

Policy debate

Right to the City: Reclaiming the Commons

Thursday 26 October - 09:30-11:00

Grand Ballroom, Selçuklu Congress Centre

Background

The Policy Councils were created in 2017 with the aim to provide an opportunity for political representatives to participate in the Organization's policy making and to have their views raised before the UCLG's governing bodies. They usually meet twice a year in the framework of the UCLG statutory meetings to bring forward initiatives, ideas and recommendations that enrich the policy ownership and the political debate within the Organization.

During its first five years of existence, the Policy Councils introduced significant advances not only in the organization's narrative - with substantive contributions to our agenda on the Right to the City or the NUA, among others - but also in terms of innovative processes that have been key to the international positioning of the network, such as the Peace Dialogues. Recognizing this legacy and willing to build on it, the Policy Councils are the driving force for the World Organization's 2022-2028 strategic priorities.

The renewed Policy Councils

In the era of the Pact for the Future - Daejeon Political Declaration, this renewed mandate is setting up the next stage of the UCLG Policy Councils. and channels their legacy through five cross-cutting areas that will serve as entry points in our conversation with the international community. With care and human rights as crosscutting axes. the five Policy Councils build on the existing priorities of our constituency to expand and renew them through five pillars that encompass our common endeavor for People, Planet and Government. Reclaiming the Commons, Redefining Finance and Economies of Equality, Regaining Trust, Renaturing and Linking the Local to the Global are at the same time our pledge and our priorities to envision the future together.

The Future Envisioning Exercises: breaking through as one

Beyond the evolution of the themes, the space for interlocution is also renewed and expanded, adding a structural dialogue with self-organized civil society in the Town Halls. This space for dialogue will be organized in the form of Future Envisioning Exercises, which, under the mandate of each policy council, will be convened at least once a year. All members of the Town Halls are invited to participate in this structural conversation and to provide oral or written inputs to the work plan of the Policy Councils when necessary and in coordination with the other mechanisms and processes included in the same (i.e. Communities of Practice, working groups, etc.).

Reclaiming the Commons to fulfill the Right to the City

In an era in which multilateralism is compelled to rethink itself, we cannot face unprecedented crises with notions and dualities that have become obsolete. A prime example of this is evidenced by the limits that the traditional public-private division of our spaces, relationships and ways of life has demonstrated. To confront the multiple crises and structural inequalities that threaten the well-being of our communities, we must transcend these compartments and think in common. The commons, which transcends the public and the private, is what holds us together as communities and what life depends on, and therefore belongs to us and holds us all equally accountable. Our constituency and its allies agree that the Commons are not always public. They go beyond the public and have to do with how we co-create: they have to do with the place of communities and the place of new essentials in policy making. Its effective management corresponds to all of us and cannot exclude anyone. Governing the commons starts with reclaiming them.

This Policy Council will place the focus on supporting the realization of the new essentials (innovative public services) that our constituency must protect (including housing, universal health coverage, accessibility, education, decent work, digital inclusivity, the right to food and water, and food systems). It will continue strengthening the link between the Commons and Human Rights through the Right to the City. The Policy Council will also push for a stronger agenda on Culture as the backbone of the Commons and debate views on how to build stronger partnerships and tailor-made solutions to unlock the potential of subsidiarity.



The Session

Within the framework of the World Council that will approve the composition and objectives of the new policy councils, this session will focus on consolidating the legacy of the previous phase and outlining the thematic priorities and landmark processes that will guide the work of the new generation of policy councils.

Agenda

Setting the scene

9:30- 9:40

By the UCLG World Secretariat

The legacy

9:40 - 10:00

This takes the form of a Panel Discussion with key actors involved in previous Policy Councils and processes. They will share lessons learned, challenges overcome, and forward-looking recommendations. This discussion will delve into the enduring legacy of these key actors and offer valuable reflections on past challenges and key milestones achieved.

From Pact to Act: Broadening the dialogue through Future Envisioning Exercise

10:00 - 10:50

During this segment, local and regional governments and partners from the civil society, as well as other stakeholders are invited to present their insights and perspectives on the priorities that will lead our new process. This open floor format, which builds on the mandate of renewed Policy Council to expand and structure the dialogue with the Town Halls through Future Envisioning Exercises, encourages collaborative dialogue, allowing for refining and identifying key themes that align with our overarching goals. It's a dynamic exchange that taps into collective wisdom, ensuring our priorities are well-informed and reflective of our shared values.



OPENING REMARKS	PRIORITIES	OPEN FLOOR
Session facilitator	Key issues for the new Policy Council	Policy Councilors and World Council representatives

Closing remarks

10:50 - 11:00

The final recap will be a testament to the engagement cultivated during the policy debate session, setting the collective commitment to advance in the key endeavors of the new Policy Councilors, as well as their spaces of convergence with the Town Halls under the umbrella of the Future Envisioning Exercises.

Concluding remarks from the Session facilitator