



ENCATC

REPORT

MONDIACULT 2025

# Culture and Education as a Key Tool for a World in Crisis

Federated Side Event at MONDIACULT 2025  
A collective initiative by ENCATC and partners from  
Colombia, Korea, Spain, Mexico and Ecuador

Barcelona, September 2025



# Foreword

by **GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens, ENCATC Secretary General**

When UNESCO invited partners to co-create Federated Side Events at MONDIACULT 2025, ENCATC responded with enthusiasm and a strong sense of purpose. The opportunity to bring together diverse organisations from across continents — each working at the intersection of culture and education — perfectly reflected our mission to bridge research, policy, and practice for a more inclusive and sustainable cultural sector.

This publication, *Culture and Education as a Key Tool for a World in Crisis*, captures the essence of that collaboration. It documents not only a dialogue held in Barcelona on 30 September 2025, but also a shared commitment to rethink how education and culture can work together to address the deep transformations our societies are facing. The event was the fruit of genuine co-design among five partner organisations — from Colombia, Korea, Spain, and Ibero-America — and it demonstrated that cross-regional cooperation can offer concrete answers to global challenges.

In these turbulent times, our sector is called upon to respond to multiple crises: social fragmentation, loss of trust, environmental degradation, and the erosion of cultural and democratic values. The conversations reproduced here remind us that culture and education together provide the foundation for resilience and renewal. Through arts education, heritage learning, and the empowerment of communities, we can nurture empathy, intercultural understanding, and creativity — the capacities that allow people not only to adapt, but to imagine and build better futures.

For ENCATC, this collaboration also marked an important milestone in our ongoing work on Culture and Education. It complements the reflections of our Working Group on Culture and Education, the results of our ENCATC Congress 2025, and our contribution to the EU Culture Compass and the UNESCO Culture 2030 Agenda. Across these initiatives, we have seen that transformative cultural education must move beyond access to participation — towards agency, critical thinking, and ethical leadership.

Our federated event made these principles tangible. The examples shared — from Artes para la Paz in Colombia, to KACES' youth arts exchanges in Korea, to heritage education in rural Spain, and the Ibero-American universities' efforts to safeguard cultural knowledge — demonstrate that innovation happens when learning is rooted in culture, and when policy, education, and community work hand in hand.

I warmly thank all our institutional partners and speakers — Adriana Sandoval Trujillo, Jahyun Kim, Mariola Andonegui Navarro, and José Francisco Román — for their inspiring contributions, as well as the many colleagues who supported the coordination and follow-up of the event. Special thanks go to Dr. Carla Figueira, ENCATC Strategic Policy Advisor, who curated and edited this publication with great care, ensuring that the richness of our exchanges is preserved and accessible to a wider audience.

As we look ahead, ENCATC remains committed to continuing this dialogue and building new forms of collaboration between educators, policymakers, and cultural professionals. Together, we can ensure that culture and education are not peripheral to the global agenda, but central to shaping more humane, creative, and sustainable societies.

Let this publication serve as a legacy of our shared experience, a tool for educators and researchers and a call to action for our global community — in summary, an invitation to continue learning through culture, and to cultivate change through education.

## **Introduction – A Shared Vision for Culture and Education by Dr Carla Figueira, ENCATC Strategic Policy Advisor**

The Federated Side Event '*Culture and Education as a Key Tool for a World in Crisis*', part of the **UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development (MONDIACULT 2025)**, held in Barcelona, was co-organised by **ENCATC**, together with the **Ministry of the Cultures, the Arts and the Knowledges of Colombia**, the **Korea Arts & Culture Education Service (KACES)**, the **Foundation San Millán de la Cogolla (Spain)**, and the **Consortium of Universities: University of Seville (Spain), Autonomous University of Zacatecas (Mexico), University of La Laguna, Tenerife (Spain), University of Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano (Colombia) and the Salesian Polytechnic University and University of Cuenca (Ecuador)**. This event embodied the spirit of cross-regional collaboration that MONDIACULT was designed to inspire.

Its aim was clear yet ambitious: to explore how culture and education can jointly empower communities to respond to the multiple crises shaping our world today — from environmental emergencies and social fragmentation to threats to democracy and cultural rights.

### **A Collective Space for Reflection and Action**

Unlike conventional panels, this event was co-designed as a shared learning conversation, bringing together public institutions, universities, and cultural foundations from Latin America, Europe, and Asia. It offered a platform not only to exchange practices but also to interrogate how transformative education and cultural policy can reinforce each other to create more resilient, inclusive societies.

Moderated by GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens, Secretary General of ENCATC, the one-hour dialogue showcased initiatives that span from community-based arts education in Colombia to heritage-led learning in rural Spain, from youth exchanges in Korea to Ibero-American university collaborations safeguarding intangible heritage.

The voices represented in this publication reflect the diversity of approaches and geographies that converged during MONDIACULT 2025. Each contribution offers a distinct perspective on how culture and education intersect to build civic trust, social inclusion, and sustainable futures.

### **From Transcript to Publication**

This publication brings together the edited transcript of the event<sup>1</sup>, complemented by written reflections and materials subsequently shared by the speakers. All participants reviewed their contributions to ensure accuracy and coherence.

Our editorial approach preserves the authentic tone of the live dialogue while weaving in contextual notes that highlight key policy linkages — such as the UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education, the 2022 MONDIACULT Declaration on Culture as a Global Public Good, and the Agenda for Culture in the Post-2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In this broader policy landscape, the UNESCO Global Report on Cultural Policies, *Culture: The Missing SDG*, offers an important analytical tool for understanding the urgent need to strengthen the interaction between education and culture. The report underscores how existing capacity — and capacity building — within educational institutions, particularly universities, can become one of the most relevant levers for sustainable development and social empowerment.

