

*Time for*  
**Contemplation**

**braga'27**

**European Capital  
of Culture**  
Candidate City



<b>Introduction and general considerations</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Contribution to the long-term strategy</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Cultural and artistic content</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>European dimension</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Management</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Capacity to deliver</b>	<b>98</b>

# Introduction and general considerations



## Q1 Concept of the programme

Time is the most precious commodity in the world. No matter the amount of material richness one may possess, time is the only resource we are unable to buy, and once lost, it cannot be replenished.

In a two millennia city, such as Braga, the traces of the passage of time are present in everyday routines, while the omnipresence of the bell towers ringing reminds us the clock is ticking. Our lives are ruled by the concept and perception of time. Yet is it in our hands to influence its definition? It has already happened in Braga: the unique way we name days in Portuguese has its origins in the city. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the Archbishop Martin of Braga, ruling over *Gallaecia* (the region that once united the North of Portugal and Spanish Galicia), renamed the days of the week after Catholic liturgy, breaking tradition with pagan beliefs. Today we hope we may also break new ground in the way Europe acknowledges time.

Our European lives are filled with terms such as rapid train, fast food, express checkout, speed dating, quick workout, short break, grab and go... They all show that time is valuable to us, raising the question: are we using it wisely? Usually, such a wake-up call happens in moments of crisis and turmoil. That is when we fully grasp how we spend our time and reassess our priorities. We experienced this individually and collectively with the pandemic crisis. But just when we thought we had learned our lesson, the world quickly went back to full speed once again; and with it came a new global crisis, one we had hoped to never again witness in Europe.

Our *Time for Contemplaction* concept has not changed, for we believe, even more firmly, it is the only path available for today's Europe. Yet, we realised our journey towards **Contemplaction** could not be a smooth-sailing one. It needed a haven to deal with the current disquiet of the world, to which we have dedicated a specific temple in our programme. In fact, it is the disquiet that suspends routine, indifference, the *mind-your-own-business* mantra. It is when we feel unsettled that we stop to contemplate, to mourn, to celebrate, to heal.

In this 2<sup>nd</sup> part of our journey, we also rediscovered old paths, walked long before borders arose, to find a similar restlessness on the other side of the frontier. From the North of Portugal, we decided to open our doors even wider to invite Galicia and the Euroregion to build up on our programme in a true spirit of shared **Contemplaction**.

Indeed, we cannot undertake this journey by ourselves. Braga and Europe must address their shared challenges together and we need the ECoC spirit and driving force to be the turning point, the life-changing event that disquiets the trail of indifference, and make us – citizens, artists, policymakers, visitors – stop, reflect and start afresh.

Braga is a medium-sized city, similar to so many others throughout Europe. Our commonplaceness becomes our uniqueness. May this vast European majority, that faces the same challenges, embrace the unease and find their *Time for Contemplaction* through culture.

*Because culture is what keeps all doors from closing, whether physical, emotional or spiritual.*

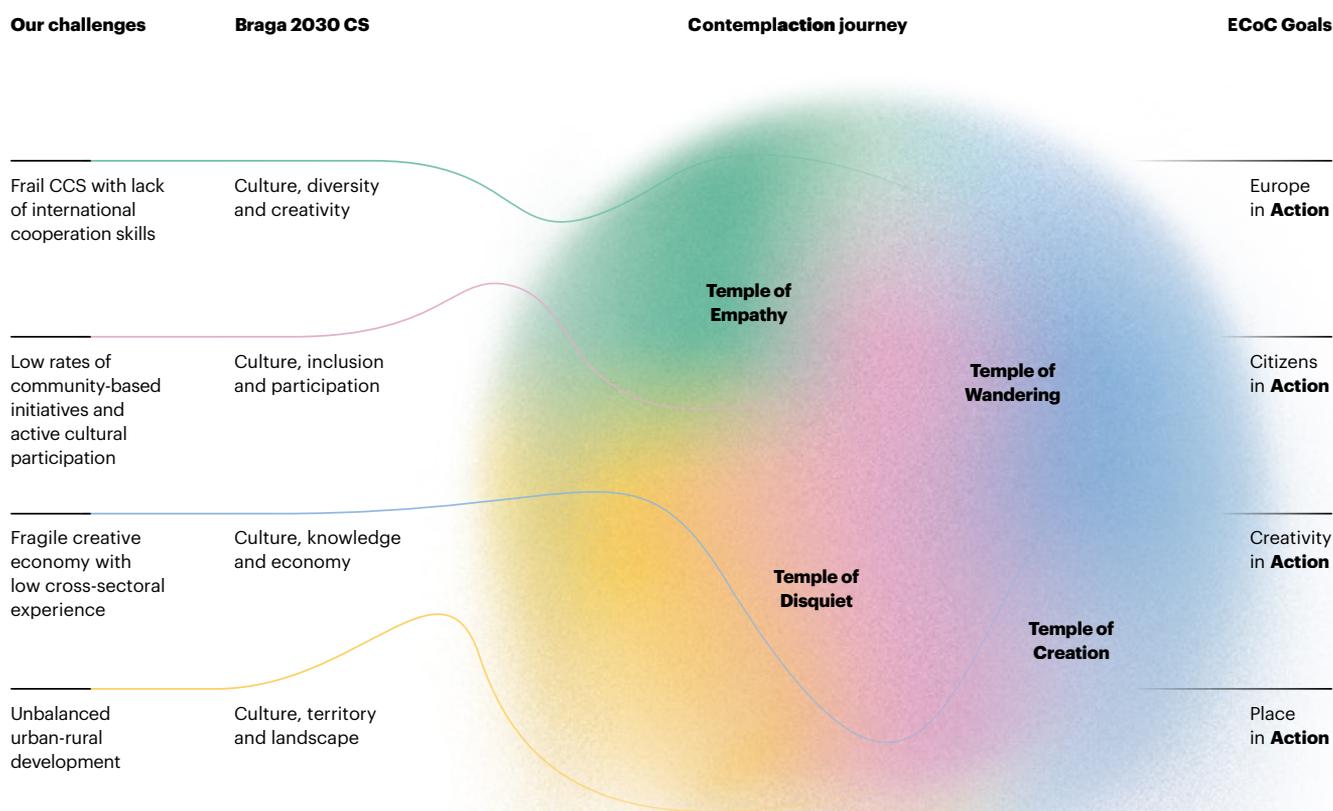
# Contribution to the long-term strategy



## Q2-3 Cultural strategy and long-term impacts

The Braga 2030 Cultural Strategy was approved and adopted by the City Council on 30 October 2020. The key themes and goals of the Cultural Strategy, outlined in detail in our preliminary application, were defined through an extensive consultation and cooperation process that lasted between 2018 and 2020, joining artists, diverse communities, policymakers and knowledge institutions.

The Cultural Strategy (CS) projects a 10-year vision for our city, where culture is everyone's business and an open public space in which all citizens, permanent and temporary, find opportunities for a more active and meaningful participation in the overall development of the city. The four key areas targeted by our cultural strategy are the same and remain in place. Yet, the amount of learning we experienced in the pre-selection process has allowed us to sharpen our European Capital of Culture (ECoC) goals, which now stand for the long-lasting transformation we strive for. They call for a little less *contemplation* and a little more **action**.



Though our ECoC process and Braga's CS have been deeply intertwined since 2018, we have now identified four priorities that connect the delivery of our programme to the city's long-term vision. For each of these goals, we define the impacts we seek to achieve and their correlation

with the cultural strategy of Braga. Our ambitions for the long-term impacts have not changed but have become more focused, achievable and quantifiable, building up on the values that *Time for Contemplation* stands for and guiding us to a purposeful change.

## Goal 1: Europe in Action

*Braga will be a culturally vibrant city with a strong European spirit, offering high-quality artistic experiences and culturally diverse opportunities*

While all our ECoC projects and programme strands have a strong connection to Europe, by tackling shared challenges jointly with European partners, this goal intends to highlight the European dimension in the transformation we seek to deliver through our Cultural Strategy.

One of the challenges we faced preparing this candidacy was that cooperation with European and international partners was not a natural process for our cultural operators. Creating conditions for stronger international cooperation was already one of our Strategy's aims. However, we decided to connect its key areas with a more vigorous European input. By doing so, we embed a European dimension as an integral component of our city's cultural development up to 2030.

BRAGA 2030 CS KEY AREAS		IMPACTS
Culture, diversity and creativity	Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European and international cooperation on a regular basis will become the "new normal" for local artistic production</li> </ul>
Culture, inclusion and participation	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizens and communities will have a much stronger feeling, awareness and appreciation of European belonging</li> </ul>
Culture, knowledge and economy	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCS professionals will be better integrated into European markets and networks</li> </ul>
Culture, territory and landscape	Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New European Bauhaus principles will guide a culture-driven development strategy for the city</li> </ul>

## Goal 2: Citizens in Action

*Braga citizens' will be healthier and happier as empowered and active participants in the lively, place-based and international cultural life of the city*

Strengthening the inclusion and participation of permanent and temporary citizens in Braga's cultural life is one of the key areas of our Cultural Strategy. With special attention to minorities and disadvantaged groups, through our ECoC programme we want to challenge the collective *status quo* even further by empowering citizens and communities to actively contribute to what our city, (Euro)region and Europe can become.

Living up to this vision – in order to deliver the programme quality we aim for and the legacy we envisage – means a committed investment in our people. Therefore, critical thinking and intense engagement in decision-making processes are transversal tools in our artistic programme that will feed and endure in the fabric of our society and its institutions in the aftermath.

BRAGA 2030 CS KEY AREAS		IMPACTS
Culture, diversity and creativity	Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minorities and disadvantaged groups will be regular active participants in the city's cultural dynamics</li> </ul>
Culture, inclusion and participation	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and well-being of the citizens of Braga will increase due to active and meaningful cultural participation</li> </ul>
Culture, knowledge and economy	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizens general life conditions will improve due to spillover economic impact of the ECoC</li> </ul>
Culture, territory and landscape	Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citizens will engage in place-based programmes for friendlier and culturally active neighbourhoods</li> </ul>

## Goal 3: Creativity in Action

*Braga will be an epicentre of the Euroregion's creative economy, fostering European, cross-border and cross-sector collaboration*

Braga 2030 Cultural Strategy identified strengthening the city's creative economy as one of its four key priorities. During the pre-selection process, our ambitions for the ECoC grew outside the lines of Braga's administrative borders.

In this second stage of the bidding process, we have worked more intensely with our neighbouring municipalities and partners from the North Region of Portugal and Galicia (ES), to draw a new model of cooperation for the Euroregion. Through a cross-sectoral approach, we aim to grow and consolidate the CCS at the regional and cross-border level as a legacy of our ECoC.

BRAGA 2030 CS KEY AREAS		IMPACTS
Culture, diversity and creativity	Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artistic quality across the Euroregion will enhance, due to the experience of co-delivering the ECoC</li> </ul>
Culture, inclusion and participation	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender balance and diversity of the Euroregional CCS workforce will increase</li> </ul>
Culture, knowledge and economy	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turnover and employment in the regional and transborder CCS will increase</li> </ul>
Culture, territory and landscape	Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved cultural infrastructure and a friendlier city environment will attract creative talent to the Euroregion</li> </ul>

## Goal 4: Place in Action

*Braga will be known across Europe as a striving city where well-being, nature and heritage are contemplated as sources for action*

As pointed out in our CS, we strongly believe that the natural and built environment shapes who we are and what we can achieve. One of the most pressing challenges for our city is the fast-paced urban development based on economic growth that has ruled for decades, bringing an unbalanced relationship with nature and taking a toll on citizens' quality of life and well-being.

During the second phase of the bidding process, we have deepened our reflection and approach to these concerns, shared by other European cities. Our cultural programme's projects address this, and so does our considering the ECoC process a fertile ground to test-drive environmentally friendlier solutions for cultural production and for exploring socio-spatial and mobility issues. This will be our contribution for Europe's commitment to a greener future.

BRAGA 2030 CS KEY AREAS	IMPACTS	
Culture, diversity and creativity	Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CCS professionals throughout Europe will recognise Braga for its approach on sustainable cultural production practices</li> </ul>
Culture, inclusion and participation	Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Citizens will develop a more gratifying relationship with the city and Europe and embrace healthier and more sustainable lifestyles</li> </ul>
Culture, knowledge and economy	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Braga will become a European example of good practice for slow tourism experiences and circular economy practices</li> </ul>
Culture, territory and landscape	Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Braga's cultural heritage will be recognised for its strong European values and reinstated as places for well-being and togetherness</li> </ul>



# Our Cultural Strategy is in action since 2020

The first revision of Braga's CS was developed in 2022, considering the four previously mentioned ECoC goals and translating these priorities into the Implementation Plan (IP) of the cultural strategy. The document renders the guidelines of the CS into detailed actions and measures, setting out short and medium-term tasks to specific municipal departments, players and stakeholders, reinforcing the coordination and intersectoral work processes and pursuing the effective implementation of the long-term strategic aims. The IP, designed to be implemented between 2022 and 2023, encompasses 10 measures, materialising new and improved strategies, giving continuity, and reinforcing those currently in place. Within these CS updates, two stand out due to their importance and impact on Braga's cultural ecosystem.

As a first milestone, a new grants system will be launched by the end of 2022, creating more diverse opportunities for cultural operators, thus meeting some of the overall cultural development goals defined in the CS. This renewed funding model creates a deeper connection to the CS priorities and the bidding process, and intends to breathe diversity and resilience into Braga's cultural ecosystem, especially after the Covid-19 recession. To accomplish this, the new grant scheme is designed to be more accessible, democratic and accountable, having as key priorities to promote the stability of the cultural operators, encompass a wider and more diverse ecosystem and stimulate

experimental processes and new partnerships at a national, European and international level.

The second highlight of the IP is the redefined Municipal Cultural Infrastructure Network – MALHA – designed as a polycentric system. It rethinks the function and identity of each space, promotes a more focused approach to each of these venues and contributes to a more diverse, inclusive and high-standard offer of the overall network. This network includes requalifying existing venues and creating new ones, such as the Media Arts Centre and the Francisco Sanches Cultural Hub, to guarantee the showcasing and work spaces needed for the city's international cultural development. The aim is to create powerful, specialised and transversal cultural facilities that attract and retain creative talent, support audience development, and circulation within the territory. This process also includes the repositioning and qualification of the parishes' cultural venues in a programme called TRAMA, defining shared cultural services and programme contents and promoting cooperation and connectivity between these decentralised centres. The idea is to bring citizens closer to cultural offer, reduce geographical inequities and reinforce inclusive participation, enhancing Braga's comprehensive cultural development.

In addition to the actions mentioned above, several others are already underway since late 2020, when the implementation of the CS started, such as the following.

## **Saber ↔ Fazer**

*Capacity building for the local CCS*

This training programme provides practical skills and knowledge necessary to promote the sustainability and growth of the local CCS, making it more resilient for the future. Launched in January 2021, right at the beginning of the second lockdown, the programme includes a series of regular training modules that cover an array of topics – project planning and management, digital communication tools, audience development and inclusion, copyright, among others – focused on offering tangible skills that can be embedded across the work practices of CCS professionals. So far, 17 courses have been held, reaching 239 participants.

## **Descentrar**

*Itinerant and decentralised cultural programme*

Territorial equity and audience development are key words to describe this travelling mini-festival that takes contemporary music and circus performance to the parishes on the outskirts of Braga. With a special focus on cultural and natural heritage, the one-day programme at each location includes guided visits and has been a regular spot for our community consultation process. Since the summer of 2021 and a new edition already running this year, the event was already hosted by 20 parishes, with 63 activities and an audience of 6000 people in total.

## **Parkinsound Orchestra**

*Community-based artist in residency project*

*Parkinsound* promotes the cultural and social integration of people with Parkinson's Disease through music. The project joined Parkinson's patients and professional musicians in a collaborative process in which the involuntary movements, symptomatic of the disease, were translated into sounds using electronic musical instruments. In parallel, the Neurology Department of Braga's Hospital assessed the impact of this project on the participants. The outcomes of the process were presented in a concert held on 8 October 2022, joining on stage as Orchestra participants and artists.

## Q4 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

### How we define success

Braga will be a city where culture keeps all doors from closing, meaning culture and European cooperation will be strategic driving forces for the city's development. Our definition of success is translated into our previously described ECoC goals:

- *Vibrant city with a diverse cultural profile and a strong European spirit* (Goal 1)
- *Empowered and engaged citizens contributing to European values and lively communities* (Goal 2)
- *Attractive creative region with a European and cross-border mindset* (Goal 3)
- *Sustainable city environment striving towards a greener Europe* (Goal 4)

Our monitoring & evaluation strategy will guide and help us track the shifts the journey towards **Contemplation** will produce in our minds (contemplation) and how it will change our behaviour as a city and in Europe (action).

### Who will carry out the evaluation

**ContemplAction Research Hub** Led by the POLObs

– Observatory on Science, Communication and Culture Policies of the University of Minho (UM), a ContemplAction Research Hub will be created to deliver the monitoring and evaluation. The Hub will aggregate the expertise of several UM research institutes in the fields of communication, society, life and health sciences, molecular and environmental biology, psychology, economics and management.

**Regional Observatory of Culture of the North** The Braga'27 research legacy will be carried out by the Regional Observatory on Culture of the North, from 2029 onwards. In 2025, a consortium will be developed by UNorte – three public universities in the North region: Minho, Porto, and Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro. The Observatory will fill a long-lasting gap in cultural data and knowledge production. It will act as a central hub, linking various regional and national stakeholders and connecting to Galicia–North Portugal Euroregion and internationally.

### Methodology

#### Aims

- 1) **Evidence of the short, mid and long-term impacts of Braga'27** by: analysing the various forms of cultural and civic engagement and outreach strategies; assessing the role of cultural participation as a source of well-being, personal growth and empowerment; identifying the cultural, urban, economic and social changes; determining the effectiveness of governance strategies; demonstrating the intersectional impacts of cultural megaevents on health and well-being, culture and creative industries, and urban and climate change;
- 2) **Monitor the implementation of Braga'27**, ensuring effective management and that commitments are met;

- 3) **Build capacity, international networks, and a knowledge base for future research** in cultural policy, cultural value and cultural megaevents at European and international levels.

### Virtuous Circles / Circular Research

The Braga'27 strategy will adopt the *virtuous circle* principle by proposing a research model that is:

- Circular** We will reuse existing data, reinterpret it, and give back to the communities, hoping to ignite a spark for social change (**Contemplation'27**).
- Rational & Emotional** We will combine scientific research with knowledgeable bottom-up applied and engaged research. We will take our time to dive deep into insights through empathic practices, capture emotions, experiences and imagination, and dare our cognitive boundaries.
- Open & Process-focused** We want to shift control over the data generated from researchers to participants, analysing inputs (programme), processes (governance) and outputs (participation).
- Place-based & European** We will engage with diverse local communities while developing methods and indicators based on international frameworks, so our work will be shared and used by other ECoCs.

### Methods

We look for inspiration in artists' ability to work on the edge of what is familiar and what is emergent, creating new possibilities to build knowledge together. We believe that different ways of seeing, imagining, understanding and inquiring lead to more insightful research practices.

**Multiple sources** We will harvest *real-world data* from box offices, smartwatches and budget reports; combine it with *primary data* collected via surveys, interviews and ethnography; and compare it with *secondary data* harvested from existing databases and statistics.

**Multifaceted knowledge** *Arts-based methods* will capture experiences that cannot be conveyed through language. *Quantitative methods* will characterise general contexts and measure impacts. *Qualitative methods* will contextualise the multiplicity of value created (e.g., the contribution of *Neighbourhood on the Road* in collaboration with Outreach – p. 75).

We will rely on digital technology to combine our approaches, notably by co-designing the:

- App Braga'27** Residents, visitors, and arts and cultural practitioners will be incentivised to register in and create profiles that will be clustered according to a ladder of participation – from passive to co-creation. For those that do not want or can not use Braga'27 App, we will create the Braga'27 Card that allows the same functionality.
- Passport for Contemplation** will allow users to choose the degree of engagement with the research – from checking at venues, rating events, filling surveys, and sharing videos and pictures, to engaging in online communities.
- Agents for Contemplation** CCS professionals will record their interactions with Braga'27 and their impacts,

including volume of business, overnight stays, ticketing, capacity building, cross-sector and cross-border collaborations, etc.

**Audiences of Contemplation** 27 representatives of the 3 profiles described in our communication strategy (Q37) will participate in a 3-year mixed-methods prospective cohort study on cultural practices and well-being, resulting in 81 sociological portraits. It corresponds to the highest level of engagement with App Braga'27, harvesting biomarker indicators via wearables and submitting individual periodic written reviews.

**Contemplation'27** A heterogeneous representative group of Braga's population (n=7) will i) co-create the App Braga'27; ii) co-customise the impact indicators in year 1; iii) co-analyse data; iv) co-author factsheets for non-academic dissemination.

**Ethics** Data collection and sharing, including App Braga'27 data, will be the object of full-ethics review and procedures will comply with the EU General Data Protection Regulation.

## Baselines

The existing baseline datasets have two major challenges: i) they are not easily reconcilable and are scattered across multiple organisations; ii) there is a lack of lower-level data.

*How are we going to overcome these challenges?*

**Local level / new datasets:** Together with existing studies from POLObs/UM, in collaboration with the Outreach team (p. 73), we are already collecting data on the impact of culture on residents' well-being using OECD Better Life Index. We will build on these studies and create new datasets to be tested during our *Contemplation* phase (ex-ante evaluation).

**National level/data sharing agreements:** We will create data-sharing agreements with Portuguese research institutes to access their datasets, allowing us to build a national cultural profile against which Braga can be compared.

**Galicia-North Portugal Euroregion level/collaboration:** We will collaborate closely with the Galician Culture Observatory on cross-border data collection and analysis.

**Transnational level/comparability:** We are also working with several ECoCs: Bodø 2024 and Bad Ischl-Salzkammergut 2024 on green ECoC indicators; Kaunas 2022 on the "Citizen Happiness" monitoring model; Trenčín 2026 on analysing real-world data; Liepāja 2027 on the correlation between mental health and the environmental.

## Dissemination & knowledge transfer

We will co-develop a multi-modal dissemination plan in close coordination with Braga'27 marketing and communication strategy.

We will share factsheets with the public, using Braga'27 and ContemplAction Research Hub's **social media, websites and App Braga'27**.

From 2023 onwards, yearly **monitoring reports** will be published, accounting for the developments and the main impact findings.

**Policy recommendations** will be published in the format of factsheets along with the final Braga'27 report to facilitate knowledge exchange. To maximise dissemination and future implementation, we will exploit our connections with relevant stakeholders to deliver policy workshops in the Euroregion.

**Journal articles, Academic Conferences & Books** We shall publish papers and books in high-impact academic journals as well as national and international press, present our findings at several conferences, and host seminars and conferences. In 2028, we will deliver a final conference.

**MAs & PhDs thesis, Associate Researchers** We will inform MAs' and PhDs' programmes. *ContemplAction Research Awards* will be attributed to 27 MA's or doctoral dissertations on a competitive basis. We will invite associate researchers to collaborate with Braga'27 Monitoring and Evaluation via networking, mentoring and training, data sharing and cross-fertilisation of ideas.

**International networks** We will connect with peers to share Braga'27 research process and outcomes and learn from others. These include Observatório da Cultura Galega, Latvian Academy of Culture, Unesco Creative Cities Network, Eurocities, Culture Action Europe, Compendium for Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe, and Culture Next Candidate Cities network.

## Timeframe

Contemplation (ex-ante evaluation)				Action (in-itinere evaluation)	Change (ex-post evaluation)	
2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ContemplAction Research Hub App Braga'27 (design)</li> <li>Ethics approval &amp; data sharing agreement</li> <li>Internal quality control, risk assessment and contingency plans</li> <li>Funding Strategy</li> <li>Monitoring report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>App Braga'27 (development)</li> <li>Protocol design</li> <li>Systematic literature reviews</li> <li>Funding application</li> <li>Data collection and analysis</li> <li>Ex-ante dissemination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>App Braga'27 (launch)</li> <li>Recruit participants to Group'27 and Group of Personas</li> <li>Funding application</li> <li>Data collection and analysis</li> <li>Ex-ante dissemination</li> <li>Monitoring report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create aggregated baseline data sets</li> <li>Data collection and analysis</li> <li>In-itinere evaluation protocol design</li> <li>Funding application</li> <li>Ex-ante dissemination</li> <li>Monitoring report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year event data sets (continuous)</li> <li>Data collection and analysis</li> <li>Protocol design</li> <li>Anticipate the Ex-post evaluation challenges</li> <li>Evaluation short-term impacts</li> <li>In-itinere dissemination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-event data sets</li> <li>Data collection and analysis</li> <li>Final conference</li> <li>Evaluation mid-term impact</li> <li>Ex-post dissemination</li> <li>Final Monitoring and Evaluation report, factsheet &amp; policy recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition to Regional Observatory on Culture of The North</li> <li>Data collection and analysis</li> <li>Protocol design</li> <li>Braga Cultural Strategy 2030-2040</li> <li>Ex-post dissemination</li> </ul>

## Indicators of impact

Braga'27 Indicators of Impact are drawn upon the Commission's Guidelines for the Cities Evaluation (2018). In addition, our strategy builds on transnational policy concepts from, namely the UN 2030 Agenda, Unesco Thematic Indicators for Culture, Culture|2030 Indicators, the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor, the Agenda 21 for Culture, and the New European Bauhaus.

OUTCOMES/RESULTS	INDICATORS OF IMPACT	METHODS	PROJECT EXAMPLES
<b>Goal 1: Europe in Action</b>			
Specific Objective: Enhance Braga's European profile by generating high-quality and culturally diverse opportunities			
<b>Operational Objective: Strengthen Braga's artistic quality by delivering an international, extensive, impactful and diverse Braga'27 programme</b>			
Braga'27 will deliver an international, diverse and high artistic quality programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Total n. of events</li> <li>● N. and quality of multicultural projects</li> <li>● N. of events in each category of events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programme data</li> <li>● Qualitative analysis of the programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stop Making (Non)sense</li> <li>● Ode to the Baroque</li> <li>● Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform</li> </ul>
Braga'27 will be implemented in compliance with the budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Budget of cultural programmes</li> <li>● Increased financial contributions obtained from public, private and third-sector partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Budget data</li> </ul>	
Braga'27 will generate environmental, social and economic sustainable values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Environmental, social and economic impacts of Braga'27</li> <li>● N. of activities that incorporate green practices</li> <li>● N. of programmes that explicitly recognise and track the relationship between culture and environmental and economic sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Return on Investment</li> <li>● Social Return on Investment</li> <li>● Environmental impact monitoring</li> <li>● Programme data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Endless</li> <li>● Eating is Wanting</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Objective: Open Braga to Europe by fostering international cooperation as a regular work practice for Braga'27 and the local CCS</b>			
All European countries will take part in the Braga'27 programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Geographical area covered in the programme</li> <li>● Diversity of European themes (in the programme)</li> <li>● N. of activities highlighting European diversity, based on European themes or transnational cooperation</li> <li>● N. of local grassroots initiatives, incl. European partners or intercultural themes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programme data</li> <li>● Audience postcode analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Roman Connection</li> <li>● Europe Day Pilgrimage</li> <li>● Solstice Parade</li> <li>● New Temples</li> <li>● Permanent Temples</li> <li>● Spring Rites</li> <li>● Supracasa</li> </ul>
More Braga citizens will identify as Europeans and belonging to a common yet diverse cultural space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased citizens' awareness and appreciation of the diversity of European cultures</li> <li>● Increased citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space</li> <li>● Increased citizens' perception of being European</li> <li>● Increased knowledge about European cultures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Residents' focus groups</li> <li>● Residents' survey</li> </ul>	
All Braga CCS engaged in the ECoC programme will cooperate internationally as a regular work practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● N. of artists and practitioners involved in international cooperation</li> <li>● N. of local artists and practitioners involved in international projects abroad</li> <li>● N. of new and sustainable international partnerships</li> <li>● Increased success rate of international funding</li> <li>● Increased income through international grant applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programme data</li> <li>● Social network analysis</li> </ul>	
<b>Goal 2: Citizens in Action</b>			
Specific Objective: Improve Braga citizens' health and well-being by broadening the opportunities for cultural participation in place-based cultural programmes			
<b>Operational Objective: Empower all audiences to engage in the decision-making and implementation of the Braga'27 programme</b>			
More Braga citizens will be happier and healthier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased citizens' participation in the programme</li> <li>● Increased levels of subjective well-being and mental health</li> <li>● Increased depth of participation in culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Residents' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● Biomarkers (step count, heartbeat, sweat rate, BMI)</li> <li>● OECD Better Life Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Metamorpho</li> <li>● Variations in Be Major</li> </ul>
A third of Braga's citizens will engage in creative and learning processes leading to the co-creation and co-production of projects and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● N. of events and initiatives encouraging active engagement and providing opportunities for different levels of participation</li> <li>● N. and % of residents co-creating or actively participating in the programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programme data</li> <li>● Residents' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● OECD Better Life Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Take Part</li> <li>● Creators Academy</li> </ul>
Half of the school population will participate in the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased participation of schools in cultural programmes</li> <li>● N. and % of young people actively participating in the programme</li> <li>● N. and % of young people engaged in activities with a European dimension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programme data</li> <li>● Ethnography of co-created activities</li> <li>● Arts-based research</li> <li>● Residents' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● OECD Better Life Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Common Good</li> <li>● Shape of Joy</li> </ul>
At least 50% of less culturally engaged communities will actively participate in Braga'27, paving the way to revitalised, friendlier and culturally active neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased participation of local community groups in cultural programmes</li> <li>● Increased support for multicultural projects (e.g. co-produced by cultural minorities)</li> <li>● Increased citizens' participation and engagement in multicultural projects</li> <li>● N. and profile of active volunteers and level (depth) of their commitment</li> <li>● N. and quality of the programmes involving the not-engaged</li> <li>● Increased motivation for participation in culture</li> <li>● N. of new long-term community initiatives and ongoing grassroots activities in neighbourhoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programme data provided by Braga'27</li> <li>● Residents' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● Volunteers' focus groups</li> <li>● Volunteers' survey</li> <li>● Secondary data analysis</li> <li>● Ethnography of co-created activities</li> <li>● Arts-based research</li> <li>● OECD Better Life Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Neighbourhood on the Road</li> <li>● Balance</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Objective: Nurture diverse forms of cultural participation in Braga's cultural life and Braga'27 through information, inclusion, accessibility and a tailored programme</b>			
80% of Braga citizens will access information and opportunities to participate in Braga'27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased level of awareness of the cultural offer</li> <li>● % of residents attending events</li> <li>● Increased attendance at ECoC events compared to the regular cultural audience of the city</li> <li>● Geographical spread of audiences</li> <li>● N. and quality of the schemes encouraging wider engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Residents' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● Box office and custom relationship management data</li> <li>● Audience postcodes analysis</li> <li>● Secondary data analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New Temples</li> <li>● Permanent Temples</li> </ul>

OUTCOMES/RESULTS	INDICATORS OF IMPACT	METHODS	PROJECT EXAMPLES
<b>Goal 3: Creativity in Action</b>			
Specific Objective: Strengthen Braga's and the Galicia–North Portugal Euroregion creative economy and environment in the areas of sustainability, digital economy, audience development and smart-city through cross-sector and international collaborations			
<b>Operational Objective: Increase Braga's urban and rural quality of life by ensuring opportunities for civic participation in (re)creating cultural infrastructures and public spaces</b>			
Create/transform unused spaces into cultural infrastructures that will adopt a zero waste and zero carbon footprint policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New use of unused spaces, new public space development</li> <li>● Value and social value of investment in cultural infrastructures</li> <li>● Environmental impact of Braga'27 infrastructure developments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Return on Investment</li> <li>● Social and Return on Investment</li> <li>● Environmental impact monitoring</li> <li>● CCS survey and focus group</li> <li>● Secondary data provided by the city</li> <li>● OECD Better Life Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reliquaries</li> <li>● Myth</li> </ul>
Braga will be a culture-driven city, supported by sustainable and inclusive cultural infrastructures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase in the availability of affordable space for cultural production</li> <li>● Increase in the availability of accessible space for cultural production (inclusive and accessible – physically, mentally, socially and financially)</li> <li>● Value of investment in cultural infrastructure and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Return on Investment</li> <li>● Social Return on Investment</li> <li>● CCS survey and focus group</li> <li>● Secondary data provided by the city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Shopyard</li> <li>● Granary</li> </ul>
Braga will have 12 slow-paced urban spaces integrated into a green network, co-designed by residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase urban and rural residents' quality of life</li> <li>● Improve cultural infrastructure capacity, including public spaces for <b>Contemplation</b></li> <li>● Environmental impact of Braga'27 public spaces developments</li> <li>● Increased n. and % of citizens stating a positive relationship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Residents' survey and focus group</li> <li>● Ethnography</li> <li>● Arts-based research</li> <li>● Environmental impact monitoring</li> <li>● OECD Better Life Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Salus, Fountains of Healing</li> <li>● Behind God's Back</li> <li>● Endless</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Objective: Grow cultural entrepreneurship, build capacity, turnover and employment in the regional and transborder CCS to attract and retain talent in Braga</b>			
The city of Braga will increase the cultural budget by 25% until 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased City of Braga expenditure on culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Documents analysis of the City of Braga cultural strategy</li> <li>● Analysis of City budgets – expenditure on culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Braga 2030 Cultural Strategy</li> </ul>
Strengthen artistic capacity and sociodemographic diversity of the CCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● N. and profile of people and organisations participating in capacity-building programmes</li> <li>● Increased gender balance and diversity of the cultural workforce</li> <li>● Quantity, quality and sustainability of the schemes and programmes supporting the professional development of cultural managers and artists</li> <li>● N. of European and international cooperation projects developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CCS survey and focus group</li> <li>● Statistical data at local and regional levels on any increase in GDP, in employment figures</li> <li>● Evaluation of capacity-building programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creators Academy</li> <li>● Square</li> </ul>
CCS will be able to attract/retain more talent in Braga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Raised cultural management standards</li> <li>● Increased n. and % of CCS graduates working in the city</li> <li>● Intangible European heritage (arts and crafts) increased skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CCS survey and focus group</li> <li>● Statistical data at local and regional levels on any increase in GDP, in employment figures</li> <li>● Evaluation of capacity-building programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Art of Caring</li> <li>● Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</li> </ul>
100 local CCS will co-deliver Braga'27, improving capacity in the areas of sustainability, audience development, digital economy and internationalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● N. of cultural professionals trained and using audience engagement methods in everyday work</li> <li>● Created conditions and programmes for the development of CCS</li> <li>● Quality and quantity of post-ECOC and long-term strategic documents and policies prepared</li> <li>● N. of European and international cooperation projects developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CCS survey and focus group</li> <li>● Statistical data at local and regional levels on any increase in GDP, in employment figures</li> <li>● Analysis of Braga's cultural strategy documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creators Academy</li> <li>● Take Part</li> </ul>
Supplementary turnover and employment in the regional and transborder CCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase in GDP and employment in the city's CCS</li> <li>● Value of investment in cultural programmes by CCS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Statistical data provided by public bodies at local, provincial or regional levels on any increase in GDP, in employment figures</li> <li>● Return on Investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</li> <li>● Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Objective: Stimulate experimental processes to create a new model of Galicia–North Portugal Euroregion cooperation and design public policies and instruments to improve governance</b>			
Increased interreligious and intercultural Galicia–North Portugal Euroregion collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sustained multi-sector partnership for cultural governance</li> <li>● N. and profile of projects realised with other sectors</li> <li>● N. and profile of projects realised internationally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Documents analysis of Braga'27, City of Braga and/or other relevant body</li> <li>● Programme data provided by Braga'27</li> <li>● Braga cultural governance (city and CCS) challenge-led hackathons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write the Way</li> <li>● Village of Religions</li> </ul>
50% more local private companies will develop a social responsibility strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cross-sectoral collaborations, including the cultural sector</li> <li>● Value of investment in cultural programmes by the private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Documents analysis of Braga'27, City of Braga and/or other relevant body</li> <li>● Documents analysis of Braga's cultural strategy</li> <li>● Braga cultural governance (city and CCS) challenge-led hackathons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ECOC fundraising strategy</li> <li>● Creators Academy</li> </ul>
The city of Braga will design and implement additional public policies and instruments improving governance and knowledge transfer between the corporate, social, and cultural sectors and academia through culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● N. of civil society bodies working with the City – n. of meetings, n. of organisations participating</li> <li>● Development of the city's cultural strategy (2030-2040) and implementation plans (2020-2030)</li> <li>● N. of decisions the City took in consultation with the cultural and civil society bodies and the increased budget for cultural activities</li> <li>● Strategy for the long-term cultural development of the City, initial and post-ECOC, incl. an Action Plan</li> <li>● N. of civic society reference bodies working with the Cultural department – n. of meetings, n. of organisations participating</li> <li>● N. of documents supporting cross-sectoral collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Documents analysis of Braga'27, municipalities and other relevant body</li> <li>● Documents analysis of Braga's cultural strategy</li> <li>● Braga cultural governance (city and CCS) challenge-led hackathons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Common Good</li> <li>● By Hand, by Heart</li> </ul>

OUTCOMES/RESULTS	INDICATORS OF IMPACT	METHODS	PROJECT EXAMPLES
<b>Goal 4: Place in Action</b>			
Specific Objective: Reshape Braga's profile as a cultural and environmentally sustainable European city striving towards a slower and greener Europe			
<b>Operational Objective: Promote Braga and the Braga'27 programme where nature and urbanity are balanced to improve quality of life and attract slow tourism</b>			
70% Braga and 50% Portuguese citizens and 90% CCS professionals will recognise the Braga'27 programme and its value to the territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awareness of the ECoC among residents</li> <li>● Awareness of the ECoC among CCS professionals</li> <li>● Awareness of Braga'27 among CCS abroad (e.g., embassies, national cultural organisations)</li> <li>● Awareness of the ECoC as a city accolade/contributor to city reputation among residents and CCS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Residents' survey and focus groups</li> <li>● CCS survey and focus group</li> <li>● Visitors' focus groups and survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Marketing &amp; Communication Strategy</li> </ul>
Braga'27 will increase the average stay to 3 nights by offering slow and sustainable tourism experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase in tourist visits (overnight stays at domestic and international level)</li> <li>● Increase visitors' quality of life</li> <li>● Environmental, social and economic impact of Braga'27</li> <li>● Total n. of programmes that explicitly foster the relationship between Braga'27 and sustainable tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Surveys of local, regional and national tourism sector</li> <li>● Statistical data provided by tourism boards and public authorities</li> <li>● Box office and custom relationship management data</li> <li>● Visitors' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● Return on Investment</li> <li>● Social and Return on Investment</li> <li>● Environmental impact monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extremo</li> <li>● Get Lost</li> </ul>
Braga will be a best-practice example of a smart city incorporating co-production and slow media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve Braga's positioning in the Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor (Index15.6) when compared to other similar cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</li> <li>● PI</li> </ul>
<b>Operational Objective: Implement a contemporary approach to Braga's heritage through innovative models of Galicia–North Portugal Euroregion collaboration, circular economy practices and socio-spatial mobility</b>			
Braga will be nationally and internationally recognised for its hospitality (“Open door”), slow media, European values, and as a green city; Improved European visibility based on a sustainable destination management strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National/international recognition of the city as being culturally vibrant and having improved image</li> <li>● N. and profile of people reached via media coverage</li> <li>● Geographical scope of media coverage</li> <li>● Volume and % of positive media coverage of Braga</li> <li>● Volume and % of Braga coverage about Braga'27 and its cultural offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Qualitative analysis of media coverage</li> <li>● Google Analytics</li> <li>● Netnography of online engagement</li> <li>● Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Europe Day Pilgrimage</li> <li>● Reliquaries</li> </ul>
Double the collaborations between Braga, Galicia and Europe in the creative economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● N. of new cross-border collaborations, co-productions and exchanges involving local and international operators</li> <li>● N. of activities highlighting European diversity, based on European themes or based on transnational cooperation</li> <li>● Environmental, social and economic impact of Braga'27</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Return on Investment</li> <li>● Social and Return on Investment</li> <li>● CCS Survey and focus groups: from Braga and the Euroregion Galicia–North Portugal</li> <li>● Statistical data provided by municipalities, national and regional statistical offices, sector bodies, etc</li> <li>● Challenge-led hackathons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ceramic Bodies</li> <li>● Common Shipe</li> <li>● Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</li> </ul>
Braga's cultural heritage sites will be reinterpreted as places for individually and collectively reconnecting with the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased n. of cultural initiatives linking heritage and innovation</li> <li>● Tangible cultural heritage infrastructure investment, heritage re-purposed or reinterpreted</li> <li>● Increased visits to heritage sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Visitors' focus groups and survey</li> <li>● Programme data</li> <li>● Residents' focus groups and survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Footnotes</li> <li>● Pipe Poetics</li> </ul>

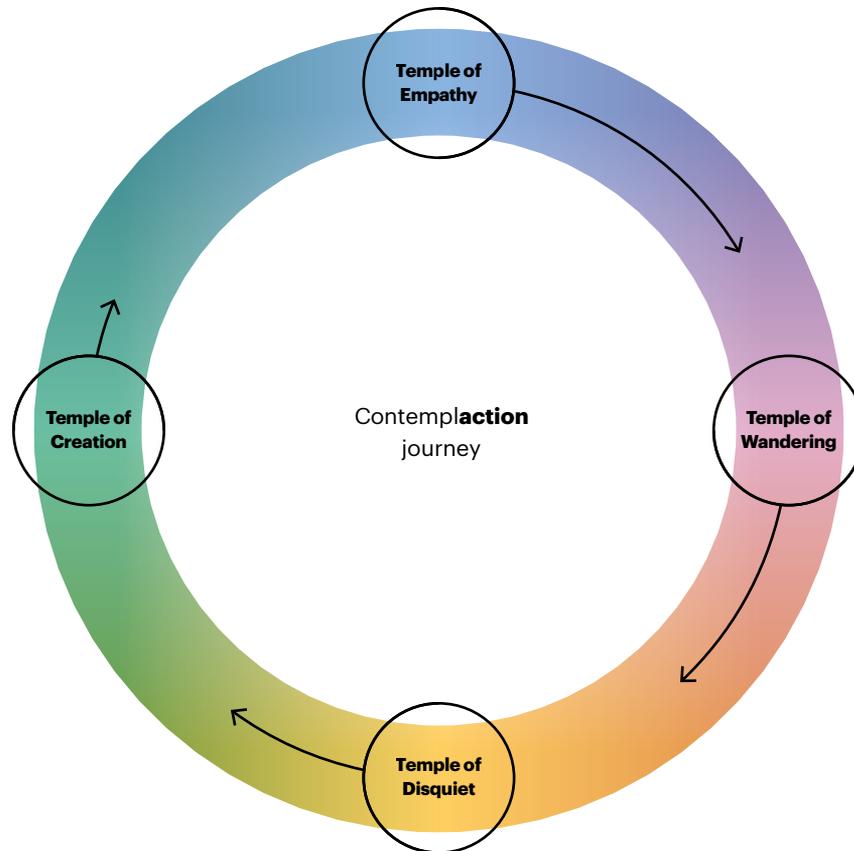
# Cultural and artistic content



## Q5-6 Cultural programme

Through culture, we want to breathe **contemplation** into European societies and communities and bring forward a new consciousness to set in **action** an all-embracing, just and viable Europe. This is our vision for our old city and the old continent with the European Capital of Culture title, and we believe the **time** is now.

