

PRESS RELEASE:

The 2020 Rome Charter Conference: mayors and institutions around the world give life to the Charter of Rome

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1-3 October 2020, MACRO: three live days to promote the values of the Charter of Rome with guests from politics and institutions from all over the world

Rome, September 2020 - Bringing the right to culture to the center of the political and social scene. From 1 to 3 October, Rome will be the scene of an extended stage between the main actors of a debate on participation in cultural life in the cities. At the heart of the three days of debate, the presentation of the **Charter of Rome 2020**, an unprecedented document promoted by **Roma Capitale and the Culture Committee of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)** and which, during the months of lockdown, registered an extraordinary adhesion that currently involves **more than 45 cities around the world**: the 2020 Rome Charter Conference will be modulated as a multi-level event, hosted in the MACRO and online streaming on the dedicated website.

Moving from Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter has its main objective in bringing the democratization of culture outside the theoretical sphere to become the cornerstone in the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals coordinated by the UN. The Charter stresses that **placing cultural life as a necessary and fundamental condition for a fair and cohesive society is urgent, and that it means fostering a dialogue that interweaves experiences and skills both international and local.** The Charter promotes a form of development that, today more than ever, must necessarily focus on sustainability.

During the Conference, representatives of governments and institutions of pioneering cities such as **Barcelona, Bilbao, Brussels, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Geneva, Izmir, Lisbon, Malmö, Medellin, Mexico City, Rabat or Washington**, will intervene during the three days of work with as many representatives of the cultural, political, business, institutional, Italian and

international world. They will address specific issues related to active cultural participation, the inequalities of access to culture and cultural participation, and the overcoming of obstacles **towards inclusive shared urban realities**. All these themes, in the socio-economic context marked by the COVID-19 crisis and the urgent need for a revival that puts people – and not only profit – at the center, take on values that in terms of democratic expression and social perspectives are inseparable.

"By 2050 two thirds of the world's population will live in urban contexts" comments **Luca Bergamo, promoter of the Charter and vice mayor of Rome**. "The strength of the Charter lies in its complexity but not at all complicated: it is a clear, simple, accessible document, but above all easily translated into action at all latitudes. The best basis therefore to create new models that redesign cities also through a free and participatory cultural dimension, thanks to the joint efforts of local governments, institutions, businesses and, of course, the third sector. Culture and participation are priorities for the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals): these three days will be the most important chance to feed the dialogue between all parties involved in this extra-ordinary challenge".

"Working on the Rome Charter has been exciting" adds **Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General**. "The difficult months of lockdown have made evident around the world the deep need to share new forms of participation, including culture. People have turned to culture to create meaning and solidarity and the crisis has shown that culture is central to the sense of belonging of communities and cities. This is why we promote that culture is recognised as the fourth pillar of sustainable development and we certainly identify it as an antidote to the secondary effects of the crisis. The Charter of Rome 2020 is an excellent document: its values are ours."

To sanction the concrete commitment, **at the end of the three days, the Charter will be officially displayed in all the symbolic places of the culture of Rome Capital** and a series of local, national and international initiatives that will have the Charter as an inspiring model will be launched. Among these, a set of articulated artistic projects carried out by Azienda Speciale Palaexpo, UN SDG Action, ASVIS and a permanent discussion table with citizens.

About United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

UCLG is the global organization of local and regional governments and their associations that represents and defends their interests on the world stage. Representing 70 per cent of the world's population, UCLG members are present in all world regions: Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Eurasia, Middle East-West Asia, Latin America and North America - organised in seven continental sections, a metropolitan section and a regional forum. This network covers more than 240,000 cities, regions and metropolises and more than 175 local and regional government associations present in 140 countries. UCLG includes among its main areas of political interest local democracy, climate change and environmental protection, the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, the role of culture in sustainability, local finance, urban development and city diplomacy for peacebuilding. Visit www.uclg.org and follow [@uclg_org](https://twitter.com/uclg_org) for more. More info about the Charter of Rome <https://www.2020romecharter.org/>.

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