Our publication is both a memory of a significant collective event and a resource for educators, policymakers, and cultural practitioners interested in building stronger bridges between education and culture.

### **The Broader Frame: ENCATC's Role**

For ENCATC, this publication is part of a wider continuum of action. Through its Working Group on Culture and Education and its policy engagement with the European Union and UNESCO, ENCATC seeks to champion education that develops critical thinking, empathy, intercultural competence, and resilience — qualities that underpin sustainable cultural futures.

By convening this federated event and curating this publication, ENCATC reaffirms its mission as a bridge between research, policy, and practice, and its belief that cultural education is not a luxury, but a right — a cornerstone for societies capable of imagining and enacting regenerative change.

### **Acknowledgements**

ENCATC extends heartfelt thanks to all the partner institutions and their representatives at the event: Adriana Sandoval Trujillo, Jahyun Kim, Mariola Andonegui Navarro, and José Francisco Román. We further thank the colleagues in the partners organisations – Serin Kim Hong and Hyejin Yang (KACES, Republic of Korea), Juan Pablo Torrente Hernandez (Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y los Saberes, Colombia), Luis Rafael Méndez Rodríguez (Universidad de Sevilla, Spain) - whose generosity and collaboration made this dialogue possible through many online exchanges and meetings (often at ungodly hours!).

We also acknowledge UNESCO for creating the federated side event framework that enables networks like ours to contribute to global cultural policy conversations, and to all who continue to uphold the shared conviction that *culture and education together can shape the world we need*.

<sup>1</sup> The video recording of the event is available at:  
<https://youtu.be/ZObgVN5JgwQ?si=dftuccw-cXnlxy4D>

## The Federated Event – Context and Framing

The Federated Side Event '***Culture and Education as a Key Tool for a World in Crisis***', held on 30 September 2025 at the Centre de Convencions Internacional de Barcelona, was part of the official programme of MONDIACULT 2025. Co-organised by ENCATC together with the Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Knowledge of Colombia, the Korea Arts & Culture Education Service (KACES), the Foundation San Millán de la Cogolla (Spain), and the Consortium of Ibero-American Universities — encompassing the Universities of Seville (Spain), Zacatecas (Mexico), La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain), Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano (Colombia), Cuenca and Salesiana (Ecuador) — the event embodied MONDIACULT's federated spirit of cross-regional collaboration.

Its aim was both clear and ambitious: to explore how culture and education can jointly empower communities to respond to the multiple crises shaping our world today — from environmental emergencies and social fragmentation to the erosion of democracy and cultural rights. Through a dynamic, time-disciplined conversation, the partner organisations shared innovative models and reflected on how transformative education and cultural policy can together inspire sustainable, inclusive futures.

The panel brought together Adriana Sandoval Trujillo (Colombia), Jahyun Kim (Korea), Mariola Andonegui Navarro (Spain), José Francisco Román (Mexico), and GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens (ENCATC) — each representing a distinct regional perspective on the relationship between culture and education.

The side event was fully aligned with MONDIACULT 2025's central themes — particularly Culture and Education, Cultural Rights, and Culture and Peace. It exemplified the federated approach promoted by UNESCO, where regional collaboration and mutual learning transform dialogue into shared action. By linking the biocultural perspectives of Colombia, the social inclusion work of Korea, the heritage education practices of Spain, and the academic reflections of Ibero-American universities, the event responded directly to MONDIACULT's call to position culture as a global public good and as a stand-alone goal in the post-2030 development agenda.

The discussion was moderated by GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens, ENCATC Secretary General, who opened the session with a reflection that captured the collective sentiment:

*"In times of turbulence, culture and education are the foundations for a regenerative and inclusive future."*

She reminded participants that today's crises are not only environmental or economic, but also cultural and educational — crises of imagination, empathy, and connection. Building synergies between culture and education, she stressed, is fundamental to shaping inclusive futures grounded in cultural diversity and human rights.

Culture must be systematically integrated across formal, informal, and non-formal education, recognising the role that all sectors of society play in knowledge transmission. It is equally vital to strengthen the quality and relevance of education by fostering appreciation for cultural diversity, promoting multilingualism, and embedding arts education and digital literacy within lifelong learning. Contextualised education — rooted in heritage, history, and traditional knowledge — is essential to cultivating belonging, creativity, and critical awareness.

The dialogue that followed was guided by two complementary lines of inquiry. First, speakers reflected on the most pressing challenges within their contexts, identifying how education and culture together contribute to peacebuilding, inclusion, and sustainability. Second, they explored how the lessons and connections emerging from MONDIACULT 2025 could be translated into future actions — new partnerships, policies, and learning frameworks capable of bridging regions and generations.

This exchange is captured in the reflections that we share below, each demonstrating how the alliance between culture and education can help societies not only withstand crisis but regenerate hope.

## Voices from the Partners

### Colombia – Artes para la Paz: Building Peace through Arts and Education

*Adriana Sandoval Trujillo – Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y los Saberes*

*“Artes para la Paz recognises the historical absence of the State and dignifies the artistic expressions of local communities as instruments for peace.”* — **Adriana Sandoval Trujillo**, Ministry of Cultures of Colombia

In Colombia, arts and culture are central to our national commitment to peace, diversity, and sustainable development. After decades marked by conflict and social division, our country recognizes that culture and the arts are not a luxury — they are a right, a means of reconciliation, and a pathway to rebuilding the social fabric.

### Arts for Peace: A National Policy for Cultural and Artistic Education

One of the Colombian government's key priorities is the public policy project *Artes para la Paz* (*Arts for Peace*) — a comprehensive strategy for arts and cultural education. This programme embodies our commitment to educating children, adolescents, and young people through the arts as a way to build citizenship, promote cultural diversity, and consolidate a culture of peace across the country.