To do so, we call on Europe to join us in **Contemplaction**, a sort of spiritual journey with four stepping stones, or as we call them, our four **Contemporary Temples**.



Our European journey begins with exercising our ability to put ourselves in the place of others. That is to say, it starts with the **Temple of Empathy**. Inequality and social exclusion are major concerns for Europe. This programme pillar aims to foster more inclusive and healthier communities in Europe that co-design new ways of living together and caring for one another in an all-encompassing European exchange.

When we put ourselves into someone else's shoes, we usually start seeing the world with different eyes. So, the next level of our journey invites us to reconnect, emotionally and physically, with the place we inhabit. This is our **Temple of Wandering**. We believe culture can play a role in addressing the enormous challenges of climate change and environmental decline. We want to explore old and new routes that connect us to Europe and jointly address our shared urge to embrace more harmonious lifestyles.

After standing in someone else's shoes and reconnecting to our surroundings, we start becoming more aware, more conscious and, impelled by a feeling of restlessness, we

become more willing to take on an active role in our community, our society, in Europe. That is what our **Temple of Disquiet** is about: upholding European democratic values by promoting active citizenship and critical thinking about the current state of affairs and future Europe.

As we move forward in this European journey of **Contemplaction**, we gather the skills and tools to enter the **Temple of Creation**, where we empower all citizens to integrate art and culture into their everyday lives, and artists and cultural operators to take a stand and have a stronger political voice for Europe.

But our **Contemplaction** journey does not end here for it is not ruled by the concept of linear time. Culture and creativity do not have a linear nature. They do not follow a straight line from point A to point B. This journey is of a spiral nature, as our Circular Research model described in Q4 (Monitoring and Evaluation), in which we keep coming back to a new starting point after every milestone. It is a never-ending *virtuous circle* of **Contemplaction**.

This journey is not one we wish to embark on by ourselves. Therefore, our cultural programme was designed in close partnership with European and international artists, communities, peers and partners, as we describe further in the European Dimension chapter (pp. 58 to 69).

This extensive European network helped us lay the foundations of our common **Contemplaction** journey. Together with it and a broad research process, reflecting on European priorities and global current challenges, we have amplified the scope of topics targeted in our cultural programme. War and territorial conflicts, depletion of natural resources, gender violence and rights, democracy and its demons (or ghosts that haunt it), are themes that have been brought into a new light in our cultural programme.

Addressing these themes made us realise that in every spiritual journey we are faced with hardships and turmoil. This is how profound healing operates. Our **Contemplaction** journey was in need of a more suitable haven for this transformation, thus, we redefined our previous Temple of Awakening as a **Temple of Disquiet**. Only by facing our wounds and tensions can we overcome them and truly become an active force of change. In fact, this discomfort and uneasiness is the inspiration source that precedes every act of **Creation**.

A *think to act* strategy is also present in our programme. Each project establishes a balanced relationship between moments of reflection followed by moments of action, thus materialising our *Time for Contemplaction* concept.

To bring all of this into **action**, our cultural programme is comprised of projects with different formats such as exhibitions, concerts, performances, artistic residencies, workshops, conferences, debates, niche events, placemaking interventions, walks, creative labs, festive moments, and others, taking place in natural surroundings, cultural venues, degraded areas, public spaces, peripheral neighbourhoods and parishes. Since audiences are as diverse as a society can be, most of our projects include different activities that provide diverse perspectives and levels of engagement. In fact, as we develop further in the Outreach chapter (pp. 70 to 77), our cultural programme was designed around the principles of **experimentation** in contemporary creation and **community artistic practices**, perceiving the entire city and its surrounding as a fertile ground for European **Contemplaction**.

As mentioned earlier in Q2/Q3, in this second stage of the bidding process, we have amplified our territorial scope of **action** and worked more closely with our neighbouring municipalities and the broader Euroregion Galicia–North Portugal. Though close to our hearts and connected via diverse protocols, our day-to-day cooperation was still very limited, as many cultural operators and communities hardly know and work with each other across the border. Through our cultural programme, we are promoting European synergies for a new model of cooperation in the Euroregion for a reinforced cross-border cultural ecosystem.

The *Time for Contemplaction* cultural programme encompasses 48 projects in four aforementioned programme pillars – Temple of Empathy, Temple of Wandering, Temple of Disquiet and Temple of Creation – and 6 **Celebration** events, which represent high-spirited moments of festivities in our 2027 calendar.

Over 85% of the projects engage the Region, and more than 45% foster cross-border cooperation, bringing partners from Galicia and the North of Portugal together.

All projects have international partners, which have expressly confirmed their interest in cooperating with Braga<sup>27</sup> and the *Time for Contemplaction* cultural programme.

*Be gentle, be proud,  
embrace uncertainty  
and always believe  
that something  
wonderful  
is about to happen.*



# Temple of Empathy



**Where we deepen our respect  
towards each other.**

## Colonial Silences

The Eurocentric narrative that justified colonisation is under deconstruction. Still, some current political movements try to recover colonial ideals, questioning human rights consensus and acting as a setback to present-day Europe. Portugal, like other European countries with colonial history – such as France, Belgium and the Netherlands, our partners in this project – has a muted past concerning its relationship with the former colonies. Five decades after the colonial war, which lasted 13 years (1961-74), about 120,000 Portuguese war veterans (most of them, men that served under compulsory military enlistment) still suffer from post-traumatic stress. About 700 men from Braga were drafted to the war and 85 were killed. Facing the urgency of decolonising knowledge and History from a European perspective about these wars, this documentary project seeks to address this period of individual and collective trauma via research, theatre performances, visual arts and film. It starts by researching memories and narratives, photographs and videos, at risk of loss due to the advanced ages of former soldiers. The project will be developed with war veterans from Braga, but also from Guinea-Bissau and Angola, voicing silenced narratives and memories. The team includes artists from three countries involved in the conflict, such as Nuno Cardoso (PT), João Branco (CV) and José Mena Abrantes (AO), and artists/collectives with experience in approaching this theme in relation to other European and African countries, such as Dorcy Rugamba (FR/RW) and H401 – Herengracht 401 Foundation (NL). The research, beginning in 2025, will lead to an exhibition and three theatre performances, involving local partners, artistic collectives and associations of war veterans from each country. In 2027, the performances and the exhibition will travel between these countries, contributing to a more profound questioning of colonisation/decolonisation. Finally, a documentary film, based on the intersections between different perspectives of the same war, directed by Leonor Teles (PT), will premiere in 2027. This legacy will allow us to question both the present, as a war takes place currently in Ukraine and other locations worldwide, and the future. The profuse artworks produced by this project are scheduled for circulation at festivals such as Lift (UK), Africa Moment Festival (ES), Mindelact Festival (CV), and Africa Montpellier (FR) in 2028. We will also challenge France and Belgium ECoC 2028 and 2030 to question their colonial past and tell this story further.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** Medical School and School of Psychology University of Minho; Braga District Archive; Braga Public Library; 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment of the Portuguese Army; photography festival Encontros da Imagem **Regional partners** theatre director Nuno Cardoso (Porto) **National partners** APVG – Portuguese War Veterans Association; filmmaker Leonor Teles **International partners** ANDA – Angolan Handicap National Association (AO); Guinea-Bissau Association of the disabled of the Armed Forces (GW); Centre for the Transdisciplinary Arts of Bissau (GW); Mindelact Cultural and Artistic Association (CV); theatre company Elinga Teatro (AO); artist Dorcy Rugamba (FR/RW); Herengracht 401 Foundation – Research, Art, Dialogue (NL); Sesc São Paulo (BR); LIFT – London’s international festival of theatre (UK); Transform Festival (UK); Africa Moment Festival (ES); Africa Montpellier Festival/Montpellier 2028 (FR)

## Reliquaries

In Medieval Europe, the cult of relics played a significant role in religious devotion and identity. These objects were precious commodities used not only for spiritual purposes but for fostering political affiliations, propaganda and even to wield military power. What European stories can our private objects of devotion tell today? This travelling exhibition gathers a series of contemporary objects and personal stories of migrants (focusing on Brazilian and African citizens now living in Braga), multicultural communities and LGBTQIA+ groups, in Braga and throughout Europe. In 2024, we will search for artefacts that tell us European stories, in an emotional journey in collaboration with anthropology research studio Alhures (PT) and local organisations such as Braga Queer Archive. Then, this archive will be the object of a co-curatorial process with Mariana Pestana (PT) and Garance-Alves (FR), discovering links between these findings and intersecting them with stories and objects from other ECoCs. This international exchange programme will amplify individual narratives in search of connections that can underline common elements that will bring us closer together as Europeans. In 2026, *Reliquaries* will expand to Braga’s public space. An exhibition created during this process will occupy eight vacant kiosks in different neighbourhoods of the city. The kiosks operate as contemporary reliquaries to expose Braga’s underground, unknown or less visible multicultural archives. The kiosk-reliquaries will open up in 2027, adding up a programme of small concerts, guided tours and storytelling sessions, co-created with citizens living in its’ surroundings, collaborating with artist Pedra no Rim (PT), and indigenous Brazilian activist Ellen Lima (BR). One could say that subverting reliquaries’ location and content in Braga might open a broader debate about the role of personal local archives in relation to collective institutional memory and contemporary forgetfulness in Europe.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 **Curatorship** Space Transcribers and Matilde Seabra **Local partners** religious art museum Palácio do Raio – Centro Interpretativo Memórias da Misericórdia de Braga; Students Association University of Minho; newspaper Correio do Minho; project Quotidiano de uma Negra (The daily life of a black woman) by Mafalda Fernandes; project Braga Queer Archive **Regional partners** anthropology research studio Alhures (Porto and Minho Region); Pedra no Rim atelier by artists Fabrizio Matos and Israel Pimenta (Porto) **National partners** curator Mariana Pestana **International partners** NOWY ZŁOTY/Labyrinth Gallery (PL); Magdalena Kreis (PL); Yuriy Biley (UA); Plovdiv 2019 (BG); Novi Sad 2022 (RS); Esch2022 (LU); Klub Solitaer e. V./Chemnitz2025 (DE); Garance-Alves/ Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR)

## Variations in Be Major

#community open call

Is the Old Continent getting old? Europeans are living longer than ever before. The number of elderly people in the EU is expanding, a pattern that will last for the next decades. In Portugal, in the next 50 years, there will be a ratio of 300 elderly people per 100 young people. *Variations in Be Major* is a musical project focused on the senior community. Through collecting and sharing the popular European intangible heritage contained in the memories of citizens from this age group, we stimulate mental health, well-being, creativity and the pleasure of doing things as a community. Music is capable of evoking the strongest memories in all of us. It can also trigger other chemical reactions in the brain, stimulating positive feelings. The daily life and memories of this group of senior citizens will be the object of artistic work, from the most anachronistic to universal themes, as well as participants' wishes and anxieties. *Variations in Be Major* has a gradual approach, always based on empathy and familiarity with sound. Aiming to attract participants, from 2025 onwards, artists will visit elderly caring facilities, promoting small concerts and open music sessions in public spaces in Braga. Regularity in this relationship and openness in communication is key to capturing institutions and seniors with less access to regular musical practices. Frequent workshops and small concerts, music listening sessions and stimulation of musical memory will be the motto to expand the project, gradually enlarging the number of participants, in order to create a more diverse and stable group throughout 2026. Partnerships with musical projects such as the documentary project *A Música Portuguesa a Gostar dela Própria* (PT), as well as cooperation with *Strokestra* (UK) and *Young@heart* (US), will provide a diversity of approaches and stimuli to the work. The main legacy will be a choir, made up of elderly people, which is also open to the participation and collaboration of all citizens, operating in nursing homes and public spaces on a weekly basis. This unique choir will present itself in individual performances during 2027, but will also co-create with other artists and collectives, such as *NYX-Electronic Drone Choir* (UK), *Wassyl Abdoun's "Phonetics"* (FR) or *Vasco Ribeiro Casais* (PT), in multimedia, installation, video, electronics or rock.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Promoters** Cidália and Marlene Fernandes **Mentorship** Ricardo Baptista **Local partners** classical music conservatories Conservatório Bomfim and Conservatório de Música Calouste Gulbenkian; Music Department University of Minho **National partners** senior citizens rock music project *A Voz do Rock*; documentary project *A Música Portuguesa a Gostar dela Própria*; music association SAMP – Sociedade Artística Musical de Pousos; performer and composer Vasco Ribeiro Casais **International partners** *Strokestra* (UK); *Young@heart* (US); *NYX – Electronic Drone Choir* (UK); *Ars Electronica* (AT); *Wassyl Abdoun and the Phonetics project/ Périféeries Saint-Denis 2028* (FR); *Reims 2028* (FR)

## Balance – European Social Circus

*Balance Festival* is about the transformative power of Circus for human development, social change and placemaking. In 2027, this festival will be the meeting point in Europe for youth and social circus schools, artists, companies, researchers and placemakers. Social circus is more than teaching circus techniques or mere entertainment: it is a tool for developing interpersonal skills, overcoming trauma and learning to take responsibility – individually and collectively. *Balance* wagers on this transformative power, within a long-range process. In 2025 and 2026, a training programme, aimed at young people from socially unstable backgrounds from Braga, Latvia and Serbia takes place, connecting local, regional, national and European institutions, such as the National Institute for Circus Arts (PT), Riga Cirks (LV) and CircoBalkana (RS/HR). Youngsters and children of Braga will collaborate with artists from *Cie Erva Daninha* (PT) and *Cirkus Cirkör* (SE), thinking, practising and creating an inclusive performance that intersects individual and community concerns. This performance will be the opening act of the international *Balance Festival* in 2027 and later the young circus artists will travel through Europe with their show. The audience-driven programme of the Festival takes place for one week in 2027. It occupies public spaces in Braga, in areas with many residents but underused squares, such as Fontainhas and Arsenalistas, which will have new social and cultural functions. The Festival explores the potential of Circus to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces at the heart of European communities, with the participation of permanent and temporary citizens. It will be co-developed with European festival partners such as *Mini Art* (BG) or *Peculiar Families* (HR).

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Rodrigo Malvar **Local partners** Equilibrium Social Circus; Team Braga Parkour; social institution Casa do Professor **Regional partners** circus festivals Trengo (Porto) and Vaudeville Rendez-Vous (Vila Nova de Famalicão, Braga, Barcelos and Guimarães); school INAC – National Institution for the Circus Arts (Vila Nova de Famalicão); Coliseu do Porto Christmas Circus Organising Committee; SALTO Circus School (Maia); circus companies Erva Daninha (Porto), Teatro Didascália (Vila Nova de Famalicão) and Radar 360 (Matosinhos) **National partners** Chapatô-Trampolim Circus School; Platform Outdoor Arts Portugal (by Bússola) **International partners** Galway Community Circus (IE); Cirkus Syd (SE); Riga Cirks (LV); CirkoRama (HR); CircoBalkana (RS/HR); Peculiar Families Festival (HR); Mini Art Festival (BG); CircoStrada – European Network for Circus and Street Arts (FR); Circus Next (FR); Caravan International Youth and Social Circus Network (BE); FEDEC – European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (BE); Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018-2028 (NL); Cirkus Cirkör and Malmö University/Malmö 2029 (SE)

## Convivial Hoods

#community open call #cross-border cooperation

Like many urban centres in Europe, Braga has intensely grown during the last decades. The city's urban landscape is marked by high-density residential areas with few public spaces for conviviality, and cultural and civic participation. Inspired by the New European Bauhaus, this super-project, which joins several proposals from the community open call, invites Braga citizens and European artists to collectively reinvent and co-design public spaces in such areas of the city. As a symbol of this transformation, "square one" will be the *Tower of Europe*, a peculiar name by which a residential building in one of the city's most densely populated and concrete-dominated areas is known. In 2023, citizens of Braga will identify spaces with potential for change, including in the city's peripheral areas. Residents will be invited, from 2024 onwards, to participate in co-creation workshops with collectives of European architects, landscapers, designers, researchers, cultural mediators and artists – Collectif Etc (FR) and Observatorium (NL) – to find out about their desires and wishes for a sustainable and liveable neighbourhood. *Convivial Hoods* will also operate as decentralised stages to welcome the ECoC programme and other site-specific projects. In 2027, these spaces will be activated with community gardening, street art (Cinta Vidal, ES) and interactive outdoor installations (Iza Rutkowska, PL), traditional percussion (Equipa Espiral, PT, and Municipality of Lugo, ES), cinema sessions (Lucky Star and Aurélio da Paz dos Reis film clubs, PT), performances (Nico Angiuli, IT), among others. This project will be previously discussed and co-curated with the community, in collaboration with AADK (ES), Mexe (PT) and Mistaker Maker (PT), in exchange with other ECoC cities, such as Kaunas 2022 project *We, the People*, and the Creative Europe project on placemaking led by Oulu 2026 (FI).

**Timeframe** 2023-27 **Promoters** Equipa Espiral – Humanitarian, Cultural and Recreational Association of Braga; Cultural Studies Students Association University of Minho; architect Marta Sofia Silva **Mentorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** social housing Municipal Department – BragaHabit; film clubs Lucky Star and Aurélio da Paz dos Reis; Observatory of Policies on Communication and Culture (POLObs) University of Minho; Circuito – Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts Educational Service **Euroregional partners** Design School Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave (Barcelos); School of Architecture, Art and Design University of Minho (Guimarães); Lab2PT – Landscape, Heritage and Territory Laboratory (Guimarães); Municipality of Lugo (ES); MEXE – International Meeting of Art and Community (Porto); Centre for Educational Research and Intervention University of Porto **National partners** architecture and art collective Warehouse Collective; platform for artistic intervention Mistaker Maker **International partners** Iza Rutkowska (PL); Observatorium (NL); studio of landscape architecture Tajuruum (EE); Arne Quinze (BE); Cinta Vidal (ES); Nico Angiuli (IT); Collectif Etc (FR); David Adjaye (TZ); Concomitentes (ES); AADK Spain Research & Contemporary Creation (ES); *We, the People*/Kaunas 2022 (LT); School of Arts and Craft/Bad Ischl-Salzkammergut 2024 (AT); Oulu 2026 (FI); Kul.turista/Budějovice 2028 (CZ)

## Metamorpho

The struggle for equal rights for women and sexual minorities will not come to an end for long and, as recent developments show, these rights cannot even be taken for granted in today's Europe. This project focuses on creating new narratives to encourage women and queer people to raise their social and political voices. *Metamorpho* is a sensory intelligence and movement lab. It addresses stress disorder as well as mental and body trauma of survivors of gender-based violence and sex discrimination. More than 600 women were murdered by an intimate partner or a family member in Europe in 2018, official reports estimate. Braga's inhabitants also have their share of trauma – the city is the third in Portugal (after Lisbon and Porto) with the highest number of domestic violence cases. European authorities also recognise that, during the Covid-19 pandemic, restrictions on mobility and increased isolation exposed women and sexual minorities to a higher risk of violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. Starting in 2025, international performance artists, art therapists and survivors of gender-based violence will meet weekly for exploratory laboratories in natural and rural surroundings. This work will be further developed during our European artist in residency programme at the School of Disobedience Healing Center (HG). This process will lead to four co-creative performative laboratories with European performance artists and choreographers like Javier Martin (ES), Maria Ines Villasmil (NL), Kristine Brīniņa (LV), and Miguel Bonneville (PT) that result in a series of performance pieces. They will be presented throughout 2027 as part of the *Salus, Fountains of Healing* project (p. 33). This work, co-curated by local collective Banquete and Gray Box (FR), brings together local and European NGOs working on gender and sexual minorities' rights, such as UMAR and Braga Out of the Closet, and research institutions, ensuring a scientific output for the project. i2ADS/Fine Arts School of Porto will reflect on the whole process from an artistic research perspective, and the Medical School of the University of Minho will study its impact on the health and well-being of participants.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Promoter** Arte Total **Local partners** dance and performance collective Banquete; women's NGO UMAR; NGO Braga Out of the Closet; Medical School University of Minho **Regional partners** i2ADS – Fine Arts School of Porto **National partners** artists Francisco Camacho – EIRA; Miguel Bonneville – Teatro do Silêncio **International partners** School of Disobedience: Healing Centre (HU); Aerowaves – Dance across Europe (IE); Gray Box Company (FR); M&N Dance Company (SL); artists Javier Martin (ES), Maria Ines Villasmil (NL) and Kristine Brīniņa (LV); Artpolis – Art and Community Centre & FemArt Festival (XK); Liepāja 2027 (LV); Studio of Arts Therapy – University of South Bohemia/Budějovice 2028 (CZ); Reims 2028 (FR)



# The Roots Club

#community open call #cross-border cooperation #legacy

*The Roots Club* reflects on the European musical heritage through the lens of the music from Braga, Minho region and neighbouring Galicia (ES). Searching for echoes between Braga, the region and the world's musical tradition, this large-scale project explores the links between *cavaquinho* and its declinations in Cape Verde, Brazil and Hawaii, between the *braguesa*, other wire-stringed guitars and the classical guitar; as well as among European female polyphonic singing. This programme aims to study the deep musical traditions of Braga and the Euroregion in order to understand its impact on European and world musical traditions while recording, documenting and thinking about this entire sector. It will reflect on the thriving instrument-building industry and the ecosystem of musicians in the region, later proposing to intervene extensively in training agents, musicians and schools and sharing this knowledge and projects internationally. *The Roots Club* has four strategic intervention axes:

**Construction** Braga has a strong network of traditional instrument builders – the largest stringed instruments factory in Europe, a set of small-scale luthiers with enormous quality and a remarkable group of percussion manufacturers. This axis' goal is to create a "Constructors Club", open to everyone and strongly rooted in international exchange with experts and peers. It will also promote technical masterclasses, import/export events, research and debate and a Design Lab, as well as a network of relationships with partners such as the Municipal School of Arts and Crafts – EMAO (Vigo/ES).

**Mediation and Education** This project intends to put traditional music in the centre of Braga's educational ecosystem, by sharing texts, stories, songs and slang of oral tradition, as well as the teaching of *cavaquinho* or traditional bass drum (*bombo*) in schools and in social intervention projects. An exchange programme with music education for socially disadvantaged children project from Brno Creative City of Music – On Stage (CZ) will enrich the experience. A collaboration with ETRAD – Vigo Municipal School of Folk and Traditional Music (ES) will also allow the creation of chordophone and percussion orchestras, international internships and exchange initiatives with musical communities from Europe, Brazil and Africa, including an e-learning project. In addition, training will be provided to education and music professionals, in partnerships with music conservatories from Galicia (Santiago de Compostela and Vigo), the University of Miskolc (HU) and ESMAE – Higher Education School of Music and Performing Arts (PT). A collaborative process with Xurxo Fernandes / Pandeireteiras Sen Fronteiros (Galicia, ES), based on youngsters' exchange between Braga and Galicia, will explore social inclusion through music instruments and crafts on both sides of the border.

**Shows/Festivals** To convey the idea of pollination and intersection, a regular and diverse set of musical showcases will happen in Braga, from traditional music to dance festivals, featuring concerts in informal public spaces, as well as medium and large-scale performances co-created by recognised artists and local musicians. An international festival of guitars and other chordophones addresses guitars' legacy, from mandolin to *braguesa* and *cavaquinho*, celebrating confluence and encounter, co-curated by International Guitar Festival Iserlohn (DE) and the "Andrés Segovia" International Classical Guitar Contest (ES). These partners also provide a theoretical grounding for the kind of aesthetic, musical and social crossings this project proposes.

**Documentation** *The Roots Club* will integrate a digital archive that brings together all the information collected, recorded and documented during this large-scale programme. It will contribute to the development of new lines of scientific research, with CESEM – Centre for the Study of Sociology and Musical Aesthetics (PT) as a partner. In cooperation with the University of Minho, this programme will also develop and disseminate knowledge about construction techniques, repertoire, and the material and immaterial heritage of this region and Europe alike.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Promoters and local partners** plucked strings orchestras Traditional Chordophones of Braga and Cavaquinhos Children Orchestra; Festivals NOROESTE, Festival of Guitar and other Chordophones and Festival and International Internship of Plucked Strings of Braga; cultural associations Arca de Sons, Terreiro dos Sons and AMTM – Project'arte na tradição; social institution Centro de Solidariedade de Braga Projecto Homem; classical music conservatories Conservatório Bomfim and Conservatório de Música Calouste Gulbenkian **Mentorship** Ricardo Baptista **Euroregional partners** Professional Conservatory of Music of Santiago de Compostela (ES); Higher Conservatory of Music of Vigo (ES); ESMAE – Higher Education School of Music and Performing Arts (Porto); EMAO – Municipal School of Arts and Crafts (Vigo/ES); ETRAD – Vigo Municipal School of Folk and Traditional Music (ES); artist Xurxo Fernandes/ Pan Sen Fron – Pandeireteiras Sen Fronteiros (A Coruña/ES) **National partners** CESEM – Centre for the Study of Sociology and Musical Aesthetics Nova University of Lisbon **International partners** University of Miskolc (HU); International Guitar Festival Iserlohn (DE); Andrés Segovia International Classical Guitar Contest (ES); On Stage: Music Education for Socially Disadvantaged Children/Brno 2028 (CZ)

## Neighbourhood on the Road

A literary bus hits the streets of Braga in 2024 to hear, read and write the stories of the Roma community living in different peripheral neighbourhoods of the city. *Neighbourhood on The Road* is a travelling library, a space for active democracy and social and cultural empowerment, highlighting European values of cultural diversity and intergenerational learning through the preservation of oral memories. Historically excluded from formal education, oral tradition is key to knowing and sharing the stories and memories of Roma communities. Arguably, the vastest ethnic minority in Europe, with more than 10 million citizens, Roma also have a solid historical presence in Braga. Between 2024 and 2026, in monthly meetings taking place in public spaces of three neighbourhoods of the city, this project will record the life stories and memories of citizens from these communities, working together with Museu da Pessoa (BR). The actual bus will be co-developed by product design students from the University of Minho, and the mobile libraries specialists Nave Voadora (PT) and Asociación de Profesionales de Bibliotecas Móviles (ES). Approaching 2027, the bus will be increasingly filled with writings and oral storytelling recordings from the three neighbourhoods' communities. It will then travel to other neighbourhoods of the city, schools and public spaces in the rural areas of Braga, promoting reading sessions for children and the elderly in order to discover and understand the beauty of the diversity of Roma culture. The collected stories will also be available digitally, allowing us to exchange with other neighbourhoods from ECoCs Plovdiv 2019 (BG) and Timișoara 2023 (RO), as well as The Roma Information and Knowledge Center of Malmö and its first Roma Library (SE), in the form of digital *pen friends*. In 2027, these friends, as well as the Federation of European Storytelling, are invited to participate in Braga's Book Fair opening in the form of a travelling party. This is Braga's 27th gift to Romania and Bulgaria for their 20th anniversary of joining the EU in 2027.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 **Curatorship** Léa Prisca Lopez and Andreia Brites **Local partners** social housing Municipal Department – BragaHabit; Braga Book Fair; Municipal Library Lúcio Craveiro da Silva **Regional partners** School of Architecture, Art and Design University of Minho (Guimarães) **National partners** Mobile library of the Municipality of Proença-a-Nova; DGLAB – Directorate-General for Books, Archives and Libraries; Nave Voadora – Directory about travelling libraries in Portugal **International partners** FEST – Federation for European Storytelling (BE); ACLEBIM – Professional Association Mobile Libraries of Spain (ES); museum Museu da Pessoa (BR); Plovdiv 2019 (BG); Timișoara 2023 (RO); Stories from Caravan & Give Us a Change!/Broumov 2028 (CZ); RIKC – The Roma Information and Knowledge Center and Malmö Roma Library/Malmö 2029 (SE)

## Cinemind

### #community open call

This project captures the sensitive view that European cinema portrays of humanity's most complex themes, generating a sense of empathy and community understanding. *Cinemind* comes from the community open call of the first phase of the bidding process and is a cycle of social cinema dedicated to mental health, taking place in the neighbourhoods of Braga. In partnership with Go Mental! International Film Festival Berlin (DE) and MENTAL – Festival of Mental Health, Cinema, Arts and Information (PT), two cinema forums will take place each month, starting in 2026. A series of round tables will gather social institutions, therapists, educators and social researchers together with international artists, district managers and other neighbourhood associations, pondering our role as a society in addressing mental illness. In parallel, a capacity-building programme, aimed at social and mental health professionals from throughout Europe, will be developed to introduce innovative artistic practices in this field, in partnership with Art4More Mental Health & Arts Festival (GR) and studio and *art brut* gallery Manicómió (PT). Throughout 2026, a documentary film on mental health issues associated with artists' creative processes will be produced and premiered in 2027 on World Mental Health Day (10 October) in partnership with Mental Health Awareness Week – Inclusive Cinema (UK). Approaching themes such as anxiety, depression, and trauma, *Cinemind* will be the meeting point between health, arts professionals and people who struggle with mental illness.

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Promoters** film production company Ficus Films; social institution Centro de Solidariedade de Braga Projecto Homem **Local partners** mental health institution Casa de Saúde do Bom Jesus **Regional partners** Oliva Art Centre (São João da Madeira); ECoC Guimarães 2012 **National partners** studio and art brut gallery Manicómió; MENTAL – Festival of Mental Health, Cinema, Arts and Information **International partners** Go Mental! International Film Festival Berlin (DE); Mental Health Awareness Week – Inclusive Cinema (UK); Art4More Mental Health & Arts Festival (GR)

## Multitudes

#community open call #legacy

According to the World Health Organisation, in the EU, six to ten out of every 100 people live with a disability, which makes 135 million people in total. With population ageing and the rising prevalence of noncommunicable illnesses, this number is set to increase in the future. In Portugal, about 17,5% of the population live with some form of disability. This project aims to create an inclusive artistic company in Braga, bringing together disabled and non-disabled people of all ages, including people with mental illness and various disabilities. This new company will address inclusion in a broader perspective, through practices that explore sound, movement and interpretation, mediated by a group of contemporary artists in residence, such as António Quiles (ES), Gregory Darcy (FR) and Katarzyna Żeglicka (PL). *Multitudes* will provide a place for creation and challenging preconceived ideas of what an artistic company should be and of the limitations of interpreters. Workshops in dance, theatre and music, in collaboration with partners such as Arts & Disability by The British Council (UK) and inclusive performing arts companies like Vertigo Power of Balance (IL), Moomsteatern (SE) and MOPS\_DanceSyndrome Contemporary Dance School & Company (CH), will result in public performances with inclusive access for both audience and participants. We also intend to host the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Conference on Disability Studies, Arts, and Education and thus exchange future practices with the international community.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Promoters** Musa artistic association **Local partners** Medical School University of Minho; mental health institutions Casa de Saúde do Bom Jesus, Centro Novais e Sousa and Braga Cerebral Palsy Association; school cluster Agrupamento de Escolas Dona Maria II; local nursing homes Centro Cultural de Santo Adrião, Centro Social Paroquial de Sobreposta and Instituto Monsenhor Airoso; local occupational activities centre CERCI Braga **Regional partners** regional occupational activities centres Valoriza and Associação de Paralisia Cerebral (Amares), APACI (Barcelos), APPACDM (Vila Verde and Esposende) and Centro Social de Souto (Terras de Bouro) **National partners** theatre company Terra Amarela; organisation for cultural accessibility Acesso Cultura; INET-MD Institute of Ethnomusicology – Centre for Studies in Music and Dance Faculty of Human Kinetics University of Lisbon **International partners** Arts & Disability – British Council (UK); artists António Quiles (ES), Gregory Darcy (FR) and Katarzyna Żeglicka (PL); MeetShareDance (ES); MOPS\_DanceSyndrome Contemporary Dance School & Company (CH); Theama (GR); Vertigo Power of Balance (IL); ShareMusic & Performing Arts (SE); Dance Company Spin (SE); Moomsteatern/Malmö 2029 (SE)

## Take Part

Civic and political participation in Europe is daily undermined by populist narratives, social apathy and other societal challenges, weakening representative democracies. Braga finds itself exactly in this situation. This is why community artistic participation is one of the transversal principles of Braga<sup>27</sup>. Backed by the profound premise of culture's role in democracy, *Take Part* will grow into a European reference festival for showcasing and exchanging on participatory art. Starting from 2023, and after five annual editions, the festival intends to develop, in 2027, a European network of participatory and community artistic practices, focused on joint reflection, artistic residencies, co-productions, and circulation of works. Taking participatory formats also to the neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city, the three-day festival takes place in underused multifunctional facilities in rural and peri-urban parishes of Braga. *Take Part* builds up until 2027 when a one-week special edition takes place in the spaces developed within *Convivial Hoods* (p. 21) and *Granary* (p. 32) projects. The festival programme has two pillars: Contemplation (research, conferences and podcasts), combining face-to-face and digital meetings; and Action (theatre, dance, music, performance and visual arts). Co-developed by artists and researchers selected by an international open call, the programme also features proposals from local communities and European partner festivals and artists, such as the International Community Arts Festival (NL), Catalonia Community Arts Festival (ES), Graeme Pulleyn (UK/PT) and EC Ma Ndryshe, Kosovan NGO winner of the European Heritage Awards 2022. *Take Part* also works as a real context training set for *Creators Academy* (p. 43), as well as a EU platform for scientific and academic exchange on participatory art, backed up by the Universities of Porto and Manchester (UK), as well as participatory art specialist Eugene van Erven (NL).

**Timeframe** 2023-27 **Curatorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** civic festival Festival Política – Braga; women's NGO UMAR; artistic platform Plataforma do Pandemónio; social institution Centro de Solidariedade de Braga Projecto Homem **Regional partners** Theatre degree and Visual Arts degree University of Minho; CIIE – University of Porto; MEXE – International Meeting of Art and Community (Porto) **National partners** organisation for cultural accessibility Acesso Cultura; Futurama – Cultural and Artistic Ecosystem of Baixo Alentejo **International partners** ICAF – International Community Arts Festival (NL); FAACCC – Catalonia Community Arts Festival (ES); Transform Festival (UK); International Festival of Performing Arts of Bahia (BR); EC Ma Ndryshe (XK); theatre director Graeme Pulleyn (UK/PT); Community Theater Network of Argentina (AR); Manchester University (UK); jubilee professor Eugene van Erven University of Utrecht (NL); Leuven 2030 (BE)

# Temple of Wandering



**Where we reconnect our bodies and minds  
to our surroundings.**

## Write the Way

#cross-border cooperation #legacy

*Write the Way* is an artistic walking lab focused on literature, performance and architecture installations, exploring a non-imposing relationship between creative practices and landscape. More than ten routes of the Ways of Saint James connect all of Europe and the Southern Mediterranean coast, all pointing to Santiago de Compostela (ECoC 2000) as the final destination. Certified as the first European Culture Route by the Council of Europe, it passes through former ECoCs, such as Mons 2015 (BE), Wrocław 2016 (PL), Aarhus 2017 (DK), Leeuwarden 2018 (NL), and candidate cities like Broumov 2028 (CZ), Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR) and Braga'27. Inspired by the challenges pilgrims have to overcome on the Ways of Saint James, this project highlights the creative potential of walking as a tool for tuning both body and mind for contemplation and universal self-knowledge. During 2025 and 2026, ten writers from ECoC cities linked by the Ways of Saint James will sign up for a European writing residency on the go. Each of them will capture the experience in a notebook and write a literary text in a unique place, pinning its geo coordinates. In 2027, these locations will be the set for architectural installations curated by Derrière le Hublot (FR) and co-designed by Zuloark (ES) and the Faculty of Arts and Architecture of Liberec 2028. These installations, built in dialogue with the landscape, will offer **Contemplation** shelters along the Ways of Saint James, as a legacy of this project. In parallel, the authors' individual experiences will serve as an inspiration for a European journey from Braga to Santiago to a transdisciplinary group of artists – writer Afonso Cruz (PT), dancer and creator Alejandra Balboa (Galicia, ES) and the theatre company Teatro do Frio (PT). Along the way, they will create a real-time performance to premiere upon arrival in Santiago. In 2027, the project will turn into a publication edited by Stolen Books (PT) – a *Notebook of the Walker*. This “Notebook” will be presented at the Braga Book Fair together with the performance premiered in Santiago the Compostela. The book will be a gift to pilgrims on the Way of Saint James in partnership with local and international organisations – Associação Espaço Jacobeus, the Agence des Chemins de Compostelle (FR) and the European Federation of St James Way.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Léa Prisca Lopez, Andreia Brites and Hugo Cruz **Local partners** Municipal Library Lúcio Craveiro da Silva; therapeutic project Walk to Believe; catholic association Espaço Jacobeus **Euroregional partners** Alejandra Balboa / Manu Lago – Galicia Danza Contemporánea (ES); supra-municipal entity Galicia and North of Portugal Eixo Atlântico do Noroeste Peninsular (PT/ES); literary festival Correntes d'Escritas (Póvoa de Varzim); theatre company Teatro do Frio (Porto) **National partners** Travel Literature Festival – LeV; book publisher Stolen Books **International partners** French Section of the Compostela Pilgrim Ways Agency (FR); Derrière le Hublot (FR); Zuloark (ES); rurAllure/Horizon 2020 Network of Cultural Pilgrimage Paths (EU); Linz 2009 (AT); Maribor 2012 (SI); Košice 2013 (SK); Marseille 2013 (FR); Mons 2015 (BE); Wrocław 2016 (PL); Donostia-San Sebastián 2016 (ES); Aarhus 2017 (DK); Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018-2028 (NL); Walking Meditations/Broumov 2028 (CZ); Faculty of Arts and Architecture of Liberec/Liberec 2028 (CZ); Brno 2028 (CZ); Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR) **Potential partner** European Federation of St James Way (FR)

## Connecting Commutes

On average, European workers spend 25 minutes commuting every day, which puts mobility policies at the centre of people's daily lives. The environmental challenges we face also pose major concerns, making the need for more efficient and environmentally fit transportation systems more urgent than ever. *Connecting Commutes* is a set of sound-based artistic objects, including audio routes specifically designed for public transport. These spiritual journeys start from the places and points of reference these vehicles pass by, raising awareness about mobility, changes in the landscape, human behaviour and our daily routines. In 2025, a preliminary reflection programme will be co-developed by Portuguese and European artistic partners, including researchers from the Communication and Society Research Centre of the University of Minho (PT) and PUTSPACE European research consortium. The artistic programme is to be developed between 2025 and 2026, favouring population engagement and international exchange. It will be designed through an artists-in-residence programme and include audio-routes and audio-walks, a sound documentary, interactive geo-walks, soundscape and field recordings by artists such as Sofia Saldanha and Binaural Nodar – Soundscapes from the fringes (PT). *Connecting Commutes* will also foster exchanges with other ECoCs, by welcoming and presenting works by Mobile Radio (Esch2022), Sound Days (Liepāja 2027) and MOTA – Museum of Transitory Art (SI). In 2027, a community radio will be set up in cooperation with Encontrarte Amares Biennial (PT), artists in residence from *Musique pour L'imaginaire* (Clermont-Ferrand 2028) and students from the Communication and Media department of the University of Minho.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Promoters** Audire – Saving Sonic Based Memories **Local partners** Communication and Society Research Centre (CECS) University of Minho; radio station RUM – Rádio Universitária do Minho; Braga bus transportation system TUB; artist Sofia Saldanha **Regional partners** Sonoscopia – Platform for Experimental Music (Porto); pluridisciplinary artistic company Visões Úteis (Porto); Encontrarte Amares Biennial **National partners** sound art festival Lisboa Soa; cultural association Binaural Nodar; CP – Trains of Portugal **International partners** SoCCoS – Residency Network for Music, Sound and Culture (EU); Sound Days (LV); MOTA – Museum of Transitory Art (SI); PUTSPACE – Public Transport as Public Space in European Cities (DE/PL); Mobile Radio/ Esch2022 (LU); *Musique pour L'imaginaire* and Metaverse/Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR); Public Art Transport/Liberec 2028 (CZ)

## Decolonising Nature

This project's aim is to question and tackle the phenomenon of urban sprawl and the increasing demand for land in and around cities and their environmental, social and economic impacts on the cities and countryside across Europe. It brings together international activists, ecologists, artists and designers, such as SUPERFLEX (DK) and Rirkrit Tiravanija (AR/US), to analyse and intervene in Braga's urban sprawl territory through discussions and creative interventions, seeking to reclaim people's right to a balanced landscape. The first phase of this two-year programme is dedicated to research and artistic residencies, and the second to creation and exhibition. Renowned contemporary artists such as Timo Toots (EE) and BridA Collective (SI) will collaborate in an artist-in-residence programme, starting in June 2026, to research the subject in dialogue with residents from the city areas most affected by urban sprawling, inspiring the artists to create new pieces that connect urban and rural areas. The programme's epilogue will be the international conference *Paradise Lost?*, held in June 2027 at Bom Jesus Sanctuary (Unesco World Heritage Site), focused on the environmental issues that Braga and other European cities face due to urban sprawl, as well as on exploring nature-based solutions to these challenges. The conference will gather participants from different corners of the world, from Hong Kong (Rural Urban Framework) to Latvia and the US, with speakers such as TJ Demos, director of the Center for Creative Ecologies, whose research focuses on the intersections of contemporary art, radical politics and ecology. We plan to work with the European Section of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Oppla, a European Union platform for disseminating nature-based knowledge and solutions, on organising this final conference.

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Curatorship** Duarte Sequeira and Guilherme Braga da Cruz **Local partners** jesuit organisation Centro Académico de Braga; National Seed Bank; Catholic University of Portugal – Braga Regional Centre; heritage and nature association ASPA; religious brotherhood Confraria do Bom Jesus; sustainability festival Greenfest; INL – International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory **Regional partners** agricultural cooperative Cavagri – Cooperativa Agrícola do Alto Cávado; education and research centre Laboratório da Paisagem (Guimarães) **National partners** jesuit cultural centre Brotéria **International partners** SUPERFLEX (DK); Maajaam/Timo Toots (EE); BridA Collective (SI); Jaśmina Wójcik (PL); Cristina Lucas (ES); TJ Demos (US); Rirkrit Tiravanija (AR/US); Rixc Festival (Riga-LV); Liepāja University Art Research Laboratory (LV); Rural Urban Framework – RUF/Faculty of Architecture at The University of Hong Kong (HK); R.o.R. – Rurally Organised Residencies/GO! 2025 Nova Gorica – Gorizia (SI); Face to Face with Nature/Liepāja 2027 (LV); Broumov 2028 (CZ) **Potential partners** European Section of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Oppla (NL)

## Get Lost

#community open call #cross-border cooperation

To contradict the existing cultural tourism model of crowds swarming around European urban monuments, we merged five proposals for creative walking tours received during the community open call of the first bidding process phase into one, *Get Lost*. Their perspectives share a common focus on a circular urban economy through sustainable cultural tourism and community practices. From March to October 2027, visitors and locals will be invited for a weekly surprise walking tour, where they will have to trust their own senses to discover the artistic creations of artists and groups of neighbours. The tours will be adapted daily in response to each group's needs and diversity to develop creative and inclusive content and paths, with the support of Acesso Cultura (PT). Participants – or *walkcreators* – will explore their empathy and attentiveness, empowering themselves and others to act for a broader change, as part of a diverse local and European community. The routes of the walking tours will be designed over the course of 2026, in walking workshops co-created by matched groups pairing up city neighbours with international digital nomads, our artist-in-residence programme with local collectives like Banquete, Malad'arte and PIF'H. They will map the paths' conditions, curate the contents and underline the needs and aspirations of the local communities. Retail stores on the way will display storytelling, movement, craftwork, design and audiovisual recordings from throughout Europe. Shared Walks (AT), Rés-do-Chão (PT) and Adoc (PT) will create a kit for artistic dialogue and participation. After the first six months of building confidence and skills, these walking groups will lead the maintenance and artistic intervention on the paths as local activists in motion. Together with iTINERIS (PT) and Aventura Plástica (ES), they will create signposting and accessibility aid devices out of recycled materials and develop an online campaign to promote these practices. In collaboration with Interartive (ES) and WAC (GR), the artists will exchange good practices in physical and digital publications and events. The outcomes will serve for the scientific project Lab2PT proposing the integration of these community-created tourism routes into Braga's Walking Routes Network and European cultural mapping platforms.

