School in South Cotabato operates as part of a partnership between the Ateneo de Davao University and the T'Boli community. The school's curriculum is both K to 12 compliant and grounded in the culture, history, arts and heritage of the T'Boli tribe to ensure an inclusive and learner-centred environment.



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LATEST NEWS



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**CELEBRATING
AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE DAY
5 MAY**

To commemorate the sixth edition of African World Heritage Day, UNESCO joined the African World Heritage Fund in hosting a series of events across the continent to raise awareness of the benefits and challenges of heritage conservation. As one of the main events, a webinar was held under the African Union's theme for 2021: "Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want", which provided a platform to discuss the synergies and challenges of implementing UNESCO Culture Conventions in Africa. The webinar concluded by calling for increased investment in culture and capacity-building to support present and future generations of African heritage professionals.

TO KNOW MORE

**UNESCO LAUNCHES CLEARINGHOUSE
ON LIVING HERITAGE AND EDUCATION**

The Clearinghouse on living heritage and education is an online platform that consolidates and shares knowledge, examples and tools on intangible cultural heritage – or living heritage – and education. It provides a user-friendly space to access a range of practical and analytical information on how intangible cultural heritage can be integrated into formal and non-formal education, offering opportunities to both improve the quality of education and strengthen heritage safeguarding.



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Available in
English and French





rudi_suardi/Getty Images from Canva.com*

HIGH-LEVEL EVENT PLACES CULTURE AT THE HEART OF “BUILDING BACK BETTER”

On the occasion of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development on 21 May, the President of the United Nations General Assembly and UNESCO organized a High-level Event on Culture and Sustainable Development, “Building back better: towards a more resilient and impactful culture sector throughout COVID-19 and the Decade of Action”. Three online panel discussions brought together ministers of culture, city mayors, academics, representatives of cultural organizations, and artists to discuss the role of partnerships, the status of artists, cultural professionals and organizations, and culture’s contribution to accelerating the 2030 Agenda’s Decade of Action.

[TO KNOW MORE](#)

PROMOTING THE POWER OF JAZZ IN THE CARIBBEAN

The UNESCO programme Transcultura, which brings together Cuba, the Caribbean and the European Union through culture and creativity, has harnessed jazz as a way of building bridges among nations and cultures in the Caribbean. In celebration of International Jazz Day on 30 April, jazz musicians from Dominican Republic, Haiti, Barbados, Jamaica, Belize, Saint Lucia, Dominica or Saint Kitts and Nevis participated in a virtual concert, demonstrating the capacity of jazz to promote inclusion, dialogue and respect.

[TO KNOW MORE](#)



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JUST PUBLISHED



CITIES, CULTURE, CREATIVITY: LEVERAGING CULTURE AND CREATIVITY FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

The UNESCO-World Bank position paper examines the strategies taken by cities around the world to promote their cultural and creative ecosystems, and puts forward a framework to integrate creativity into urban recovery and sustainable development. The report is the second in a collaborative series between UNESCO and the World Bank.

Report available in English 

This Tracker is produced by UNESCO, in English and French.

We are counting on partners to support its production in other UNESCO official languages, to expand the global discussion on culture and public policy.

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