*‘Arts for Peace’* acknowledges the transformative power of arts education — its capacity to shape critical and creative citizens and to foster more equitable, resilient, and sustainable societies. It is firmly aligned with UNESCO's Framework for Arts Education and with the 2022–2026 National Development Plan, Colombia: A World Power of Life, which seeks to redefine education as an integral process encompassing culture, science, sports, citizenship, and peace education.

### A Comprehensive and Decentralised Approach

*‘Arts for Peace’* is a joint initiative between the Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Knowledge and the Ministry of Education. It forms part of the CRESE Comprehensive Education Policy and is articulated with the National System of Artistic and Cultural Education and Training (SINEFAC). This inter-institutional cooperation aims to guarantee the right to arts education from the earliest stages of life, overcoming persistent challenges such as lack of coordination between educational levels, insufficient professional development for trainers, and inadequate cultural infrastructure.

By 2025, the programme has reached over 400,000 students, including participants in both formal education and non-formal learning spaces such as cultural centres, community organisations, and even correctional institutions — benefitting more than 100,000 people nationwide.

Education is offered across five artistic disciplines — music, dance, theatre, audiovisual, and creative writing — and prioritises collaboration with local universities and community actors. This decentralised approach ensures that learning processes respect the cultural and biocultural diversity that defines Colombia — the second most biodiverse country in the world. Each region's artistic practices are valued as expressions of its unique ecological and cultural heritage.

“In times of turbulence, culture and education are the foundations for a regenerative and inclusive future.”

### **From Informality to Recognition**

*'Arts for Peace'* emerged as an evolution of the earlier Sounds for Peacebuilding initiative. It addresses the historic absence of the state in many territories, where communities have long relied on artistic and cultural expressions to preserve their identities amid conflict. These bottom-up cultural processes — deeply rooted in community traditions — are now being recognized and integrated into national education and cultural policy frameworks.

As **Adriana Sandoval** explained during the MONDIACULT Federated Event:

*“Artes para la Paz recognizes the diversity of all these places where the State has historically not been present. It does not seek to impose a single model but rather to formalize and value local artistic expressions — to recognize their role in transforming societies while respecting their differences.”*

This recognition involves balancing formal education systems with traditional and informal ways of transmitting knowledge. Through partnerships with universities, the Ministry promotes teacher certification and professionalisation, while simultaneously validating the non-institutional forms of cultural knowledge that have sustained communities for generations.

This dual approach 'dignifies' the role of educators — valuing both the officially accredited and the community-based artist as legitimate carriers of knowledge. It reflects an ongoing dialogue between institutional systems and living cultural practices, creating dynamic mechanisms of recognition that strengthen both.

## **Culture as a Right and a Tool for Peace**

At its heart, *'Arts for Peace'* is about ensuring that culture and the arts are integrated into the curriculum of schools — no longer treated as extracurricular or optional, but as fundamental rights. As **Adriana Sandoval** observed:

*"When arts and culture are placed within the school curriculum, they stop being a luxury. They become a right. And to make them a right, we must invest — from where we are, with the tools we have — respecting autonomy, diversity, and difference."*

This investment goes beyond funding: it involves building networks of cultural and educational collaboration that reach territories historically affected by conflict. The programme supports the creation of local cultural networks, training of educators, and community participation, fostering environments for artistic expression, collective healing, and territorial transformation.

It also responds directly to the recommendations of Colombia's Truth Commission, which emphasized the essential role of arts and culture in reconciliation and peacebuilding. By creating spaces for creativity and dialogue, *'Arts for Peace'* becomes a living mechanism of collective recognition and repair.

## **Regional Leadership and South–South Cooperation**

Colombia's experience with *'Arts for Peace'* has inspired broader regional collaboration. During MONDIACULT 2025, the Ministers of Culture of the Pacific Alliance — Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru — signed the Declaration on Artistic and Cultural Education and Training, a landmark commitment to integrate education, culture, and the arts as pillars of human development and peace.

The declaration, led by Colombia and drawing from its national experience, underscores that:

*"Culture is the common ground on which a more dignified life is built, citizenship is constructed, democracies are strengthened, and the region projects itself with greater cohesion and strength."*

This act exemplifies South–South cooperation and mutual learning, showing how countries can adopt shared frameworks to advance cultural rights and education as engines of sustainable development.

## Looking Forward

After MONDIACULT, Colombia's priority is to continue refining and expanding 'Arts for Peace', deepening its territorial reach and reinforcing teacher training and institutional cooperation. The next steps involve strengthening collaboration with local universities, creating more inclusive certification mechanisms for educators, and promoting the dialogue between formal systems and informal community knowledge.

As **Adriana Sandoval** concluded:

*"We must keep listening to what is happening in the territories, connecting local and international experiences, and ensuring that informal artistic practices are recognized as equally valuable. They are different — but just as rich. Our task is to build the bridges that allow them to converse."*

Through 'Arts for Peace', Colombia reaffirms that culture is both a right and a responsibility — a force capable of transforming societies, nurturing peace, and enabling future generations to imagine and build a more equitable world.

### **Speaker bio:**

**Adriana Sandoval Trujillo**, Head of the Cooperation and International Affairs, Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Knowledge, Republic of Colombia

Adriana Sandoval holds a Master's in Digital Anthropology from University College London and a BA in Communication Studies from Concordia University, Montreal. She previously served as Cultural Attaché at the Colombian Embassy in the UK, leading cultural diplomacy and public engagement initiatives.

### **Organisation:**

**Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Knowledge, Republic of Colombia**

The Ministry leads Colombia's cultural policy and promotes the integration of arts and education to strengthen peacebuilding and diversity. Its Arts for Peace programme—developed with the Ministry of Education—advances inclusive arts education as a tool for social transformation and reconciliation.