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Promoters** Alexandra Rodrigues; Banquete; Best Events; non-professional theatre group Associação Malad'arte; Manuel António Pereira **Local partners** non-professional theatre group PIF'H Produções Ilimitadas Fora d'Horas; Adoc – continuous occupation association; iTINERIS – Touristic and Territorial Qualification **Euroregional partners** LAB2PT – Landscape, Heritage and Territory (Guimarães); international gathering of walking artists The Walking Body (Guimarães); educational platform Aventura Plástica (Pontevedra/ES) **National partners** organisation for cultural accessibility Acesso Cultura; collective Gira Sol Azul; association Rés-do-Chão **International partners** Shared Walks (AT); Interartive – Platform for Contemporary Art and Thought (ES); WAC Walking as a Question – International Encounters (GR); Durf 2030 (BE)

## Common Snipe

#cross-border cooperation

Europe has more than 200 Unesco biosphere reserves, which promote ecosystem conservation and sustainable development based on local communities. Braga is among the main gateways to the Gerês-Xurés Biosphere Reserve (PT/ES), one of the few cross-border reserves in the world. *Common Snipe* proposes a transdisciplinary research project intersecting artistic creation, science and education. This process will result in a collective creation of a performance and an environmental education book, seeking to inspire a different relationship between human communities and nature. The common snipe is a migratory bird that crosses Europe each year. The Gerês-Xurés natural sanctuary is its only breeding site in Portugal. This species' behaviour synthesises the possibility of exchange and travelling great distances with a minimal ecological footprint, a symbolic lesson for European societies. The project starts at the end of 2026 – at the time common snipes arrive at Gerês-Xurés – and will be co-created by dancers, sound artists, illustrators, conservation workers and researchers from the countries through which the migration routes of this bird pass – Latvia, Germany, and Denmark. Inspired by its exuberant mating ritual, creators Filipa Francisco/Mundo em Reboiço (PT), Julia Eckhardt (DE/BE), Vera Tussing (DE), Mette Ingvarsten (DK), environmental NGO Quercus (PT), Liepāja's Lake Biosphere Reserve (LV) and European Ornithologists' Union (EU), will immerse into the Gerês-Xurés reserve to combine the observation of the bird with the development of transdisciplinary practices that will result in a performance presented within the landscape (2027). Meanwhile, local book publisher Paleta de Letras (PT) will design and illustrate a bilingual environmental education book about the residency, with artistic activities and body and sound exercises for children, that will be accompanied by a training programme aimed at elementary school teachers. Schools from Pontevedra and Braga will also join the project through regular visits to the Reserve to watch the common snipe in action, which will include an educational exchange with Ponte...nas Ondas! (ES/PT).

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Curatorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** elementary schools of Braga; Biology Department University of Minho; book publisher Paleta de Letras; social institution Casa do Professor **Euroregional partners** regional development entity Adere Peneda-Gerês (Ponte da Barca); Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests – Peneda-Gerês National Park; Unesco Gerês-Xurés Cross-Border Biosphere Reserve (PT/ES); cultural and educational association Ponte...nas Ondas! (Pontevedra/ES – VN Cerveira/PT) **National partners** Sekoia – Performing Arts; cultural association Mundo em Reboiço/Filipa Francisco; environmental NGO Quercus **International partners** artists Vera Tussing (DE), Doris Ulrich (AT), Mette Ingvarsten (DK) and Julia Eckhardt (DE/BE); AADK – Platform for Research and Contemporary Creation (ES); European Ornithologists' Union (CH); ZIIC – Science and Education Innovation Centre/Liepāja 2027 (LV)

## Extremo

#euroregional open call #cross-border cooperation

In the same way that European integration faded national borders, this project intends to blur frontiers between municipalities, artistic genres as well as art and nature. *Extremo* combines sonic experiences and music, testing sound boundaries in the natural environment between Braga and Guimarães. Co-created by two artistic collectives from Guimarães and Santiago de Compostela (Galicia/Spain), *Extremo* establishes a European exchange network with a board of partner festivals from different countries, such as Skanu Mezs (LV), Timber Festival (UK) and the international travelling event Walking Festival of Sound, that will contribute to the artistic programme both as advisors and co-curators. *Extremo* (meaning extreme/border) takes place in a peculiar geographic setting: a belt of sanctuaries and promontories around Braga and Guimarães, on the border between the two municipalities, called *Sacro Montes*. We critically explore the contribution of this built and natural landscape system to the cultural definition of this region, while also examining the relationship between territory, sound and arts, with the support of the scientific project Audire of the University of Minho (PT). The festival will have a format of a one-day journey, resembling a short pilgrimage. It will allow European visitors to explore this territory, awakening all participants to its green heritage and promoting slow tourism, with a programme of sound walks by artists such as Luís Antero (PT) and Martyna Poznańska (DE), as well as soundscaping and active listening sessions on the pathway between the *Sacro Montes*. The Baroque chapel of Santa Maria Madalena, located in Falperra, at the precise limit between the two municipalities – oddly enough, one part of the building belongs to Braga and the other to Guimarães – will be the epicentre of the artistic programme. It will host electronic and electroacoustic performances of artists such as French composer and sound designer Helene Vogelsinger, and Gustavo Costa and Pedro Tudela, from the Portuguese experimental music platform Sonoscopia. *Extremo* will have a biennial format. The experimental edition, taking place in June 2025, will welcome the Sound Walk City initiative in partnership with Walk Listen Create (BE), consolidating the event's notoriety and its networks for the 2027 edition.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Promoters** Capivara Azul – Cultural Association (PT) **Co-promoters** Work on Sunday (ES) **Local partners** scientific project Audire – Saving Sonic Based Memories – Communication and Society Research Centre (CECS) University of Minho; young people association JovemCoop; art historian Eduardo Pires de Oliveira **Euroregional partners** sonic collective Liceo Mutante (Pontevedra/ES); Sonoscopia – Platform for Experimental Music (Porto); international gathering of walking artists The Walking Body (Guimarães) **National partners** electroacoustic music Biennial Aveiro Síntese/Arte no Tempo; sonic artist Luís Antero **International partners** Skanu Mezs Festival (LV); Timber Festival (UK); Walking Festival of Sound (UK/SE/PL); Walk Listen Create (BE); artists Suso Saiz (ES), Helene Vogelsinger (LE) and Martyna Poznańska (DE); Ghent 2030 (BE)



## The Roman Connection

Roman civilisation left a decisive legacy in Europe, connecting territories throughout history to the present day, notably via its roads. Through these communication pathways, *Bracara Augusta* was part of an empire and culture with more than 2000 years of history that shaped this territory. But the Roman Empire spanned far beyond Europe, stretching to the North of Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin, connecting three continents and leaving a mark on these cultures and political systems to this day. This project highlights these social, political and cultural interconnections through an exhibition, site-specific interventions in rural and urban landscapes, musical and performative acts, an online platform and a great anthological book. Starting in Rome and ending in Braga'27, this ambitious itinerary crosses the cities of Rijeka, Elefsina, Plovdiv, Istanbul, Haifa, Beirut, Alexandria, Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Tanger, Gibraltar and Salamanca. Portuguese and international visual artists, performers, architects, musicians and writers, such as Rebecca Moradalizadeh (PT/IR), Sandro William Junqueira (PT) and Mostafa Saifi Rahmouni (MA), will be invited to artist residencies in these cities, where they will have the opportunity to work with local artists on co-creating a set of original pieces that will be premiered in 2027 at Braga's Archeology Museum D. Diogo de Sousa. An online platform will serve as a digital journal of the residencies, allowing the participating creators to exchange visual and written documents regularly. A table-shaped sculpture, a work of the collective The Decorators (UK), will occupy one of Braga's central squares. This communal space will host some of the performative projects, such as tastings of the food from different Mediterranean cuisines, promoting exchange and shared experiences with passers-by. In parallel, a conference programme in partnership with the Roberto Cimetta Fund (FR) and Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (SM), and featuring thinkers such as Franco "Bifo" Berardi (IT) and Pelin Tan (TU), will reflect on the political issues that concern the Mediterranean countries and their relationships with Europe, Africa and the Middle East, with the emphasis on the migratory crisis and the refugees' humanitarian situation. A book-object will be produced for future memory of these itineraries, creations and discussions as a testimony of this civilisational journey and cultural exchange that will connect and unite us.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Paulo Mendes **Local partners** archeology museum Museu D. Diogo de Sousa; religious and social institution Misericórdia de Braga **Regional partners** University of Porto; Sonoscopia – Platform for Experimental Music (Porto) **National partners** artists Martinho Costa, Tito Mouraz, Valter Vinagre, Xavier Paes, collective Paralaxe, Hugo Canoilas, Mariana Caló + Francisco Queimadela, Duarte Belo; performers and musicians Ana Deus, Susana Mendes Silva, João Ferro Martins; writer Sandro William Junqueira; architects Pedro Bandeira and Pedro Machado Costa; conference speakers Liliana Coutinho, Mariana Pestana, Jorge Leandro Rosa **International partners** Roberto Cimetta Fund (FR); Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean (SM); The Decorators (UK); Artists at Risk (FI); We Love Sousse – Anna Lindh Foundation Network (TN); El Birou Art Gallery (TN); Unfinished Art Space (MT); featured artists Allan Sekula (US), Antoni Muntadas (ES), Fernando Marques Penteadó (BR), Hamish Fulton (UK), Jannis Kounellis (GR), Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (BR/ES), Marcelo Moscheta (BR), Mostafa Saifi Rahmouni (MA), Raymond Hains (FR); performers and musicians Jalalu Karvelt-Nelson (US), Rebecca Moradalizadeh (PT/IR), Tristan Perich (US), Victor Gama (AO), Ece Canli (PT/TR); conference speakers Franco "Bifo" Berardi (IT), Pelin Tan (TR) and Matteo Pasquinelli (IT)

## Flows

### #cross-border cooperation

*Flows* is a series of site-specific media art installations that reflect on how Europe's ecosystems are under increasing pressure. While we face the threats of the world's geopolitical imbalance and the global consequences of the pandemic, the clock has not stopped ticking on the climate and the biodiversity crisis. As Bruno Latour puts it, Art provides a privileged space for a "thought experiment" that could help us cope with the new climate regime. In the outermost landscapes – the mountain forests in the Gerês-Xurés Cross-Border Biosphere Reserve, the volcanic activity of the Azores Geopark, the sea lagoon in the Natural Park of Ria Formosa, the Slavkov forest and the Brazilian rainforest – we can find the data of the flow in all its biodiversity. That is how international artists and researchers will critically explore how we preserve (or not) and interact with our natural ecosystems. Within this programme, we will produce eight artworks between 2025 and 2026. The process will stem from a match between European and international artists, such as Rosa Menkman (NL), Gil Delindro (PT), Jenna Sutela (FI), Formafantasma (IT), Marco Barotti (IT), Studio Above & Below (UK), and European research institutions like the INL – International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (PT/ES) and the Critical Zone Observatories in Mount Lisina (CZ), Canton Uri (CH) and Koiliaris River (GR). *Flows* will also include a space for discourse and debate, bringing together international artists, researchers, social scientists and politicians to discuss the process and its outputs from a horizontal perspective, covering a wide range of knowledge areas. This art, science and technology co-creation programme sprouts from a collaboration between the Portuguese ECOC 2027 candidate cities of Braga and Ponta Delgada, the city of Faro and the Brazilian city of São Paulo, joined by other European partners and the European Media Art Platform (EMAP), that will bring their knowledge and experience to the project. All of the works resulting from these collaborations will be presented in a travelling exhibition in the four partner cities in Portugal and Brazil in 2027 and, later on, in Budějovice 2028 Candidate City as part of their Ars Biologica flagship project and the worldwide Unesco Creative Cities of Media Arts Network.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 and 2028 **Curatorship** Luís Fernandes **Co-Promoters** Braga'27; Ponta Delgada – Azores 2027; Municipality of Faro; São Paulo Cultural Centre (BR) **Local partners** Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts; cultural venue gnration; Master in Media Arts University of Minho; INL – International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory **Euroregional partners** Unesco Gerês-Xurés Cross-Border Biosphere Reserve (PT/ES) **National partners** University of Algarve; Ria Formosa Natural Park; digital art museum Museu Zero; Azores Geopark; vaga – space for art and knowledge, Arquipélago – Contemporary Arts Centre **International partners** Jérôme Gaillardet – Paris Globe Institute of Physics (FR) on the Critical Zones Observatories of Mt. Lysina (CZ), Canton Uri (CH) and Koiliaris River (GR); Media Arts Creative Cities of Unesco Network; European Media Art Platform (EU); Budějovice 2028 (CZ)

# In Your Eyes – Urban Sketchers Retreat

#euroregional open call #cross-border cooperation

Drawing allows time for meditative observing in action, a kind of **Contemplation** that enables a greater understanding of what surrounds us. *In Your Eyes* invites European citizens to connect and share diverse ways of seeing a city – its heritage sites, streets, daily movements of people and curious events. In 2027, the project will gather Urban Sketchers from 27 cities in all European countries in eight gatherings with 50 participants each. Through drawing and the landscape of Braga'27, they will find the European tie that binds us all together. Participants will gain top-quality sketching experience through a set of workshops with highly skilled international mentors, such as Wilfried Pathuis (NL), Eduardo Belga (BR), Alvin Wong (HK) and Christine Deschamps (FR). The project ends with a final exhibition and a sketchbook publication that includes the collected drawings and a report on the entire experience. Locals and visitors will be invited to take part as sketchers, models or observers, as well as the local student community, leaving seeds for the future generation of urban sketchers.

**Timeframe** 2027 **Promoters** MÂE GÔ | Urban Collective/Pedro Alegria & Julie Christie **Co-Promoters** artistic painting studio La Casa Taller – Gemma Marqués (ES) **Local partners** urban sketchers Natacha Antão Moutinho, Alexandra Abranches; Philosophy degree University of Minho **Regional partners** Urban Sketchers Portugal Norte; Urban Sketchers Minho (Viana do Castelo); Visual Arts degree University of Minho (Guimarães) **National partners** Urban Sketchers Portugal **International partners** artists Wilfried Pathuis (NL), Christine Deschamps (FR), Eduardo Belga (BR) and Alvin Wong (HK)

# Granary

#legacy

The New European Bauhaus initiative links the European Green Deal to our daily lives and living spaces. It calls on all Europeans to imagine and build a sustainable and inclusive future together, by creating bridges between different backgrounds, cutting across disciplines and building on participation at all levels. At the same time, it aims to inspire a movement that will facilitate and steer the transformation of our societies along three inseparable values – sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion. This project is Braga'27's contribution to The New European Bauhaus initiative, an exercise of collectively imagining a green cultural space, home to experimentation and built on sustainable cultural practices. Inspired by the *espigueiro* (granary), a traditional agricultural structure of the region, the *Granary* will be built between 2024 and 2025 in co-creation between the local community, architects Moradavaga collective (PT/IT), Marko Brajovic (HR/BR), the Centre for Architecture and Urban Studies of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto (PT), designers (Open Design School, IT), permaculture associations (Joya da Terra, PT), team members of the city's cultural venues, as well as multidisciplinary collectives such as Receptas Urbanas (ES). This nomadic infrastructure will then become the home of experimentation in alternative forms of creation, production, programming, circulation and cultural communication, based on principles of environmental sustainability and circular economy (2026-27). In 2027, an open call aimed at European artistic collectives and co-promoted with AREA – Arts in Rural European Areas (DK) will invite scenography, light, sound, and costume design professionals to develop and produce their work in greener ways. The selected proposals will co-create a performance with the theatre collective O Bando (PT). The *Granary* will travel through the city and the region, providing shelter for these activities and challenging European cultural venues and operators to rethink their work habits with sustainability in mind. A digital toolkit on the construction, maintenance and promotion of green cultural facilities will be created in partnership with the University of Minho and disseminated among European art professionals and policymakers. To complement the project, the *Creators Academy* (p. 43) will provide training for cultural operators and institutions in the environmental field.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** University of Minho; young people associations Associação Juvenil de Gualtar and Agrupamento de Escuteiros CNE660 Montariol **Regional partners** agroecological project Joyas da Terra (Gerês); regional development entity Adere Peneda-Gerês (Ponte da Barca); architecture collective Moradavaga (Porto); CEAU – Centre for Studies in Architecture and Urbanism Faculty of Architecture University of Porto, Architecture, City and Territory Heritage Group – PACT (Porto), Unesco Chair – Heritage, Cities and Landscapes (Porto) **National partners** theatre company O Bando **International partners** Receptas Urbanas (ES); AREA – Arts in Rural European Areas (DK); artist Marko Brajovic (HR/BR); Open Design School/Matera 2019 (IT); Maison de la Architecture/Montpellier 2028 (FR)

# Endless – Community Eco Festival

#community open call #cross-border cooperation

The depletion of natural resources is key to understanding the climate challenge we face. Earth Overshoot Day comes earlier and earlier every year, which means that we keep using more and more of our ecosystems' resources. Inspired by the bold European goal of tackling threats to biodiversity over the next decade, the new festival *Endless* will put the spotlight on the river Cávado, Braga's main water supply. It aims to rethink the territory's relationship with its core ecosystem by bringing European artists, citizens and policymakers together. This art in nature festival will be implemented by the community in the six municipalities of Cávado NUT III region connected by the same river. Several negative examples of how humans approach ecosystems can be found along its banks, triggering dissent and, consequently, reflection and action that need to be urgently strengthened. *Endless Festival* questions extractivism and the idea that natural resources are infinite. As an alternative, it proposes symbiotic exchanges between humans and ecosystems that surpass them, synthesising these essential elements for species' survival. Based on the principles of co-designing and addressing ecological issues, this festival will activate exchange channels between European creators and thinkers, such as Liminal (UK) and Idensitat (ES), local communities and natural territories (Intermunicipal Community of Cávado, Braga'27 and Clube de Economia Circular). *Endless* will take place in 2027, as an outcome of a long process that will start in 2024 with a capacity-building programme (*River Source*), gathering heterogeneous work groups of operators from the six municipalities that will work with other organisations such as Oerol Festival (NL). In 2025 and 2026, the project will evolve into a set of Experimental Activities (*River Bed*), inviting the communities from all six territories to work with local and international artists, such as ScapeStudio (US) and CECOLAB – Circular Economy (PT). This process will result in a series of small performances and publications. The festival itself (*River Mouth*) will happen in 2027: every two months, across the six municipalities along the course of the river and bringing all participants from the previous phases together, it will occupy dams, river banks and beaches, in a dialogue with the Cávado ecosystems. *Endless* will privilege artistic creation *with* nature, not just considering it as a “background”, through land art, dance, music, cinema, performance and activism.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 **Promoters** Non-professional theatre group Tin. Bra and Maira Ribeiro; artistic platform Plataforma do Pandemónio; social institutions Cáritas Arquidiocesana de Braga and Casa do Professor; Alexandra Rodrigues; Bruno Laborinho; Bruno Fernando de Carvalho Guedes; Guilherme Pereira and Sandra Ribeiro; Jorge Alexandre Dias; Diana Sá Carneiro **Mentorship** Hugo Cruz and Rodrigo Malvar **Local partners** Braga Circular Economy Club; film production company Ficus Films; Terra Convida Cooperative **Euroregional partners** Intermunicipal Community of Cávado; Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave (Barcelos); cinema festival Festival de Cans (Porriño/ES) **National partners** CECOLAB – Circular Economy; RHI – Think Art, Talks Business, Make Culture; Burro IL Gueiteiro – Travelling Festival of Traditional Culture; cultural association Binaural Nodar **International partners** artist Karolina Grzywnowicz (PL); Oerol Festival (NL); ScapeStudio (US); Liminal (UK); Idensitat (ES); Centre National d'art et du Paysage/ Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR); Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018-2028 (NL)

# Salus, Fountains of Healing

#cross-border cooperation #legacy

This European placemaking programme will build seven public installations for water enjoyment and regeneration as a part of a larger movement for urban practices of mental healing. The culture of public bathing rituals has long been present across European cities since water has the unique ability to help us connect body, mind and spirit. Located at Braga's 6<sup>th</sup> century water supply source, the Seven Fountains Eco-Park urban project has generated a lot of public debate and civic movements. *Salus, Fountains of Healing* wants the future Seven Fountains Park to become a source of meaningful new inspiration for contemporary creation and contribute to healing Europe's heating and disconnected urban environments. A group of young patients of the Psychiatry Ward of Braga's Hospital and students of the University of Minho dealing with anxiety will be invited to use the nearby Seven Fountains Park for outdoor creative therapy sessions. After exploring its underground water channels and exchanging cultural practices used in spas and water treatments with six other ECoC projects and other European thermal towns, they will create audiovisual contents together (2024-2027). The surrounding schools will work with local heritage associations and street artists from Kaldarte (ES) and Fenda Festival (PT) to co-design a representation of the underground water paths in the streets as a real-scale map, connecting the Park to the seven contemporary *Salus Fountains*, located in the city centre. These water paths will also incorporate *digital taps* with audiovisual content created and refreshed at the therapy sessions (2026). Braga also counts on Placemaking Week Europe 2027 (NL), which the city will host to provide capacity building and conferences on water and landscape design topics. International guest lecturers like the pioneers Herbert and Bettina Dreiseitl (DE) and 2022 European Heritage Awards winners Collective Foundation (BG) will join the University of Minho Architecture School and address the local community, professionals and the seven scenography art creators coming from each of the six ECoC partners and Braga's Euroregion. During two weeks, they will design and co-create the seven *Salus Fountains* as installation spots to stage Braga'27 cultural programme, but also hang out and enjoy the water as if in thermal retreats. Visitors and the local community will be invited to take part in the building process, cross boundaries of everyday public space interactions, and travel in their minds (and maybe even in the body) to Europe's thermal baths, saunas and spas. In 2028, the inspiring and fresh memory of 2027's summer will continue as the *Salus Fountains* move to the Seven Fountains Park, where they will keep attracting those who look for a place to regenerate and restore, affirming Braga as a European Healing City.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Local partners** APsi – Psychology Association University of Minho; Psychiatric Ward Hospital of Braga; Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts; urban arts festival Fenda; roman site Termas do Alto da Cidade **Euroregional partners** art festival Kaldarte (Pontevedra/ES); School of Architecture, Art and Design University of Minho (Guimarães); Polytechnic Institute of the Cávado and Ave (Barcelos); architect Teresa Andersen **International partners** Thermal artistic residency, European Historic Thermal Towns Association (BE); Herbert and Bettina Dreiseitl (DE); Collective Foundation – Rivers of Sofia (BG); Placemaking Europe (NL); International Society for Urban Health (ES); 11 Fountains/ Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018-2028 (NL); Brined to the Point of Happiness/Bad Ischl – Salzkammergut 2024 (AT); Creative Wellbeing Movement/Trenčín 2026 (SK); Hot Sauna Debates/Oulu 2026 (FI); Nordic Solstice/Liepāja 2027 (LV); Budějovice 2028 (CZ)

# Temple of Disquiet



**Where we face our uneasiness  
and question our future.**

# Common Good

## #cross-border cooperation

How do we inspire the next generation of Europeans to act upon the future they want to create? *Common Good* is a capacity-building programme for young citizens' civic and political engagement and activation. By empowering the youth to act together for the common good, this programme raises their awareness of local issues, the complex questions of our time and the challenges of global sustainable development. *Common Good* is already in place since June 2022 and unfolds in four different projects:

**Generation B27** is a focus group of citizens from 12 to 18 years old from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds. During a series of meetings, they participated in co-creating a checklist of principles for the cultural programme projects that is now part of the programme's evaluation process (see Q4). The participants are also ambassadors for Braga'27 since September and have already contributed ideas for sharing our concept in schools and among younger audiences. Additionally, a budget and framework will be designed to call teens to submit their ideas and projects for the Braga'27 programme. From 2023 onwards, in cooperation with Youth Resource Centre – Anna Lindh Foundation Network (BA) and Acesso Cultura (PT), this group will grow into a new think tank that will advise on city development issues that affect their daily lives. The collective will contact with experts in the fields of curatorship, art, culture and communication, learn from and follow the approach of Museo en Red – Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (ES) to advise Braga's cultural institutions on how to relate to the community and engage with younger audiences. Generation B27 is about letting the young adults of 2027 decide what their future city and Europe will be.

**Democracy for common good** is a collaborative platform where youngsters activate their democratic and collaborative skills to identify a Common Good Matrix. First, they deepen their knowledge of local problems with global impact. Then, they co-create solutions to address these issues, proposing projects co-developed with local authorities, experts and civic organisations. The best idea will be financed by the ECoC budget and materialised by the proponents with the mentorship of a youth entrepreneurship office. These activities will be embedded in the school curriculum for ages 14 to 18. An annual event gathers participants and policymakers from Braga, Pontevedra (Galicia, ES) and others to share experiences and promote further collaboration. The pilot edition will run in three Braga schools in 2022-2023, extending to all school groups by 2025-2026. In 2026, we invite Liepāja 2027 (LV) to test the same model, establishing a network of shared experience and local youth activism that reinforces Europe as a community for the *Common Good*.

**Future ground** How to urge the next European generation toward a sustainable existence? (i) By learning with top European scientists, thinkers, activists and artists. In 2024, a digital platform will go online for young audiences to discover state-of-the-art European academic research and knowledge on the issues that challenge our future. In 2025, scientists, thinkers and activists will work with artists to address questions raised on the platform by young European teens, through cross-media and attractive tools recorded live with middle and high school student audiences. (ii) Each day from 2025 onwards, the digital platform will highlight a new topic to be debated in classes and embedded in the local media agenda, thus diversifying our community conversations. (iii) What institutions do we need to become citizens of a sustainable world? From 2023 on, in collaboration with The House of Deep Democracy (NL) and inspired by The School of Life, intergenerational citizens' assemblies will work with experts in various fields to answer this question. Their findings will turn into immersive transdisciplinary presentations in partnership with theatre company Comédias do Minho (PT) to engage eclectic audiences.

**Commons city** is a multidisciplinary and transgenerational programme to reinforce critical reflection on technology, social design and innovation. It unfolds in four different actions: (i) *Commons Thinking*, a series of talks around subjects outlined by the Generation B27 think tank, where youngsters partner with citizens and specialists to co-create a framework for conversations about different topics, guided by the deep democracy method. The first talk – datafied society – will take place in January 2023 in partnership with Ars Electronica (AT); (ii) A standard and quality seal for a Commons City along with (iii) a set of educational initiatives co-designed with Waag Society (NL) to improve literacy and skills for the next century by reaching out to citizens through a network of community centres, libraries and associations. By learning and collaborating with The European Wergeland Centre (NO), (iv) a Hacktive Peace network will connect Braga'27 to European cities for co-creation and exchange, campaigning for European values, non-violence and democracy.

**Timeframe** 2022-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Andreia Martins (Bildung) **Local partners** Circuito – Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts Educational Service; University of Minho; Schools of Braga **Euroregional partners** theatre company Comédias do Minho (Melgaço, Monção, Paredes de Coura, Valença, VN Cerveira), cultural and educational association Ponte...Nas Ondas! (Pontevedra/ES – VN Cerveira/PT) **National partners** cultural association Audiência Zero; Fórum dos Cidadãos citizenship initiative; organisation for cultural accessibility Acesso Cultura; TV channel Canal 180 **International partners** The European Wergeland Centre (NO); Waag Society (NL); The House of Deep Democracy (NL); Ars Electronica – Future Thinking School programme (AT); Museo en Red – Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (ES); Youth Resource Centre (ORC) – Anna Lindh Foundation Network (BA); Novi Sad 2022 (RS); Peace Machine/Oulu 2026; Liepāja 2027 (LV); Périféreries Children's Assembly/Saint-Denis 2028 (FR); Montpellier 2028 (FR)

## Stop Making (Non)sense

Outsider Art, or *art brut*, as French artist Jean Dubuffet named it in the 1940s, has witnessed a recent audience growth due to a broader circulation of works of art and exhibitions and a more dynamic market, both in Europe and the American continent. This exhibition aims to reflect on the current relevance of this art form, breaking artistic, social and mental barriers by putting *art brut* in dialogue with contemporary art and other art forms. This includes religious figuration in handicrafts, the mask representation in African cultures (from the unique African Art Collection of José de Guimarães [PT]), and the portraits from the historical archive of the Portuguese Centre of Photography. Within this dialogue, the selection of works responds to three criteria: the act of self-representation, the act of portraying and the mask, and the general importance of otherness. Through a great exhibition taking place at the new dst Contemporary Art Museum in Braga, the project gathers renowned international *art brut* artists, such as Adolf Wölflí (CH), Henry Darger (US), Miroslav Tichý (CZ) and Jaime Fernandes (PT) with other celebrated national and international contemporary artists, such as Portuguese Rosa Ramalho and Paula Rego, and Julian Rosefeldt (DE), Nan Goldin (US), and Markus Muntean & Adi Rosenblum (AT/IL). In cooperation with the residency programme for *art brut* artists Manicómió (PT), new art pieces will be created by artists like Bráulio Moreira and Cláudia R. Sampaio (PT) and presented in an exhibition. *Stop Making (Non)sense* will have as partners one of the most influential *art brut* collections in Europe, the Treger Saint Silvestre collection (PT), and we look forward to establishing the same connection with the historical Collection de l'Art Brut (CH).

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Paulo Mendes **Local partners** business group dst Contemporary Art Museum; Medical School University of Minho; mental health institution Casa de Saúde do Bom Jesus; social institution Centro de Solidariedade de Braga Projecto Homem **Regional partners** Treger/Saint Silvestre Collection of Art Brut, Oliva Art Centre, Norlinda and José Lima Collection (São João da Madeira); CPF – Portuguese Centre of Photography (Porto); CIAJG – José de Guimarães International Arts Centre (Guimarães); Peter Meeker Collection/Casa São Roque (Porto); Serralves Foundation – Museum of Contemporary Art (Porto) **National partners** studio and art brut gallery Manicómió; Modern and Contemporary Art Museum Coleção Berardo; featured artists Anabela Soares, André Cepeda, Arlindo Silva, Artur Moreira, Bráulio Moreira, Carla Filipe, Carolina Carvalho, Cláudia R. Sampaio, Ernesto de Sousa, Fernando Lemos, Hugo Canoilas, Jaime Fernandes, João Maria Gusmão e Pedro Paiva, João Tabarra, Jorge Molder, Jorge Queiroz, José de Guimarães, Júlia Ventura, Mariana Gomes, Mário Eloy, Mauro Cerqueira, Mumtazz, Paula Rego, Pedro Ventura, Rosa Ramalho, Tiago Alexandre **International partners** Cultural Centre Cluj-Napoca (RO); European Outside Art Association (DK); featured artists Adolf Wölflí (CH), Albino Braz (IT), Alberto García-Alix (ES), Aloïse Corbaz (CH), Anna Zemánková (CZ), Augustin Lesage (FR), Boris Mikhailov (UA), Carlo Zinelli (IT), Cindy Sherman (US), Edson Chagas (AO), Eugene Von Bruenchenhein (US), Fischli & Weiss (CH), Francesca Woodman (US), Friedrich Schröder-Sonnenstern (DE), George Widener (US), Giovanni Battista Podestà (IT), Gloria Oyarzabal (ES), Guo Fengyi (CN), Henry Darger (US), Jacqueline B. (FR), Jean Dubuffet (FR), JH Engstrom (SE), Joanna Piotrowska (PL), John Baldessari (US), Julian Rosefeldt (DE), Lee Godie (US), Madge Gill (UK), Malangatana (MZ), Marcel Storr (FR), Markus Muntean & Adi Rosenblum (AT/IL), Martín Ramírez (MX), Mattia Denisse (FR), Mary T. Smith (US), Miroslav Tichý (CZ), Nan Goldin (US), Robert Longo (US), Scottie Wilson (UK), Sophie Calle (FR), Susanne Themlitz (DE/PT), Thomas Ruff (DE), Urs Fischer (CH), Vanessa Beecroft (IT-US); Hidden Worlds Expanding/Tartu 2024 (EE) **Potential partners** Collection de l'Art Brut (CH)

## Village of Religions

#community open call #cross-border cooperation

Religious and spiritual pluralism has always been a central element of European society. But the diversity of Europe's confessional landscape has also – regularly and throughout history – been weaponised for political purposes, generating social tension and rift. *Village of Religions*, a project selected from our community open call, is a place for intercultural exchange on the religions in Europe. As its first edition already took place in 2012 during the European Youth Capital, the parish of Priscos will open to the world's creeds once more in a festival that gives different doctrines an opportunity to reflect on their shared values of spirituality. The festival is a space for dialogue and sharing, with a programme of talks, performative presentations, meditation and social gatherings for believers and non-believers, freely accessible to all interested audiences. Taking place in the farm-like surroundings of the village's church, the three-day event will be entirely co-produced by the community of Priscos – the parish inhabitants will be responsible for welcoming the guests, hospitality and the production of the event. The programme, co-curated with The European Network on Religion and Belief, The Society for Spirituality Studies (SK) and other partners, will reflect the richness of the confessional panorama of Europe with Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Shinto and Confucian representatives. Mirroring the growth of Brazilian and African communities in Braga, the programme will highlight the exchange with African diaspora beliefs such as Candomblé and Umbanda, Indigenous religions and traditional African religions. Our partners from the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Portugal and the European Academy of Religion (IT) will join in observing, participating in the programme and co-editing a publication on the knowledge and experiences shared in the event. Other dialogues will take place at the Table of the Common Canteen, where menus are studied to respect all faiths, seeking common denominators between all creeds. Performative presentations on the power of voice as an act of spiritual manifestation will take place in the meeting square. The *Village of Religions* 2027 will close every day at dawn with a collective silent walk.

**Timeframe** 2027 **Promoter** Parish of Priscos **Mentorship** Ana Rocha **Local partners** Archdiocese of Braga; Faculty of Theology Catholic University of Portugal **Euroregional partners** Xacobeo 27 Organising Committee – Regional Government of Galicia **International partners:** ENORB – The European Network on Religion and Belief (BE); EUARE – European Academy of Religion (IT); The Society for Spirituality Studies (SK); Anna Lindh Foundation Network: Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (JO); Jesuit School of Philosophy and Theology Belo Horizonte (BR); Faculty of Theology Loyola University (ES); Périphéries 2028 Saint-Denis (FR); Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies University of Leuven/Leuven 2030 (BE)

## Shape of Joy

According to a recent survey on the quality of life in European cities, Braga is the happiest city in Portugal and the fifth in Europe. But how is happiness measured and materialised in space? Is there a shape of joy? This three-year architectural European exchange programme aims to question and experiment on how public spaces can promote the overall well-being of citizens via sustainable approaches to placemaking strategies. Four European architecture schools from ECoC cities will research and prototype solutions on how urban planning can influence people's happiness and well-being, working with children and adult citizens, architects and decision-makers. In Braga, this project looks at *Bairro da Alegria* – a local neighbourhood whose curious toponym is Neighbourhood of Joy – and we will work with a similar district in Latvian Liepāja 2027, the neighbourhood *Ezerkrasts*, which signifies “Shore of the Lake”. This action is divided into three phases. The first one maps the neighbourhood's public spaces, through a co-creative process between architects, communities, children and schools, in partnership with Casa da Arquitectura – Portuguese Centre for Architecture, non-formal education platform INDUCAR (PT) and the Centre for Architecture Arc en Rêve (FR). This process consists of guided visits that chart emotional urban cartographies, and workshops on digital drawing and model construction. The second phase will set up a European summer school for students from the architecture schools of Guimarães (PT), Riga (LV), Vilnius (LT) and Lille (FR), to reimagine innovative solutions for problems identified in the neighbourhoods' public space. The summer school ends with an exhibition of the results and a public presentation for the community of Braga in the neighbours' association of Bairro da Alegria. An interdisciplinary European jury will select the best proposal, which will be built with the help of social architecture collective Warehouse (PT), for a true ‘neighbourhood of joy’.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Space Transcribers and Matilde Seabra **Local partners** neighbours' association Bairro d'Alegria; Medical School University of Minho; Institute for Social Sciences University of Minho; elementary school and kindergarten of Bairro da Alegria **Regional partners** non-formal education and social integration platform INDUCAR (Porto); ProChild Collaborative Laboratory (Guimarães); Casa da Arquitectura – Portuguese Centre for Architecture (Matosinhos); School of Architecture, Art and Design University of Minho (Guimarães) **National partners** children programme UNICEF – Programa Cidades Amigas das Crianças; collective Warehouse **International partners** Faculty of Architecture Technical University of Riga (LV); Vilnius Gediminas Technical University Faculty of Architecture (LT); École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture et de Paysage de Lille (FR); Centre for Architecture Arc en Rêve (FR); Designing Happiness/Kaunas 2022 (LT); Liepāja 2027 (LV); Montpellier 2028 (FR)

## Encontros da Imagem '27

#cross-border cooperation

*Encontros da Imagem* is the oldest international photography festival in Portugal. Together with the city's museum of photography *Museu da Imagem*, it holds a vast and valuable photographic archive. For the ECoC 2027, the festival builds bridges with other European photographic archives, such as World Press Photo Foundation (NL), Istanbul Museum of Modern Art – Photography Department (TR) and the International Consortium for Photographic Heritage Photoconsortium (EU), in search of shared spiritual practices and underlying belief systems in different societies and their relationship with the well-being of individuals. These collections will serve as the basis for a series of contemporary curatorial, creative and research practices involving internationally recognised photographers such as Brian Griffin (UK), Donna Ferrato (US), Olena Morozova (UA), Rea Papadopoulou (GR), Pawel Starzec (PL), Tânia Dinis (PT) and Paulo Catrica (PT). Inspired by this topic, *Encontros da Imagem* will grow its activities much beyond its regular programme through diverse artistic and community practices: artist residencies that result in essays and exhibitions, and a conference cycle that will include seminars, debates and artists' talks with ISSP – Platform for Contemporary Photography Gallery (LV). Additionally, the festival will partner up with local schools to run an educational project that gathers young and senior people in a search through personal archives. The well-known gesture of picking up the family album to remember special moments or absent loved ones is not common anymore. Today, the ones we love pop up from our electronic devices in thousands of photos, depleted of a certain involuntary curatorship that was usual during the selection of images for photo albums. Also, the fact that we do not print our pictures much any longer leaves cities' photographic archives in need of new “raw material” that can illustrate their contemporary societies. This diverse group of students and seniors from the city's most multicultural neighbourhoods will select a wide range of photographs from analogue and digital albums to map Braga's contemporary society through its citizens' habits and spiritual practices. This selection will result in an exhibition during the festival's 2027 edition, after which these images will be integrated into the city archive.

**Timeframe** 2027 **Promoter** Encontros da Imagem **Local partners** archeology museum Museu D. Diogo de Sousa; photography museum Museu da Imagem; contemporary art gallery Forum Arte Braga; Monastery of Tibães; University of Minho **Euroregional partners** IPCI – Institute for Cultural Production and Image (Porto); artist Tânia Dinis; photography festival OF – Outono Fotográfico de Ourense (ES) **National partners** Imago Photo Festival – Lisbon; City of Tomar Centre for Photographic Studies; artists Daniel Blaufuks and Paulo Catrica **International partners** Photoconsortium – International Consortium for Photographic Heritage (EU); photography festival Imaginària – Photography Festival of Castelló de La Plana (Valencia/ES); LagosPhoto – International Art Festival of Photography (NG); Istanbul Museum of Modern Art – Photography Department (TR); World Press Photo Foundation (NL); ISSP Gallery (Riga/LV); artists Brian Griffin (UK), Donna Ferrato (US), Olena Morozova (UA), Rea Papadopoulou (GR) and Pawel Starzec (PL); Novi Sad 2022 (SR)

## Sensor

#Euroregional open call

Why do we stop playing? This project highlights the impact of playing on mental health and explores toys and games as a valuable part of our cultural and social heritage across Europe. *Sensor* is built around three axes:

**Play** scientific research in cooperation with the University of Oviedo (ES), starting in 2025, about common games and toys and their contribution to European cultural and social heritage;

**React** in partnership with the University of Minho schools of Psychology and Medicine, we will research about the impact of games, toys, sounds and images on mental health throughout life. Artists and medical professionals will cooperate in this process, and scientists will monitor the work sessions with participants. The results of this process will be used in new works of art and scientific papers;

**Create** a set of artistic works will be developed by Portuguese and other European, Brazilian and African artists, and presented in a final programme that will consist of a performative installation, crossing photography, digital art, music and dance. An open call for selecting these artists will make way for a co-creation with Portuguese artists such as João Martinho Moura, Miguel Pedro and António Rafael. Toy instruments, lullabies, playground sounds, nursery rhymes and tongue twisters, identified in *Play*, are mandatory tools for those artistic collaborations. LEV Festival (ES) and Maintenant Festival (FR) will take an active part in this project, co-curating the artistic works, which will also be presented in their 2027 festival editions.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Promoters** AUAUFEIOMAU – artistic and cultural cooperative **Local partners** bookstore 100.ª página/Casa Rolão; School of Psychology and Medical School University of Minho; decorative arts museum Museu dos Biscainhos **Regional partners** Sonoscopia – Platform for Experimental Music (Porto) **National partners** digital art museum Museu Zero; gallery.insofar **International partners** University of Oviedo – Arts and Humanities Department and School of Health (ES); LEV Festival (ES); Maintenant Festival (FR); Afro Brasil Museum (BR); Africana Foundation (CH)

## Behind God's Back

#cross-border cooperation

Braga is spiritually dichotomous. On the one hand, the city is known to be conservative due to the strong presence of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, Braga has intermittently been home to a vibrant yet underground alternative and transgressive culture. Picoto, a small hill in the city centre, is the physical face of this antagonism – a gracious retreat in the urban landscape that people like seeing from a distance but do not usually go to, finding it shady or even dangerous. *Behind God's Back* will be a new international festival that opens up the Picoto hill to reflect on fast-changing alternative European culture through contemporary utopias. The BGB Festival will bring together international architects, artists, activists and practitioners of holistic and sustainable disciplines, to share, build and think about other-than-normative ways of living in Europe. The festival gives voice to queer-ecology and eco-feminist approaches and also to pre-colonial forms of relationship between humanity and divinity, which need to be recovered and are imperative for re-thinking Europe's current societal and environmental challenges. It takes place in the summer of 2027, but the preparations will start in 2026 with an international open call for architects to propose four ephemeral sustainable structures, related to the four elements of Nature and four cardinal directions, which will be the event's main stages. These structures and the natural surroundings of the Picoto hill will provide a fitting space for a lively programme of activities such as concerts, exhibitions, performances and theatre, talks, solstice encounters and markets, co-curated between a network of European partners such as Cosmic Burger and Greenfest, in Braga, the ANTI Festival (FI), the rural queer festival Agrocuir in Galicia (ES), and the NITE European project (NL). From psychedelics to trance music, from biohacking to spiritualities, queerness, alchemy, sustainability and mythology, and cities' identity crises, in 2027, Picoto will be brought into a new light as a labyrinth for imagination, where you can get lost in order to find yourself.

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Curatorship** Space Transcribers and Matilde Seabra **Local partners** Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts; sound artist Cláudia Martinho; sustainability festival Greenfest; artistic collective Cosmic Burger; Master in Media Arts University of Minho **Euroregional partners** queer festival Festival Agrocuir da Ulloa (Lugo/ES) **National partners** sound art festival Lisboa Soa **International partners** ANTI Festival (FI); NITE – Night spaces: migration, culture and IntegraTion in Europe (NL); Institute for Post Natural Studies (ES); CYNERTART – Platform for Nomadic Thinking & Choral Practices (DE); IP Group (PL); Krista Dintere (LV); artists Annamaria Väisänen, Eevi Tolvanen and Loren Kronemyer (FI); Flows/Bad Ischl-Salzkammergut 2024 (AT); ASA-FF e. V./Chemnitz2025 (DE); Bourges 2028 (FR), Budva-Boka 2028 (ME)

## Myth

#cross-border cooperation

In Greek mythology, Europa was a Phoenician princess. She was abducted by Zeus, who whisked her off to Crete. Her brother, Cadmo, sought her out and, on his journey, founded Thebes, the city of the Seven Gates. *Myth* will be an international theatre and opera festival, symbolically held in the ruins of Braga's Roman theatre, with the vision of liberating Europe and recreating the City. An indispensable element of every European city from the Classical period until our days, theatres were set in the centre of political, social and religious life – the acropolis, the agora, the stadium. Searching for that very first understanding of the idea of theatre as a place of communal enlightenment, this festival proposes to renew, re-interpret and co-create contemporary versions of works of classical culture and promote a renovated look at Europe and its citizens. At the ruins of Braga's Roman theatre, an ephemeral stage with the capacity for 1000 viewers will be co-designed and built by Tbilisi Stage Design Biennale (GE) and local and national artists. The festival will be co-produced with Liepāja 2027, presenting different theatre performances based on Greek and Roman classical texts. There will also be a parallel choir programme and a cycle dedicated to reading and interpreting the primordial texts of the foundational European civilisations, looking to the past in search of contemplative answers for Europe's present and future. *Myth* will unfold in two phases. *Training and Thinking*, promoting theatrical training for citizens of Braga, regardless of their origins, for their participation in the choirs of the shows. Students from different schools and the universities of Minho (PT), ESAD Vigo (ES), Music and Performing Arts School of Porto (PT) and the University of Lisbon (PT) will also take part in this process. In addition, ETA – Eurasia Theater Association Summer University will take place in Braga, bringing together young actors, playwrights, directors, set designers, video artists and sound creators from the Association's 24 countries. The festival's artistic programme will consist of eight performances – five theatre and opera co-creations, intersecting artists from the 24 ETA countries; a co-creation by CTB – Braga Theatre Company and Akroama (IT); a performance from Liepāja 2027; and the guest country Montenegro represented by Budva Theatre City (Budva-Boka 2028).

**Timeframe** 2027 **Promoter** CTB – Braga Theatre Company **Local partners** University of Minho; archeology museum Museu D. Diogo de Sousa **Euroregional partners** ESMAE – Higher Education School of Music and Performing Arts (Porto); ESAD Vigo (ES) **National partners** University of Lisbon **International partners** Tbilisi Stage Design Biennale (GE); Eurasia Theatre Association (TR) – network of theatre partners from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, France, Georgia, Greece, India, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, North Cyprus, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, South Cyprus, Spain, The Netherlands, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan; International Festival of Ancient Greek Drama (CY); Akroama (IT); Liepāja 2027 (LV); Budva Theatre City/Budva-Boka 2028 (ME)

## Ceramic Bodies

#euroregional open call #cross-border cooperation

All across Europe, a very rich popular mythology that crosses pagan beliefs, oral memory and religious traditions can be found. Especially in rural areas, myths and legends inspired and were depicted in popular ceramics. Used in everyday objects and often available locally, clay is a low-cost raw material that gave (and still gives) free rein to the imagination of European artisans. Based on popular tradition and on the way we live spirituality nowadays, can new myths and new icons be (re)created? This is the motto for a project of video installations that will occupy the city of Braga throughout 2027. Our starting point is research into the ceramics of Barcelos (Unesco Creative City of Crafts and Folk Arts), a town 20 km north of Braga, whose ceramic handicrafts display typical features of the Minho region and the entire Northern Iberian Peninsula. This project is especially interested in how ceramic culture fuses popular knowledge, condensing rural mythologies as well as gender and circular economy issues. Barcelos pottery brings together a poetics of shapes that generates a very rich and often misunderstood imagery. Local ceramics depict pagan beliefs based on oral memory that take shape through sculptures such as lizards chasing women when they are menstruating, exorcisms, sorceresses or *carrôchos* (six-legged creatures). These representations were made mainly by poor and illiterate women, excluded from any technical training, such as Rosa Ramalho, Ana Baraça or Júlia Côta, that despite this kept questioning the limits of art, style, tradition and imitation, in a way that can help rethink the space of art and creation today. Several international artists will be working with Barcelos' enduring ceramic community during 2026. This exchange programme gathers the support of AC/E – Acción Cultural Española and Arts Council Luxembourg, and includes artists Ana Mariz (PT), Pablo Barreiro (ES), Carlos Mensil (PT), Vanessa da Silva (BR) and Hisae Hikenaga (MX). This process will result in a series of video installations located in the public gardens of Braga. They will be a meeting place for artists, researchers and audiences to engage in talks that will bring European contemporary creation and craftsmanship together as a link between tradition and community.

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Promoters** Ana Mariz (PT) and Pablo Barreiro (ES) **Local partners** Duarte Sequeira Gallery; DeBarro Ceramics **Euroregional partners** Barcelos Creative City of Unesco; NORDÉS Gallery (Santiago de Compostela/ES) **National partners** artistic production platform Artworks; NONO Gallery; film production company Primeira Idade; artist Carlos Mensil **International partners** Artists Vanessa da Silva (BR) and Hisae Hikenaga (MX); contemporary art gallery Max Estrella (ES); AC/E Acción Cultural Española (ES); Kultur | Ix – Arts Council Luxembourg (LU); support of audiovisual production by Ibermedia (ES); Canal ARTE (FR); CNC France (FR)

# Tour d'Europe on Journalism

#cross-border cooperation

The years 1981, 1986, 1995, 2004 and 2007 tell the story of European enlargement and integration, meaning that for many countries more than 40, 25 and 20 years will soon have passed since they joined the EU. On the other hand, the year 1985 tells the story of the ECoC, when Athens started it all, inspired by Melina Mercouri. Culture and the ECoC have greatly contributed to the European integration process. This project targets teams of local journalists firstly – in specific, from outlets such as RUM (University of Minho Radio), Correio do Minho, Diário do Minho, Antena Minho, and local bloggers and influencers; and secondly, those from the Euroregion – such as Nòs Diario, Praza, Mediosengalego, among others from Galicia and the capital Lisbon, where national media is headquartered. They will be invited to investigate the impacts of European integration and the ECoC initiative on different cities and their effects on people's lives. This Tour d'Europe starts in 2023 in Elefsina, Timișoara and Veszprém-Balaton, moving to Tartu in 2024, Chemnitz and Nova Gorica – Gorizia in 2025, Oulu and Trenčín in 2026, and Liepāja and Plovdiv in 2027. In these cities, exchanges with local and regional media will be fostered. In a series of journalistic pieces, in writing, video and photo, the stories of European integration are told, and the faces of Europe portrayed. The travels will also include capacity-building workshops to promote peer learning and strengthen good cultural journalism in Europe, tackling issues such as fake news and hate speech, and promoting research journalism on the ECoC beyond the stereotypes of a one-off large-scale event. Moreover, the project will target journalism students from across Europe to accompany the development and implementation of ECoC projects in the former and designated ECoC cities. This idea might well set the ground for an Erasmus+ partnership to offer more intensive European exchanges via a programme of mobility and internships. Finally, in 2027, we will invite the European community of local journalists, spanning academia and European networks and media such as the European Journalism Training Association (BE), Eurozine, Euractiv, and ECoC News. They will all come together for a public event and a meeting on the challenges of today's media and the secrets of high-quality cultural journalism, and to cover Braga'27, sharing our European stories with the world. From 2023 on, the resulting works will be shared on diverse digital media, feeding a joint "ECoC blog" and a series of podcasts. These platforms will allow common channels to be created in order to build a European community of cultural journalists that will remain. Overall, the project aims to create a sustainable media environment for content sharing and exchange between journalists across borders, reinforce the European dimension of cultural journalism, and promote awareness of the power of culture and cultural diversity within the European integration process.

**Timeframe** 2023-27 **Local partners** radio station RUM – Rádio Universitária do Minho; newspapers Correio do Minho and Diário do Minho; radio station Antena Minho **Euroregional partners** Porto School of Journalism, Faculty of Science and Communications University of Porto; galician news media Nòs Diario, Praza, La Voz de Galicia, Mediosengalego, Revista Luzes, Tempos Dixital (ES) **International partners** universities of participating ECoCs: Plovdiv 2019 (BG), Elefsina 2023 (GR), Veszprém-Balaton 2023 (HU), Timișoara 2023 (RO), Tartu 2024 (EE), Chemnitz 2025 (DE), GO! 2025 Nova Gorica – Gorizia (SI), Oulu 2026 (FI), Trenčín 2026 (SK), Liepāja 2027 (LV), Reims 2028 (FR) and Malmö 2029 (SE) **Potential partners** newspapers Público, Jornal de Notícias, Expresso; European Journalism Training Association (Mechelem-BE); Eurozine (AT); Euractiv (BE); Ecoc News (IT)

# Eating is Wanting

Nearly 150 years ago, the French lawyer and chef Brillat-Savarin made his most famous remark, "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are". By picking up on this statement, *Eating is Wanting* will gather everyone around the dining table to reflect and debate about how food and our eating habits can be a vehicle of self-knowledge, celebration and interconnectedness with our shared European and global culture, history and environment. Consider codfish, one of Portugal's most popular and best-known sources of protein – it is caught in the Northern cold seas and played a historic role in bringing together several European countries in commercial partnerships and trade, helping to forge cultural identities on both ends. *Eating is Wanting* is a three-year project (2025-2027) that includes a yearly festival with a vibrant schedule of events in partnership with local and European food-related institutions, such as the National Seed Bank (PT) and Slow Food Europe. A festival that goes beyond the traditional show cooking and culinary experiences, to reach a deeper level of thought on food by creating bridges between local cooks and our ECoC friends in Bodø 2024, Nova Gorica – Gorizia 2025 and Oulu 2026. Renowned architecture collective raumlabor (DE) is invited to set up a contemporary kitchen in the city centre to cook strong bonds between international artists, food activists and the community, allowing them to exchange knowledge on how to plant, transform and preserve food. Between saucepans, ingredients and conservation techniques, we will learn about the bases of a sustainable diet, where slow and seasonal food are essential, and remind ourselves that choosing what we eat can also be a political gesture, impacting others, our landscapes and ecosystems. The *Eating is Wanting* programme includes food workshops and debates, topped off by performative meals in unexpected locations in Braga and its surrounding region, such as in MARB – the regional logistics and food supply market or in the middle of a cornfield in Braga's outskirts. Each performative meal is co-designed by a team of architects and renowned food artists, such as the collective The Center for Genomic Gastronomy (US), Soft Protest Digest (FR), plant-based project A Recoletora (PT), and studio Marije Vogelzang (NL). While architects design the setting, artists will guide the participants through critical practices that nourish food-related stories and experiences. With the help of chefs, students from the Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave cooking school (PT), farmers, academics, and activists, attendees will embark on a celebratory journey of self-discovery and environmental exploration through the world of food.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Space Transcribers and Matilde Seabra **Local partners** INL – International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory; National Seed Bank; local brewery Cerveja Letra/Hopen Beer Fest; MARB – regional logistics and food supply market **Regional partners** School of Hospitality and Tourism Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave (Barcelos); agricultural cooperative Cavagri – Cooperativa Agrícola do Alto Cávado **National partners** edible wild plants collaborative project A Recoletora; international research platform Illustration School Gata da Mata **International partners** The Soft Protest Digest (DK); The Centre for Genomic Gastronomy (US); Regional Centre for Culinary Heritage Latgale (LV); Slow Food Europe (EU); Studio Marije Vogelzang (NL); Flying Stock Fish Festival and Future of Feeding Europe/Bodø 2024 (NO); Food Academy/GO! 2025 Nova Gorica – Gorizia (SI); Arctic Food Lab/Oulu 2026 (FI)

## Carnation Revolution – 50 Years in Freedom

April 25, 1974. Sickened and tired of taking part in a devastating colonial war that had been dragging young men to die in Africa since 1961, soldiers took to the streets of Portugal to depose a long fascist regime that was standing “proudly alone” in a democratic Europe. That day, the military guns did not fire bullets. Instead, they were filled with red carnations offered by the people. *Carnation Revolution – 50 Years in Freedom* is an immersive transdisciplinary exhibition. It takes place in a military facility, from where soldiers departed to the revolution, and in Teatro Circo, where the performances and cinema screenings will take place, turning visitors into participants of history. Diverse documents will be shown, from photographic archives, books, posters and graphic material, news pieces from public TV archives, to documentary films such as “Good Portuguese People” (1980), by Rui Simões (PT), “Torre Bela” (1975), by Thomas Harlan (DE), “State Funeral” (2019), by Sergei Loznitsa (UA) or “The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceaușescu” (2010), by Andrei Ujică (RO). Visual art pieces by Portuguese artists Ana Hatherly, Helena Almeida, Vieira da Silva, Júlio Pomar, Clara Menéres, Mário Cesariny, Pancho Guedes, Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, Paula Rego, among others, will give an insight into the social, political and cultural context of the period between the 1920s and 1970s. By including both past and present, the project invokes the collective European memory to reflect on today’s distortion of historical facts and the basic principles of freedom by populist discourse and new nationalist narratives that spread throughout Europe and the world. Much more than the history of a single country, this will be a call to act for change, to stand up for European values – human rights, democracy, pluralism, tolerance, and equality. This discussion will be supported by a parallel conference programme, in which the Portuguese political history will serve as a starting point for presenting European themes such as information manipulation and censorship, the contemporary dialogue between colonisers and colonised, and the role of women and gender equality throughout history, with historians, thinkers, artists and curators such as Fernando Rosas, Hendrik Folkerts (SE), Maria Inácia Rezola and Irene Flunser Pimentel. This polyphony of voices and historical interpretations will also be visible in the project’s performative branch with the theatre of Bernardo Santareno and Heiner Müller (DE), and the contemporary dance and performance of Vera Mantero and Joclécio Azevedo (BR). In addition to already existing works by Harun Farocki (DE) and Malangatana (MZ), newly commissioned works will be presented by international artists such as Fernando

Sánchez Castillo (ES) and Binelde Hyrcan (AO), reinforcing the project’s cultural, political and emotional topography and reminding Europe of other dictatorships and humanitarian crises that happened or are happening in other latitudes.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Paulo Mendes **Local partners** decorative arts museum Museu Nogueira da Silva – University of Minho; Centre for Humanistic Studies University of Minho (CEHUM); 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment of the Portuguese Army; photography museum Museu da Imagem; Braga Public Library; Braga District Archive; featured artist José Delgado **Regional partners** Serralves Foundation – Museum of Contemporary Art (Porto); CIAJG – José de Guimarães International Arts Centre (Guimarães); Oliva Art Centre and Norlinda e José Lima Collection (São João da Madeira); CPF – Portuguese Centre of Photography (Porto); art galleries Fernando Santos, Quadrado Azul (Porto) **National partners** APVG – Portuguese War Veterans Association; Commemorative Commission for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 25<sup>th</sup> of April; Museum of Neo-Realism; Figueiredo Ribeiro Collection; featured artists Alfredo Cunha, André Carrilho, Ângela Ferreira, António Olaio, Eduardo Batarda, Filipa César, João Pedro Vale & Nuno Alexandre Ferreira, Manuel Santos Maia, Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, Mónica de Miranda, Nuno Nunes-Ferreira, Rita GT, Salomé Lamas, Silvestre Pestana, Vasco Araújo; performance artists Ricardo Vaz Trindade, Susana Chiocca & António Lago, Vera Mantero; conference speakers Fernando Rosas, Irene Flunser Pimentel, Maria Inácia Rezola, Pedro Lapa **International partners** Prague City Gallery (CZ); featured artists Andrei Ujică (RO), António Ole (AO), Binelde Hyrcan (AO), Cildo Meireles (BR), Délio Jasse (AO), Deimantas Narkevičius (LT), Fernando Sánchez Castillo (ES), Gonçalo Mabunda (MZ), Harun Farocki (DE), Jonathas de Andrade (BR), Malangatana (MZ), Mirosław Balka (PL), Mohau Modisakeng (ZA), Pedro G. Romero (ES), Sergei Loznitsa (UA); performance artists Joclécio Azevedo (BR/PT) and Oona Doherty (UK); conference speakers Hendrik Folkerts (SE); Sandra Baborovska (CZ)



# Temple of Creation



**Where a new flow of creative energy  
fuels our city and Europe.**

# Square – International Independent Music Festival

#cross-border cooperation

*Square* is a celebration of European independent artists that aims to contribute to a more diverse and representative music market ecosystem. Starting in 2026, this four-day event will take place in four cities, blending their local scenes with European artists and other professionals. With both audience and professionals-driven programmes, *Square* is not an ordinary European showcase festival. Each artist will be meticulously matched with an unconventional performance site – picture an electronic act performing in a vineyard or a folk collective playing in an old factory – creating a unique experience. After years of the predominance of Anglo-Saxon artists across Europe, the past decade set a more diverse and inclusive stage for other artists to emerge. Powered by local clubs and independent labels, promoters and events, there has been a growth of outlying European markets, like the Balkans or Iberia, that so far had little expression at internationally renowned events. This festival will take place in the neighbouring cities that are part of the municipal network *Quadrilátero Urbano* – Braga, Barcelos, Guimarães and Vila Nova de Famalicão, a region where some of the most promising artists, labels, venues and promoters from Portugal are based. There is fertile ground to develop an event in this territory that will showcase the best European talent, co-curated with local, national and international partners such as MOST – The Bridge for Balkan Music (HU), Le Guess Who? (NL) and Trans Musicales (FR). In cooperation with partners MUMI and Sinsal it will include a small showcase extension in Galicia (ES). *Square* will become an international reference in promoting and increasing the circulation of artists from peripheral European countries, building and strengthening new markets for them to flourish.

**Timeframe** 2026-27 **Curatorship** Lovers & Lollypops **Local partners** booking agents and labels Bazuuca, Revolve and artistic collective Cosmic Burger **Euroregional partners** *Quadrilátero Urbano* – Municipalities of Braga, Guimarães (ECoC 2012), Barcelos and Vila Nova de Famalicão; music festivals Sinsal (Vigo/ES) and MUMI – professional music meeting of Galicia and Portugal (PT/ES) **National partners** cultural production and management company CTL Lisboa; music festivals Festival Músicas do Mundo de Sines, Festival Zigurfest and Festival Tremor; Zé Dos Bois Gallery **International partners** Le Guess Who? (NL); MOST music market of the Balkans platform (HU); Trans Musicales (FR); Budva-Boka 2028 (ME)

# Creators Academy

#cross-border cooperation #legacy

What greater legacy can the ECoC leave than transforming people and the region's cultural ecosystem? *Creators Academy* is a peer-based capacity-building programme offering training, mentorship and a platform for exchange with inspiring initiatives from other parts of Europe. It is specifically designed to help the community projects selected in our open calls increase their autonomy and capacity for building co-creation projects at the European level. During the bidding process, we witnessed cultural operators' fragilities in areas such as international collaboration, networking and co-creation. This project, tailored for the regional CCS, aims to strengthen the European dimension of regional-based projects and operators. *Creators Academy* was inspired by other ECoCs legacy programmes, such as Tempo Academy in Kaunas 2022 (LT), and developed with the support of cultural and creative industries specialist Arteria Foundation (PL). The programme offers peer learning and exchange opportunities between the region and European creators, through regular field trips to other cities to get to know their approach on the ground and by hosting other ECoCs or candidate cities, planting the seeds of future cooperation. This non-formal and informal learning programme will be developed from 2023 until 2030, prolonging the benefits of the title Year. The project addresses around 50 organisations, individual promoters and artists, who will meet local, national and international professional trainers. In 2023, a tailor-made training programme will be co-designed with the creators and other partners, considering the main needs identified. The Academy will carry out several training cycles and its modules can employ different arrangements, venues and trainers depending on the group in question and its particularities, unfolding in a blended learning approach. The mentoring programme will take place throughout the different phases of the ECoC, enhancing the immersion of creators in real contexts and monitoring their evolution. In 2024, a proficiency validation system will be tested in partnership with the National Qualifications Agency and the educational community project *Pluriversidade*, based on the accomplished learning, allowing creators' professional and/or academic evolution. Higher education partners and artistic professionals, such as Alberto Sampaio Secondary School, the Higher Education School of Music and Performing Arts (Porto) and Galicia Drama School (ES), will collaborate in this process. At the same time, we expect that the *Creators Academy* will inspire them to rethink their proposals for formal learning and open it further up for European exchange.

**Timeframe** 2023-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** innovation hub Startup Braga; artistic collective Cosmic Burger; University of Minho; Alberto Sampaio High School; Maximinos High School; Equilibrium Social Circus; classical music conservatories Conservatório Bomfim and Conservatório de Música Calouste Gulbenkian **Euroregional partners** Galicia Drama School (ES); Arda Academy (Porto); ESMAE – Higher Education School of Music and Performing Arts (Porto), ESAP – Higher Education Artistic School of Porto; vocational artistic school Academia Contemporânea do Espetáculo (Porto) **National partners** organisation for cultural accessibility Acesso Cultura; educational community project *Pluriversidade Comunitária*; Higher Education Dance School of Lisbon; IEF – National Institute for Employment and Professional Training; ANQEP – National Agency for Qualification and Professional Education, I.P. **International partners** Arteria Foundation (PL); SP Drama School – Development Center for Stage Arts (BR); Sesc São Paulo Research and Training Centre (BR); Wrocław 2016 (PL); Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018-2028 (NL); Novi Sad 2022 (SR); Kaunas 2022 (LT); CCN – International Choreographic Institute/Montpellier 2028 (FR)

## Footnotes, guide with museum instructions

This project establishes a dialogue between the collections of Braga's most important museum institutions and contemporary artistic creation. Footnotes are commentaries and interpretations that add a layer of information to the understanding of a subject, a piece, or an object. Works of contemporary art, many of them site-specific, will function as critical comments on existing museological proposals, dialoguing with the museum's collections and promoting a fresh interpretation of those contents and spaces. The project also includes performances, spoken word events, concerts and conferences. The multidisciplinary programme will take place at the Archeology Museum D. Diogo de Sousa, the Museum of Biscainhos and the Museum Nogueira da Silva, heritage sites that safeguard Braga's and European common cultural heritage – the Roman Empire legacy, the richness of the Baroque period, the dictatorships of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A universe of stories and knowledge that will resonate with both national and international visitors through the juxtaposition with contemporary works of art from Erwin Wurm (AT), Lawrence Weiner (US), Sabine Hornig (DE) or Julião Sarmiento (PT). In each museum, a performance, a concert or a debate will take place every week, sharing the room with the newly installed artistic works-interventions. A visitor guide map will also be created, promoting unusual encounters with people and objects, the secrets of the urban arena and its unstable territory. By turning spectators into contemporary "flâneurs", *Footnotes* intends to promote an alternative relationship with museums and renew audiences' interest in visiting them.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Paulo Mendes **Local partners** archeology museum Museu D. Diogo de Sousa; decorative arts museums Museu dos Biscainhos and Museu Nogueira da Silva – University of Minho; religious and social institution Misericórdia de Braga; Monastery of Tibães **Regional partners** CIAJG – José de Guimarães International Arts Centre (Guimarães), Sonoscopia – Platform for Experimental Music (Porto); Serralves Foundation – Museum of Contemporary Art (Porto) **National partners** Modern and Contemporary Art Museum Museu Coleção Berardo; Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art Gallery; Leal Rios Foundation; Figueiredo Ribeiro Collection; featured artists António Bolota, Carlos Bunga, Fernão Cruz, Francisco Vidal, Jonathan Uliel Saldanha, Leonor Antunes, Luísa Jacinto, Mafalda Santos, Maria Trabulo, Priscila Fernandes, Sara & André; performers and musicians Pedro Tudela + Miguel Carvalhais, José Valente, Joana Gama; conference speakers Diogo Aguiar, Filipa Ramos and Sandra Vieira Jurgens **International partners** featured artists Cildo Meireles (BR), Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (ES), Dénes Farkas (EE/HR), Didier Fiúza Faustino (FR), Dinos & Jake Chapman (UK), Doug Aitken (US), Erwin Wurm (AT), Lawrence Weiner (US), Liam Gillick (UK), Franz West (AT), Marlene Dumas (ZA), Nora Turato (HR), Paulina Ołowska (PL), Philippe Van Snick (BE), Ryan Gander (UK), Sabine Hornig (DE), Wolfgang Tillmans (DE); performers and musicians Dori Nigro + Paulo Pinto (BR), Eric Alalooqa (EE), Jacob Kiekegaard (DK), Max Eastley (UK); conference speakers Pablo Berástegui (ES) and Barbara Piwowarska (PL)

## Semibreve '27

*Semibreve* is one of Europe's leading festivals focused on exploratory electronic music. A fundamental part of the festival's identity is its constant ability to reach out for new ideas, artists, venues and audiences in dialogue with the city's cultural heritage on some of its most iconic buildings, such as Bom Jesus Sanctuary (Unesco Heritage site). Looking forward to the ECoC 2027, apart from its regular activity, *Semibreve* will widen its collaboration with other European festivals, artists, education institutions and business companies, notably from countries with recent ECoC experiences, promoting an international exchange platform of artwork and educational initiatives based on sonic exploration. In 2027, *Semibreve* will deliver a threefold programme developed specifically for the ECoC programme. Seeking to strengthen the connections with like-minded European institutions, *Semibreve* will co-produce a new installation work with Sonica festival from Ljubljana (SI). Focusing on the contemplative act of listening and exploring the ecological dimensions of sound, a collective of Portuguese and Slovenian artists, which will be selected via an open call, will work on this piece between March and September 2027. It will premiere in *Semibreve* (October 2027) at the Monastery of Tibães, travelling afterwards to the 2028 edition of Sonica. In the ECoC preparatory years, there will be an exchange programme for students of the Media Arts Masters of the University of Minho and media arts students from Liepāja 2027 to collaborate on a joint artwork that will be exhibited at Update festival during Media Arts Week and *Semibreve* Festival in 2027. Additionally, *Semibreve* will join efforts with instrument maker Bastl Instruments (CZ), the cybersongosse synthesiser from Bourges 2028, and software developers Imaginando, from Braga, to present a week-long workshop for adolescents and university students from Braga and Brno 2028, dedicated to the creation of DIY musical instruments and interfaces. This collaboration between youngsters from three European countries will lead to a public presentation of sound explorations developed by this group. Also, a discussion about communitarian sound practices, in partnership with the Sound and Image Department of the School of Arts of the Catholic University of Portugal (Porto), will be included in the programme.

**Timeframe** 2027 **Curatorship** Luís Fernandes **Local partners** artistic and cultural cooperative AUAUFEIOMAU; Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts; Master in Media Arts University of Minho; Monastery of Tibães, tech startup Imaginando **Regional partners** University of Porto; School of Arts Catholic University of Portugal (Porto); ESMAE – Higher Education School of Music and Performing Arts (Porto) **International partners** SONICA (SI); Bastl Instruments (CZ); EMAP – European Media Art Platform (EU); We Are Europe (EU); Liepāja University Art Research Laboratory (LV); Media arts festival Update/Liepāja 2027 (LV); Brno 2028 (CZ); Cybersongosse/Bourges 2028 (FR)

# The Art of Caring – School for Conservation

## #legacy

This capacity-building programme trains and qualifies young adults and professionals in the field of conservation and restoration of cultural heritage. It will be the first step in creating a future conservation “School-Studio” in Braga, dedicated to applied and decorative arts and crafts. Braga is known for its historical and cultural heritage, particularly from the Baroque era. Having craftsmen and technicians fully apt for conserving and restoring its wonderful pieces such as gilded woodwork and carved altars, sculptures, paintings, tile panels and chiselled metal pieces is one of the city’s vital needs. The project focuses on training in-class, in workshops and in real work contexts (granting levels 4 and 5 of the European Qualifications Framework). It also aims to co-promote a broad diffusion of contemporary scientific approaches and practices for the conservation/restoration of cultural heritage, following the guidelines published by the *Chart of Venice* (20<sup>th</sup> century) and all the subsequent documents. To achieve this, European exchange programmes and partnerships with several organisations, schools and training centres will take place, through admissions of teachers and students from other European countries or through organising workshops and seminars. For that, we will count on the collaboration of institutions such as the Michelangelo Foundation – Creativity and Craftsmanship (CH), Escuela Superior de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Culturales (ES), Institut National des Métiers d’Art (FR) and Fundação de Arte de Ouro Preto (BR). *The Art of Caring* will kick off with a collective intervention on the emblematic Chapel of Santa Maria Madalena and São Gonçalo (mid-18<sup>th</sup> century), also known as “The Converted Women Seclusion”, since its original purpose was protecting the poor and homeless women and “lead them to salvation on Earth”. This chapel is ornated with a gilded and carved main altar and table, painted ceilings and stone columns, and important pieces of religious statuary. The overall conservation state of the chapel is quite precarious, the wooden structures and ceiling being of particular concern. The project will be led by Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva Foundation – Europa Nostra Award 2012 for “Exceptional Contribution” – a reference in Portuguese decorative arts and crafts in the field of promotion and preservation. It will establish a partnership with the Catholic University of Porto that will bring an extensive network for exchange with other Baroque cities in Europe to the project. An artistic school that will connect us all, from Eastern Europe to Brazil, where the Baroque was introduced by the Portuguese, specifically by Braga architects and masters.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Maria João Bustorff/  
Fundação Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva **Local partners** archeology  
museum Museu D. Diogo de Sousa; University of Minho **Regional part-  
ners** Regional Directorate for Culture of the North; School of Arts Catholic  
University of Portugal (Porto) **National partners** IEPF – National Institute  
for Employment and Professional Training; ANQEP – National Agency for  
Qualification and Professional Education, I.P. **International partners**  
Michelangelo Foundation For Creativity and Craftsmanship (CH); ECCIA –  
European Cultural and Creative Industries Alliance (EU); ESCRBC – Higher  
School of Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Assets (Madrid/ES);  
INMA – The National Institute of Crafts (FR); Bauhaus – New Bauhaus (DE);  
Colbert Committee (FR); FAOP – Ouro Preto Art Foundation (BR); ICFG – Flavio  
Gutierrez Cultural Institute (BR); IEPHA – State Institute of Historic and Artistic  
Heritage of Minas Gerais (BR); Pedra Institute (BR); Liepāja Restoration Centre/  
Liepāja 2027 (LV); Budva-Boka 2028 (ME)

## PI

### #community open call

PI is a 72-hour event that intersects creative coding with artistic and holistic practices, researching creative ways of understanding and intertwining body, technology and art. This new festival, which will take place during Europe Code Week, emphasises interdisciplinary cooperation by supporting networking and collaboration between European researchers, artists, activists and the community to share knowledge and contribute to the advancement of live coding research in the EU. It will have three main areas of development. The first one, Game Jam, is a three-day challenge, co-designed with the local and international community of coders and body-mind practitioners. Participants will co-develop a video game in 72 hours, based on a surprise theme related to our bid’s concept: *Time for Contemplation*. During the challenge, participants are bound to one rule – vocal silence. The binary system will be the only way for the participants to communicate and create. As the challenge develops, each day the participants will have a series of corporeal and holistic practices such as Yoga, Tantra and meditation that promote body-mind-technology experiences. The second is a series of Open Workshops to strengthen the cooperation between the EU creative coding community. Ljudmila Art and Science Laboratory (SI) and Creative Coding Utrecht (NL) will support the transnational sharing of knowledge and the exchange of artistic experiences, considering their diversity, knowledge and learning needs. Finally, a series of Live Coding Performances by Michele Samarotto (IT) and Daniel Kuroscho Hopfner (DE) will be part of the festival’s programme, engaging the audience with a creative technique in which computer programs are written in real time and on stage to produce sound and images.

**Timeframe** 2027 **Promoters** Pedro Martins Guimarães **Mentorship**  
Rodrigo Malvar **Local partners** Radio Station RUM – Rádio Universitária do  
Minho; Yoga Braga; Gratitude – Arte do Yoga; Braga Unesco Creative City of  
Media Arts **National partners** Nova University of Lisbon – Code Fest; Taoist  
Tantra Centre; Yoga Portuguese Confederation **International partners**  
EuroXR Association (BE); VR@School (RO); Raw Fury (SE); Ljudmila Art and  
Science Laboratory (SI); Creative Coding Utrecht (NL); Ars Electronica (AT);  
IN-SONORA – International Show of Sound and Interactive Art (ES); artists  
Michele Samarotto (IT), Daniel Kuroscho Hopfner (DE); Brno 2028 (CZ)



# Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform

#legacy #cross-border cooperation

The *Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform* is a stepping stone towards building a cross-border European media cluster in the North of Portugal and Galicia Euroregion (and one of our legacies), in a joint effort of Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts, Guimarães ECoC legacy in cinema production and the Galician Audiovisual cluster. It will also invite individuals and organisations from Europe and beyond, following the most recent trends of co-creation and co-production and enhancing the creative ecosystem of Braga'27, as this project aims to emphasise the common links between European and world cinema, through historical and contemporary dialogue. The core element of this platform is cross-border cooperation, unfolding into a three-dimensional programme.

**The Contemplation cinema festival** In cooperation with other film festivals from the North of Portugal and Galicia, such as Curtas – Vila do Conde International Film Festival (PT), MDOC – Melgaço International Documentary Festival (PT), PlayDoc International Film Festival – Tui (Galicia, ES), Curto Circuito – Santiago de Compostela (Galicia, ES) and Gijón International Film Festival (ES), its programme will elevate the screening room into a temple of encounter, reflection and learning. A film festival does not end in a fortnight of events. It continues in the community and develops throughout the year. The festival will have a strong educational approach, highlighting topics such as climate change, sustainability and community living, while exploring connections between moving images and our societies, in a quest for a deeper understanding of urban, social, environmental and cultural challenges and local, regional, cross-border and European identities.

**Call to action** is the engine designed to jumpstart cinema and audiovisual markets through economic cooperation and cultural exchange, in partnership with Galician organisations AGADIC – Cultural Industries Agency (ES) and CGAI – Galician Centre for Arts of Image (ES). A place for international showcasing, for creators, producers and audiences to mingle, as well as for fostering capacity building for cinema professionals and audience development initiatives, where producers Rodrigo Areias (PT) and Belí Martínez (ES) will be mentors and David Pope (UK), Maria Vittoria Pellechia (IT) and Éva Demeter (HU) will coordinate a capacity-building project for professionals.

**Call to Contemplation** is a think tank, co-created with IFFS – International Federation of Film Societies and CIFEJ – International Centre of Films for Children and Young People, for reflecting on the importance of cinema as a medium for addressing and pointing out solutions to contemporary questions: memory and future; city and community; climate change and ecosystems; European identity and citizenship. A contribution to the development of critical thinking by sharing and shaping culture as a natural and public right. Dragan Milinkovic Fimon (RS) will coordinate the teacher's capacitation team for the project implementation. The activities will take place in Braga, Guimarães and Santiago de Compostela in 2027, but this project will seek to become a global Platform, bringing together partners from Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iran, Bangladesh, UK, Germany, among others, providing a global approach and multicultural perspectives on Contempl/ACTION.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Eduardo Brito and João Paulo Macedo **Local partners** University of Minho; film clubs Lucky Star and Cineclube Aurélio da Paz dos Reis **Euroregional partners** ECoC Guimarães 2012; film club Cineclube de Guimarães, Minho Film Commission; APNEIA – Association of Producers and Independent Audiovisual Entrepreneurs from the North of Portugal; Agência – portuguese short film agency (Vila do Conde); cultural association Casa da Animação (Porto); Cinema Museum of Melgaço; animation cinema museum Casa Museu de Vilar (Lousada); film festivals CURTAS Vila do Conde, MDOC (Melgaço) and Close-Up (Vila Nova de Famalicão); AGADIC – Galician Agency of Creative Industries (Santiago de Compostela/ES); CGAI – Galician Centre for the Image Arts/Film library of Galicia (A Coruña/ES); PlayDoc International Film Festival (Tui/ES) **National partners** Ministry of Culture/ICA – The Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual; Portugal Film Commission; Portuguese Cinematheque – Museum of Cinema; European Centre for Creative Writing; artistic residencies Lyriqas; Global Teacher Prize Portugal winner Elsa Cerqueira; artist and professor Filipe Lopes; cinema curator Isa Catarina Mateus **International partners** FIAPF – International Federation of Film Producers Associations; FICC – International Federation of Film Societies; Éva Demeter – Alexander Trauner Film Festival (HU); FIPRESCI – International Federation of Film Critics; CIFEJ – International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (IR); EAVE – European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs; EFA – European Film Academy; EFP – European Film Promotion; artists Anomaa Rajakaruna (LK), Maria Vittoria Pellechia (IT), David Pope (UK), Dagmar Kamlah (DE), Dragan Milinkovic Fimon (SR), Diana Saqeb Jamal (AF/CA), Golam Rabbany Biplob (BD), Günther Kinstler (DE) and Kamran Shirdel (IR); Cinemed/Montpellier 2028 (FR)

# Baroque, a Labyrinth of Transmutations

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, while Europe was brimming with political turmoil, European colonisation spread firmly throughout the American continent on several fronts, carrying the seal of different crowns. Artisans, painters and architects from Braga ventured into Brazilian Ouro Preto (Minas Gerais), contributing to cultural transmigration between cities and continents by exchanging knowledge with the local masters. This led to the birth of a new style – the Baroque of Minas Gerais. Carver and sculptor Aleijadinho, Antônio Francisco Lisboa (BR), is praised as its most prominent figure, the same way that in Portugal we celebrate Braga-born Baroque architect André Soares. Through a transdisciplinary exhibition and an international conference that will gather creators, thinkers and historians, such as Angelo Oswaldo (BR) and Azu Nwagbogu (NG), we question the Eurocentric history of colonisation by Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands and France. The exhibition is not a unilateral perspective focused on those who sailed off to unknown seas but rather evokes the vision of those standing at the beach, watching the caravels dock. Following the transit of objects, images and bodies, we establish a dialogue of cultures and miscegenation, a cartography of the social order and traumatic processes of colonial expansion, also engraved in the Baroque creations. The Monastery of Tibães will be the exhibition headquarters, where existing visual art pieces, including historical paintings and documentation, and newly commissioned works will be showcased. These will focus on the appropriation and reinterpretation of the Baroque style, some resulting from artist residencies by artists such as Adriana Varejão (BR), whose work is anchored in the iconography of the Baroque tiles and carvings, or Pedro Cabrita Reis (PT). In the gardens and fields of the Monastery, artistic interventions by José Pedro Croft (PT), Marilá Dardot (BR) and Batia Suter (CH) will take place. At the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus (Unesco World Heritage Site), itself a Baroque masterpiece, Miguel Palma (PT) and Joana Zielyska (PL) will exhibit site-specific installations. In the Main Room of the Biscainhos Museum, another example of Baroque, the ceiling-painted figures and exotic animals of “tropicalised landscapes” will contrast with works of Rochelle Costi (BR), Lourdes Castro (PT) and Candida Höfer (DE). The project will be a co-production between relevant Brazilian institutions such as Inhotim Institute and Ouro Preto Art Foundation (BR) and Portuguese museums such as the National Museum of Ancient Art (PT).