<https://www.mincultura.gov.co/despacho/Paginas/grupo-de-cooperacion-y-asuntos-internacionales/default.aspx>

<https://arteparalapaz.mincultura.gov.co/Paginas/index.aspx>

## **Korea – Arts Education for Social Cohesion and Resilience**

*Jahyun Kim, Korea Arts & Education Service (KACES)*

*"If fragmentation and mistrust are among the deepest crises of our time, then arts education is one of the most reliable tools we have to rebuild connection."* — **Jahyun Kim**, KACES

Across the world, we are witnessing widening divides — between generations, regions, and communities. Social fragmentation, expressed through isolation, mistrust, and inequality, weakens the social fabric and erodes our ability to imagine a shared future.

For two decades, the Korea Arts and Culture Education Service (KACES) has sought to counter this fragmentation through arts and culture education. Since its creation in 2005, KACES has worked to ensure that every citizen — regardless of background or location — can experience the transformative power of the arts.

### **A Two-Decade Journey**

Over twenty years, KACES has dispatched thousands of teaching artists across Korea, bringing arts education into schools, correctional facilities, senior centres, and rural villages. What began as an effort to close access gaps has evolved into a mature ecosystem of policies, programmes, and partnerships.

Today, KACES' mission aligns closely with the UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education, reflecting a shared vision of inclusion, resilience, and sustainable futures.

In 2025, KACES convened an International Expert Meeting in Seoul, co-hosted a pre-conference webinar with UNESCO Bangkok, and launched the Global Arts Education Institute — including its inaugural publication, KACES Insights 2025. These initiatives mark a new stage of international collaboration and policy reflection, consolidating Korea's 20-year journey from national practice to global partnership.

### **Arts Education as a Force for Inclusion**

At the core of this journey lies a conviction: arts and culture education is not a luxury; it is essential infrastructure for social cohesion.

One recent initiative captures this vision — the KACES Youth Exchange Programme, developed from the *Dream Orchestra*, widely known as *El Sistema Korea*, and later expanded into three distinct programmes — the *Dream Orchestra*, the *Dance of Dreams*, and the *Theatre of Dreams* — which together form the *Dream Arts Collective*, with a newly launched visual arts component (*Dream Studio*).

This large-scale summer camp, known as the *Festival of Dreams*, brought together more than 500 young people from Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Japan. Over several months of online exchanges, followed by workshops, rehearsals, and performances, the project culminated in a collective festival of music, movement, and creative expression.

What emerged was not only artistic achievement but a living practice of inclusion. A particularly moving moment came from the joint youth choir, which included visually impaired students from Japan. After the performance, one participant said she had never before felt treated differently. Performing side by side with peers from other countries was, for her, a natural act of belonging.

This project demonstrated that artistic collaboration can embody peace. It created a space where difference became connection, where unity was experienced rather than prescribed.

The initiative also modelled a systematic approach to exchange and co-creation. Rather than a one-off event, it followed a four-step process:

1. Building relationships
2. Facilitating exchange
3. Designing joint creation
4. Sharing with the wider community

This structure ensures continuity, reflection, and mutual learning — and it mirrors the pillars of the UNESCO Framework: access and inclusion, development of cultural capabilities, and sustainable systems through partnership.

## **The Glue that Holds Societies Together**

After two decades of work, KACES has learned that arts and culture education rebuilds trust not by declaring unity but by making unity possible. It offers young people a tangible experience of collaboration — of what inclusion feels like, what cooperation sounds like, and what peace looks like when enacted together.

In an era marked by social fragmentation and multiple global crises, arts education must therefore be recognised as a civic and cultural right, a foundation for human resilience and social well-being.

As **Jahyun Kim** observed:

*'Arts education is the glue that holds fractured societies together — safeguarding cultural rights and enabling us to imagine inclusive futures.'*

### **Beyond Borders: Culture, Identity, and Sustainability**

Following the MONDIACULT Federated Event, KACES continues to explore how cultural diversity and identity can coexist and strengthen each other through arts education. Balancing these dimensions is an ongoing challenge — especially in times when the loss of land or biodiversity often leads to the loss of songs, languages, and traditions that embody sustainable knowledge.

One meaningful example comes from the Sapa Photography Project in Vietnam. Vietnamese youth used cameras not merely to capture images but to document landscapes and daily life in their communities. Their photographs preserved both the beauty of nature and the cultural heritage intertwined with it, while Korean artists and practitioners participated as mentors and collaborators.

When exhibited in Seoul, these images allowed Korean audiences to see through Vietnamese eyes — revealing that protecting the environment also means protecting cultural identity.

Such exchanges illustrate that arts education is not just a response to crisis but a bridge reconnecting people, place, and planet. It reminds us that creativity and ecology, identity and sustainability, are inseparable dimensions of the same collective task.

### **Looking Forward**

In the years ahead, KACES aims to deepen its international cooperation and strengthen its regional networks. Plans are already underway to establish an Asia-Pacific Collaborative Body on arts and culture education, bringing together national policy organisations and practitioners.

This initiative builds on the foundation laid by previous global conferences and aims to contribute to the post-2030 development agenda by ensuring that culture and education are integrated as drivers of peace, empathy, and sustainable living.

Through these efforts, Korea reaffirms its commitment to the global community: to use the arts not only to educate, but to heal, connect, and inspire.

**Speaker bio:**

**Jahyun Kim**, Director of Future Strategy, Korea Arts & Culture Education Service (KACES)

Jahyun Kim oversees strategic development at KACES, focusing on arts education and cultural participation across Korea. With over 20 years of experience in public policy and cultural management, she leads initiatives that connect creative learning, inclusion, and international cooperation.