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Paulo Mendes **Local partners** Monastery of Tibães; decorative arts museum Museu dos Biscainhos; University of Minho **Regional partners** Serralves Foundation – Museum of Contemporary Art (Porto); CIAJG – José de Guimarães International Arts Centre (Guimarães); Oliva Art Centre and Norlinda and José Lima Collection (São João da Madeira); University of Porto; Nuno Centeno and Pedro Oliveira galleries (Porto) **National partners** Maria e Armando Cabral collection / Rialto6; Modern and Contemporary Art Museum Coleção Berardo; Museum of Neo-Realism; MNAA – National Museum of Ancient Art (PT); Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art Gallery; featured artists Albuquerque Mendes, Ana Hatherly, Ana Jotta, Ângelo de Sousa, André Sousa, Artur Barrio, Diana Policarpo, Eduardo Batarida, Gabriel Abrantes, Hugo Almeida Pinho, Joaquim Rodrigo, Jonathan Ulriel Saldanha, José Pedro Croft, Julião Sarmento, Luísa Cunha, Manoel de Oliveira, Miguel Carneiro, Miguel Palma, Nuno Ramalho, Pedro A. H. Paixão, Pedro Cabrita Reis, Pedro Calapez, Pedro Neves Marques, Silvestre Pestana, Von Calhau; performers Gustavo Sumpsta, Tânia Carvalho; conference speakers Marta Mestre and Ângela Berlinde **International partners** Institute Inhotim (BR); Lagos Photo Festival (NG); Institute Moreira Salles (BR); Maison Européenne de la Photographie (FR); Artists at Risk (FI); Vermelho Gallery (BR); Municipality of Ouro Preto – Minas Gerais (BR); the Minas Gerais State Government – Culture and Tourism State Department (BR); IEPHA/MG – Minas Gerais State Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (BR); IPHAN – National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (BR); IBRAM – Brazilian Institute of Museums (BR); FAOP – Ouro Preto Art Foundation (BR); ICFG – Flávio Gutierrez Cultural Institute (BR); Archdiocese of Mariana (BR); featured artists Adriana Varejão (BR), Batia Suter (CH), Candida Höfer (DE), Christian Andersson (SE), Cildo Meireles (BR), Claudia Andujar (BR), Dan Graham (US), Délio Jasse (AO), Elmgreen & Dragset (DK/NO), Erwin Wurm (AT), Eugenio Dittborn (CL), Hélio Oiticica (BR), Joana Zielyska (PL), Jonathan Monk (UK), Juan Araujo (VE), Lygia Pape (BR), Marilá Dardot (BR), Oscar Tuazon (US), Rochelle Costi (BR), Rosângela Rennó (BR), Ryan Gander (UK), Yonamine (AO); conference speakers Ailton Krenak (BR), Angelo Oswaldo (BR), Azu Nwagbogu (NG), Ellen Lima (BR)



## By Hand, by Heart

The art of crafts is part of Europe's cultural heritage and, despite local and regional particularities, we can find common ground in techniques, materials and patterns across the continent. This project starts from the richness of handicrafts in the Quadrilátero region (Braga, Guimarães, Barcelos and Vila Nova de Famalicão) to promote an international programme of learning exchange between European artisans and contemporary artists. We will start with a comprehensive and much-needed mapping of regional artisans, crafts, workplaces and selling methods, co-produced by The Home Project (PT) and the European CraftHub. Once the regional artisan scene is identified, an extensive capacity-building programme will gather local and European artisans, schools and university art students to promote the exchange of techniques, tools and the co-creation of new design pieces conceived with ancestral knowledge and materials. This programme will take place throughout 2025 and is co-organised with Passa ao Futuro (PT) and the World Crafts Council. In 2026, it will also include a set of workshops and a student exchange with the Handicraft Chamber of Ukraine and the Limerick School of Art and Design (IE), where participants from these three countries will have the chance to visit each other. In 2027, in an international residency co-promoted by Vicara (PT) and Organisation in Design (NL), international designers Eneida Tavares (PT), Pieke Bergmans (NL), Jo Nagasaka (JP), Studio Tochka & Tochka (BG) and Unfold Studio (UK) will work together with local artisans and artists from partner cities Liepāja 2027 (LV) and Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR) to design new products based on traditional craftsmanship and contemporary aesthetics. Each stage of this process will result in a book and an exhibition, with a digital component made available in the Crafts Hub's Material Library platform. During this residency, in partnership with Materahub (IT) and Crafting Europe, Braga will host an international seminar on heritage promotion and capacity building for artisans, designers and artists through innovative approaches and business models.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Duarte Sequeira and Guilherme Braga da Cruz **Regional partners** Quadrilátero Urbano – Municipalities of Braga, Guimarães (ECoC 2012), Barcelos and Vila Nova de Famalicão; Design School Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave (Barcelos); School of Architecture, Art and Design University of Minho (Guimarães); Design degree Lusíada University (Vila Nova de Famalicão); Contextile – Contemporary Textile Art Biennial (Guimarães) **National partners** cultural agency Vicara; research-based cultural initiative Passa Ao Futuro; design studio The Home Project **International partners** WCC – World Crafts Council Europe (IE); DeuS – Learn Design Create (EU); CraftHub (IT); Organisation in Design (NL); Crafting Europe (IE); Handicraft Chamber of Ukraine (UA); Limerick School of Art and Design (IE); FITE – The International Festival of Extra Ordinary Textiles (FR); designers and design studios Pieke Bergmans (NL), Jo Nagasaka (JP), Studio Tochka & Tochka (BG) and Unfold Studio (UK); Open Design School Matera/Matera 2019 (IT); Veszprém-Balaton 2023, Bad Ischl – Salzkammergut 2024; Oulu University of Applied Sciences/Oulu 2026 (FI); Design Massif Biennial/Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR)

## Pipe Poetics

Originating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a period in which the Iberian Peninsula was at the centre of Europe's political power, the Iberian Pipe Organ had an impact both on musical composition and as a model for instrument builders from most of Europe. However, after its pinnacle in the Baroque period, the instrument became underappreciated and understudied. *Pipe Poetics* intends to promote the creation and live performance of new compositions for Braga's Iberian Pipe Organs, bringing together the forefront of musical creation and the city's unique heritage. This project invites Claire M. Singer (UK), Charlemagne Palestine (US), Kali Malone (SE) and Anna von Hausswolff (SE), four international contemporary composers with distinct backgrounds, to bring fresh musical approaches to this fascinating instrument. Every trimester in 2027, a new musical composition will be developed, over the period of one month, and presented onsite at one of Braga's churches, in an exciting intersection between the city's heritage and artistic vanguard. All four works will be co-produced and presented with other festivals, both from Portugal – Jardins Efémeros and Out.Fest – and other European partners like Tartu's (EE) Sound our Souls festival, during 2028. Each of the artistic residencies will be recorded in film, leading to a documentary that will be presented online during 2027, and to a record, to be launched by the Australian label Room40. Additionally, *Pipe Poetics* will include a series of contemporary composition workshops and masterclasses held by internationally renowned organists for local music students of the University of Minho, the Calouste Gulbenkian music conservatoire, and European students from Liepāja 2027 and Janáček Academy of Performing Arts (Brno 2028).

**Timeframe** 2027 **Curatorship** Luís Fernandes **Local partners** Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts; Braga's Sinfonietta Orchestra; Archdiocese of Braga; classical music conservatoire Conservatório de Música Calouste Gulbenkian, University of Minho **National partners** international exploratory music festival Out.Fest and transdisciplinary festival Jardins Efémeros **International partners** Organ re-framed (UK); Room40 (AU); composers Claire M. Singer (UK), Charlemagne Palestine (US), Kali Malone (US/SE) and Anna von Hausswolff (SE); Sound of Souls Festival/Tartu 2024 (EE); Return of the Towers/Liepāja 2027 (LV); Janáček Academy of Performing Arts/Brno 2028 (CZ)

## Shopyard

#legacy

Did you know there are also *Galleries Lafayette* in Braga? The only resemblance to the sparkling Parisian department store is... the name. Our Lafayette Galleries are one of many decadent shopping malls from the 1980s, which we intend to revamp and retrieve from shadow into light. *Shopyard* looks at multiple well-located spaces across the city as an opportunity to create polycentric, informal cultural hubs. It will provide artists, designers, architects and cultural operators with a place for work, sharing experiences and knowledge, and for reflecting on artistic practices and European urban life, while also offering a space to digital nomads coming to Braga. These residents will organise regular open-door events for the public, in connection with the European Creative Hubs network. The programme will have three phases. The first will start in 2024, at Lafayette Galleries through a partnership between the private shop owners and the municipality that will create a cultural cooperative rooted in a bottom-up strategy that includes cultural and creative stakeholders. With the help of Bologna-based IndrediBol! creative hub (IT) and Nova Iskra (RS), Start Up Braga and the architectural cooperative LACOL (ES), this co-op will promote a spatial rebranding of Lafayette Galleries and organise the first international call for residencies to occupy these spaces. In the second phase, during 2025, selected residents will not only access these work spaces at an affordable price, but also local and European networks of knowledge exchange through a lively programme of workshops, open ateliers, debates and talks. In addition, they will receive support to access funding programmes. In the third phase, between 2026 and 2027, more under-occupied shopping malls in the city will be included in the *Shopyard* network, following the *Trialogue* exchanged with pilot projects Reichenberger Zombie Business (Liberec 2028) and Les Manufactures (Clermont-Ferrand 2028), together with the European Network for Workspace Health Promotion (IT). They will strengthen the co-op structure and foster a more prosperous network of informal creative spaces in the city, based on the legacy of a co-created good practices guide for healthy work environments with other national and European creative hubs.

**Timeframe** 2024-27 and onwards **Curatorship** Space Transcribers and Matilde Seabra **Local partners** Braga Business Association; shopping malls shop owners; agency for economic dynamisation Invest Braga; innovation hub Startup Braga **Regional partners** Porto Municipal Ateliers; Creative Laboratories and Emerging Ateliers – Arts and Creativity Platform (Guimarães); Armazém Cowork (Porto) **National partners** artistic production centre Polo Cultural Gaivotas – Municipality of Lisbon **International partners** IncredíBol! (IT); European CreativeHubs Network (EU); LACOL – Architectural Cooperative (ES); Nova Iskra (RS); European Network for Workspace Health Promotion (IT); The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FI); artist Katharina Rohde (DE); Creative Industry Košice (SK); Kreativivni centre Poligon (SI); Reichenberger Zombie Business/Liberec 2028 (CZ); Les Manufactures/Clermont-Ferrand 2028 (FR)

## Supracasa

*Supracasa* is a long-term programme of multidisciplinary artist residencies for international artists, tailored especially for our European *supraneighbours* from Northern Africa, the Balkans, Ukraine, Russia and the Caucasus. The name gets inspiration from the genius local poet Sebastião Alba who, after having lived a part of his life in Mozambique and having spent his last years homeless on the streets of Braga, died tragically in a hit-and-run car accident. *Supracasa* (suprahouse) is a metaphor the poet used to describe “*another place not located in the geographic territory where civil society exists*”. Sebastião Alba considered poetry his *suprahouse*, a spiritual haven where art is formed. The project will be a meeting platform for independent artists who work on the margins – social, artistic, political and geographical peripheries; and a place of debate about the role of arts in addressing migration and its effects on the social and political landscape of Europe. The aim is to rethink collaborative models and experimental methods of production, distribution and presentation in line with the challenges of the arts sector and society, based on the principles of solidarity, geographical balance and inclusion. Every year from 2025 on, in partnership with Artists at Risk (FI), Anna Lindh Foundation Network and Roberto Cimetta Fund, we will open a call for artists to come to Braga for a 12-month residency and work with local cultural operators. During their stay, artists will share their knowledge and experience with cultural operators, young artists and students through monthly sessions, co-curated by CulturadeCasa (RO) and Reshape Network (HR). The programme will take place in the Monastery of Tibães and the Jesuit Centre for Spirituality and Culture Casa da Torre (Vila Verde), two religious community spaces that will operate as a network for this project, offering physical facilities and spiritual retreat. The residency will end with a presentation followed by two more remote collaborative creations, in partnership with Performing Borders (UK), to keep the spirit of *Supracasa* alive and above borders.

**Timeframe** 2025-27 **Curatorship** Ana Rocha **Local partners** artistic platform Plataforma do Pandemônio; Monastery of Tibães; Casa da Torre – Jesuit Centre of Spirituality and Culture **Regional partners** Centre for Artistic Residencies Campus Paulo Cunha e Silva (Porto) **National partners** artist Francisco Vidal **International partners** Artists at Risk (FI); Performing Borders (UK); CulturadeCasa (RO); Shaymaa Shoukry – Dayer for Artistic Productions (EG); Anna Lindh Foundation Network: Jerusalem Center for Women (PS); Roberto Cimetta Fund (FR); Mediterranean Young Artists Biennale (SM); Arktik – The Institute for the Future (HR); Onassis Air (GR); The Festival Academy – European Festivals Association (BE); Reshape Network (HR); Mona Stories/Broumov 2028 (CZ); Budva-Boka 2028 (ME); Skopje 2028 (MK)

# Media Culture – Euroregional Platform

#legacy #cross-border cooperation

Inspired by the EU's *European Digital Decade* reference framework, this project joins the media sector from the Galicia-North Portugal Euroregion, focusing on the most innovative fields – new media and digital storytelling. It will provide a collective reflection and a hands-on approach to the challenges of the new digital creative economy and its impacts on European societies and the sector itself. Building a cross-border media cluster is an old project of the region given existing infrastructures, knowledge and professional communities, such as Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts, Porto's House of Cinema, Guimarães ECoC legacy in cinema production, the Galician Government strategic investment in their audiovisual sector, its strong structures and the dynamic festival scene and educational offer on both sides of the border. However, the sector is fragmented by limited cross-border and international collaboration. The enormous impact and potential of digital media to connect and scale up ideas in the global creative economy, alongside the region's close links to the Ibero-American space, makes this initiative the ideal way forward. *Media Culture* Platform intends to discuss and test proposals in response to the fundamental challenges affecting the sector worldwide and this peripheral region in particular – how to care about and nurture cultural diversity in globalised digital platforms, how to build more respectful and sustainable economic models for content creators and how to develop critical civic engagement within dominant narratives. The entire programme will be co-curated, joining together diverse voices from academia and professionals in the audiovisual, digital and new media fields from the region with European and Ibero-American peers, such as Storytellers United (EU) and Narrar el Futuro (CO), European and Ibero-American communities of media makers, technologists and designers; Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision (NL), experts on the impact of new media and digital culture on society; Unbias the News, a global network to boost more inclusive journalistic narratives; and Zemos98 (ES), active in fostering a critical citizenry with mainstream narratives. In addition, *Media Culture* will work together with another transnational project ECoC, Nova Gorica (SI) and Gorizia (IT) 2025, sharing experiences on the path initiated within the participation in the European Capital of Culture and Transfrontier Urban Cohesion – CECCUT Jean Monnet Network. Starting in 2023, in collaboration with sectoral associations partners, such as the Galician Audiovisual Academy and the audiovisual association Ao Norte (PT), a series of travelling workshop-meetings will take place monthly until 2027, culminating every year in a conclusive showcasing encounter in Braga. These events will be embedded in 44 existing international festivals and professional events throughout the Euroregion.

The physical and online actions will promote reflection, residencies, practical learning, interactive experiences co-created with citizens, creative experimentations and content prototyping in the frame of annual thematic programmes. In parallel, to ensure that the resulting ideas, stories and prototypes may find adequate space and resources to develop further and internationalise, we will activate a digital media incubator, with regular open calls. All of these visions, processes and storytelling objects will also be documented to feed a dynamic digital space, with mapping, showcase, distribution and collaborative features, that will serve as an open collective platform for the sector from 2023 on. This space and the support of media partners will also allow the dissemination of creative works among local and global audiences. As a legacy, a more engaged and connected cross-border community will also result in improved access to global content markets and a greater collective awareness of the importance of a sustainable and human-centred digital future.

**Timeframe** 2023-27 and onwards **Local partners** Braga Unesco Creative City of Media Arts; agency for economic dynamisation InvestBraga; innovation hub Startup Braga; VFX studio Nu Boyana Portugal **Euroregional partners** European Group of Territorial Cooperation Galicia-North of Portugal (PT/ES); North of Portugal Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDR-N) and Regional Government of Galicia (ES); Eixo Atlântico – Peninsular Northwest Municipalities Association; Galician Audiovisual Academy (ES); Proxecta – Galician Association of Film Festivals (ES); AGAPI – Galician Association of Independent Producers (ES); CREA – Galician Association of Professionals of Direction (ES); AO NORTE – Audiovisual Production and Animation Association (Viana do Castelo); cinema and audiovisual festivals Encontros de Cinema (Viana do Castelo) and MDOC (Melgaço); Sound and Image Department, School of Arts Catholic University of Portugal (Porto); Galician Radio and Television Corporation (ES); digital magazine Vinte – Praza Pública (ES); School of Design Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave (Barcelos); ID+ Research Institute for Design, Media and Culture – University of Aveiro; University of Porto; academic groups in the audiovisual, digital and new media fields University of Santiago de Compostela (ES), University of Vigo (ES) and University of A Coruña (ES) **National partners** art and culture magazine Gerador **International partners** Storytellers United (EU); Narrar el Futuro, Ibero-American Platform and Festival of New Media (CO); Unbias the news (global network); Zemos98 (ES); ReFOCUS Media Labs (GR); WRO Art Center, Wrocław (PL); Stichting Waag Society (NL); Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision (NL); Supercluster (BE); MediaFutures Leibniz University of Hannover (GE); Visionary Days (IT); Kersnikova Institute (SI); GO! 2025 Nova Gorica-Gorizia (SI); Liberec 2028 (CZ)

# **Celebration!**



**High-spirited events in  
our 2027 calendar.**

## New Temples

The Braga'27 artistic opening and community celebration, where we invite composer Llorenç Barber (ES) to create a sound project for the city's bells. Braga's sound landscape is filled by the lavish bells that toll from the numerous church towers, and the last artisanal bell factory in the country is located in the city. A bridge between tradition and contemporaneity, the festive bells will meet a series of light and video mapping presentations at different heritage sites, created by TILT Collective (FR), Calidos (ES), Marco Barotti (IT), Pasquale Direse/ Medialize.it (IT), João Martinho Moura and Arte Total (PT). Inside our most emblematic "traditional temples", Finnish and Slovakian ensembles will perform classical music concerts, and Galician-Portuguese musicians that intersect traditional music from both regions and urban and contemporary music, such as Baiuca (ES), Néboa (ES/PT), and Haema (PT), will play together. With the night comes the opening of Braga's New Temples, four large-format installations co-created by citizens and street and public arts artists Plastique Fantastique (DE), Cardbordia (RU), Bordalo II (PT), and Olivier Grossetête (FR). These temporary buildings located in different areas of the city will be fusion spots for various cultures with live concerts from Moulinex + Noite Príncipe (PT/African diaspora), Acid Arab (FR/Arab diaspora), and Arca (ES/VE). In parallel, there will be an official ceremony, where the European Commission, Liepāja 2027, the 2026 and 2028 ECoC representatives, and the whole ECoC family as well as all local, regional and national authorities and our partners will be our guests of honour.

### January 2027

**Local partners** media artist João Martinho Moura; CTB – Braga Theater Company; non-professional theatre groups Tin.Bra, PIF'H Produções Ilimitadas Fora d'Horas, Nova Comédia Bracarense and Malad'arte; classical music conservatories Conservatório Bomfim and Conservatório de Música Calouste Gulbenkian; dance company Arte Total; Team Braga Parkour; dance schools Ent'Artes and Backstage **Euroregional partners** music festival Festival Música no Claustro (Tui/ES) **National partners** platform for artists Outdoor Arts Portugal (by Bússola); musical project Moulinex + Noite Príncipe; artist Bordalo II **International partners** artists Pasquale Direse/ Medialize.it (IT); TILT Collective (FR); Cardbordia (RU); Plastique Fantastique (DE); Olivier Grossetête (FR); Marco Barotti (IT); music label raso. (ES); ECoC family **Potential partners** Calidos (ES); Acid Arab (FR/Arab diaspora); Arca (ES/VE)

## Spring Rites

This project celebrates Spring, the March equinox, connected to rebirth and fertility since ancient times. From the Orient to Europe, these renewal ceremonies are part of different cultures and religions, from the Holi Festival in India, to the Persian New Year in Iran, or the *Falles* fire pits in Spain. It is not a coincidence that Christians celebrate the rebirth of Christ at this time of year nor that Jewish *Pesach* also takes place in the beginning of Spring. Common Christian Easter symbols, such as rabbits or eggs, are deeply rooted in pagan traditions that made their way into contemporary times and our popular culture. In Braga, thousands come to participate in the various religious events that take place during Holy Week. This project is a counterpart programme, a pagan celebration idealised by contemporary artists to evoke popular traditions and rituals associated with the awakening of Spring and its relationship with nature, resulting from an investigation with local citizens and artists. It takes place on three river beaches – Navarra, Adaúfe and Merelim S. Paio – outside the city centre. On these river shores, scenic devices and large-scale sound sculptures will be set up by two artistic collectives, Sonoscopia and Companhia de Música Teatral (PT), with visual artists and performers such as Roman Ondak (SL) and Abraham Hurtado (ES), together with local communities. The project also includes workshops and a programme to activate the musical sculptures, including performative pieces by Beatriz Albuquerque (PT) and Ece Canli (TR) and experimental music concerts by António Caramelo (PT) or Vertixe Sonora (ES). In the city centre, the photography museum Museu da Imagem screens video documentaries from the riverfront performative actions juxtaposed with international artworks from Joan Fontcuberta (ES) and Jimmie Durham (US) on cultural ritualisation and religious representation.

### March to May 2027

**Curatorship** Paulo Mendes **Local partners** photography museum Museu da Imagem; Braga Public Library; religious and social institution Misericórdia de Braga; artist Bárbara Fonte **Euroregional partners** Serralves Foundation – Museum of Contemporary Art (Porto); Pedro Oliveira Gallery (Porto); Sonoscopia – Platform for Experimental Music (Porto); graphic/art laboratory Oficina Arara (Porto); Vertixe Sonora (Santiago Compostela/ES) **National partners** featured artists Alberto Carneiro, António Olaio, Francisco Queirós, Manuel João Vieira, Pedro Cabral Santo, Xavier Almeida; artists collective Companhia de Música Teatral; performers and musicians António Caramelo – Folclore Impressionista, Beatriz Albuquerque, Daniel Moreira e Rita Castro Neves, Gil Delindro, João Ricardo Barros Oliveira, Nuno Marques Pinto and Susana Chiocca **International partners** Institute Inhotim (BR); galleries Rosalux and Kolonie Wedding (DE); featured artists Ana Mendieta (CU), Andrea Pichl (DE), Efrat Nathan (IL), Isa Genzken (DE), Jérémy Pajeanc (FR), Jimmie Durham (US), Joan Fontcuberta (ES), John Wood & Paul Harrison (HK/UK), Laure Prouvost (FR), Lothar Baumgarten (DE), Matt Mullican (US), Roman Ondak (SL), Thomas Hirschhorn (CH), Tobias Rehberger (DE); performance artists Abraham Hurtado (ES) and Ece Canli (TR/PT); conference speakers Federica Bueti and Federico Campagna (IT); Budějovice 2028 (CZ)

## Europe Day Pilgrimage

In Portugal, particularly in the Minho Region, the most popular festivities are dedicated to a patron saint. In fact, what was once a traditional pilgrimage has evolved into wider celebrations, turning them into open-air cultural festivals rather than strictly religious events. Although some pilgrims still attend them with devotion, the vast majority see them as an opportunity to celebrate with friends and family, with a lot of music, dance and gastronomy involved. Following this tradition, we propose to celebrate Europe Day by introducing and inspiring ourselves in the six patron saints of Europe – Catherine of Siena, a voice for peace and common good; Cyril and Methodius of Greece, who lived for the unification of peoples; Bridget of Sweden, who amplified the word of people’s unity; Edith Stein, who perished at the hands of a regime with no respect for individual freedom; and Benedict of Nursia, a pioneer in the contemplation practices to whom we owe the deepening of European thinking. All six advocated the values of solidarity, diversity and equality, values that Europe shares and cherishes. We will develop a series of events to discover them. Starting on 9 May, a week-long celebration will gather the 27 Member States, which will share their folk traditions with Braga and their contemporary perspective on Europe. An outdoor fair will be set up at the *Sacro Montes* (the three hills surrounding the city where sanctuaries are located), where each country will showcase their cultural attributes, enjoying and celebrating European unity. The event will also extend into the city centre and put different nations in contact by uniting folk and contemporary dance, and *cantares ao desafio* (traditional challenge singing) with hip-hop improvisation. A matchmaking process to pair 27 local culture clubs with associations from the 27 EU nations will be organised, resonating with Rijeka’s 27 *neighbourhoods* network. The culture clubs from Braga will be responsible for welcoming the international groups and establishing future exchange programmes and creative collaborations.

### May 2027

**Local partners** Monastery of Tibães; religious brotherhood Confraria do Bom Jesus; Erasmus Student Network Minho; Students Association University of Minho **Euroregional partners** former portuguese ECoCs Porto 2001 and Guimarães 2012; Xacobeo 27 Organising Committee – Galicia Regional Government (ES) **National partners** former ECoC Lisbon 1994 **International partners** European Association of Folklore festival (BG); Ark of Taste – Slow Food Foundation (IT); Eldrimner, the Swedish National Centre for Small Scale Artisan Food Processing (SE); Food in Action (SE); European Association of the Via Francigena Ways (IT); rurAllure/Horizon 2020 network of Cultural Pilgrimage Paths (EU); Europeade Festival (BE); Traditional Arts & Culture Scotland (UK); Broumov 2028 (CZ); Wellness and Fooding/Reims 2028 (FR)

## Solstice Parade

The summer solstice has been celebrated in all of Europe since ancient times. As Christianity spread to regions of pagan tradition, midsummer celebrations were assimilated, often resulting in an amalgam between the pagan and the sacred. Such is São João de Braga, one of the oldest Saint John pilgrimages in the country, with more than 800 years of history. In June, *bombos* (local handheld bass drums) and plucked strings echo in the city with most vigour, folk groups gather in the city centre, *gigantones* and *cabeçudos* (local animated giant puppets) form long and joyful parades, and the streets are taken over by hundreds of thousands of people in a curious mix of pilgrims and party-goers. In 2027, we celebrate our most beloved festivity with Europe and the world. Our *gigantones* and *cabeçudos* will dance with the Bulgarian Kukeri furry “monsters”, courtesy of the Kukeri of Cultural Hub “Vasil Levski” (Sushitsa, Karlovo, BG) and the city of Plovdiv (ECoC 2019). Our folk groups will be complemented by colours and dances of Baltic and Nordic midsummer folk traditions, co-curated with the ECoCs Tartu 2024 (EE), Bodø 2024 (NO), Oulu 2026 (FI) and Liepāja 2027 (LV). African drums will join their frantic rhythms to a European drums meeting that will gather the most renowned and diverse international drum groups in Braga. And let’s not forget that the city of Porto (ECoC 2001) and Brazilian Festas Juninas both celebrate São João too. They will also be our special guests for this “once in a lifetime” parade.

### June 2027

**Local partners** Braga Business Association; São João de Braga organising committee; traditional music associations Associação Ida e Volta and Equipa Espiral; University of Minho music group Bomboémia **Regional partners** Agora/Municipality of Porto Culture Department **International partners** City of Ouro Preto (BR); Kukeri of Cultural Hub “Vasil Levski” (Sushitsa, Karlovo – BG); European Folk Network (BE); We Love Sousse (TN); Plovdiv 2019 (BG); Tartu 2024 (EE); Bodø 2024 (NO); Oulu 2026 (FI); Liepāja 2027 (LV)

## Ode to the Baroque

Disguised by its external austerity, the Monastery of Tibães hides in its interior a panoply of magnificently Baroque spaces, ornated by splendid gilded woodcarvings and beautiful tiles, in a manifestation of the spirit of the Counter-Reformation that shaped the religious architecture of Europe throughout the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 2027, internationally renowned Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos will team up with Belgian artist Wim Delvoye for a contemporary dialogue in the Monastery rooms, corridors and church. Under the eye – or shall we say the blessing? – of some of the most remarkable pieces of the Portuguese Baroque master carvers, the Neo-Baroque artist Joana Vasconcelos joins forces with Wim Delvoye's Neo-Gothic approach to present a large-scale exhibition, an ode to the dynamism, opulence and drama of the Baroque. A majestic set to exhibit her art is not a novelty for the Portuguese artist who occupied the Versailles Palace with her large-scale pieces ten years ago, having been the first woman to do so. Some of the pieces exhibited at Versailles will contrast with the monastic architecture, as is the case of the exuberant *Lilicoptère* (2012), a helicopter coated in gold leaf, thousands of crystals and an extravagant and colourful cover of ostrich feathers. Or Delvoye's *Dump Truck* (2014), where the artist reproduces a contemporary truck using Gothic aesthetics. *Ode to the Baroque* is a celebration of ancient and contemporary art, a cathartic and mystical discovery that will spark our senses and lift our souls. An emotional experience that European audiences will not want to miss.

### January to December 2027

**Local partners** Monastery of Tibães **Euroregional partners** Galician Centre for Contemporary Art; Galicia City of Culture Foundation; Regional Government of Galicia; Estrella Galicia (ES) **National partners** artist Joana Vasconcelos; Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva Foundation; logistics company Iterartis **International partners** artist Wim Delvoye (BE)

## Permanent Temples

Europe's collective memory has extraordinary songs of resistance against oppressive and dictatorial regimes that still inspire and unite around shared values of freedom and togetherness. *The doors that April opened shall never close again* – the verse by poet Ary dos Santos about the Portuguese Carnation Revolution sets the tone for our closing ceremony. The doors that Braga'27 opened shall never close again. To celebrate the moment we pass the baton to the French and Czech cities that will host the ECoC initiative in 2028, we propose giving voice to iconic resistance songs from Portugal, Latvia, Czechia and France. Closing 2027, a tremendous concert, designed for different venues of the city, will bring together the diversity of European citizens, voices, choirs and artists, reinterpreting iconic songs of resistance from these four countries, from *Grândola to Modlitba pro Martu* (A Prayer for Marta) and *Pūt, vějíři* (Blow, little winds), and proposing the creation of new ones. Throughout this year, a collaboration between artists such as the vocal groups Sopa de Pedra and Mulheres do Minho, and students involved in the *Common Good* project (p. 35) in exchange with students from Liepāja 2027, will write and compose new resistance songs, those of the present, to be included in the concert. This project is co-constructed with an exchange platform between these Portuguese musicians, Nicolás Frize (FR) and choirs from the four countries. The European Youth Choir is also invited to this moment. The final result is a concert in which a variety of European citizens' voices will participate, that will be recorded in digital format and distributed in 2028. The closing ceremony of Braga'27 will also include the premiere of an original multidisciplinary performance inspired by the central moments of the ECoC, exploring the idea of *contemplating to resist*. This piece will be directed by Plasticien Volants (FR), in co-creation with Team Braga Parkour (PT), ACERT (PT) and the New Theater Institute of Latvia (LV). Finally, a public art piece, to be installed at one of the entrances to the city, will be co-created by the students participating in the project and artists Tiago Galo (PT) and Barbora Idesová (CZ). It is a special legacy of the ECoC to the city and Europe.

### December 2027

**Curatorship** Hugo Cruz **Local partners** CTB – Braga Theater Company; Team Braga Parkour; non-professional theatre groups Tin.Bra, PIF'H Produções Ilimitadas Fora d'Horas, Associação Malad'arte and Nova Comédia Bracarense; classical music conservatories Conservatório Bomfim and Conservatório de Música Calouste Gulbenkian; artist João Martinho Moura; dance company Arte Total; dance schools Ent'Artes and Backstage; women's singing group Grupo de Cantares das Mulheres do Minho **Regional partners** vocal group Sopa de Pedra **National partners** documentary project MPAGDP A Música Portuguesa a Gostar Dela Própria; theatre company ACERT **International partners** artists Plasticien volant (FR), Barbora Idesová (CZ), Nicolás Frize (FR); New Theatre Institute of Latvia (LV); Liepāja Music, Arts & Design School (LV); Liepāja 2027 (LV), French ECoC 2028, Czech ECoC 2028, open competition ECoC 2028 **Potential partners** World Youth Choir (EU); European Youth Choir (EU); European Choral Association (EU)

## Q7 Choosing events and projects

The *Time for Contemplation* cultural programme outlined in this final selection bid book represents 75% of what we envision 2027 will look and feel like. The programme detailed in Q5/6 translates our belief and passion about the **Contemplation** concept and how it has echoed in a broad European and International network of partners.

We have anchored our cultural programme and artistic vision in an extensive process of consultation and participation that goes back to 2018 and has engaged cultural organisations, CCS professionals, citizens from all walks of life, policymakers and European peers (see Q13/Q14). This allowed us to develop our goals, programme pillars and projects, co-curating a programme that: targets the city's key needs and aspirations; embraces artistic excellence and diversity; cross matches local and (global) European perspectives and experiences.

Following the first outline of our concept and programme structure, we selected and worked with a team of 18 curators that represent a balanced mix of local, national and international backgrounds and experiences, as well as diverse artistic fields. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of the bidding process, this curator team has grown to deliver the amplified scope of topics targeted by our cultural programme for the final selection.

To further foster participation, diversity and transparency of our bidding process, we have launched two open calls. From our 2021 community open call, we selected 40 project ideas that led to 9 artistic projects that became part of the Braga'27 cultural programme, after a capacity-building and mentorship process with the promoters. In 2022, we launched a Euroregional open call designed to explore new and different ways of cooperation within the region and at the cross-border level. In this most recent open call process, where we valued projects co-promoted between regional and Galician partners, we selected four projects for our *Time for Contemplation* cultural programme. Throughout both open call processes, we worked closely with promoters to ensure the selected projects would be further developed in line with Braga'27 ECoC goals and our principles of experimentation in contemporary creation and community artistic practices (see Q13/Q14).

In 2023 and the following period up to 2027, we will continue this process of inclusion and participation. With a building-up strategy in mind, starting in 2023, we will launch already existing projects with a special focus on capacity building: *Take Part*, *Common Good*, *Tour d'Europe on Journalism*, *Creators Academy* and *Media Culture – Euroregional Platform*. These projects target diverse audiences – cultural operators, artists, communities, youth, placemakers, media professionals – and operate at different territorial levels – local, Euroregional and European. This will allow a more rooted and disseminated preparation process for the years to come towards 2027.

The Programme Director, together with the team of programme coordinators, will play an important role in carrying this torch ahead, further developing and implementing the artistic vision. Keeping a close eye on global trends and affairs and with the overall flexibility of the programme in mind, to ensure it can adapt well to challenges, future international calls are already envisaged in our programme budget. This

will provide conditions for updating and refreshing the diversity of the programme's content, artists, and partners, widening the European dimension of the activities and a lasting impact of Braga'27.

Approximately 6 million euros are reserved for new proposals: 5 per cent of the total programme budget will be dedicated to youth-driven projects; 5 per cent to community and grassroots projects; and 10 per cent for international calls. By safeguarding the mentioned flexibility, we ensure that local, EU and global trends that may arise during the preparatory phase, find space and are dealt with in **Contemplation**.

## Q8 Combining cultural heritage and experimental cultural expressions

Our *Time for Contemplation* is inspired by Braga's history and natural and built landscape, which are deeply rooted in faith and religion and, as such, in spirituality. Nature, material and immaterial heritage shape who we are, but are also powerful driving forces and sources of inspiration for what we can achieve. Innovation and experimentation are vital tools throughout our cultural programme, especially when it comes to unlocking the potential of cultural heritage and bridging the gap in Braga's dichotomous cultural profile: rich roman and baroque **heritage & media arts** creative city of Unesco; **conservative** religious background & growing **multicultural** communities; unbalanced **urban** environment & **rural** surroundings; strong folk **tradition** & prosperous cross-sector **innovation** businesses. The following projects reflect these combinations:

**Write the Way** invites European artists and architects to design shelters for **Contemplation** in dialogue with the landscape, along the Way of Saint James.

In **Pipe Poetics** international contemporary music composers write new pieces for Braga's historic pipe organs.

**Carnation Revolution** revisits (and heals) the role of Braga in the uprising and establishment of the Portuguese dictatorship regime, through a multidisciplinary exhibition with contemporary international artists.

**By Hand, by Heart** introduces design and technological research to the region's crafts traditions.

In **Granary**, traditional techniques of vernacular architecture are explored to build a new green cultural space, home to experimentation on sustainable cultural practices.

Tbilisi Biennale of Stage Design brings state-of-the-art knowledge to the construction of an ephemeral stage for Braga's Roman Theatre ruins, in **Myth**.

**Ceramic Bodies'** video installations question how traditional popular ceramic production can be a source of inspiration for contemporary artists and circular economy models.

In **The Roman Connection** European and North African Mediterranean is once again connected through the roman roads, inspiring new works of art and collaborations between artists in this geographical area.

**The Roots Club** crosses traditional plucked string instruments construction with research and innovation in an international Design Lab.

Contemporary artists Joana Vasconcelos and Wim Delvoye revisit the opulence of the Baroque period in a large-scale immersive installation at Tibães Monastery, in **Ode to the Baroque**.

**Colonial Silences** reunites war veterans from Portugal and former African colonies to share memories of this historical conflict and heal traumas through contemporary artistic practices.

In **Footnotes** the city's museums' historical collections will be given a contemporary spin with site-specific interventions from international artists and performers.

**The Art of Caring** provides innovative technical training to future conservation and restoration professionals.

**Eating is Wanting** will rediscover traditional agricultural and food preservation processes through nano-technology research combined with artistic approaches.

In Braga'27 traditional art forms, heritage and history are invigorated by experimental approaches to sustainable cultural practices and (re)activated through contemporary artistic creation.

## **Q9 Involvement of local artists and organisations**

The *Time for Contemplation* programme features more than a hundred local artists, CCS professionals, cultural organisations and institutions. As further developed in the Outreach section (pp. 70 to 77), participation and community artistic practices are at the core of our bid. Since the early steps of this process, we have engaged a wide range of artists, cultural operators, social and health institutions, policymakers and municipal officials, research & learning institutions, business organisations, youth groups representatives and citizens. Several rounds of talks and exchanges with all these stakeholders culminated in the definition of needs and goals, and the outline of our concept and programme structure. The two open calls launched in 2021 and 2022 amplified the participation of local artists and cultural organisations in the programme: about a third of the projects are promoted by local organisations and institutions. On top of this, one third of our curatorial team is based in Braga, contributing to the projects' and activities' even deeper local roots. For the final selection programme, we developed ideas into **action**, working with partners to flesh them out, upgrading the projects to a more operational level and refining the structure, content and European Dimension of the programme. In fact, as pointed out earlier in Q2/Q3, one of the challenges we faced was that cooperation with European and international partners was not a natural process for our cultural operators. Part of the work we undertook with them was of a capacity-building nature, in the spirit of upgrading the projects to become more international and European and to foster cross-border cooperation. The following examples illustrate this process and involvement.

Local dance company Arte Total promotes **Metamorpho**, a sensory intelligence and movement lab aimed at victims of gender-based violence, working together

with other international and local partners, such as School of Disobedience: Healing Centre (HU) and women's rights NGO UMAR.

**Semibreve** and **Encontros da Imagem**, festivals promoted by local independent cultural operators, join Braga'27 and prepare a special edition for 2027 inspired by **Contemplation**.

The Communication and Society Research Centre of the University of Minho develops arts-based research for **Connecting Commutes**.

Community open call project **Multitudes** builds on the experience of the local association MUSA, which works with inclusive artistic practices, to create an artistic company that gathers disabled and non-disabled people of all ages, in cooperation with social institutions in Braga and international inclusive companies such as MOPS\_DanceSyndrome Contemporary Dance (CH).

CTB – Braga Theatre Company invites their partners from Eurasia Theatre Association (TR) to co-promote the international theatre and opera festival **Myth**.

**Cinemind** joins social institution Projecto Homem and audiovisual company Ficus Films to promote a social cinema cycle dedicated to mental health, in partnership with Go Mental! International Film Festival Berlin (DE).

**Endless** is a cluster project that unites 10 ideas and promoters from our community open call in organising an arts in nature festival that celebrates the importance of ecosystems and test-drives environmentally friendly solutions in cultural events.

Local media artist and researcher João Martinho Moura creates large-scale digital art installations for the opening event **New Temples**.

# European dimension



## Q10 Cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and European themes

As it is *Time for Contemplation*, Braga'27 engages in collective mindfulness, bringing together people and communities from throughout Europe and beyond to address and jointly find solutions for the challenges of our times:

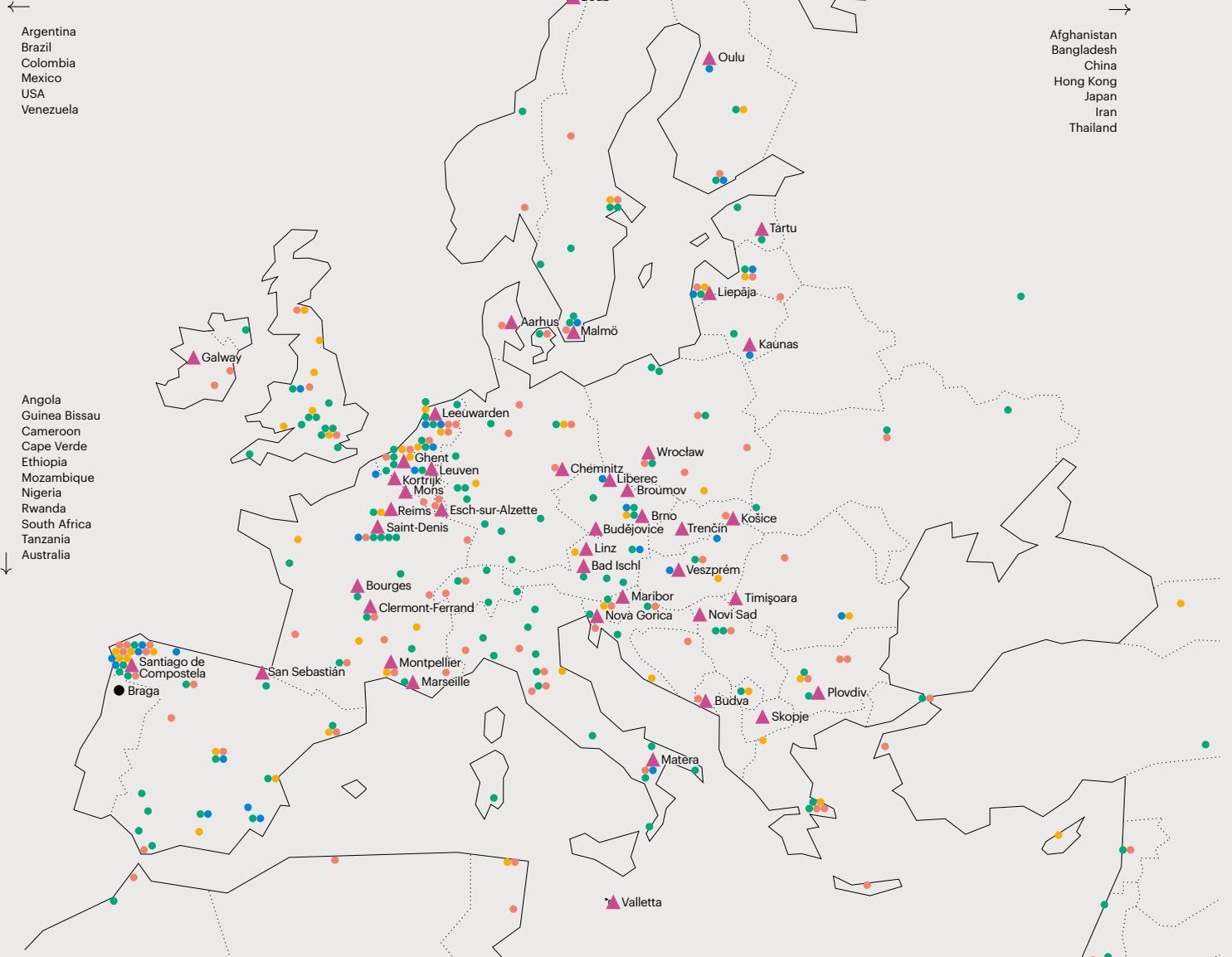
- By setting **creativity into action**, Braga'27 engages **Europe in action**.
- By offering Europe a programme based on community artistic participation, Braga'27 gets **citizens in action**, as inspiration for new **places in action**.

Boosting Europe with contemplative energy, Braga'27 activates old and new paths for an even stronger European cooperation. Up to 2027 and beyond, especially the paths between Liepāja 2027 and Braga'27 will be buzzing with movement, bringing us even closer to our ECoC twin in Latvia and inspiring new European connections and alliances along the way. Liepāja 2027 and Braga'27 have already invited various European partners to join our shared ECoC projects: The **Centre for Architecture Arc en Rêve** from Bordeaux in our project *Shape of Joy* on urban planning and the influence it can have on people's happiness; the Irish **Limerick School of Art and Design** and the **Handicraft Chamber of Ukraine** in the project *By Hand, by Heart* on innovative approaches and business models for European artisans.

As we continue our collective journey of building common paths for European Contemplation, we connect with Europe via our four temples: Empathy, Wandering, Disquiet and Creation. To fully enter these temples, we tune into several all-encompassing European guiding principles that also feed our communication strategy (see Q36): openness to share and embrace, generosity to rediscover and reunite, courage to question and inspire, and will to dare and empower. Only together with Europe can we bring life and meaning to these temples and make the most of *Time for Contemplation* for the European community.

On the way to 2027, it is **time for sharing and embracing**, ourselves, the unknown other, the community and Europe. It is time for creating new confluences that lead us to new and future friends and for giving fresh meanings to old friendships: we meet all of them with empathy and respect, always in solidarity. Together, we cherish equality and nurture core European values like

democracy and inclusion. This is also how we embrace the cultural territory from both sides of the border between the North of Portugal and Spanish Galicia and how we strengthen **empathy** and cooperation in the cross-border region, joining forces to explore and build a common media culture and support sustainable creation. We reinforce the cross-border mindset and contribute to shaping a European community in the Iberian North, exchanging experience and collaboration with other cross-border regions throughout Europe, like Slovenia and Italy.



←

Argentina  
Brazil  
Colombia  
Mexico  
USA  
Venezuela

→

Afghanistan  
Bangladesh  
China  
Hong Kong  
Japan  
Iran  
Thailand

↓

Angola  
Guinea Bissau  
Cameroon  
Cape Verde  
Ethiopia  
Mozambique  
Nigeria  
Rwanda  
South Africa  
Tanzania  
Australia

**ECoC** ▲

Aarhus 2017 DK  
Bad Ischl-Salzammergut 2024 AT  
Bodø 2024 NO  
Bourges 2028 FR  
Brno 2028 CZ  
Broumov 2028 CZ  
Budějovice 2028 CZ  
Budva-Boka 2028 ME  
Chemnitz 2025 DE  
Clermont-Ferrand 2028 FR  
Donostia-San Sebastián 2016 ES  
Durf 2030 Kortrijk BE  
Esch 2022 LU  
Galway 2020 IE  
Ghent 2030 BE  
Kaunas 2022 LT  
Košice 2013 SK  
Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018 NL  
Leuven 2030 BE  
Liberec 2028 CZ  
Liepāja 2027 LV  
Linz 2009 AT  
Malmö 2029 SE  
Maribor 2012 SL  
Marseille 2013 FR  
Matera 2018 IT  
Mons 2015 BE  
Montpellier 2028 FR  
Nova Gorica-Gorizia 2025 SI  
Novi Sad 2022 RS  
Oulu 2026 FI  
Plovdiv 2019 BG  
Reims 2028 FR  
Saint-Denis 2028 FR  
Santiago de Compostela 2000 ES  
Skopje 2028 MK  
Tartu 2024 EE

Timișoara 2023 RO  
Trenčín 2026 SI  
Valletta 2018 MT  
Veszprém-Balaton 2023 HU  
Wrocław 2016 PL

Morocco  
Mozambique  
Netherlands  
Nigeria  
Norway  
Poland  
Russia  
Rwanda  
Serbia  
Slovenia  
South Africa  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Tanzania  
Thailand  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom  
United States of America  
Venezuela

**Artists** ●

Afghanistan  
Angola  
Argentina  
Austria  
Bangladesh  
Belgium  
Brazil  
Bulgaria  
Cameroon  
Cape Verde  
China  
Croatia  
Czechia  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Ethiopia  
Finland  
France  
Germany  
Greece  
Hong Kong  
Iran  
Ireland  
Israel  
Italy  
Japan  
Kosovo  
Latvia  
Lebanon  
Lithuania  
Mexico

**Events** ●

Barcelona ES  
Berlin DE  
Bogota CO  
Brno CZ  
Brussels BE  
Bucharest RO  
Capdenac-Gare FR  
Cardiff UK  
Edinburgh SE  
Iserlohn DE  
Krakow PL  
Kuopio FI  
Lagos NG  
Leeds UK

Liepāja LV  
Linz AT  
Ljubljana SI  
London UK  
Lyon FR  
Madrid ES  
Melbourne AU  
Monterosso ES  
Montpellier FR  
Newcastle UK  
Nicosia CY  
Peristeri GR  
Pontevedra ES  
Porrino ES  
Prespes GR  
Pristina XK  
Rennes FR  
Riga LV  
Rotterdam NL  
Salvador BR  
San Marino SM  
Sint-Pauwels BE  
Sofia BG  
Split HR  
Stockholm SW  
Swadlincote UK  
Szolnok HU  
Terschelling NL  
Tbilisi GE  
Tui ES  
Tunis TN  
Utrecht NL  
Valencia ES  
Vigo ES

**Cultural institutions** ●

A Coruña ES  
Alexandria EG  
Algiers DZ  
Amman JO  
Amsterdam NL  
Athens GR  
Barcelona ES  
Beirut LB  
Belgrade RS  
Belo Horizonte BR  
Berlin DE  
Bertrange LU  
Bilzen BE  
Bissau GW  
Bologna IT  
Bordeaux FR  
Bra IT  
Brasília BR  
Brumadinho BR  
Brussels BE  
Budapest HU  
Budva ME  
Cairo EG  
Cannes FR  
Clermont-Ferrand FR  
Cluj RO  
Copenhagen DK  
Dresden DE  
Dublin IE  
Edinburgh UK  
Efeisina GR  
Esch-sur-Alzette LU  
Fidenza IT  
Florence IT  
Geneva CH

Gibraltar UK  
Hamburg DE  
Hannover DE  
Helsinki FI  
Hilversum NL  
Hong Kong HK  
Istanbul TR  
Jerusalem PS  
Kiev UA  
Killenny IE  
Košice SK  
Kráslava LV  
Lausanne CH  
Le Puy-en-Velay FR  
Lesbos GR  
Liepāja LV  
Little Rock US  
Ljubljana SI  
Lobios ES  
London UK  
Luanda AO  
Lublin PL  
Madrid ES  
Malmö SE  
Manchester UK  
Mariana BR  
Matera IT  
Montpellier FR  
New York US  
Oslo NO  
Östersund SE  
Ouro Preto BR  
Paris FR  
Pecchioli IT  
Perugia IT  
Piraeus GR  
Poços de Caldas BR

Pontevedra ES  
Portland US  
Randers DK  
Rethymno GR  
Riga LV  
Rijeka HR  
Rio de Janeiro BR  
Rotterdam NL  
Salamanca ES  
Santiago de Compostela ES  
Sao Paulo BR  
Sempach-Stadt CH  
Sofia BG  
Sousse TN  
Spa BE  
Stockholm SE  
Strasbourg FR  
Sushitsa BG  
Tanger MA  
Tehran IR  
Toulouse FR  
Tripoli LY  
Tunis TN  
Tuzla BA  
Utrecht NL  
Valletta MT  
Veliko Tarnovo BG  
Vigo ES  
Villabalter ES  
Warsaw PL  
Wrocław PL  
Zabrze PL  
Zagreb HR

**Knowledge and learning institutions** ●

A Coruña ES  
Amsterdam NL  
Balatonalmádi HU  
Belo Horizonte BR  
Blanca ES  
Brno CZ  
Bucharest RO  
Granada ES  
Helsinki FI  
Leiden NL  
Liberec CZ  
Liepāja LV  
Louvain-la-Neuve BE  
Madrid ES  
Malmö SE  
Manchester UK  
Matera IT  
Miskolc HU  
Murcia ES  
Oulu FI  
Oviedo ES  
Paris FR  
Pontevedra ES  
Riga LV  
Santiago de Compostela ES  
Sao Paulo BR  
Utrecht NL  
Vienna AT  
Vigo ES  
Villeneuve-d'Ascq FR  
Vilnius LT



Braga'27 is European **time for rediscovering and reuniting**. As we act together, we restore European unity and regain the ever so important sense of belonging that many lost during the times of Covid-19 isolation. As our European partnership map shows, Braga'27 overcomes the handicaps of peripheral locations. It stands for a polycentric Europe, in a perpetual **wander** of creative aggregation: the whole of Europe is invited to participate, enhancing the quality of artistic and social innovation and, therefore, European quality of life and well-being. Moreover, those looking for inspiration for sustainable and shared action will gladly turn to Braga'27, as our programme and the principles of New European Bauhaus can serve as an impulse for a new European spirituality. *Placemaking Europe Week 2027* will gather in Braga to learn about the urban interventions co-designed by the local and European community.

Braga'27 opens the familiar and ongoing dialogue with Africa and the Americas to its fellow Europeans, allowing **time for questioning and inspiring** diversity and inter-continental exchange. We gather the courage to face the shadows and the **disquiet** from our past. In *Colonial Silences*, these new bonds facilitate the healing of the wounds that the devastating Portuguese colonial wars inflicted. We revisit the shared Baroque heritage with renowned Brazilian

artists like Marilá Dardot and Claudia Andujar in *Baroque, a Labyrinth of Transmutations*, reflecting critically on our past and bringing yet more cultural diversity and richness to our ECoC programme, broadening European perspective, and widening the scope of Braga'27.

Our programme also offers **time for daring and empowering** Europe and beyond, starting with our supra-neighbours from Ukraine, the Caucasus, the Balkans and North Africa. Braga'27 invites them to the region for shared capacity building and knowledge exchange to inspire each other's artistic **creation**, keeping European solidarity alive and above borders, while also dealing with realities such as war and migration. We will collaborate closely with the UK City of Culture for 2027, especially on inclusive arts and cultural events, which they are experts on.

Only in European **Contemplation** can we develop resilience and strengthen the vision of a peaceful Europe, which in the current state of conflict truly seems to be a farfetched utopia. For that reason, we strongly believe there is an urgent need to restore the faith in a **Contemplative** Europe and that this will allow us to go on with renewed confidence. To take us there, we set the following foundations of our joint European journey towards **Contemplation**:

---

## 1. Faith in European Pluralism

European diversity is one of the strongest assets of the EU and an essential driver of innovation. We believe European creativity comes from crossing over the borders of age, gender, ethnicity, social background, health condition and spiritual beliefs through artistic co-creation, challenging people to perceive and be perceived differently. The empathy developed through these diverse and inclusive encounters gives confidence to our inner-self and the European community.

---

## 2. Holistic Community Practices

We share our dichotomies and causes with other European regions. Addressing them collectively is an expression of European cultural practice. In exchange and collaboration with European peers, we will find new solutions and answers to European challenges such as urban sprawl and fake news. Out of these practices a broader and meaningful sense of belonging and unity will evolve, making us grow closer to our local and global neighbours and in the long run, strengthening our democratic ecosystem.

---

## 3. Contemporary European Memory

Only by critically examining and embracing the shadows of our past can we become one with ourselves and achieve European integrity. Our peripheral location has allowed us to keep out of the spotlight and ignore individual and collective trauma. We will break the silence on our past to heal our wounds collectively. We need to inspire courage and confidence for Europe to rise to this challenge, and above all, as Europeans, we need to be sensitive at heart to pick up on the feelings of others to do no further harm.

---

## 4. Healing European Belief System

The European future we confidently walk towards relies on autonomous critical thinking and initiative to take action. We need young citizens to stand up for the European values we share and believe in. For that, Braga'27 already counts on the engagement of the young Generation B27 of **Contemplactivators** to envision our future and to put it into practice with Europe. In an intergenerational dialogue, others will join to boost Europe's immunity against hate speech, threats to democracy, environmental and digital challenges.

---

## Stop and Chat

Multicultural electronic music on memory stimulation

**Wassyl Abdoun – Phonetics project (FR)** meets with multi-age choirs from Braga at nursing homes

Literature and storytelling on nomadic European heritage

Untold stories of Roma communities from **Malmö 2029 (SE)**, **Broumov 2028 (CZ)**, **Timișoara 2023 (RO)**, **Plovdiv 2019 (BG)** and **Braga'27** travel to European libraries and monastic archives

International artists share their diverse perceptions of self-representation

Mental Health Care Centre Bom Jesus experiences **Collection de l'Art Brut (CH)**

Mysticism and spirituality on eco-feminism and queerness

**Agrocuir in Galicia (ES)** and artists from **Anti Festival (FI)** celebrate *Behind God's Back*

---

## Common Causes

Connecting rural peripheries to urban centres

*Connecting Commutes* with **Museum of Transitory Art (SI)**; or *Get Lost* every week with **Shared Walks (AU)**

Introducing innovation to tradition

Producing everyday design pieces *By Hand, By Heart* with **XAMK Oulu University (FI)** and **crafthub (IT)**

Balancing multiculturalism and conservatism

Organising Holy Week celebrations with *Spring Rites* and hosting **Europeade Festival (BE)** and **Food in Action (SE)** for *Europe Day Pilgrimage*

Intersecting heritage and media arts

Academic learning exchanges with **Liepāja University Art Research Laboratory (LV)** for experimental media work at *Semibreve* in Bom Jesus Sanctuary (Unesco Heritage Site)

---

## Echoes for the Future

Invisibility of migrant communities in Europe

Co-curated exchange of objects with artists **Garance-Alves (FR)** and activist **Ellen Lima (PT/BR)**

War veterans' trauma from African colonial past

Co-creating theatre performances and documentary film with **Dorcy Rugamba (FR/RW)**, **Herengracht 401 Foundation (NL)**, **João Branco (CV)** and **Leonor Teles (PT)**

Baroque as the language at the service of power, suppression and Eurocentrism

Exhibition and artistic emancipation over Baroque pieces and venues co-produced by **Institute Inhotim (BR)**, **Lagos Photo Festival (NG)**, **Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (PT)**

European peaceful revolutions and cross-border solidarity

Participative concert of European revolution Hymns with **European Youth Choir (EU)** and 2027 and 2028 **ECoC** choirs

---

## Cultural Prescription

Step 1 Common Good

During 2022, Generation B27 started to wander through their common hopes and introduced themselves to Europe, exchanging with the **Young Assembly** from **ECoC Candidate Saint-Denis 2028**

Step 2 Salus, Fountains of Healing

In 2023, a group of local students will face their disquiet over the care for nature and mental health with other **ECoC** projects to frame **Placemaking Week Europe (NL)** 2027 in Braga

Step 3 Take Part

Until 2027 the festival will build autonomy and knowledge on participatory art with **EC Ma Ndryshe (XK)** and **Community Theater Network of Argentina (AR)**, for empathy and engagement with local and European communities

Step 4 Multitudes

After working with **ShareMusic and Performing Arts (SE)**, **Theama (GR)** or **Vertigo Power of Balance (IL)**, a new generation of people living with disabilities will take their role in Europe through international artistic creation as a legacy

## 5. Creative European Matchmaking

Not all local creatives have the chance to connect with Europe at first sight, but most of them would enjoy the company. Especially after a period of social distancing, we appreciate the value of European friendship that challenges and inspires our creativity. A tailor-made capacity-building programme for European matchmaking finds **Contemplation** empowering the CCS to integrate within European networks, programmes and events, whilst creating new ones that will increase the reach of European creators.

## 6. European Deceleration for Digital Well-Being

Time is a limited resource we cherish by promoting meaningful artistic celebration. The European programme of Braga'27 challenges artistic creation to reuse existing assets and activities, reduce pollution and abandon the present model based on quantity for optimised impacts, and replace the outdated practice with new European creation. Likewise, as in our natural environment, the awareness of our eco-footprint is taken into account to create healthier digital territories based on slow media and conscious and comprehensive digital innovation.

## 7. (Re)Activate Paths for European Regions

The European continent owes its pulsation to the paths and junctions that allow circulation on different scales. European creative communities will explore the physical connections of its territory, either taking overlooked pathways – there since Roman time – or paving unexplored ones to welcome peripheral European regions and the other continents to Braga'27.

## 8. Sanctuary of Sustainable European Heritage

Climate change is causing Europe to struggle with unprecedented extreme weather more and more often. War destruction and nuclear risks are now striking our neighbours, and our minds are in a state of constant anxiety about what breaking news could jeopardise tomorrow's work and quality of life. Learning from current events and New European Bauhaus principles, the Braga'27 programme has deepened its commitment to raising conscience about sustainability across Europe and at different stages of artistic creation.

## New European Relationships

First dates	In contrast with the first open call in 2021, selected projects like <i>Extremo</i> have already met with European partners like <b>Walk Listen Create (BE)</b> and <b>Skanu Mezs Festival (LV)</b>
Open relationships	The <i>Art of Caring – School for Conservation</i> has broadened their intercontinental scope by connecting with <b>Bauhaus – New Bauhaus (DE)</b> and establishing a special connection with <b>FAOP – Ouro Preto Art Foundation (BR)</b>
Shared Vows	<i>Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</i> has been attracting the interest of <b>Kersnikova (SI)</b> and <b>Refocus MediaLab (GR)</b> for shared digital and Media Culture cross-border strategies
Growing Families	Creating new European Networks like “Constructors Club” of traditional music instruments creators and international <i>Contempl/ACTION</i> cinema platforms or joining <b>Caravan International Youth and Social Circus Network (BE)</b> and <b> rurAllure/Horizon 2020 Network of Cultural Pilgrimage Paths (EU)</b>

## European Themes

New European pilgrims: creative and digital nomads	Creative hubs from <b>Nova Iskra (RS)</b> and <b>IndrediBo! (IT)</b> share knowledge and training on digital work environment at <i>Shopyard</i>
Digital and ecological footprint	<b>SUPERFLEX (DK)</b> and <b>Rirkrit Tiravanija (AR/US)</b> digital installations, <b>Timo Toots (EE)</b> and <b>BridA Collective (SI)</b> artistic residencies, <i>Paradise Lost?</i> conference.
Mental health and urban well-being	Immersive body-mind creative coding with <b>IN-SONORA (ES)</b> and <b>Ljudmila Art and Science Laboratory (SI)</b> at <b>Europe Code Week (EU)</b>
Conscious digital narratives and interaction	Legacy of new media and digital storytelling on a shared European strategy for conscious digital integration in the cultural sector with <b>Media Futures (DE)</b>

## Pilgrimage layers

European cross-border regions gather resources and share strategies	<b>Braga Media Arts</b> and <b>Guimarães ECoC legacy</b> in cinema, together with existing dynamic among the media sector in the North of Portugal and Galicia at <i>Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</i>
Extending networks for joint European cultural media coverage	<i>Tour d'Europe on Journalism</i> for informed communication on the ECoC initiative and cultural and slow tourism
Open doors for innovation with European neighbours	Showcasing artists from <b>MOST – Music Market of the Balkans Platform (HU)</b> at <i>Square – International Independent Music Festival</i>
Sharing and connecting communities across continents	Artistic residencies circulating Europe and the MENA region around the Mediterranean with the support of <b>Roberto Cimetta Fund (FR)</b> and <b>Anna Lindh Foundation Network (PS/BA/JO)</b>

## Updates on our European Agenda

Reaching and empowering endangered talents	<i>Supracasa</i> and <i>By Hand, by Heart</i> now reach artists from <b>Handicraft Chamber of Ukraine</b> and <b>Artists at Risk (FI)</b>
Community caring for healthy urban environments	<i>Granary</i> and <i>Convivial Hoods</i> integrate neighbourhood placemaking interventions with local materials and European knowledge
Ecological footprint of cultural events	New projects like <i>Endless Festival</i> and <i>Common Snipe</i> happening throughout the Euroregion deliver resourceful European management practices
Sustainable aesthetics and art creation	<b>Délio Jasse (AO)</b> , <b>Rosângela Rennó (BR)</b> , <b>Wim Delvoye (BE)</b> and <b>Joana Vasconcelos (PT)</b> will confront contemporary takes and stands on the meaning of the Baroque and art consciousness in Tibães Monastery

## Q11 Attracting a broad European and international audience

Braga'27 invites Europe and beyond to visit the Euroregion: to enjoy *Time for Contemplation* and create meaningful connections with the cross-border region, the local community and oneself. We invite our guests to step outside the current visitor's box with a list of things to see during a rushed one-day trip, just stopping by while staying in Porto or Santiago de Compostela. Braga'27 offers a slower, more conscious, cultural, and more sustainable travel experience.

The principles of our 1<sup>st</sup> bid book of an open-door policy, the strengthening of cross-border connections with Spain, the divine quality of our cultural programme and the possibility of digital encounters to attract a broad European and international audience are still in place. We developed our strategy further and added yet one crucial component that guarantees a passionate and **Contemplative** encounter of millions of guests from Europe and the world in Braga: **Celebration!**

We are convinced that the festivity of Braga'27 and the construction of our European temples with their purifying and uniting energy will attract international visitors who wish to feel the pulse of Europe, its vivacity, diversity and creativity. Our opening event *New Temples* is built for Europeans from all over the continent to engage in the first Braga'27 moment with inspiring international artists like Acid Arab (FR/Arab diaspora), Cardbordia (RU) and Plastique Fantastique (DE), while our closing event *Permanent Temples* lets Europe experience and **celebrate** European peaceful revolutions with immersive arts. In *Spring Rites*, Europeans can sense a belonging to each other as well as to the reawakening nature. *Europe Day Pilgrimage* and *Solstice Parade* await European guests to participate and to bring European energy and diversity. News will travel fast about the passionate and uniting festiveness of Braga'27 and will have many people from Europe travel to the ECoC to join the **celebration**.

Even faster will people know that festiveness at Braga'27 also means to **celebrate** community, to get invited into someone's home, sharing a table and one of the many delicious dishes of the Portuguese North. Europe will love the hospitality of the people from Braga'27 while the locals will connect even further to Europe, and relish hosting the European community.

As we will **celebrate** Baroque in its impressive variations, European audiences fond of visual arts and cultural heritage will surely lay their eyes on Braga'27. Internationally acclaimed Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos and the free-spirited Belgian artist Wim Delvoye will open an extraordinary dialogue on Neo-Baroque. Moreover, an exhibition on the unique styles of the Baroque, which developed in Minas Gerais in Brazil following the colonial invasion, is yet a cultural gem waiting to be discovered by European audiences.

*Stop Making (Non)sense* is a jovial invitation to celebrate the act of self-representation. Through an exhibition,

well-known and emerging *art brut* artists such as contemporary Cláudia R. Sampaio are staged with iconic feminist artists like Cindy Sherman (US), Vanessa Beecroft (IT/US), Kara Walker (US) and the recently passed Paula Rego (PT). This will surely have many throughout Europe pack their suitcases to plunge into *Time for Contemplation* in Braga'27.

In 2027 the Jacobean Year will be celebrated and Santiago de Compostela is expecting more than 10 million pilgrims. Many of them will be passing Braga on the Way of Saint James, heading to Santiago from central Spain and Portugal. Braga'27 will be present and visible throughout this Jubilee in the Galician city, inviting international pilgrims to continue their path to enjoy *Time for Contemplation*. Braga'27 will offer new layers for their spiritual journey in *Write the Way*, for which international artists will construct artistic parkours along the Way of Saint James, as well as our contemporary organ music encounter *Pipe Poetics*. As Santiago de Compostela and Braga signed a twin city agreement in May 2022, having at the heart of their agreement cooperation for joint international projects and touristic development, our newlywed twin city will gladly share its visitors with us. Our neighbours from Galicia and the Iberian North will no doubt pay Braga'27 a visit for **Contemplation** and **Celebration** as the Euroregion is co-hosting the ECoC programme with us.

Visitors from other parts of Europe, including its Eastern European and Scandinavian peripheries, will be visiting to experience the merits of inclusive arts. Also, they will come to discover Braga's unique immersive natural landscapes, like the city's sacred hills and the Biosphere cross-border Reserve of Gerês-Xurés. They will feel attracted to come to Braga'27 to discover the dichotomy of tradition and modernity, and the encounter of experimental media arts with the spiritual and the religious.

Guests from abroad, primarily Brazil, are expected to enjoy European festivity and diversity while it is their turn to discover Portugal. We will also target North American and Australian audiences to take a prolonged stop in Braga when doing their cultural tours through Europe.

Our strategy to reach broader international audiences also addresses specifically three growing target groups that share an interest in longer stays, either to find a sense of community, to care for their body/mind as a temple, or to be active. By combining the three, we are sure anybody will identify with the needs and desires of at least one of them. **Pilgrims & hikers, digital nomads and people in recovery processes** will find in Braga'27 exceptional circumstances for their stay. Promoting conditions for the needs of these target groups will also result in a more active, inclusive and participative lifestyle in Braga making the Euroregion even more known for slow tourism and **Contemplation** throughout Europe.

All in all, a visit to Braga in 2027 becomes an intended and meaningful deceleration. We will inspire our international visitors to integrate newly acquired strategies of **Contemplation** into their everyday lives upon returning from their Braga'27 retreat, **celebrating** their visit as a lasting and sustainable experience for Europe.



braga'27

Capital Europeia de Cultura

2012-2013



## Q12 Links with other ECoCs and candidate cities

European Contemplation is the thriving rhythm of Braga'27. Ever since we started, we met with our ECoC peers from all over Europe to get to know each other and we have kept in continuous contact. Over the years, initial ECoC contacts turned into strong European relationships and friendships. This was key for the joint development of Contemplative European projects. Today, Braga'27 finds itself rooted in a sound ECoC network.

We established connections with former and designated ECoCs up to 2027. The Braga'27 team visited **Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018, Valletta 2018, Matera 2019, Rijeka 2020, Esch 2022** and **Novi Sad 2022**. With these ECoC family members, we exchanged knowledge on European topics such as digital and green cultural events, citizen participation, volunteering, urban transformation, legacy, cross-border cooperation, capacity building and youth engagement. **Plovdiv 2019, Novi Sad 2022, Tartu 2024, Bodø 2024, Nova Gorica-Gorizia 2025, Oulu 2026, Trenčín 2026** and **Liepāja 2027** partnered up to develop our programme.

Ensuring the European legacy of Braga'27, we got close to the candidate cities of **France 2028, Czech Republic 2028, Budva-Boka 2028, Skopje 2028, Sweden 2029** and **Belgium 2030**. Recently, **Clermont-Ferrand 2028** and **Montpellier 2028** visited us to learn about our ECoC process and to discuss cooperation for projects on European work migration and New European Bauhaus, while Braga'27 specified plans for an Erasmus+ youth exchange with **Périféeries 2028 in Saint-Denis**.

## Contemplation with ECoC twin Liepāja 2027

Liepāja 2027 and Braga'27 interweaved their bids further in an intensive exchange, identifying European challenges on which we will contemplact together during our shared title Year:

### Valuing tangible and intangible cultural heritage

Exchange of knowledge, skills, techniques and experts between Braga's *School for Conservation* and Liepāja's *Restoration Centre* · Co-designing of social, inclusive and sustainable approaches for placemaking in Braga'27 *Shape of Joy* for a happier life in Liepāja's neighbourhood *Ezerkrasts* and Braga's *Bairro da Alegria* · Braga'27, Unesco Creative City of Media Arts, supports Liepāja 2027 *D 10* in establishing the MMM – Media Art Museum

**Healing body, mind and spirit through artistic practices** Collaboration on Liepāja's *Agora of Values* and exchange of experts for its conference on mental health and Braga'27 *Salus, Fountains of Healing* · Liepāja-based Kristīne Brīniņa empowers women to overcome body trauma by giving masterclasses for Braga'27 *Metamorpho*

### Empowering our European youth for democracy

Liepāja's Youth Forum and Braga's Generation B27 establish close links to develop projects on digital consciousness and environmental well-being · Music students from Liepāja compose contemporary resistance hymns for the Braga'27 closing event celebrating Europe's peaceful revolutions

**Community care for nature** Liepāja's *Face to Face with Nature* and Braga's *Decolonising Nature* collaborate on scientifically and artistically exploring the human right to and responsibility for a green landscape · Co-designing of a cultural education programme for school kids from Liepāja and the Euroregion to discover and learn about the bird common snipe and its migratory routes between the Baltics and Gerês

As Liepāja 2027 and Braga'27 are *(un)restingly* Contemplacting on how to celebrate the ECoC 2027 together, both cities will invite citizens from its twin ECoC to participate in their closing event. Braga'27 welcomes folk choirs to *Permanent Temples* to establish a dialogue, remembering political upsurge and the Portuguese Carnation Revolution as well as the Singing Revolution of the Baltics, nurturing solidarity in face of the uncertainties of today's Europe.

# Embracing our partner ECoCs of 2026 & 2028 and beyond

Moving towards the title Year, Braga'27 contemplates especially with the ECoCs 2026 and the 2028 candidates on healthy urban environments and a resilient democratic European ecosystem.

**Trenčín 2026** invited us to *What Would Marcus Say* for **Contemplation** on mental health, post-Covid-19 society and the role of individuals in shaping democracy. Trenčín's *Creative Wellbeing Movement* joins ECoCs such as Bad Ischl – Salzkammergut 2024 and Oulu 2026 in Braga for *Salus, Fountains of Healing*, sharing its experience in working with European spa heritage and inspiring artistic creation. We welcome the **Oulu 2026** *Peace Machine* in Braga, continuing this innovative approach to peace in the European South, especially with children and teenagers. The chefs and food experts of the Oulu 2026 *Arctic Food Lab* will add fresh Nordic flavours to our *Eating is Wanting*.

With the French candidates, we surpass borders of gender, religion, age and territories for socially diverse European participation. As the European youth has a strong say in Braga'27, the collaboration between the **Périféries 2028** Children's Assembly and Braga's Generation B27 has kicked off and will be reaffirmed in a joint Erasmus+ application. *Village of Religions* offers a safe space in Braga for artists from Saint-Denis to debate and celebrate creative and spiritual diversity. Braga's feminist association UMAR will be working with **Bourges 2028** researching the authorship of hidden European women. Bourges 2028 is invited to bring its unique electro-acoustic instrument, cybersongosse, to *Semibreve* for workshops with children. Being one of Europe's strongest regions for film, we connect France's second largest film festival *Cinemed*, based in **Montpellier 2028**, to our Euroregion's *Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform*. As Montpellier 2028 plans to develop the Museum of the History of France in Algeria, our *Colonial Silences* exhibition will tour to the Africa Montpellier Festival. We welcome **Reims 2028** and their *Wellness and Fooding* gastronomic innovations at *Europe Day Pilgrimage* and women from Braga participating in *Metamorpho* labs will head to Reims to present their self-conscious performance at *Pop Woman Fest 2028*. Braga'27 *By Hand, by Heart* invites artists, designers, and artisans from **Clermont-Ferrand 2028** *Design Massif Biennale* to explore craft skills taught by different generations in contemporary creation. In *Connecting Commutes*, we gather the sounds of the human and natural landscapes surrounding both our cities.

With our Czech ECoC peers, we deepen and share scientific research on creative processes to inspire social innovation. We count on the *Creative Minds* of **Budějovice 2028** and their University Studio of Arts Therapy to support research at our *Metamorpho* performance lab. Also, we integrate their citizens' science approach of *Kul.turista* to measure the natural qualities of our neighbourhoods. In 2028, we will share the results of our *Flows* European scientific exchange and the exhibition will travel to their flagship *Ars Biologica*. In *Write the Way*, the Faculty of Arts and Architecture of **Liberec 2028** will offer secular inspiration through architectural installations for pilgrims on the Way of St. James. A dialogue between Liberec 2028, Clermont-Ferrand 2028, and Braga'27 on current European work migration and digital nomads is established, linking our projects *Les Manufactures*, *Reichenberger Zombie Business* and *Shopyard*. Being Unesco Creative cities of music and media arts, **Brno 2028** and Braga'27 merge the traditional and the experimental, inviting students of the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts for organ master classes for *Pipe Poetics*, and Brno 2028 gaming industry to engage in body-mind creative coding experiences in our *PI*. Braga'27 supports **Broumov 2028** in overcoming its remote position in Central Europe as *Write the Way* connects with *Walking Meditations*, and *Supracasa* exchanges art works with *Mona Stories*, engaging in a dialogue between periphery and centre as well as religion and nature. Broumov 2028 is open to caring for our legacy and hosting the second editions of our conference *Paradise Lost?* and *Europe Day Pilgrimage*.

With Montenegrin **Budva-Boka 2028** and Macedonian **Skopje 2028** we blend the borders of Europe, bringing innovation to our common heritage. Budva-Boka 2028 invited artists from Braga'27 for an artist residency of *Buka Hubs* in an ancient fortress. A co-production reinterpreting Greek and Roman classical theatre for both our theatre festivals *Myth* and *Theatre City* is planned.

**Malmö 2029** through Circus Cirkör and Moomsteatern will share its expertise on social circus for youth in *Balance* and on inclusive performance for our *Multitudes*. Stories of the European Roma community collected with **Plovdiv 2019**, **Timișoara 2023** and **Broumov 2028** during *Neighbourhood on the Road* will be offered as a gift to Malmö 2029 as Sweden's first Roma Library has just opened there.

We connect **Ghent 2030** and Braga'27 via contemporary artist Phillipe Van Snick at *Footnotes* and sound routes with Walk Listen Create during *Extremo*. For *Get Lost*, **Durf-Kotrijk 2030** and Designregion Kortrijk will co-design urban furniture in Braga'27 while we share our experience of working with Europe for their cultural projects monitoring platform. We count on the participation of **Leuven 2030** and its University Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at *Village of Religions*.

Braga'27 will connect to Maltese imaginary island **Farfara 2031**, a research project that intends to experiment with the concept of the ECoC by trying out a fictional digital bid. Together, we will discover what a full digital cultural programme might look like when putting spatial thinking aside, and what assets this process can have for Europe and its cultural life.

## Cooperation, Exchange and Learning with former, current and designated ECoCs

Just this September, artist Aistė Ambrazevičiūtė digitally explored *Forest Tectonics*, bringing the Contemplative energy of the woods of **Kaunas 2022** to Braga'27 and its exhibition *Europe and Beyond*. **Clermont-Ferrand 2028** based Anne-Sophie Emaré showed *Root* on European memory. In November 2022, Braga's photography festival *Encontros da Imagem* will present an exhibition and reflect on contemporary Europe for the programme arch *Other Europe* at **Novi Sad 2022**. Together, we are developing *Resistance! – Youth Festival of Modern European History* to reflect critically on European colonialism. This June, our NGO UMAR, which fights domestic violence, met with European activists at Novi Sad's *REWOMAN – European Women's Remembrance*. For Braga'27 *Creators Academy*, we learn from **Kaunas 2022** and its *Emerging Kaunas*, exchanging on how to best train our youth to have an active say in the ECoC programme development and implementation. The experience of Kaunas project *Designing Happiness* on working with citizens will be considered in *Shape of Joy*. With **Esch 2022** we tell stories of European migration, notably Esch's large Portuguese migrant community, whose most precious memories of home will be integrated in *Reliquaries*. **Tartu 2024** Earth Station *Maajaame* cooperates with us in *Decolonising Nature* and setting up our rural residency programme. Their *Hidden Worlds Expanding* team contributes to our *art brut* exhibition *Stop Making (Non)sense*. **Bodø 2024** will arrive with *Feeding Europe* and its *Flying Stock Fish Festival* at *Eating is Wanting*, cooking with our migrant communities and adding fusion recipes to the compendium of contemporary stock fish cuisine. Braga'27 contributes to Bodø's *Via Querinissima* and together we bring life to the travels of the Italian merchant Pietro Querini. The Centre for Ecological Economics and Ethics at **Bodø 2024** North University and **Bad Ischl – Salzkammergut 2024** will ensure the greenness of Braga'27 through knowledge transfer on Green ECoC indicators. For *Connecting Commutes*, sounds collected at the *River Sound Lab* of **Bad Ischl – Salzkammergut 2024** will ride in Braga's public transport, taking the citizens on a European sound journey. Artisans from the Austrian ECoC and **Veszprém-Balaton 2023** visit the Euroregion to exchange crafts techniques in *By Hand, by Heart*.

ASA-FF of **Chemnitz 2025** brings innovative concepts from the European Workshop for Culture and Democracy to tackle the demons of democracy in our *Behind God's Back*. Braga-based international urbanists Space Transcribers are invited to the European Maker community for the *Dialogfelder* in Chemnitz 2025. **Nova Gorica–Gorizia 2025** Kersnikova Institute for Culture, Art and Education becomes a member of our international board of the *Media Culture – Euroregional Platform*. Their M&N Dance company joins Braga'27 *Metamorpho*, integrating their sensory body work from *Borderless Body* masterclasses, and strengthening feelings of body positivity. Also, we exchange artists for our rural residency programmes *R. o. R. – Rurally Organised Residencies* and *Decolonising Nature*. **Wrocław 2016** and **Leeuwarden-Friesland 2018-2028** are open to sharing their knowledge on how to involve local communities in the development of the ECoC programme for our capacity-building programme *Creators Academy*. **Matera 2019** Open Design School cherishes the sustainable styles of New European Bauhaus with us in *Granary*. **Plovdiv 2019** supports us in working with our Roma community in neighbourhood projects, and the traditional Bulgarian Kukeri will bring a new spirit to Braga'27 during *Solstice Parade*.

We are glad to feel the support of ECoC peers from all over Europe and are eager to meet the candidate cities from **Poland 2029**, **Cyprus 2030** and our neighbours of **Spain 2031**. We will establish further European connections and strengthen the Braga'27 legacy by partnering with those new friends in the ECoC network. So, welcome, we are looking forward to shaping the face of Europe together!

# Outreach



## Q13-14 Involvement of civil society, marginalised and disadvantaged groups, volunteering and accessibility

Do we still believe that love can find us in the beginning and end of all things? Absolutely. The journey since the pre-selection has reinforced our will to be an example for Europe in keeping our hearts open and our aspiration to become a singular space for experimentation in contemporary creation and participation. And although we know we cannot do everything, we are convinced that aiming for the unreachable can take us close enough to all that we are capable of reaching. This is our **Contemplative Outreach**.

But let's pick up from where we started: it was 2018. We were in the preparatory process for our Cultural Strategy before the pandemic surprised us all, changing a great deal in the dynamics of community encounters. As we wanted to understand what the citizens of Braga thought about their city and its surroundings, we went to the streets, centre and periphery alike, with no distinction. Even without realising, we were already applying the concept of *Time for Contemplation*: we took quality time to observe beyond what was visible and act upon it. It was all about the time, presence, availability to listen, and opportunity to question how we feel about ourselves, each other, and the place we live. Thanks to this process, we reached several conclusions. The most fundamental one is Braga citizens' love for their city, both in its strength and vulnerability, and their openness to improving and transforming the city into a space for contemporary experimentation, setting an example to others.

### What we did between 2020–21

**20 of the most relevant cultural institutions in Braga joined in** We deepened our relationships by learning about their problems and wishes for the future. Many of the programme's projects reflect these desires and also have these institutions as promoters or partners. Such is the case with *Encontros da Imagem*, *Semibreve* and *The Art of Caring – School for Conservation*.

**20 online work sessions with more than 100 cultural operators (during the pandemic)** Organised by themes such as ecology, mobility, tradition, safety and education, these sessions allowed us to identify several assets that Braga lacks and needs to develop, as well as those the city already has but that need improvement. The sessions also had interesting immediate effects: they precipitated networking between cultural operators who previously did not know each other; a local dance company created lectures on artistic participation and accessibility after realising there is a lack of this know-how in the city; ideas generated here fueled several community open call proposals (*Supracasa*, *The Roots Club*, *Multitudes* and *Cinemind* are some examples).

**500 people were engaged in 7 municipal cultural events** We set up our colourful parasols and invited the audience to take a seat, asking them to talk and think about the city and Europe together. We found diverse communities, opinions and challenges along with a strong willingness to be part of the change.

**50 representatives of the city's immigrant communities gather in a performance** We organised 20 work/sharing sessions where we listened to citizens from Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Denmark, Spain, Palestine, Senegal and Ukraine, among others. Together with them, members of Braga's Roma community and patients of a mental health institution, we co-created the performance **The Composition of Air**, which puts on stage the desires, challenges, doubts and aspirations of this diverse group of people. The project is based on one of our programmatic principles: community artistic participation.

**Collaboration with the communication team** Citizens and their thoughts about the city became the protagonists of the communication strategy through: **50 video testimonials** (in which different citizens talk about the city and Europe, sharing their stories and wishes for 2027); **9 editions of the Let's talk newspaper** (distributed in person by our team in all of Braga's parishes; each edition reflected upon a different European theme while also providing information about the ECoC process and the last issue was fully dedicated to the 1<sup>st</sup> bid book); **8 radio talks and weekly vox pops** (at RUM – University of Minho Radio – based on the European themes set by the newspaper).

## What we have been doing since pre-selection

Since the pre-selection, we have been putting contemplation into action! In this second stage of the Outreach strategy, we held back from questioning and began bringing the answers we reached together with the citizens of Braga to the table. Our focus now is to put different ways of stopping, taking time and contemplating into practice, acting upon what we discovered during these explorations.

We still continue our journey through Braga, setting out tables, chairs and Braga'27 sun umbrellas for sharing thoughts and ideas. We also give away **Contemplaction** mats that help citizens incorporate the concept into their everyday lives. At the same time, these Braga'27 objects are an excellent way for us to identify spots for contemplation in the city. Moreover, we started incorporating **Contemplaction** exercises into the listening sessions with young people. We observed how they took them into their own day-to-day, leading to different experiences of

self-awareness and emotion management. These exercises also became a routine in our team's daily activities.

We are present at various cultural events, where people can reach out to us with their ideas and thoughts, and our office doors at *gnration* are always open to those who want to know more about the candidacy. In fact, we see the entire city as our workroom and have the great privilege of our office often being a public space, a terrace, a garden or a monument.

After two long years of health measures that turned school walls into almost impenetrable barriers, we finally managed to get in and spend some quality time in dialogue with **12 school clusters in Braga**, including the **Calouste Gulbenkian Music Conservatory art school**. The **Common Good** project started in 2022, as planned, with the birth of **Generation B27**, a focus group with governance responsibilities composed of 27 young people of different backgrounds and profiles, aged between 13 and 18. These young individuals represent the generation that will benefit from the cultural transformation that the ECoC



2027 could bring to the city. They are actively involved in the development of the Braga'27 cultural programme, and their point of view and fresh ideas are a valuable ongoing contribution to the Programme Director. The group is also our newest advisory council, guaranteeing that the young people's perspective will be embedded into the implementation, title Year and legacy phases. They will continue their activities after 2027, serving as a forefront for developing civic, political and cultural participation.

We keep working closely with the communication team, inviting citizens, artists and cultural operators to star in our content. **Make Conversation** is a vodcast/radio show at RUM where artists create in real time while talking to a cultural operator, such as a producer or a technician, that works backstage on a less visible platform. The series aims to better understand Braga's artistic and cultural ecosystem and give it a voice. The new video series **Stop and Chat** brings together two strangers who had never met before for a chat at an unlikely spot in Braga. The two could be a young student and a senior citizen, a priest and a scientist, a Braga native living abroad and an inhabitant from another continent that arrived recently. The **Contemplation Summer magazine** is dedicated to the bid's concept and features articles, interviews, photo essays and information about the selection process. Our **digital communication platforms** (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn) remain a forum for dialogue and the website menu "Take Part" is still open for ideas, volunteering and applications to open calls.