**Organisation:**

**Korea Arts & Culture Education Service (KACES)**

A public agency under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Republic of Korea), founded in 2005 under the Support for Arts and Culture Education Act. KACES promotes equitable access to arts education, dispatching thousands of teaching artists nationwide and leading international collaborations aligned with the UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education.

<https://arte.or.kr/>

## **Consortium of Ibero-American Universities – Culture and Education for a World in Crisis**

*José Francisco Román (Mexico, speaker at the event) and Luis Méndez Rodríguez (Seville, Spain) representing the Consortium of Universities: University of Seville (Spain) · Autonomous University of Zacatecas (Mexico) · University of La Laguna, Tenerife (Spain) · University of Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano (Colombia) · Salesian Polytechnic University and University of Cuenca (Ecuador)*

*"Our challenge is to make the social appropriation of culture real — if we truly want the world to be sustainable."* — **José Francisco Román**, Consortium of Ibero-American Universities

At the MONDIACULT 2022 Conference in Mexico City, culture was defined as a global public good — one of the most significant concepts of this century for understanding the role of culture in integrating the life of communities. From the perspective of universities, this principle is fundamental: it underscores culture's potential to bind together academic, social, and civic life and to ensure the survival of humanity through shared values and creativity.

However, the challenge lies in making this principle tangible — to truly place culture at the centre of our lives. Around the world, universities observe a progressive erosion of democratic values, an increase in polarisation and disinformation, and a fragmentation of cultural and social life. The mediating structures that once nurtured civic dialogue — politics, religion, the arts — are weakening, threatening the social fabric itself.

In this context, the Consortium of Ibero-American Universities recognises that education and culture must work together to counter these trends, rebuild trust, and strengthen civic life.

From the perspective of universities, the UNESCO global report on cultural policies, *Culture: The Missing SDG*, is not only a diagnostic framework but also a call to action. It highlights how the existing capacities of higher education institutions — and their ability to build new forms of knowledge, skills, and partnerships — position universities as key drivers of sustainable development, cultural continuity, and social empowerment.

### **A Shared Academic Commitment**

Since 2024, six universities — from Spain, Mexico, Colombia, and Ecuador — have collaborated in a Consortium on Culture and Education for a World in Crisis. Together, they have organised a series of international conferences under the banner '*Proposals from Academia towards MONDIACULT 2025*', held in Zacatecas (Mexico, April 2025), Quito (Ecuador, July 2025), and with future sessions in Tenerife (Spain), Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic.

These meetings serve as laboratories of reflection linking universities, cultural institutions, and professionals from across Ibero-America. They explore how higher education can address today's intertwined crises — political, social, cultural, and environmental — by reconnecting knowledge, creativity, and civic responsibility.

## **Universities Responding to the Crisis**

From within academia, several interrelated challenges have been identified:

1. Erosion of democratic values – There is declining civic participation, especially among youth, reflected in lower trust in institutions and disinterest in the common good. Universities have the responsibility to cultivate critical thinking, ethical awareness, and civic engagement as essential democratic competencies.
2. Polarisation and disinformation – The spread of misinformation and ideological echo chambers, often amplified by digital platforms, deepen divisions. Universities respond by teaching media literacy, promoting plural debate, and fostering dialogue across differences.
3. Crisis of identity and fragmentation – Globalisation and digitisation have disrupted shared narratives and weakened social cohesion. Universities therefore promote intercultural programmes, heritage studies, and opportunities for empathy and mutual understanding.
4. Inequality in access to education – Despite expansion, economic, social, and technological barriers persist. Universities act through scholarships, inclusion programmes, and digital education initiatives that widen access while ensuring quality.
5. Transforming education for the future – The consortium promotes experiential learning, the ethical use of AI, and the integration of global citizenship and sustainability into curricula – forming citizens able to face planetary challenges.

## **Culture, Heritage, and Social Transformation**

Cultural engagement within universities plays a crucial role. The member institutions maintain Centres for Cultural Initiatives that offer high-quality, inclusive programming in music, theatre, exhibitions, and debates. Many are located in historic city centres affected by gentrification and mass tourism, where they act both as spaces for community life and as educational laboratories.

These centres exemplify how universities can protect and revitalise urban heritage while providing students and citizens with experiences that combine artistic creation, reflection, and public service.

Beyond campus, the consortium promotes research and cooperation networks that strengthen links between cultural heritage and sustainable development. Examples include:

- The Ibero-American University Chair on Heritage, Routes and Cultural Itineraries, created at the Autonomous University of Zacatecas in 2024, which unites researchers from across the region.
- The planned Ibero-American Chair on Cultural Heritage at the University of La Laguna, Tenerife, designed to articulate joint academic work on the social impact of heritage.
- The Seville Declaration on Heritage and its Social Function and the Puebla Declaration on the University District, which reaffirm the social responsibility of universities in protecting both cultural and natural heritage

## Social Appropriation of Culture

As José Francisco Román emphasised in Barcelona, the state and government are custodians but not owners of cultural heritage. True ownership lies with citizens — the collective creators of this heritage. The task ahead is to make social appropriation of culture a reality, empowering communities to see culture not as a distant monument but as a living part of daily life.

This conviction has inspired concrete academic initiatives. One of the most innovative is the proposal to establish an Ibero-American School of Jewellery and Goldsmithing, which seeks to recognise master artisans — many of them women — who have preserved ancient techniques of metalwork and design. Through collaboration between universities and craft communities, the initiative aims to grant academic recognition to artisanal knowledge, valuing these creators as bearers of both tangible and intangible heritage.

Such projects exemplify how universities can link formal and traditional knowledge, science and craft, to generate sustainable local development and reaffirm culture as a driver of dignity and creativity.

## Looking Ahead

The consortium is committed to continuing the MONDIACULT academic process beyond 2025 — consolidating a permanent network for cooperation and exchange among Ibero-American universities.

Its guiding principle is clear: education, culture, and heritage are inseparable. Together, they form the basis for democratic renewal, social inclusion, and the sustainable future of our shared humanity.

Universities have a fundamental task: to protect cultural and natural heritage through its sustainable use and social appropriation. Education and culture reach their full meaning when they become strategies for collective survival.

### Speaker bio:

**José Francisco Román**, Research Professor in History, Autonomous University of Zacatecas, Mexico

José Francisco Román is a research professor specialising in historical and cultural heritage. Formerly Director of the UNESCO Category 2 Regional Institute of World Heritage in Zacatecas (2017–2021), he has led regional cooperation projects in Latin America and contributed to the inscription of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

**Organisation:**

**Consortium of Ibero-American Universities**

A partnership between the Universities of Seville (Spain), Zacatecas (Mexico), La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain), Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano (Colombia), Cuenca and Salesiana (Ecuador). Since 2024, the consortium has advanced academic collaboration on 'Culture as a Global Public Good', convening a series of international conferences ahead of and following MONDIACULT 2025.

<https://mondiacult2025.uaz.edu.mx/>

## **Spain – La Rioja – Educating for Cultural Rights through Heritage**

*Mariola Andonegui Navarro, Fundacion San Millán de la Cogolla*

*“Involving children and newcomers in discovering and protecting heritage helps them identify with their place and strengthens community bonds.”* — **Mariola Andonegui Navarro**, Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla

We are located in the municipality of San Millán de la Cogolla, in La Rioja, in northern Spain — a small valley village with about 200 inhabitants, home to the monasteries of Suso and Yuso, declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1997.

### **Depopulation and Cultural Heritage**

In our rural context, the deepest crisis affecting culture and education is depopulation. The local school has only eight enrolled children of four different nationalities — Algerian, Spanish, Argentine, and Portuguese. San Millán is therefore a depopulated area, with an aging population and no generational replacement. Yet, it is also home to new residents from countries such as Ukraine, Bolivia, Romania, Morocco, Algeria, and Bosnia. This growing diversity is reshaping the social fabric, but there is still limited attention paid to the cultural backgrounds of these new neighbours.

From a heritage perspective, depopulation threatens not only tangible heritage, but especially the intangible knowledge that sustains it — traditional crafts, construction techniques, and ways of life tied to the use of natural resources. These forms of knowledge are disappearing with the last generation that still practises them.

At the same time, the arrival of people from other parts of Spain and abroad poses the challenge of mutual integration: helping newcomers understand and identify with local culture, and encouraging local residents to learn about and value the cultures of those who join them. The perception of heritage in San Millán is naturally different for someone born in La Rioja and for someone arriving from afar with a different cultural background.

### **Heritage Education as a Tool for Cohesion**

This is why it is essential to create spaces for encounter and dialogue through heritage — spaces where long-time residents and newcomers can share their knowledge, stories, and traditions. Heritage thus becomes an educational and social tool that strengthens social cohesion, community life, and cultural rights.

At the San Millán de la Cogolla Foundation, we address these challenges through our heritage education programme, alongside other cultural initiatives such as a research and conservation programme and the performing-arts project *Escenario Vivo* ('Living Stage'). Through these, we aim not only to bring culture to rural areas, but also to engage local people in it and open this historically significant place to the world.

## **European Collaboration and Innovative Methodologies**

Since 2018, the San Millán Foundation has collaborated with the SM Foundation and with partner organisations from Finland, Serbia, and Italy within a European consortium specialised in heritage and arts education. Together, we have developed three educational projects, co-funded by the Creative Europe and Erasmus+ programmes, recognised with the Europa Nostra Award (2021) and the Young European Heritage Makers Award (2025).

Our people-centred methodology promotes the development of cultural competencies through an innovative approach inspired by the 2020 Rome Charter. We encourage children and young people to:

- Explore their cultural heritage with their families and communities.
- Create freely, using art and technology to express their vision of the world.
- Share their creations with peers in other countries through transmedia storytelling.
- Enjoy the cultural environment as a source of learning and personal well-being.
- And above all, protect the heritage that defines, unites, and enriches us as a society.

## **Impact and Broader Significance**

Our experience shows that heritage education:

- Promotes cultural diversity.
- Strengthens commitment to heritage conservation.
- Builds social bonds within communities.
- Enriches exchange among professionals across countries.
- Connects cultures, fostering empathy and mutual respect.

Integrating this form of education into schools not only ensures access to cultural rights, but also contributes to improving quality of life and strengthening the democratic values of society.

By linking local culture to global perspectives, the San Millán Foundation demonstrates how rural territories can become laboratories of social innovation, where heritage and education together shape inclusive, participatory, and sustainable futures.

## Looking Ahead: Strengthening Teacher Training and Community Bonds

The San Millán Foundation has a long history of promoting culture in rural environments, with a strong vocation for education, research, and teacher training. Today, much of our work focuses on supporting rural schools, and in the past year we have launched a new project dedicated to early childhood education, providing training for teachers who work with the youngest pupils.

Our next priority is to reinforce teacher training, especially for those who come to San Millán temporarily. Many teachers work here for only a year before moving on, so it is essential that they learn about and appreciate the place where their students live. Understanding the territory and its heritage enables them to transmit its value to their pupils, helping children to grow up proud of their community and aware of its cultural significance.

Equally important is to take teachers and students outside the classroom—to discover their surroundings, meet local residents, and learn through direct contact with the community. The rural environment offers the unique advantage of this open, shared learning space. Neighbours are eager to participate, telling stories and helping children understand local life. This exchange is particularly meaningful for children from Algeria, Morocco, Portugal, and other countries who may not have extended families in the area. The elderly residents often become mentors and cultural bridges, connecting generations through shared experiences.