Our **Councils** continue providing precious contributions to the bidding process. The **Strategic Council**, composed of renowned experts in various fields and connected to the city, the country and other ECoCs in different ways, welcomed new members (see Q41). The **Local Advisory Council** keeps on gathering artists, local cultural agents, the business sector and the Municipal Youth Council. Not only has it also welcomed new members, but it has evolved into a prolific work group and an agile networking cluster. We also launched a **new open call**. Having conducted the first open call for Braga cultural operators last year, we now target artists, cultural operators and institutions from Northern Portugal and Spanish Galicia. We received 30 proposals, of which 5 made it into our cultural programme. Finally, Outreach developed even stronger connections with the **Monitoring and Evaluation** chapter. As a part of our activities, we distributed a questionnaire in line with the OECD indicators for the *Better Life Initiative*. The **Circle of well-being** is an opportunity for the citizens to evaluate topics such as housing, safety, work-life balance, art and culture, helping us understand their satisfaction with the city and what we can do to improve our shared future (see Q4).

## Lessons for the future

The times of great fragility of democracies we are facing at a global level have made the need for a paradigm shift in the relationships we establish ever more apparent. We urgently need to look at one another and settle on social dynamics that are more about *us* and less about *me*. It is clear we are in a pressing need of actions that favour the debate of ideas, empathy and dialogue in the fight against disinformation, polarisation and the fear of the "other".

This work of listening attentively and with curiosity and diagnosing led us to the following premises upon which we built our programme:

The artistic and programmatic work must focus on the strengths of this place, Braga (space-time). It must work both with its assets and shortcomings, as well as its symbolic capital.

Based on the analysis of these forces, through observation and dialogue, we build future democratic spaces of inclusion, debate and participation for Europe.



We must place European communities at the centre of cultural action, reflection and policy planning, designing the territory and its amenities in accordance with a profound deliberation of the environment and people's interests, their particularities, roots and social standing.

Design the city from the communities' perspective.



To ensure these premises are met, we designed a cross-cutting, diverse programme based on participatory and community artistic practices. They become a programme default, with the same importance as the programme's artistic quality or its European dimension. Therefore, all our projects comprise different tools and dynamics such as open calls, decentralised activities, turning the streets into stages, training and capacity building, organising conversations, and collaborative creations, among other ways of seeking the effective participation of the population.

In Braga'27 way to **Contemplation**, we discover ourselves and our city. We uncover a territory made of different layers, dense and demanding, with many problems to solve and aspects to improve. As the survey of the cultural audiences revealed, most of Braga's population is quite distant from cultural participation. In a way, we could even consider a large portion of the population is "marginalised" from artistic enjoyment and fulfilment. Each city is unique, built by many people with different personalities, backgrounds and experiences. We believe in the power of **community artistic practices**, in their artistic value and social impact. Our ideal of promoting well-being depends on a plan that contemplates and advances social equality at different levels: by fighting isolation, embracing minority groups, equipping citizens to think critically, especially younger generations, including parents and children from pregnancy and pre-childhood; welcoming people with disabilities, creating conditions for sustainable and environmentally friendly communities; making access to the digital world universal; actively involving and integrating immigrants. In short, by recognizing and fully experiencing the fact that our society and the city are connected and integrated into a vast territory that is Europe and the world. We want to shape a new and positive sense of ourselves, centred on human experience, and propose a simultaneously poetic and converging vision of the various types of bonds that make a community. Meet the **Braga'27 Contemplation Manifesto** forged by many hands, heads, hearts and bodies.

We fiercely believe in love and its ethics  
as the beginning and end of all things.

We demand time to stop, listen, discuss and act.

We are what surrounds us, the environment  
is our home and our body.

Doubt must be the first stroke of the white canvas of the future.

We call for cultural and artistic participation  
to be a right for all Europeans.

We define participatory and community art  
as a programmatic and creative principle for Europe.

We claim our right to a future rooted in memory and imagination.

The street is a stage.

There is no such thing as a centre and periphery.

The digital world must be accessible, informative and inspiring.

We stand for an international collaboration that is ethical,  
close and non-hierarchical, where dialogue is key.

We frequently revisit the definitions of accessibility,  
inclusion, community, participation and equity.

We question everything, even what we wrote before.

With this certainty at heart, we design projects that promote connections between different communities. Everything addresses all audiences, **ensuring accessibility and participation** and attempting to eliminate borders and barriers. With this in mind, we created a programme that reinforces the notion that art and culture are permeable territories that in themselves have the power to bring different people together.

Our concept urges us to think and act, so we implemented a specific community artistic participation project last year aimed at our city's marginalised and disadvantaged groups: **The Composition of Air**.

The success of its methodology and practice made us move forward and continue to act. This year, two more projects based on the same guiding principle are in place:

**Sphere** and **ParkinSound Orchestra**. The first one is a capacity-building project aimed at three local structures, based on the idea of a blank page as the beginning of all artistic creation. It is co-created by NEED Cooperativa (an association that supports people with disabilities, their families and caregivers); Banda Musical de Cabreiros (a peripheral philharmonic band that is also a music school); and Planalto Theatre Group (a non-formal theatre group from Sobreposta, one of Braga's most distant and rural villages). ParkinSound Orchestra promotes the cultural and social integration of people with Parkinson's disease through music. The project is also an opportunity to measure the impacts of artistic practices in this community since it is monitored by the Department of Neurology of the Hospital of Braga, which is collecting information to understand its effects.

## The future

The Municipality has already been developing several projects that promote cultural diversity, the integration of minorities and social support policies. The latest programme to host Ukrainian refugees is of note. Braga was a haven for dozens of people fleeing the war, and a local hotel opened its doors to house 44 Ukrainian citizens. The city was one of the first in Portugal to welcome refugees at the Ukrainian border. These actions were mediated by Vasyl Bundzyak, an Orthodox priest responsible for the local Luso-Ukrainian association. The **Municipality Intercultural Mediation Office** works with collaborators such as Vasyl (Eastern European communities), Saidatina (African communities), Toni (Roma community), and Rómulo (Brazilian community), our Braga'27 mediators for reaching immigrant and Roma communities, which have little visibility in the city and are rarely noticeable on a walk through its most central streets. For the Roma community, in **Neighbourhood on the road** (p. 24), a literary bus will hit Braga's streets in 2023 to hear, read and write their stories. A platform for cultural empowerment, highlighting the European values of cultural diversity and intergenerational learning by preserving oral memories.

Yet Braga is also conservative. Its roots are deeply Catholic, one of its epithets being the *City of Archbishops*. These aspects can be challenging for the **LGBTQIA+ community**, as well as for **women**. That is why our programme includes projects that create safe new spaces where these communities can find freedom, visibility and opportunity to voice their identities and share it with others. Braga's citizens also have their share of trauma. The city is third in the country based on the number of domestic violence cases. Another collective trauma that we urgently need to address is the **Colonial War**. For Portuguese veterans, talking about the war is still taboo, and the country never truly acknowledged nor reflected on war-related issues such as mental health, racism and eurocentrism.

We will also focus on young people with eating disorders and survivors of **gender-based violence**. Physical and mental health is directly related to our **Contemplation** mission. After hearing the population mention the need to "take a break and take care of each other", we created the projects: **Colonial Silences** (p. 19), centred on traumatic experiences on both sides of the Colonial War, seeking to address individual and collective trauma; **Reliquaries** (p. 19), a travelling exhibition of contemporary objects and personal stories of migrants (focusing on Braga-based Brazilians and Afro-descendants), multicultural communities and LGBTQIA+ groups, from Braga and throughout Europe; **Metamorpho** (p. 21) encourages women to raise their voices socially and politically; **Behind God's Back** (p. 38) gives voice to queer-ecology and eco-feminism theories.

**Senior citizens** have a prominent place in our project. Community living implies close relationships between generations, establishing the dynamics of mutual help, interest, curiosity and sharing. We will also promote active ageing, as everyone should have the opportunity to continue growing and learning throughout life. **Variations in Be Major** (p. 20) works on music and memory by collecting and sharing the popular European intangible heritage of this age group, stimulating mental health, well-being, creativity and the joy of doing things collectively.

Braga is one of the country's youngest cities. It was the European Youth Capital in 2012, and in 2027 we want to involve **young people** in civic and cultural participation and deepen their relationships with other age groups. The next question will share some examples of how we will work with this group.

**Volunteering** can be an important means of developing audiences, reaching more people and discovering new talents. We have already connected with the city's Local Bank of Volunteers. It brings together people from different age groups with the time and the will to contribute to the city's initiatives. After the pandemic, the group resumed its activity, seizing this opportunity to restructure its model and goals with our contributions. Together, we aim to create a single volunteer programme for the city based on the values of solidarity, citizenship, proximity, trust and efficiency. The first training session, with 50 people, will take place in 5 November. It includes two modules: i) European values, the ECoC programme and the Braga'27 project; ii) the rights and duties of volunteers. The second phase, planned for the end of the year, will allow us to identify the leadership potential within this group and find individuals that will regularly work with our team, ensuring the share of information, concepts and ongoing projects. We also look forward to exchanging with other international volunteering platforms to create a solid international group of volunteers to help build our ECoC project.

When it comes to **accessibility**, we maintain the same premise as in the 1<sup>st</sup> bid book: cultural access as a fundamental right of every citizen. We promote physical, social and intellectual access to cultural participation, as each person should be able to access any content of Braga'27. The d/Deaf or hearing-impaired community will be able to participate in our programme since all activities will have Sign language interpreting. The same applies to all blind and visually impaired people, as an audio description will be provided for all performances. They should also be able to integrate the programme as participants, creators and performers.

We are conscious of the need to intervene whenever cultural access is not guaranteed. To keep in mind accessibility, equity and inclusion, we maintain our partnership with Acesso Cultura, the most relevant organisation in this area in Portugal, ensuring that the programme implementation considers the specificities of the different target audiences. In addition, the Braga'27 programme will include "relaxed sessions": cultural events that take place in a more relaxed and friendly atmosphere, where rules regarding movement and noise in the room are not so strict. These sessions will be conceived in cooperation with local cultural venues, artists, parents and caregivers. The Communication will also follow these notions, as we will work closely together on developing content that can be accessed by different target audiences, in all their diversity and specificities.

## Q15 Audience development strategy

Besides the groups identified in the previous question, a significant part of Braga's population does not participate in the city's cultural and civic life. The audience study conducted by the University of Minho allowed us to understand our audience profiles and design a strategy to tackle poor cultural participation. We believe art and culture are the tools for developing more conscious, critical, political and humanised collectives. This belief is why community artistic participation is the basis of our actions. We want to reinvent our sense of ourselves and transform Braga into a community that is more attentive to its diversity and capable of self-reflection and questioning. Yet we are aware of the complexity of defining a concept as vast as that of the community, which encompasses geographic, linguistic, historical, emotional, political and generational ties, among other dimensions. We want to contribute to this debate, which is why many of our projects are connected to the Academy, striving to produce new knowledge. We look at the city as our meeting point made of multiple cohesive and dynamic layers. Instead of seeing our audiences as closed compartments, our vision interconnects them in the same shared territory. We leave boxes behind to organise ourselves in a giant circle: **Braga as our point of European Contemplation.**

New Braga citizens

Disabled people

Mental illness

Roma community

The invisibles

Senior citizens

LGBTQIA+

Young people

Our audience development strategy is a means of bringing about the intended change, particularly in cultural participation. We designed our **contemplative** strategy based on the value of **love, empathy, freedom, equity, kindness, justice, curiosity, well-being and courage.** The mission of our Cultural Strategy for 2020-2030 defines **Braga as a European city where culture is at the centre of sustainable development, quality of life and happiness of those who live, work in it or visit it.** Braga'27 will contribute to it through the implementation of its concept. **Time to stop → look beyond what you see → Time to act**

We aim to be an example for Europe by achieving the following goals:

- Stimulate cultural participation through programmes that are decentralised and based on community artistic practices;
- Promote fair access for all audiences, overcoming language, mobility, financial and social barriers;
- Foster international experiences, sharing and collaboration for building a more sustainable and inclusive future for European cities together;
- Facilitate cultural participation as a vehicle for an active civic life promoting peace, happiness, well-being, democracy and human rights.

# Audiences

## The invisibles

The main target of our candidacy: citizens who are not mobilised or do not feel compelled to participate in the civic and cultural life of the city. The ones who think culture and politics have little or nothing to do with them. Those who like to criticise but do not think they are also responsible. It is this silent, growing, invisible majority that we want to summon up and involve in this transformation. This particular audience, in which we all fit in at one time or another, is who we want to challenge with the concept of *Time for Contemplation*. All initiatives have this profile in mind and feature accessible messages and means, creating conditions for welcoming people who are typically not cultural audiences to come and participate in our programme. Through open calls and innovative connection strategies, we will invite them to come in and take part in the transformative and interrogative power of art. By promoting new *agoras* and other spaces for public debate, Braga'27 can awaken a sense of civic and cultural participation and the joy of having a say in the future of our European society. With this in mind, most of our cultural programme projects include training sessions, debates and assemblies. Cultural practices make us better citizens, contribute to our well-being, and enrich cities with new rhythms and routines. **Take Part** (p. 25) reflects upon all of this: participatory art, civic and political involvement, experimentation and debate.

## Marginalised & Disadvantaged

Marginalised and disadvantaged groups usually excluded from cultural participation practices:

**The new Citizens of Braga:** immigrants who chose to live in our city but still look for integration. For them, we design projects that cross the paths of different communities. Participatory creation projects that will be carried out in various neighbourhoods, sharing cultures, collecting stories and creating new ones are examples of how we will involve them in the ECoC and the city's cultural life.

**The Roma community:** Braga is home to the largest Roma community

in Portugal, and we have designed ways for this group to share their culture with the world, integrating it into artistic performances. There are also neighbour exchange projects, promoting dialogue between different communities and learning from Roma communities in other European cities.

**Disabled people:** We will create a cross-cutting cultural access programme, breaking physical, intellectual and social barriers. In addition, an inclusive professional dance company will be created, allowing citizens to pursue a career in the arts.

**People struggling with mental illness:** we are focused on understanding the reality and the worldwide growth of mental illness better. After that, we will create ways to approach these citizens and improve their lives through art.

**Senior citizens:** Our strategy includes projects outside cultural venues, so we can reach out to seniors in places where they usually go and mobilise them to participate in Braga'27. Our volunteer programme also includes this audience.

**LGBTQIA+ community:** We will create bridges across borders to tell and share stories that will help break through prejudice.

## Young people

Braga is one of the youngest cities in the country. Its 38 schools and around 30,000 students make for quite a diverse educational landscape. Yet, the University of Minho study found that students rarely engage in cultural initiatives. Our programme includes projects for younger generations and schools that develop emotional, social and critical skills for them to use inside and outside school walls.

**Common Snipe** is an example of how we intend to act upon this (p. 29). The project promotes ecosystem conservation and sustainable development based on local communities. It will bring schools from Galicia and Braga together for regular visits to the Gerês-Xurés Biosphere Reserve to observe the bird common snipe in action. It will also have body and sound activation for children and a training programme for teachers.

**Balance – European Social Circus** (p. 20) will involve young generations and work on developing

interpersonal skills, overcoming trauma and learning to take responsibility, individually and collectively. A training programme for young people from socially unstable backgrounds from Braga, Latvia and Serbia will take place, connecting local, regional, national and European institutions.

**Salus, Fountains of Healing** (p. 33) brings together young patients from the **Psychiatry Ward of the Hospital of Braga** and students from the **University of Minho** struggling with anxiety. We will invite them to use the nearby park for outdoor creative therapy sessions, explore its underground water channels and exchange cultural narratives about water treatments with the other six ECoCs.

Finally, **Common Good** (p. 35) began in 2022 with the first meetings with all the school groups in Braga. Motivated by the questions – *How can we involve the next generation of Europeans to act upon the future they desire?*; and *What city and what Europe will young adults of 2027 live in?* – we met with teachers and students to create the focus group **Generation B27**. These 27 teenagers have already gotten together to learn about the ECoC and how it can drive collective and social transformation throughout Europe. During these sessions, we challenge them to reflect on democratic principles and how could our programme better answer these issues and their wishes. This matrix is now part of the project evaluation and will guide us through implementation. The focus group also contributed ideas on communicating Braga'27 across schools and to other younger citizens. We put these initiatives into practice and turned members of Generation B27 into our ambassadors. We will also open a call for them to submit their projects to feature in the official Braga'27 programme. **Common Good** goes even further, as it is one of our legacy projects. It includes exchanging with similar initiatives from other ECoCs as Liepāja 2027 and Montpellier 2018. With Périphéries 2028 Saint-Denis, Generation B27 will hold a first online meeting on the day of the jury visit.

We believe the future belongs to them, which is why our programme emphasises this audience. Meet the activist movement for Common Good democracy.

# Management



# Finance

## Q16 Updated total operating budget

Since the pre-selection phase, the overall operating budget increased from 42 to 48 million euros due to a more substantial commitment of the local and regional authorities.

The income from the public sector grew 13%, now representing 97% of the total budget. The income from the private sector is also slightly higher due to a more detailed and solid fundraising strategy, as further developed in Q21.

TOTAL INCOME TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE (IN EUROS)	FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR (IN EUROS)	FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR (IN %)	FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR (IN EUROS)	FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR (IN %)
48 069 450 €	46 449 450 €	97%	1 620 000 €	3%

## Q17-18 Income from the public sector and financial commitments for operating expenditure

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE	IN EUROS	IN %
National Government	19 000 000€	41%
City	9 686 900€	21%
Region	4 162 550€	9%
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	13 000 000€	28%
Other	600 000€	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46 449 450€</b>	<b>100%</b>

The good results of the pre-selection phase led to increased enthusiasm for the candidacy, gathering strong support and recognition from the local and regional population, cultural and political agents, and more awareness of the potential relevance of the ECoC programme for Braga and the entire region. This was crucial to raise the local and regional commitment, much needed to reinforce the implementation of the ECoC programme and to lower the risk of a high dependency on EU funds. To achieve this, we have worked closely with the municipal financial department and developed several contacts with all the political parties represented in the City Council. As a result, the Municipality doubled its investment which now represents 21% of the public sector income. Also, the new city budget and the submission of the final bid book were approved with a unanimous vote by both the Municipal Council on 12 September 2022 and by the Municipal Assembly on 30 September 2022.

Besides maintaining the regular municipal cultural activity, the city is providing increasing support to the implementation of the Cultural Strategy. For instance, the funding programme for independent cultural operators is expected to continue growing with the new grants system.

At the regional level, the candidacy was able to amplify its partnerships across the North Region of Portugal and mobilise broad support from all the municipalities, regional institutions and agencies. The North Regional Council from the North of Portugal Managing Authority, which gathers all 86 region's municipalities and about two dozen

representatives of the economic and social sector, unanimously granted their formal support to Braga ECoC candidacy and voiced their commitment toward our programme. Furthermore, the seven municipalities of the *Quadrilátero Cultural* and *CIM Cávado* (Amares, Barcelos, Esposende, Terras de Bouro, Vila Verde, Vila Nova de Famalicão and Guimarães), along with the University of Minho and *Porto and North of Portugal Official Tourism Board*, already formalised their participation on the ECoC project and announced a total investment of more than 4,1 million euros for the cultural programme, communication and promotion activities, between 2023-27.

At the national level, the Ministry of Culture announced that a total of 15 million euros from its budget would be dedicated to the ECoC delivery, increasing the national funds allocated to this project but reducing the EU Structural Funds coming from the national programmes by the same amount. This shift of sources strengthens the ECoC budget: Government support has fewer bureaucratic constraints and poses not as many eligibility issues. Another advantage is that these funds can be transferred to anticipate financial needs and not only after the payments are made. On the other hand, the Government also decided that the financial support from the Secretary of State for Tourism should amount to 4 million euros.

Regarding EU Funds and following the Portuguese Government's recent announcement, we have now considered 10 million euros from the Portuguese EU Framework Programme 2020-27 to cover part of the ECoC operation expenditure. Nonetheless, we have kept our additional provision of 3 million euros for ongoing and future candidacies to direct EU funding, as further explained in Q19.

Under Other incomes, we have included the ticket sales and royalties' projection, as well as the expected contributions from cultural diplomacy institutes and agencies, namely the British Council, Goethe, Cervantes, Alliance Française, Luso American Development Foundation, and others.

## Q19 Fundraising Strategy for EU support

We have started defining a fundraising strategy for the 2021-27 EU Framework, working closely with highly qualified and experienced professionals in EU funding and project management, both from the Municipality of Braga and the Municipal Company Teatro Circo de Braga.

At the regional level, the ECoC team has been working with the North Region Managing Authority to mobilise additional funds to those announced by the National Government from the ERDF, to support some of the strategic initiatives of the cultural programme. 200.000 euros ERDF support was approved to cover the preparation phase and the implementation of some pilot projects within the previous 2014-20 Regional Programme.

We are now working on the upcoming 2021-27 framework. Culture is one of the next regional operational programme's investment priorities. Even though the final official document is still under discussion with the European Commission, we have already identified projects that fit these priorities so that we can present them as soon as the calls for funding are launched.

At the cross-border level, as our cultural and artistic programme contains several projects with a strong collaboration with Galicia, we have analysed all the connections between our activities and objectives and the strategic priorities of the Galicia-North Portugal 2021-27 joint investment plan and the Interreg Programme Spain-Portugal (POCTEP 2021-27). We have already held a few prior meetings to present our main projects to the programme authority, notably the new media Euro-regional agenda, which intends to contribute to several programme aims and indicators. As this programme is also in the final approval phase, it is still not possible to officially submit our proposals. Yet we are already preparing these candidacies together with our partners and the Portuguese and Spanish regional authorities.

With respect to other EU Funds, such as Creative Europe, Erasmus+, URBACT, and Citizens, Equality Rights and Values programme that are already ongoing, we have successfully submitted some candidacies and are preparing proposals for future calls, notably within Horizon Europe, European Urban Initiative, Digital Europe and other potentially interesting programmes. The following table summarises this work, presenting the achieved funding opportunities and those under preparation.



PROGRAMME SUBPROGRAMME	PROJECT	RELATION WITH BRAGA'27 PROJECTS	STATUS & PARTNERS
<b>URBACT</b> Action Planning Network	<b>Tourism-Friendly Cities</b> Sustainable tourism in medium-sized cities through integrated and inclusive strategies with the local community through urban development	<b>Endless – Community Eco Festival; Behind God's Back</b>	<b>Funded; Duration: 2019-2022</b> Genoa (IT); Braga (PT); Cáceres (ES); Druskininkai (LT); Dubrovnik (HR); Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (IE); Krakow (PL); Rovaniemi (FI); Venice (IT)
<b>Citizens, Equality Rights and Values</b> European Remembrance: CERV Lump Sum Grant	<b>RESISTANCE! – Youth Festival of Modern European History</b> Remembrance of Europe's recent historical political changes with young people	<b>Carnation Revolution – 50 Years in Freedom; Colonial Silences</b>	<b>Funded; Duration: 2023-2025</b> Društvo Gledališce Glej (SI); Teatro Circo de Braga EM S.A. (PT) National Moravian-Silesian Theatre (CZ); Delleali Associazione Culturale (IT); Café de las Artes (ES); Theatre du Pelica (FR)
<b>Creative Europe Project</b> Culture: large-scale cooperation project	<b>European Media Art Platform</b> Network of collaborating European media labs to reflect on the impact of new technologies on society	<b>Flows</b>	<b>Funded; Duration: 2022-2025</b> Antre Peaux (FR), Ars Electronica (AT), FACT (UK), iMAL (BE), IMPAKT Centre for Media Culture (NL), Kersnikova Institute (SI), KONTEJNER   bureau of contemporary art praxis (HR), LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial (ES), m-cult (FI), NeMe Arts Centre (CY), Onassis Stegi (GR), RIXC Centre for New Media Culture (LV), Werkleitz-Centre for Media Art (DE), WRO Art Center (PL), Braga Media Arts (PT)
	<b>EUDigitalDeal</b> Web based Digital Futures Action Plan with artists, educators and young people for human-centered, sustainable innovation tackling mis-/disinformation in media, digital public spaces and digital literacy	<b>Media Culture – Euro regional Platform</b>	<b>Funded; Duration: 2023-2026</b> Ars Electronica (AT), Fundacion la Laboral Centro de Arte y Creacion (ES), Fundación Zaragoza Ciudad de Conocimiento (ES), Ariona Hellas (GR), Zavod Za Kulturo Umetnost in Izobrazevanje (SI), Helsingor Kommune (DK), Centar Za Promociju Nauke (RS), Gluon (BE), Stichting Waag Society (NL), Pro Progressione Kulturalis Nonprofit Knzhaszn (HU), Sineglossa (IT), Interactive Media Art Laboratory (BE), Braga Media Arts (PT)
	<b>Reimagine Europe</b> Empower a young generation of digitally connected Europeans to explore new ideas and modes of develop, produce, present and distribute new cutting-edge art addressing European social and political challenges	<b>Semibreve</b>	<b>Funded; Duration: 2023-2026</b> Sonic Acts (NL), Paradiso (NL), Elevate (AT), INA GRM (FR), MACBA (ES), Bergen Kunsthall (NO), A4 (SK), Disruption Network Lab (DE), Kontejner (HR), Borealis (NO), Semibreve (PT)
	<b>Socially Engaged Public Art and Placemaking</b> Bond people and places through the concept of Green Cultural Care	<b>Salus, Fountains of Healing; Convivial Hoods; Decolonising Nature;</b>	<b>Application to be Submitted in November 2022; Duration: 48 months</b> Oulu 2026 (FI); Schauspiel Leipzig (DE); Festspillene – Harstad (NO); Donostia Kultura – San Sebastian (ES); Viimsi Artium – Lubja (EE); Led Art / Schock Cooperativ – Novi Sad 2022(RS); Drugo More – Rijeka (HR); Placemaking Europe (NL); Send/receive (DE); L'Office (FR); Aalborg University (DK), Teatro Circo de Braga EM SA (PT)
<b>Creative Europe Project</b> Culture: medium-scale cooperation project	<b>European Photo Archives</b> Gathering digital archives on platform for European social curatory work	<b>Encontros da Imagem</b>	<b>Application planned for March 2023; Duration: 36 months</b> Novi Sad Led Art / Schock Cooperativ – Novi Sad 2022 (RS); Encontros da Imagem (PT); World Press Photo Foundation (NL); ECoC 2029/30 candidate; Galician Photo Archive (ES)
<b>Erasmus+</b> Learning Mobility of Individuals	<b>European Media Ecosystem</b> Capacity-building programme for media students to support excellent cultural journalism in Europe	<b>Tour d'Europe on Journalism</b>	<b>Application planned for 2024</b> Theatro Circo de Braga EM S.A. (PT); Media and Journalism Faculties from ECoC Universities
<b>North Region Operational Programme 2021-2027</b>	<b>Endless – Community Eco Festival</b> Sustainable practices of cultural event production on natural environments	<b>Endless – Community Eco Festival</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> Braga (PT); Amares (PT); Barcelos (PT); Esposende (PT); Terras de Bouro (PT); Vila Verde (PT)
	<b>By Hand, By Heart</b> Digital innovation on craftwork production through cross sectoral learning programme	<b>By Hand, by Heart</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> Braga (PT); Barcelos (PT); Vila Nova de Famalicão (PT); Guimarães (PT)
	<b>Creators Academy</b> Capacity-building programme for cultural operators	<b>Creators Academy</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> ESMAE – School of Music and Performing Arts (PT); ESAP – School of Arts of Porto (PT); ACE – School of Arts (PT); University of Minho (PT); Start Up Braga (PT)
	<b>Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform</b> Cross-border cooperation to promote cinema and audiovisual production through economic cooperation and cultural exchange	<b>Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> AGADIC – Cultural Industries Agency (ES); CGAI – Galician Centre for Arts of Image (ES); Minho Film Comission (PT); Braga Media Arts (PT); Portugal Film Comission (PT);
<b>Demographics, qualifications and inclusion Operational Programme</b>	<b>The Art of Caring – School for Conservation</b> Capacity-building programme that trains and qualifies young adults and professionals in the field of conservation/restoration of cultural heritage	<b>The Art of Caring – School for Conservation</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> Regional Directorate for Culture of the North (PT); School of Arts of the Catholic University of Portugal (PT); Ricardo do Espírito Santo Silva Foundation (PT)
<b>Interreg Programme Spain-Portugal (POCTEP 2021-2027)</b>	<b>Walking through the Broaderline</b> Strengthen the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development in cross-border territories	<b>Write The Way</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> Galicia and North Portugal Eixo Atlantico Noroeste Peninsular (PT/ES); Dirección Xeral do Patrimonio Cultural – Galicia (ES)
	<b>Media Culture – Euroregional Platform</b> Cross-border European Media Cluster in the North of Portugal and Galicia Euroregion	<b>Media Culture – Euro regional Platform</b>	<b>Application planned for 2023; Duration: 24 months</b> AGADIC (ES); Galician Audiovisual Cluster (ES); Minho Film Comission (PT); Braga Media Arts (PT)

## Q20 Timetable for income to cover operating expenditure

The timetable for the income to cover operational expenditure allows the organisation to plan and develop all the activities with the necessary financial support since the annual income provides the means to cover operational expenses estimated in the table in Q23. Moreover, by the end of 2026,

we should have received 62% of the income and spent 50% of the budget, which will allow the management to handle contingencies that may potentially arise from programme implementation or possible delays in public or private transfers planned for this period and in particular for the title Year.

SOURCE OF INCOME FOR OPERATING EXPENDITURE	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027 ECoC YEAR	2028
National Government	-€	5 500 000 €	5 750 000 €	6 000 000 €	1 500 000 €	250 000 €
City	1 092 000 €	1 092 000 €	1 092 000 €	1 092 000 €	4 893 210 €	425 690 €
Region	265 980 €	336 880 €	520 880 €	1 124 280 €	1 914 530 €	-€
EU	600 000 €	950 000 €	1 350 000 €	2 600 000 €	6 900 000 €	600 000 €
Sponsors	-€	-€	46 500 €	544 750 €	1 028 750 €	-€
Other	-€	-€	-€	25 000 €	575 000 €	-€
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1 957 980 €</b>	<b>7 878 880 €</b>	<b>8 759 380 €</b>	<b>11 386 030 €</b>	<b>16 811 490 €</b>	<b>1 275 690 €</b>

## Q21 Fundraising strategy to seek support from private sponsors

The ECoC is a unique opportunity for increasing the private sector's involvement and contribution to the city's cultural life. Just as having a dedicated team with a comprehensive, all-embracing approach to the fundraising strategy is vital for creating adequate conditions for the ECoC to serve as a living laboratory for various forms of funding and partnerships that can also provide examples of good practices for the future.

The ECoC has the potential to mobilise both civil society and the economic sector. On top of motivating companies to invest in cultural projects, it also helps create links and work practices between the companies and the cultural operators they support. This is why our fundraising strategy evolved into a threefold plan to convert individuals and companies into supporters of Braga'27, enable cultural agents to attract more funding and boost civil society participation in cultural initiatives.

For that reason, we updated our funding strategy: adding a new strand to involve citizens and cultural audiences in becoming donors and advocates of the ECoC; improving the approach to national and local companies; and merging the capacity building and crowdfunding proposals into an integrated and more elaborate funding model.

The ECoC fundraising strategy unfolds as follows:

### A Promoting individual engagement in the ECoC Programme

Our sponsorship plan develops tools that will enable everyone to participate in the cultural programme funding, contributing to a greater sense of ownership and involvement with the ECoC initiative. It will also help communicate our projects and promote community-based initiatives by raising awareness of the programme agenda and encouraging public participation.

**Friend** Individual investment 5 € Benefits ECoC basic merch (tote bag & lanyard) • Subscription to the dedicated newsletter with programme overview based on selected individual preferences • 35% discount on all programme initiatives • Early bird invitation to community initiatives Estimate number of donors 27000 Target value 135 000 €

**Enthusiast** Individual investment 150 € Benefits ECoC basic merch (tote bag & lanyard) • Subscription to the dedicated newsletter with

programme overview based on selected individual preferences, and exclusive projects previews • Access to VIP events during Opening Ceremony • Early bird access to ticket reservation • 10 free tickets • 50% discount on all programme initiatives • Early bird invitation to community initiatives Estimate number of donors 2700 Target value 405 000 €

**Biggest Fan** Individual investment 300 € Benefits Tote bag • Subscription to the dedicated newsletter with programme overview based on selected individual preferences, and exclusive projects previews • Access to VIP events during Opening and Closing Ceremonies • Early bird access to ticket reservation • Free pass to all programme activities • Early bird invitation to community initiatives Estimate number of donors 270 Target value 81 000 €

Another way for individuals to contribute to sponsoring the programme is by participating in the crowdfunding initiatives described in the third vector of our fundraising strategy.

### B Attract companies as supporters and ambassadors of the ECoC

Our strategy combines:

- A marketing strategy for attracting big sponsors, interested mainly in promoting their products and services to potential clients;
- An ECoC Partners Club that promotes not only financial but mostly in-kind support from local and regional companies and small businesses since we believe this kind of relationship is the most interesting for involving potential sponsors.

Both models are firmly rooted in our candidacy's theme and goals. We believe in sponsorship that goes beyond traditional approaches. Instead, it is a close relationship in which success is not measured only by the financial contribution these institutions make but also by the seeds left for the future. We would also like to turn the benefits of supporting the ECoC directly visible in the work environment and promote meaningful involvement of the workers, as described below. In addition, our social and ecological concerns are embedded in everything we do, including our approach to the support we receive from companies. This will reflect in the marketing and communication tools associated with the sponsoring plan and in our choice of partners that must align with these priorities.

**Action Supporters** Target 5 companies • 500 000 €  
 Action supporters are big national and international companies that will provide transversal support in terms of financial investment, logistics and/or production services and goods. These companies will be featured prominently in all communication and marketing actions, and each of them will be associated with one of our activities' public space sites, hosting several events during the ECoC Year.

Additionally, we will make sure we are present at these companies by creating a **Contemplaction** room with a yearly cultural programme for the company employees, where we will invite them to slow down and recentre their work-life balance through culture. Dedicated information will be available in a digital format and at these sites, together with special access conditions for participating in the ECoC events.

### ECOC Partners Club

We defined three broad categories according to the expected investment and impact on the ECoC programme. In the table below, we summarise the target budget and engagement level for each category, as well as what we offer in return and how we plan to further involve them in our concept and programme. These benefit packages are guidelines, as we will develop a customised plan with each partner based on the company's mission and needs.

**Small local business** Engagement level Communication spots • Food and accommodation • Cultural programme service and production suppliers • Space concession Benefits Exclusive Partners Club logo • ECoC digital communication presence • Participation in cultural programme activities • Free tickets package Target 20 to 30 companies • 65 000 €

**Local companies** Engagement level Cultural programme project partners • Financial or/and in-kind support to the ECoC communication and logistics needs • Space concession • Conception and development of special projects for collaborators and citizens Benefits Exclusive Partners Club logo • ECoC online and offline communication presence • Participation in cultural programme activities and audience development programmes • Free tickets package • Tickets discount for employees • Special guests at Celebration events Target 10 to 15 companies • 150 000 €

**Regional companies** Engagement level Cultural programme project partners • Financial or/and in-kind support to the ECoC communication and logistics needs • Space concession • Conception and development of special projects for collaborators and citizens Benefits Exclusive Partners Club logo • ECoC online and offline communication presence • Participation in cultural programme activities and audience development programmes • Free Tickets package • Tickets discount for employees • Special guests at Celebration events • Brand activation at **action** events Target 7 to 10 companies • 250 000 €

Apart from these benefits, we will promote regular meetings between the ECoC Partners Club companies to create conditions for networking and capacity building and an active discussion forum on the ECoC implementation. This forum will also become a part of the ECoC advisory council.

## C Empower cultural agents and citizens to develop and fund their own initiatives

**Acting Together Platform** Target 34 000 €  
 Following up on the ECoC goals Citizens in Action and Creativity in Action, we will also focus on empowering cultural agents and civil society to engage with the city's cultural life. The fundraising strategy includes a dedicated

platform, a training programme and a support office for cultural operators and citizens, which will promote grassroots projects and help them create their own partnership and fundraising strategies, multiplying the possibilities of private engagement with both the ECoC programme and legacy activities. We will give special attention to crowd-funding for community-based initiatives and projects benefiting young people, senior citizens, and marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

The training programme started in 2021 within the framework of the City's Cultural Strategy, with the first training sessions dedicated to communication, marketing and funding planning (see Q2 and Q3). It will continue until 2027. To guarantee the programme's success, we will create a dedicated team that will support the implementation of our partners' funding strategies (within the community office, as explained in our organisation structure – see Q29 and Q30).

Furthermore, we will implement a digital platform that matches projects and funding opportunities, with areas dedicated to in-kind support and crowdfunding. This platform will:

- Increase citizens' and companies' involvement;
- Congregate and communicate all in-kind calls and crowdfunding processes related to the ECoC projects;
- Certify all advertised funding initiatives that are part of the ECoC programme to gain the trust of the potential sponsors/donors;
- Provide a portfolio of projects for those who are interested in supporting the ECoC initiative, allowing them to find initiatives that best fit their areas of interest;
- Foster funding opportunities by matching the project's needs with the companies'/donors' offer of support.

## Q22 Breakdown of operating expenditure

BREAKDOWN OF OPERATING EXPENDITURE	(IN EUROS)	(IN %)
Programme Expenditure	30 569 450 €	64%
Promotion and marketing	7 000 000 €	15%
Wages, overheads and administration	7 000 000 €	15%
Other	3 500 000 €	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48 069 450 €</b>	<b>100%</b>

Most of the operating expenditure is dedicated to implementing the cultural programme. At this moment, the activities described in Q6 already add up to 23 million euros, representing 75% of the programme expenditure. The remaining budget will be dedicated to youth-driven projects (5% of the programme expenditure), future community and grassroots projects open calls (5% of the programme expenditure), and prospective international open calls (10% of the programme expenditure). Finally, the last 5% of the programme expenditure will support building up pre-existing local events in the title Year.

In "Other" expenses, we have included 2 million euros for programme evaluation and monitoring activities, with an in-depth work plan from 2023 to 2029, and a contingency budget of 1,5 million euros.

## Q23 Timetable for operating expenditure

TIMETABLE FOR SPENDING*	PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		PROMOTION AND MARKETING		WAGES, OVERHEADS AND ADMINISTRATION		OTHER	
2023	1 000 000 €	3%	300 000 €	4%	400 000 €	6%	175 000 €	5%
2024	2 000 000 €	7%	550 000 €	8%	750 000 €	11%	350 000 €	10%
2025	4 000 000 €	13%	750 000 €	11%	1 000 000 €	14%	350 000 €	10%
2026	8 000 000 €	26%	2 000 000 €	28%	1 650 000 €	24%	525 000 €	15%
2027 ECoC Year	12 569 450 €	41%	2 650 000 €	38%	2 250 000 €	32%	1 225 000 €	35%
Later	3 000 000 €	10%	750 000 €	11%	950 000 €	13%	875 000 €	25%
<b>SUM</b>	<b>30 569 450 €</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7 000 000 €</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7 000 000 €</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3 500 000 €</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Q24-25-26-28 Capital expenditure: income from the public sector, financial commitments, EU support and new cultural infrastructure

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	IN EUROS	IN %
National Government		0%
City	20 160 146 €	73%
Region		0%
EU	7 268 710 €	27%
Other		0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 428 856 €</b>	<b>100%</b>

When it comes to the public investments in infrastructure for the ECoC programme, the Municipality will ensure the bulk of the total amount necessary for the capital expenditure budget.

Most of these investments were identified earlier, during the development of the Cultural Strategy. These include the renovation and requalification of existing cultural venues and sites that will benefit the ECoC programme and two new cultural public initiative infrastructures: the Media Arts Centre and the Francisco Sanches Cultural Hub, presented in the table below.

AMOUNTS THAT WILL BE SPENT ON THE NEW CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURES	IN EUROS
Francisco Sanches Cultural Hub	2 700 000 €
Media Arts Centre	6 000 000 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 700 000 €</b>

The city is strongly committed to these projects and their budget. All the capital investments included in this table are part of the 2021-26 and 2022-27 investment plans approved by the Municipal Assembly.

As an outcome of our EU fundraising strategy, the EU co-financial support considered in the previous table has already been approved by the corresponding programme authorities. 6 418 710 € are from projects included in the Recovery and Resilience Plan Programme, and the other 850 000 € will be granted to projects already approved in the North Regional Operational Programme – Norte 2020. The Municipality has an office dedicated specifically to EU fundraising, as well as decades of experience in managing projects funded by both national and EU programmes. In the last EU framework, the Municipality gathered more than 52 million euros through EU projects, obtaining more than 33 million euros in EU Funds. On that account, we expect to gather more support from the ERDF funds in the 2021-27 framework, which is still under negotiation within the EU and the Portuguese Government. That will allow the city to maximise its public investment and support new infrastructural challenges that may arise from the ECoC implementation process.

## Q27 Timetable for income to cover capital expenditure

SOURCE OF INCOME FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	2021/2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027 ECOC YEAR
National Government	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€
City	3 271 820 €	9 268 387 €	4 379 940 €	3 130 000 €	110 000 €	-€
Region	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€
EU	1 064 950 €	3 024 900 €	3 178 860 €	-€	-€	-€
Sponsors	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€
Other	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€	-€
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 336 770 €</b>	<b>12 293 287 €</b>	<b>7 558 800 €</b>	<b>3 130 000 €</b>	<b>110 000 €</b>	<b>-€</b>

The income timetable is aligned with the investment plan. Some of the interventions have already started in 2021/22, and the Municipality plans to finish all bigger infrastructural projects between 2024 and 2025. Apart from the public investment, the ECoC programme will also use the

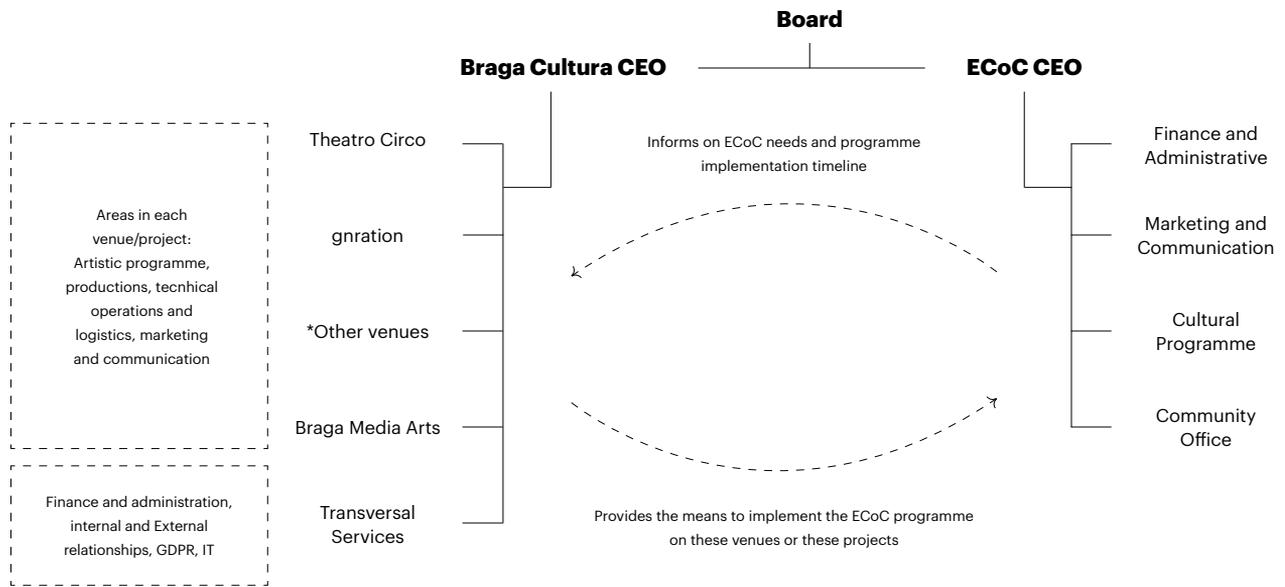
facilities of a new contemporary art museum owned and managed by a private company from Braga. The project is already approved, with an estimated budget of 15 million euros and the Museum, located in the city centre, is expected to open in 2025.