Continuing to build these intergenerational and intercultural ties—between teachers, children, elders, and heritage—is central to our mission. We want every child to feel rooted in the place where they grow up, so that one day they can look back and say: *"I spent my childhood in San Millán de la Cogolla, and it shaped who I am."*

### Speaker bio:

**Mariola Andonegui Navarro**, Coordinator of the Heritage Education Programme, Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla

Mariola Andonegui is an art historian with a PhD in Didactics of Visual Expression and extensive experience in heritage education. Her work with museums and foundations across Spain has been recognised with two Europa Nostra Awards. She currently coordinates educational projects at the San Millán de la Cogolla Foundation.

### Organisation:

**Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla (FSM)** - <https://www.emilianensis.com/>

Based in La Rioja, Spain, FSM is dedicated to heritage education, conservation, and cultural engagement. Together with Fundación SM and European partners, it develops Creative Europe and Erasmus+ projects promoting youth participation and cultural rights in rural areas.

Fundación San Millan: <https://www.fsanmillan.es/>

Fundación SM (<https://es.fundacion-sm.org/>)

<https://www.fsanmillan.es/noticias/la-fundacion-san-millan-coorganiza-en-mondiacult-2025-un-debate-internacional-sobre-cultura-y-educacion-ante-los-retos-de-un-mundo-en-crisis/>

Video presented at MONDIACULT 2025: [https://youtu.be/OBk1tqyL\\_JE?si=XXbkayePPvOR9rvx](https://youtu.be/OBk1tqyL_JE?si=XXbkayePPvOR9rvx)

## Europe – Rethinking Education and Cultural Policy for Regenerative Futures

*GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens, ENCATC*

*“Education cannot only be about transmitting knowledge for employment; it must foster resilience, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and the ability to learn continuously.”* — **GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens**, ENCATC

For ENCATC, the crisis facing culture and education is not one of a single dimension—such as climate change, inequality, or conflict—but of inadequacy: our current systems are not adapting quickly enough to meet the interlinked global challenges that define our century.

Across regions, societies experience fragmentation, loss of trust, and a crisis of meaning. Culture and education together hold the power to counter this by shaping values, worldviews, and the capacity to live together. They are not add-ons to sustainable development—they are its foundation, providing both the ethical compass and the practical skills to navigate disruption.

### **Culture and Education as Central Forces**

ENCATC—the European network on cultural management and policy—brings together universities, researchers, and professionals committed to linking education, policy, and cultural practice. Over 30 years, the network has championed cultural education as a driver of systemic change, equipping students and citizens to lead with empathy, creativity, and responsibility.

Today, we recognise that education cannot simply transmit knowledge for employment. Many of the jobs our students will take on do not yet exist. Therefore, learning must focus on building critical thinking, resilience, cultural awareness, and the ability to learn continuously. We need to prepare people to be comfortable with uncertainty and to lead change with integrity.

At the same time, our classrooms are more diverse than ever. Students come from multiple linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds. This raises essential questions: *Whose culture is being taught? How do we balance authenticity with hybridity?* If education fails to engage with cultural diversity as a source of agency—not just access—it risks reinforcing inequality rather than overcoming it.

## **From Access to Agency**

As ENCATC's consultation for MONDIACULT 2025 highlighted, the key to meaningful cultural education lies in agency. Too often, funding and governance flow from the top down, shaped by external agendas rather than by citizens' own creative energies. To foster sustainable cultural ecosystems, people must be empowered not only to consume culture but to shape it.

This means starting early—embedding cultural creation within formal and informal education, ensuring that young people learn through co-creation, and that policy frameworks recognise citizens as producers of cultural futures.

The ENCATC Focus Group on Culture and Education underscored this shift. Discussions among educators, policy-makers, and students across Europe and beyond revealed four interconnected challenges:

1. Teaching for uncertainty: preparing students not just for today's roles but for unknown futures.
2. Embracing diversity and hybridity: acknowledging the coexistence of multiple cultural identities and ways of knowing.
3. Balancing authenticity and innovation: valuing heritage while fostering creativity born from intercultural dialogue.
4. Reclaiming agency: making cultural participation citizen-led rather than institution-led.

These findings informed ENCATC's contribution to the MONDIACULT Digital Library and shaped its forthcoming policy paper on culture and education<sup>2</sup>.

## **Transformative Education for Systemic Change**

At its heart, ENCATC promotes transformative cultural education—learning that combines critical reflection, emotional engagement, and experiential practice. This approach cultivates systemic thinkers who understand connections between culture and climate, heritage and identity, technology and human dignity.

This pedagogical vision sees education as a means of liberation and reflection-in-action. In the cultural field, it translates to developing empathy, humility, curiosity, and intercultural competence—qualities essential for managing diversity and sustaining democratic values.

As expressed during MONDIACULT's federated event in Barcelona, this vision aligns with UNESCO's post-2030 agenda: integrating culture and education as core pillars of sustainable development. The ENCATC Congress 2025, also held in Barcelona, reaffirmed this by connecting research, policy, and practice, and by fostering dialogue between academics, practitioners, youth, and decision-makers.

<sup>2</sup> <https://encatc.org/en/about-us2/influence/policy-papers/>

## **Bridging Research, Policy, and Practice**

ENCATC's strength lies in building bridges. It connects universities and cultural institutions, policymakers and practitioners, students and mentors, Europe and the world. Through initiatives such as the EU Culture Compass consultation and the MONDIACULT Focus Groups, ENCATC has shown how cultural education strengthens civic responsibility, embeds sustainability in curricula, and enhances professional ethics and global citizenship.

The network's current priorities include:

- Mapping innovative teaching methodologies that combine disciplinary expertise with transversal skills such as critical thinking, intercultural collaboration, and digital literacy.
- Engaging students and young professionals directly in designing the next generation of cultural management curricula.
- Linking education with cultural rights, justice, and sustainability, ensuring that culture is recognised not only as a sector but as a common good.

## **Commitment and Way Forward**

After MONDIACULT 2025, ENCATC will continue to serve as an agent of change. The Culture and Education Working Group will remain a permanent space for dialogue and innovation. Its next steps include:

- Developing an international mapping of innovative curricula that embed resilience, intercultural competence, and critical pedagogy.
- Disseminating best practices drawn from ENCATC members to inspire universities and policymakers worldwide.
- Involving the younger generation in co-designing learning models that reflect their realities and aspirations.

The real crisis is the gap between the urgency of global challenges and the slow adaptation of our systems of education and culture. ENCATC's answer is to advance cultural education as a transformative force, uniting heart, mind, and action for inclusive and sustainable societies.

Through its global network, ENCATC reaffirms its commitment to act—producing knowledge, shaping policy, and empowering people to learn, create, and collaborate. Because when education and culture meet, they become not just tools for adaptation, but forces for regeneration.

**Speaker bio:**

**GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens**, Secretary General, ENCATC – European Network on Cultural Management and Policy

GiannaLia Cogliandro Beyens has served as Secretary General of ENCATC since 2004. An expert in EU affairs and international cultural relations, she has over 30 years' experience in advocacy, strategic management, and cultural policy. She previously worked for EUROCITIES and the European Commission and is a former Secretary General of the Association of European Cities of Culture.

**Organisation:**

**ENCATC – European Network on Cultural Management and Policy** - <https://encatc.org/>

Founded in 1992, ENCATC is the leading European network dedicated to cultural management and policy education. With over 100 members from 40+ countries, ENCATC is an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO and holds consultative status with ECOSOC. It works to strengthen professional capacity, foster cross-sector dialogue, and advance evidence-based cultural policy.

ENCATC & Federated Event webpage: <https://encatc.org/en/events/detail/mondiacult-side-event-culture-and-education-as-a-key-tool-for-a-world-in-crisis/>

## Conclusions and Shared Commitments

### Key Messages and Perspectives from the Dialogue

The Federated Side Event "*Culture and Education as a Key Tool for a World in Crisis*" brought together institutions from Europe, Asia, and Latin America to examine how culture and education can jointly address interconnected global crises—environmental, social, and democratic.

Speakers highlighted that education systems must evolve to cultivate resilience, empathy, and critical thinking.

**ENCATC** underlined that the most pressing challenge lies in bridging the widening gap between cultural education and rapidly changing societal realities. Universities must train students not only for jobs that do not yet exist, but for lifelong adaptability and agency as cultural actors.

**Colombia's Ministry of Cultures** emphasized that arts and culture have been central to rebuilding the social fabric in territories affected by conflict, presenting *Artes para la Paz* as a model for decentralised, community-based arts and cultural education that dignifies local educators and respects cultural diversity.

**KACES (Republic of Korea)** demonstrated how arts education combats social fragmentation and mistrust through participatory models, showing that creativity and collaboration are essential tools for inclusion and peace.

**The Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla (Spain)** focused on heritage education as a driver for rural revitalisation and intercultural understanding, fostering children's sense of belonging and cultural rights.

Finally, **the Ibero-American University Consortium** called for renewed partnerships between academia and communities to ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge and crafts, positioning universities as spaces for cultural continuity and innovation.

## Shared Commitments

The session concluded with a collective commitment to embed culture more systematically across all forms of education—formal, non-formal, and lifelong—while strengthening global cooperation between cultural and educational institutions.

**ENCATC** announced that its *Culture and Education Working Group* will, among other initiatives, map innovative pedagogies and curricula fostering cultural literacy, intercultural competence, and social responsibility. It will also involve students in shaping future learning models and policy recommendations.

**Colombia's Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Knowledge** committed to expanding *Artes para la Paz* through inter-ministerial collaboration and to promoting the formal recognition of local and traditional artistic educators, ensuring culture's integration into peacebuilding and environmental strategies.

**The Korea Arts & Culture Education Service (KACES)** emphasized the importance of adopting a balanced approach between cultural diversity and identity, presenting a photography project in Vietnam as an example of how arts education can reconnect people, places, and the planet. Guided by these principles, KACES will continue to expand such initiatives to benefit future generations.

**The Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla** will strengthen teacher training in rural schools, linking heritage, community participation, and intercultural dialogue, while promoting Europe-wide cooperation on heritage education.

The Consortium of Ibero-American Universities announced its intention to establish an Ibero-American School of Jewellery and Traditional Crafts, recognising artisans' expertise through formal qualifications and safeguarding intangible heritage across generations.

Together, the partners agreed to maintain the dialogue initiated at MONDIACULT and to share outcomes within UNESCO's post-2030 cultural framework. The event reaffirmed that culture and education, when united, are not peripheral sectors but essential forces for resilience, peace, and sustainable development.

## About ENCATC and MONDIACULT 2025

**ENCATC** – *the European network on cultural management and policy education* – brings together educators, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers who explore how culture and education contribute to sustainable and regenerative futures.

In 2025, the ENCATC community reflected deeply on the importance of culture being embedded in policy, contributing to the shaping of the EU Culture Compass and to MONDIACULT 2025.

You can read more about ENCATC's engagement with MONDIACULT 2025 at: <https://encatc.org/en/about-us2/influence/policy-papers/>

## Editorial Note

Editorial coordination and content curation by Dr Carla Figueira (ENCATC Strategic Policy Advisor), October 2025.



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MONDIACULT 2025