# Organisational structure

## Q29 Governance and delivery structure

As outlined in the pre-selection bid book, if Braga is recommended for the ECoC 2027, it will be managed by Teatro Circo de Braga EM SA, the municipal company for culture. An independent department within the municipal company will be established for that purpose, as a task force dedicated exclusively to implementing the ECoC. Its structure and organisation are detailed below.

Having carefully studied all options and analysed the models applied in previous ECoCs, considering both their benefits and disadvantages, we firmly believe that this is the best governance structure for our project.



\*other municipal cultural venues to be managed by the company in the upcoming years, as the New Media Arts Centre

### Success factors

#### Independency and accountability

This governance model ensures the political involvement of all the stakeholders along with an autonomous and flexible organisation, as is necessary for implementing such a demanding task. It also secures the administrative and artistic independence required to deliver the ECoC programme.

To guarantee the appropriate level of political and administrative supervision, the Company Board, responsible for the overall organisation of the municipal company, will grow from 3 to 5 members. The Municipality will appoint two members, while the Ministry of Culture, National Tourism Authority and the University of Minho will each designate one member.

The board approves the annual strategy and financial plan, oversees its execution and supervises the CEO's leadership. This board will be assisted by the inputs of the Monitoring and Evaluation Team in all phases of the ECoC project implementation. The Strategic Council and Local Advisory Council from the pre-selection phase will be merged into the Strategic Advisory Council, gathering representatives of the regional and local authorities, the local cultural organisations, the economic sector, higher education institutions, artistic schools, youth associations, as well as other relevant representatives of the civil society.

The company will be divided into two independent entities, one dedicated exclusively to the ECoC delivery and

the other responsible for managing the city's cultural venues and strategic cultural projects, according to the Braga 2030 Cultural Strategy. To ensure autonomy and accountability, each department will have its own CEO and separate plans, budget, accounting, and bank accounts.

The organisational diagram displayed above shows the company structure and the relationships and hierarchies within each department and between them.

#### Experience and flexibility

Teatro Circo de Braga is a well-established organisation that has a central role in the local cultural dynamics, with decades of work in cultural management and a strong relationship with the local community and artists. Its experience and network will be a great benefit to the ECoC. What is more, since the municipal company will also be running a larger network of cultural venues in the city, it will facilitate the engagement between the ECoC team, responsible for planning and executing the cultural programme, and the executive and technical teams of each of the venues where those projects will take place, reducing conflicts and context costs.

Another benefit of the symbiotic relationship linking the work of the Braga Cultura and the ECoC departments will be the continuous connection between the long-term cultural strategy approved by the Municipality and the ECoC programme.

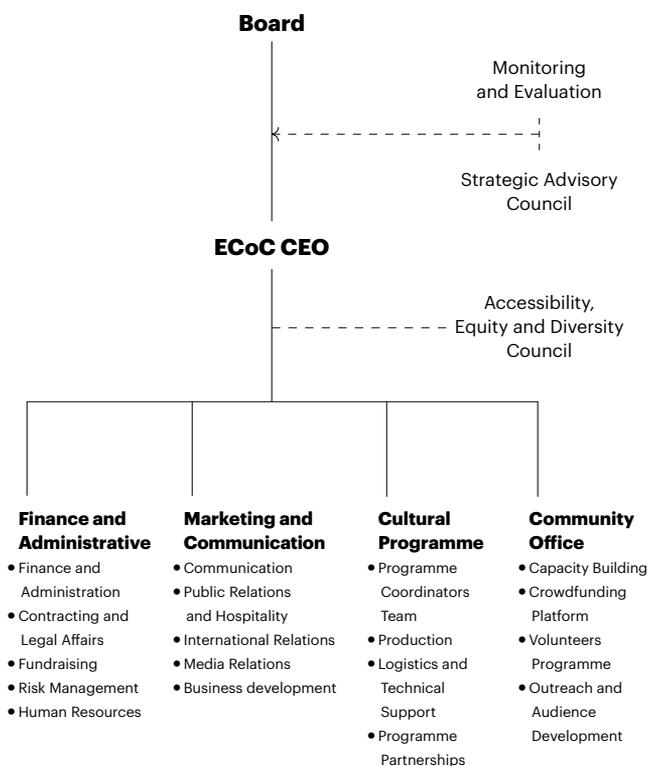
## Smooth transition and legacy

The candidacy team is currently established as a special division within the municipal company. This team will ensure the transition period until the ECoC CEO and directors are designated and all other positions are filled. As this transition will happen within the same organisation, the candidacy knowledge will pass on with a lower risk of sudden changes and bureaucratic and legal issues. Moreover, this transition will benefit from the already acquired experience with the organisation's legal framework, work dynamics and local networks, which will be valuable for the ECoC implementation.

On the other hand, during the implementation period, the new cultural venues will for the most part be dedicated to the ECoC project. The municipal company will integrate the management of these venues into its Braga Cultura department. This means they will need to develop their own cultural plan after the ECoC and reinforce their teams for this purpose. As a consequence, the local company can simultaneously offer new challenges and job positions to the ECoC team, retain talented and experienced people, and underpin the continuity of some of the legacy projects.

## Q30 Management

The ECoC management within the local company will be organised as displayed in the diagram below.



The Finance and Administrative Director will supervise the existing budget, elaborate all necessary contracts and legal procedures, control and manage the risks, and implement the ECoC Human Resources policies, while continually working on a fundraising strategy to involve more private and public partners, thus amplifying the impact of the ECoC programme.

The Marketing and Communication Director will carry out the promotion and marketing activities, ensure the ECoC public and international relations and hospitality, develop the media content and assist in involving local, national and international media, audiences and stakeholders, as well as in maintaining regular contact with them.

The Programme Director will be responsible for developing the cultural and artistic plan along with the team of Programme Coordinators with independence from the CEO and the Board and respect for artistic creation at all levels. The person in this position will be accountable for implementing the artistic vision of Braga'27 according to the **Contemplation** goals, ensuring diversity and the right balance between the different artistic projects and disciplines, and achieving the project's European dimension. Besides having a central role in the project implementation, the Programme Director will also manage the production activities, guaranteeing the necessary technical and logistical support, and establishing local, national and international artistic partnerships.

To ensure the success of local and regional partnerships and civic participation, the Community Office Director will be responsible for developing a specialised team devoted to capacity building and continuous support to the cultural partners, civic organisations and individuals involved in the ECoC programme. This person will also oversee the execution of the Acting Together Platform, the outreach and the audience development programme and the volunteers' programme.

Following our goal "Citizens in Action", to strengthen the inclusion and participation of citizens in cultural activities, with particular attention to minorities and disadvantaged groups, an Accessibility, Equity and Diversity Council will be created to assist both the CEO and the unit directors. This Council will gather representatives of the groups identified in the Outreach section (see Q15) and meet twice a year until 2026 and every trimester during the title Year.

## Staff with appropriate skills and experience, CEO and Programme Director

The recruitment process will start with the selection of the CEO and the unit directors. The CEO will be selected first and should be appointed by the end of the first trimester. All other leaders must be designated until June 2023. The recruitment processes will be announced internationally, to broaden the chances of finding the right match. We will look for candidates that are highly experienced in their fields, with both national and international cooperation backgrounds, as well as individuals that are mission-oriented, resilient and flexible to tackle such a demanding project. Interpersonal skills and empathy are fundamental when managing people and a strong ethical mindset is a must when public projects and funds are at stake. The CEO and Programme Director profiles are further detailed below, as they are key positions in the ECoC delivery structure.

CEO	PROGRAMME DIRECTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minimum 8 years experience in top management in a public cultural organisation</li> <li>● Political understanding of European Union policies and funding structure</li> <li>● Experienced team leader with strong ethical values and interpersonal soft skills</li> <li>● Experience in representation roles</li> <li>● Skilled in managing large-scale projects with high budgets with EU and private funds</li> <li>● Mission-oriented and aligned with the <b>Contemplaction</b> vision and goals</li> <li>● Risk and conflict management experience and stress tolerance</li> <li>● Strong local and national network with relevant authorities</li> <li>● Portuguese and English proficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minimum 8 years experience in cultural management and production</li> <li>● Integrated and interdisciplinary vision of the cultural programme in line with the <b>Contemplaction</b> theme and goals</li> <li>● Good understanding of Braga's long-term Cultural Strategy</li> <li>● Strong cultural network at the national and European level</li> <li>● An experienced team leader and an excellent mediator</li> <li>● Inspiring personality and excellent communication skills</li> <li>● Risk and conflict management experience and stress tolerance</li> <li>● Strong ethical values and interpersonal soft skills</li> <li>● Portuguese and English proficiency</li> </ul>

During the second half of 2023, the unit directors will start defining the structure of their teams, detailing the job descriptions and hiring the first staff members to address the initial tasks of the ECoC implementation process. In the following years, the teams are expected to grow gradually to accommodate the ECoC timetable, as estimated in the following table.

STAFF PER YEAR	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Full-time	9	12	14	22	30	20	6
Part-time	3	6	8	14	18	8	4
Trainees	3	4	6	6	4	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>

As we mentioned before, the bidding team will be invited to remain in the project and apply for positions in the ECoC team. We believe they have valuable in-depth knowledge that deserves to be sustained when adequate. Nonetheless, all vacancies should be filled through an open and transparent selection process, where the candidates' profiles should be carefully defined and assessed. Professional experience in large-scale projects and in an international environment, being a team player and the level of alignment with the ECoC goals will be some of the key factors to be considered.

In the overall recruitment process, gender equality and social diversity will be taken into consideration, as well as the balance between local, national and international co-workers. Not only will these criteria contribute to creating a fair representation of the city's different communities, but also promote European cultural diversity by fostering an international work environment.

The ECoC is a unique opportunity for trainees to have their first work experience, so internships will be fostered and welcome. For that matter, partnerships will be established with universities and higher education institutions, at both local and European levels.

Our concept, *Time for Contemplaction*, must also be present in our work culture and dynamics. Therefore, collaborators will have the possibility to choose a part-time or flexible schedule to allow a better work-life balance. Moreover, the fruition of the cultural programme initiatives will be included in the work week, as we believe they are fundamental both to the work performance and well-being and to the success of the ECoC. Workspaces will also have **Contemplaction** areas where the team can take a break, connect with other staff members, share ideas, or just stop to breathe before action.

## Q32 Cooperation between local authorities and the Braga'27 team

Firstly, Teatro Circo de Braga is an arm's length organisation of the Municipality of Braga, with an umbilical relationship with the local authority that ensures this connection while simultaneously guaranteeing the independence of the cultural programme. Moreover, since the beginning of the candidacy process, which started in 2018 with the preparation of the long-term cultural strategy, the bidding team has been working closely with the heads of the Municipality departments. As a consequence, the city strategy is aligned with the ECoC programme, and open and direct communication channels are already established.

At the regional level, after receiving formal support from the North Regional Council, we invited all the municipalities of the Northern Region to join the ECoC regional network. Furthermore, these municipalities have already nominated local representatives that will act as focal points, supporting the implementation of the cultural programme projects in their territories to help deliver the ECoC.

And finally, the company Board and its Strategic Advisory Council include representatives of relevant local, regional and national authorities, which provides the internal know-how to engage and work with these varied stakeholders.

# Contingency planning

## Risk assessment and mitigation measures

During the pre-selection phase, we undertook a profound analysis of our candidacy strengths and weaknesses as well as the difficulties and constraints we may face during the ECoC delivery. This provided us with a baseline for developing a risk framework, where we have identified major risks, the probability of their occurrence and mitigation strategies.

This Risk Matrix has been updated to include the natural evolution of the ECoC project during the final selection phase but also to incorporate the reflections driven by global-scale shifts, namely those that arise from the ongoing war in Ukraine.

### RISK MATRIX

RISK	PROBABILITY	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Loss of political and administrative support due to a change in political leadership in 2025 (when local government elections will be held)	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ECoC candidacy has gathered wide support from the citizens and local cultural scene and has been unanimously approved by all political parties represented in the City Executive Council and Municipal Assembly.</li> <li>Furthermore, the ECoC team will operate with full administrative and artistic autonomy.</li> </ul>
Failure to assure the planned budget	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our budget structure has been approved by the City Executive Council and the City Municipal Assembly, and there are formal commitments from the Ministry of Culture and the State Secretary of Tourism.</li> <li>The city increased the financial support to cover 21% of the operational expenses. This, together with the financial commitment from the region and the Government, the candidacy can now ensure two-thirds of the planned budget.</li> <li>A contingency reserve has also been created to minimise the probability of unplanned changes in the financing structure.</li> </ul>
Instability of the governance structure	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ECoC team will be anchored in a pre-existing governance structure with full executive and artistic independence, safeguarding not only the daily operational demands of the project but also its legacy.</li> </ul>
Insufficient ownership and collaboration of local cultural operators	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural operators have been actively engaged in the development of the Cultural Strategy from its very outset. Their participation in the cultural programme was further fostered through the Open Calls launched during the preparation phase of the bid and their input was integrated into the cultural programme.</li> <li>The main cultural stakeholders are represented in the Local Advisory Council and will be part of the ECoC Strategic Council.</li> <li>Additionally, these cultural operators will actively participate in the ECoC programme by directly managing part of its projects. To this end, they will receive financial and capacity-building support.</li> </ul>
Lack of experience in international projects among local cultural operators	Medium/ Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Cultural Strategy is already tackling this issue by providing a long-term capacity-building programme for the cultural and creative ecosystem. Also, our management model encompasses a support office which will assist the local stakeholders in their projects. Furthermore, our programme includes a project focused on the capacity building of cultural operators for the specific purpose of the ECoC programme implementation.</li> </ul>
Inappropriate use of the funds allocated to the project stakeholders	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The management model includes a support office that will provide the partners with guidance on budget implementation and supervise it. The partnership terms will clearly define the responsibilities and accountability of project stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Lack of engagement of the local population due to low community and civic culture	Medium/ Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the bid preparation process, our outreach and communication strategies have already put in place actions for continuous community involvement and liaison. The preparation for the title Year will include capacity building for collaborative projects and a training programme for setting up a network of professional community mediators.</li> <li>A marketing strategy was designed to involve citizens as stakeholders and to promote their participation in community-based programmes.</li> <li>Furthermore, 10% of the operational budget is now dedicated to youth-driven projects and future community and grassroots projects open calls.</li> </ul>
Lack of engagement of the regional partners for hosting and promoting the ECoC programme within their territories	Medium/ Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All municipalities of the Northern Region and several regional organisations have already formalised their support and commitment to the ECoC project.</li> <li>Moreover, a regional network is in place, with formal representatives designated by these entities, and a working process is designed to guarantee the effective implementation of the partnerships and the engagement of their territories.</li> <li>At a cross-border level, we have secured the support of the Galicia Regional Authority, mobilising their cultural services and partners towards the ECoC.</li> </ul>
Failure to secure the necessary infrastructure for hosting the programme and the title	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The city's planned infrastructure for culture, urban and tourism is already in place or under development.</li> </ul>
Discouragement of the local cultural and creative ecosystem in case the application for the European Capital of Culture is unsuccessful	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Cultural Strategy provides a clear work plan for the city's cultural development in the long run and is intertwined with our proposal for the ECoC process. In case we do not succeed in hosting the title, we intend to implement a part of the programme projects.</li> </ul>
Global-scale constraints that can limit the implementation of the programme	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine are teaching us all to cope with uncertainty.</li> <li>The programme's implementation plan will foresee detailed contingency measures for each particular project, including a digital strategy.</li> <li>Also, a contingency budget that amounts to 3% of the overall operational expenditure will provide a financial reserve to offset price fluctuations.</li> </ul>

# Marketing and communication

## Q36 Slogan

The Braga'27 slogan is *Time for Contemplaction*. Since sharing our 1<sup>st</sup> bid book with the public, we have been presenting this concept to our audiences in different formats, testing its ability to pass our message and its potential limitations. Tools like the video series *Stop and Chat*, where we invite citizens from different walks of life to pause and reflect on present-day themes, or the *Contemplaction* summer magazine, are different formulations of our slogan that help audiences engage with the concept. Our *Contemplaction Mats*, round carpet mats that we give away for people to use as contemplation spots, are a physical, playful translation of *Time for Contemplaction*. Curiously enough, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Not only do people relate the concept to the city, they immediately make a connection to their own experiences and start articulating them. For example, one senior citizen told us that, for her, *Contemplaction* is looking at a newborn baby, referring to the renewal of time and the importance of new generations. Another person said it was being able to make space for beauty in our lives, whereas a young adult pointed out the urgent need to stop and combat the idea that we should be productive at all times. This feedback reassures us of the pertinence of our concept and its importance to contemporary European societies. We believe that the Braga'27 theme will resonate across European audiences since the lack of time, a poor work-life balance, individualism, deficit of empathy and mental illness are all challenges that Europeans relate to in their everyday lives.

During the title Year, we will unfold our slogan into more tangible headlines related to the four Temples of the cultural programme and the CelebrACTION events:

- Time for sharing and embracing.
- Time for rediscovering and reuniting.
- Time for questioning and inspiring.
- Time for daring and empowering.
- Time for **celebraction!**

Occasionally, we will also shake things up a bit because *Time for Contemplaction* is also time for Europeans to have fun together. So don't be surprised if headlines such as *Contemplate this, Time for some action*, or even *Contemplactivists of the world, unite and take over*, come up in our minds and actions.

*Time for  
Celebration!*

**braga'27**

## Q37 Marketing and communication strategy

*Friendship is a ring that expands like those in our childhood when we would throw stones in the lake, fascinated by the drawings in the water, in ever larger circles.*

We evoke the words of Cardinal José Tolentino Mendonça, from the book *Nenhum Caminho Será Longo – Para uma Teologia da Amizade* (No Path is Too Long – Towards a Theology of Friendship), to propose a marketing and communication strategy that rests on the ties of friendship that bind us together as Europeans. Friendship, or in other words, empathy, is the basis of all communication, and we want Braga'27 brand to grow in ever larger circles from now to 2027 and beyond. Through old, new and future friendships, we will strengthen our bonds with local, regional, national, European and international friends to help us spread the word about the ECoC 2027 in Braga, whether they are citizens, artists, cultural operators, institutions, media or business partners. With that in mind, we chiselled a marketing and communication strategy that grows stronger and wider as we approach the title Year, guided by the strategic principles and communication goals defined during the pre-selection, which remain unaltered.

### Strategic principles

The three strategic principles defined in the 1<sup>st</sup> bid book – **digital, sustainable, accessible** – are still the premises of our every action. They will be embedded in all communication outputs, as we will create transmedia actions and materials, with both a digital and a non-digital version, mindful of the importance of communicating non-digitally, especially for European audiences. Everything will be made from eco-friendly materials and in a sustainable way by suppliers with certified ecological practices. All will be subject to our Accessibility, Equity and Diversity Council (see Q30), which will make sure that our communication is accessible and reaches a wide range of audiences, in Portuguese, English and Spanish, with translations into the languages of the city's immigrant communities, whenever this option guarantees stronger participation of these groups. The written content will also be gender neutral, something we are already putting into practice. Other accessibility services will be provided, such as audio description, sign language, augmentative and alternative communication, and accessible signposting. We will also not be afraid to adapt and specify all of the above whenever necessary.

### Communication goals

#### Communicating Braga'27 concept and programme

Since pre-selection, we have been unfolding our slogan into a series of different media and approaches, such as the video series and the magazine mentioned above, to reach our audiences and communicate this seemingly complex idea in more palpable outputs. Should Braga be recommended to host the ECoC 2027, we are ready to step up and rise to the challenge of communicating to broader audiences, sharing our concept and cultural programme in detail on various digital and non-digital fronts.

**Contributing to building a more reflective, critical and active community** This goal is fundamental for the success and legacy of Braga'27. The ECoC will

be worthwhile if the initiative can transform those it reaches. We believe that communication can play a role in this by sharing content that promotes the idea that we as individuals have the power to question, think and act towards a better city, a better Europe, and a better world. Even if it means the communication can be a bit provocative or defiant. Nobody said it was easy, but we know it is worth it.

**Making our brand loved** We have already been receiving positive feedback from Braga'27 branding and a bit of criticism too, which, for us, is also love. We intend to keep listening to our audience's feedback and to continue creating stories that people can relate to and understand.

**Involving Braga's citizens at a body&mind level** The core of this goal is to engage the citizens of Braga and visitors in the programme as its protagonists. Generation B27 (see Q15) is an example of how we are experimenting with this. Also, the audiovisual content will continue focusing on local citizens and visitors, giving them the chance to be the storytellers of 2027.

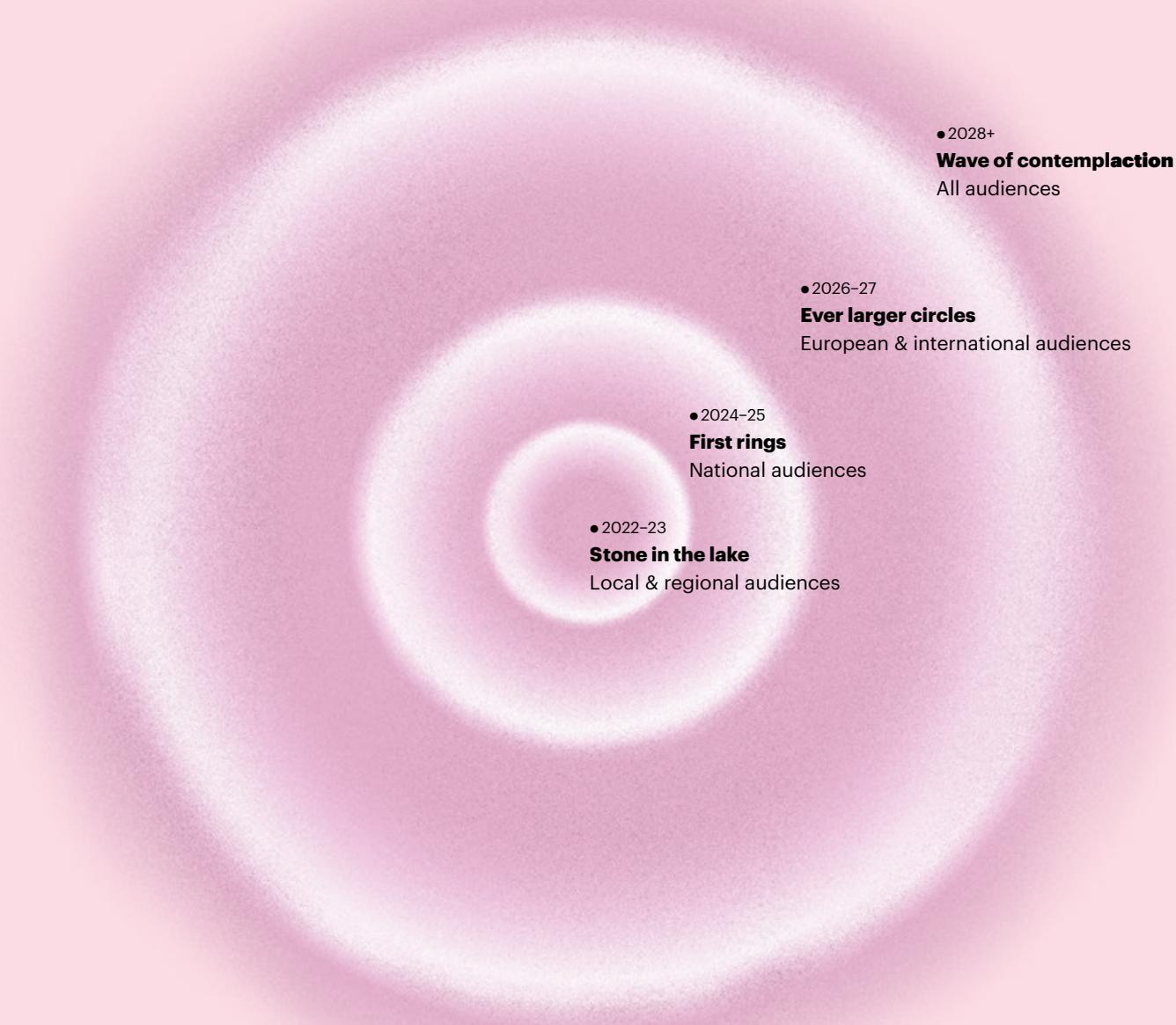
**Involving audiences from other regions of Portugal and neighbouring Spain** This goal is something we will push for from the early stage of the strategy. In fact, we have already started, and the open call for artistic projects (see Q13/14) was our first communication action aimed at the North of Portugal and Galicia. It included an advertising campaign in regional, national and Galician media, as well as a billboard campaign in the streets of Braga, Amares, Barcelos, Esposende, Guimarães, Vila Nova de Famalicão, Vila Verde and Terras de Bouro.

**Attracting European audiences and beyond** Captivating and engaging audiences from other European countries to come and visit Braga during 2027; putting Braga on the map as a European city that fosters arts, culture and our common values, where communities are actively involved in the city's cultural life; attracting audiences from other continents, such as North and Latin America, by making Braga'27 a must stop during these audiences' longer trips to Europe.

# The Circle of Friendship

The Circle of Friendship is our proposal that sums up the marketing and communication actions from 2022 to 2027 and beyond. It builds up in four temporal segments, each focused on a geographical target group but not exclusively dedicated to it. We intend to broaden our action as we approach the title Year, having strongly engaged and captivated local, regional and national audiences at an early stage in ways that

set the participatory tone for European and international groups. Thus, our targets divide into local and regional audiences (including Galicia), national audiences and European and international audiences. These categories contain the groups identified in Q15 transversely, following the Outreach assumption that the city is a meeting point for people from all places and walks of life to enrol in community artistic participation. Digital audiences are present in all phases of the Circle of Friendship.



## Stone in the lake 2022-23

The first splash of the ECoC project on Braga's still waters includes the bidding phase, the recommendation and the first year of implementation. Primarily targeting local and regional audiences, these actions use local and regional media to set the roots of our bid concept in our closest friends: the people of Braga, our neighbouring cities, the North Region of Portugal and Galicia (ES). Naturally, these target groups are continuously involved

throughout the years, it doesn't stop at 2023, but they are our first friends.

Focus target groups: local and regional audiences, Galician audiences, digital audiences, target audiences referred in Q15 (the Invisibles, Marginalised & Disadvantaged Groups, Young People).

### Actions already in action

**A strong digital strategy** with regular audiovisual content created by the communication team and involving citizens in Braga's slow

communication storytelling, such as the video series *Stop and Chat* and the vodcast/radio show *Make Conversation*; audiovisual coverage of all activities related to Outreach actions and others made by the bid team; usage of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, newsletter and website, in Portuguese and English.

**Strong offline presence** After distributing nine editions of our newspaper last year, this year we released a summer magazine – *Contemplanção* (Contemplation) – that was freely

available not only in several cultural venues and cafés in the city centre and all parishes of Braga but also at cultural and public spots in the neighbouring cities of Amares, Barcelos, Esposende, Guimarães, Vila Nova de Famalicão, Vila Verde and Terras de Bouro.

- Campaigns that go beyond the limits of Braga: such was the case of the open call for artistic projects, aimed at artists from the Euroregion Galicia-North Portugal, that included outdoor advertising in Braga and neighbouring cities, as well as a newspaper campaign at the regional newspapers, cultural magazines and also *Faro de Vigo*, one of Galicia's best-known press references.
- Partnership with TUB (Urban Transportation System of Braga) to decorate four buses with the Braga'27 brand.
- Partnership with the local logistics company Torrestir to decorate a truck that circulates across European routes with the Braga'27 brand.
- Partnership with Braga Business Association that distributed Braga'27 communication materials in local shops, bars and restaurants.

#### **Actions after recommendation Advertising campaign**, online and offline, announcing the results of the bidding process. Braga'27 is preparing for both possibilities: a local campaign with a big "Thank you, Braga. Let's keep contemplating", if the city is not recommended for the ECoC 2027, and a national campaign announcing that in 2027 Europe and the world are invited to come to Braga for an enlightening shared *Time for Contemplation*.

- 2023 will also be the year when we start reaching national audiences through regular online and offline campaigns, as well as the moment to cover the initial implementations of the programme activities.

**Partnerships** It is also the time to activate local and regional partnerships such as the one established with *Porto and North of Portugal* Official Tourism Board (see the detailed partnership on page 94) and establish national partnerships with organisations such as the Tourism of Portugal, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, national companies

with international visibility and the national TV and radio media companies.

- 2023 will also be the time to reinforce the fundraising and sponsorship strategy (see Q21), since by then we will know that Braga will be the European Capital of Culture 2027.
- As for partnerships with local companies, we have already established a joint agreement with several local businessmen, responsible for hundreds of companies from Braga with an international presence (see Q21). They will be enthusiastic partners for both the programme's projects and visibility actions. As a way of thanking them and involving different audiences in our activities, special tickets and access to participatory programmes will be made available for local companies' workers as well as their families.
- **WYD in Lisbon** World Youth Day (WYD) is the yearly gathering of young people from all over the world with the Pope. In August 2023, this large-scale international event will take place in Lisbon, preceded by a preliminary programme in different Portuguese cities, including Braga. In the last days of July 2023, the city expects thousands of international youths, an opportunity to present them with the *Time for Contemplation* concept, and an invitation to return to Braga in 2027.

Media involved: Braga'27 digital media (website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter); local and regional media, including Galician media.

#### **First rings 2024-25**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of our strategy is when The Circle of Friendship starts to widen. This will be the time to fully engage national audiences, uniting the 12 candidate cities in a true fellowship and sharing of European values, and involving national media in covering the first developments of our programme activities. This is also the time to invite European and international press and influencers to come to Braga in crucial moments, preparing the ground for the *Contemplation* to come in 2027.

Focus target groups: national audiences, international opinion leaders and international visitors arriving at Portugal's touristic main entrances.

#### **Actions**

**Eco-roadshow 12 as 1** During 2024 and 2025, we will involve the 12 Portuguese candidate cities, taking advantage of their favourable geographical distribution across the country, in a two-year eco-roadshow. The Braga'27 team will travel from Braga to Viana do Castelo, Vila Real, Guarda, Aveiro, Coimbra, Leiria, Oeiras, Évora, Faro, Funchal and Ponta Delgada by bicycle, train or boat, with the underlying message "There is time to get there leaving the least ecological footprint possible". All candidate cities will have the experience of the bidding process behind them and are aware of the importance of the initiative for the country. So, during this roadshow, we will not only invite the citizens of each of these cities to enjoy the Braga'27 programme in 2027, but also turn these cities into ambassadors of the initiative in their communities, creating an opportunity for them to present the ECoC 2027 *Time for Contemplation* in their channels of communication and local and regional media, and also their institutional digital media.

**Cooperation with Unesco Creative Cities Network** Braga is a Unesco Creative City in Media Arts and, as such, an open door to a vast network of 297 cities in Europe and the world that put creativity at the centre of their sustainable development. Every year, these cities gather in an annual conference to strengthen their ties and define strategic objectives for the future of the network. Braga has applied to host this meeting in 2024 and this could be a major chance to showcase Braga'27 and invite delegations and citizens of these 297 cities to return to Braga in 2027. It will also be an opportunity for the ECoC 2027 to communicate the initiative in the following annual conferences of 2025, 2026 and 2027 by joining the Braga Unesco Creative City delegation with a group of Braga'27 ambassadors that will promote the initiative in the hosting cities.

**Campaign at national airports** During the summers of 24 and 25, Braga'27 will welcome international visitors at the airports of Porto, Lisbon, Faro, Funchal,

Ponta Delgada and Vigo (ES) with an advertising campaign that will invite tourists to come back in 2027 for a **Contemplaction** stay in Braga. Besides a billboard campaign, during the summer months we will use the airport arrivals area to distribute a **contemplaction** tote bag, in which visitors can find two tools to **contemplaction**: a notebook and a sleep mask.

**Billboard campaigns at the national level** Two branding campaigns, one for each year, will be visible throughout the Portuguese and Galician motorways, with a reminder that 2027 will be the year to come to Braga for *Time for Contemplaction*.

**Supplement at national newspaper** Accompanying the two-yearly campaigns, we will create a supplement to Portuguese reference newspapers *Jornal Público* and *Expresso*, introducing the concept and the implementation of the initiative.

**1' Contemplaction on TV** We will present a one-minute **contemplaction** every Friday after the evening news on the public TV broadcaster RTP. It could be a reading of a book passage, a youngster reflecting on **Contemplaction** or just a minute of silence. The idea is that this minute can translate the Braga'27 concept and spark curiosity about what is coming in 2027.

**Media involved:** Braga'27 digital media (website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter); local and regional media, including Galician media; national media.

## Ever larger circles 2026-27

Nothing can hold us back now. As we approach the title Year, Europe is our friend of honour, alongside our international companions. Braga'27 is about Europe, and Europe is about old friendships that stop to think and act together towards a better joint future. In 2026, our communication will spread through Europe and other international markets with the help of cooperation with *Porto and North of Portugal* Official Tourism Board and the Tourism of Portugal office. It is also time for international media to put the spotlight on Braga and its ECoC's preparations and programme for the title Year. 2027 will be the Year when **Contemplaction** in Braga will be a must-stop.

**Focus target groups:** European and international audiences

### Actions

#### **Cooperation with *Porto and North of Portugal* Official Tourism Board**

As Braga'27 is moving on to the final selection of the ECoC initiative in Portugal as the sole representative of the Northern Region, we partnered up with *Porto and North of Portugal* Official Tourism Board to use their promotional channels from 2023 to 2027. The office has 72 stores throughout the region, one in Santiago de Compostela (Galicia, ES). By communicating in those spaces, we can reach not only the local and regional audiences but also an estimated 1.5 million international visitors, including the tourism of the Douro Region, with figures going up to 150.000 tourists in 2019, and the expected 10 million visitors (numbers of Xacobeo 2019) in Santiago during the Xacobeo 2027. Besides this, *Porto and North of Portugal* is present at the most relevant European tourism fairs every year, such as the acclaimed World Travel Market (UK), Fitur (ES) and ITB (DE). In 26 and 27, all efforts will be on promoting Braga'27 on those occasions. We will also communicate via the office's international billboard network, which, in 2021, had 17 positions distributed throughout its European and international markets (Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain, UK, Russia, China, India, Japan, Brazil, Canada, US). This network includes Porto international airport, the main entrance point for international tourists to the region. Let's not forget international touristic operators, journalists and influencers that regularly come to the territory to discover the next must-go trip – an average of 48 Press & FAM Trips per year. Braga will be proposed as the perfect spot for culture and contemplation, inviting groups of visitors to enjoy the ancient city and its relationship with spirituality. A delightful and relaxing stay in a place that will be bursting with mindful art and culture, delicious food, and the perfect balance between city enjoyment and nature retreat. If we get the title, we will establish the same agreement with the Tourism of Portugal that will ensure even wider national and international reach.

**Cooperation with institutional partners** We will take advantage of Portuguese institutions such as embassies, consulates, the Camões Institute and the EUNIC global network (gathering European national cultural institutes) to present the ECoC project and the Braga'27 programme to Portuguese citizens living abroad, so they can be our informal ambassadors in their countries of residence.

#### **Presence in Xacobeo 2027**

The opening of the Holy Door marks the beginning of the Jubilee Year in Santiago de Compostela (ES). This event takes place in the afternoon of 31 December 2026 and Braga'27 will also be there with a special marketing presence, inviting pilgrims to the opening of Braga ECoC 2027 – from the ancient temple to the *New Temples* opening ceremony. Regular marketing actions will take place in Santiago during 2027 and also through Xacobeo's official digital media.

**Airlines, trains and buses partnership** The years 2026 and 2027 will be good opportunities to partner up with low-cost and flag airline carriers, such as TAP and Ryanair, among others, that travel to Porto and Vigo, as well as the main international train and bus companies that have Braga as a destination. In this way, in 2026 we will invite tourists to return in the following year, and in 2027 we will invite them to make a stop for **Contemplaction** in Braga.

**Social Media platforms and website** We will keep our Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn pages alive and well-fed before and during 2027 and leave an open door for new social media platforms. Our main goal on these platforms will be to interact with our audiences, searching for their echoes and feedback on our programme. With audiences participating from a distance in mind, we will broadcast all main activities live via our social network platforms and follow up with photos, interviews and wrap-up videos. There will also be social media advertising campaigns aimed at specific geo-targeted audiences. We will use that possibility for all our international audiences, focusing on Galician, Spanish and Brazilian audiences (that are physically and emotionally close). We are also planning a joint social media strategy with Liepāja 2027 to make

Braga visible to the Latvian and Baltic audiences and vice-versa, making Liepāja appealing to Iberian audiences. As for the website, from 2023 to 2026, it will become a participation tool with information on activities, forms for calls, and a news area with the preparation stages for the ECoC Year. In 2027 it will evolve into a powerful tool for visitors to access the programme overview, find specific targeted activities, and book tickets. A detailed schedule with the possibility to filter projects will enable visitors to choose what to see according to their preferences (see target segmentation app below). The website will have Portuguese, English and Spanish versions and an accessibility menu. After 2027, we plan to transform it again, creating a living archive of all projects implemented during 2027 and communicating the legacy projects (see Wave of Contemplation below.)

#### **Target segmentation app**

A detailed schedule with the possibility of filtering projects by audiences and “visiting mood”, which enables visitors to choose what they want to participate in. It also links activities to their locations and the best way to get there. The app will have two formats: a search mode (users can search within the schedule) and a quiz mode (the app suggests activities after the user fills out a quiz). The app will be available in Portuguese, English and Spanish, with the possibility of audio description and filling. All the data collected in the Braga’27 app, website and social media will feed the Monitoring and Evaluation (p. 10).

#### **Will TikTok still be a thing?**

If TikTok is still relevant in 2027 for younger generations, we will create a community of local tiktokers to learn and interact with major European TikTok stars for an alternative coverage of Braga’27 projects.

**Braga’27 on Metaverse** In 2026, we will invite international Metaverse experts to study the possibility of creating the first presence of an ECoC on Metaverse in 2027. Not only will it be a way to involve our audiences that participate from a distance, but it would also be an opportunity to raise awareness of the positive use of social and VR media.

**The Critics’ Club** Aimed at local, national and international audiences in 2027, the Critics’ Club is an invitation for citizens to attend the programme’s

events and become our specialised critics. Through regular get-togethers at the local radio and through local newspapers’ opinion sections and our social media channels, each month a group of citizens will think and discuss the contents they have interacted with to form and give their views on the programme’s initiatives. They will be accompanied by a group of selected national and European critics.

**The participants pack** A special welcome kit for artists, collaborators, volunteers and journalists that will cover the Braga’27 Year. It includes merchandising, a catalogue, a full-access badge and extra tickets for friends and family.

**Street visibility** Following the digital and sustainable strategic lines defined earlier, we will work with local and international tech companies to find innovative solutions for our outdoor presence, such as the cultural spaces’ signage, which we intend to make fully digital. The City Council is also developing a digital display system that will be ready for use in 2027. We would also like visitors to feel they are approaching the ECoC 2027, a celebration Year not to be missed by those arriving in the Iberian Peninsula. Therefore, regular billboard campaigns during 2026 and 2027 will run at the most relevant Iberian cities and regions, motorways, train stations and airports (Vigo, Madrid, Barcelona, Lisbon, Porto, Algarve, Madeira and the Azores). The same goes for the cities that are part of our region: the Quadrilátero Urbano, the Intermunicipal Community of Cávado and the Euroregion (North of Portugal and Galicia). Once visitors arrive in this territory, it will be impossible to miss that 2027 is the Year of the ECoC. The Urban Bus Transportation System (TUB) vehicles and their onboard digital monitors will bear the Braga’27 brand. The city’s vacant kiosks will not only serve for programme projects but also as communication hotspots. In line with the bid’s attention to peripheral areas, every parish will also have a Braga’27 hotspot in the most popular location (from cafés to culture clubs) with all the necessary information for people to engage in our activities.

Media involved: Braga’27 digital media (website, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter);

local and regional media, including Galician media; national media; international media

## **Wave of contemplation – 2028 Onwards**

After 2027, the marketing and communication strategy will reshape itself to deliver the outcomes of Braga’27. Together with the Monitoring and Evaluation and Cultural Programme teams, we will help share the positive impacts of the ECoC as well as communicate the legacy and ongoing and new projects that will still be active after the title Year.

Focus target groups: all audiences

#### **Actions**

**Braga’27 directory** In 2028, a publication will be designed and published as a wrap-up of the best moments of this walk to Contemplation. It will be available online and in paper to those who wish to receive a copy at home. For that, they can leave their address and a contribution for posting costs in a kiosk made for that purpose, available during 2027 at the programme activities’ locations.

**Digital directory** After the title Year, the website will include a directory of all the activities that took place in 2027, with projects’ synopsis and artists’ bios, as well as descriptions of all participants. It will also have a dedicated menu for the Monitoring and Evaluation main analysis and conclusions.

**Commissioned talk shows** to celebrate 1, 5 and 10 years of the initiative: when closing the media partnerships, we will make sure we save three mediatic moments to remember Braga’27 on its 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, at a local, national and international media outlet.

Media involved: local, regional, national and international.

## Q38 Media partnerships

Braga'27 has already taken action to establish contacts, or shall we say friendships, with certain local, regional, national and international media. But it will be after the recommendation that we will build closer partnerships with the media. Regardless of their origin, we will challenge our media partners to spend as much time as they can in Braga, finding meaningful stories that inspire others to Contemplact in Braga during 2027. Some partnerships are already established, such as RUM University of Minho Radio or Gerador arts magazine, and we already had an inspiring conversation with Euronews. We will widen our Circles of Friendship according to our chart: 2022-2023 local and regional; 2024-2025 national; 2026-2027 international.

**Local:** Radio RUM; daily newspapers Correio do Minho and Diário do Minho; the future Time Out Braga (since the recent touristic interest in the city, there have been talks on creating the Braga issue); magazines Revista Rua e Revista Minha; local blogs such as Braga Cool and We Braga; among others.

**Euroregional:** TV broadcasters Braga TV, Porto Canal and Corporación Radio e Televisión de Galicia (CRTGV); Galician media Vinte – Praza Pública (special collaboration in *Media Culture – Euroregional Platform* [see page 51]); daily newspapers Jornal de Notícias, Faro de Vigo, La Voz de Galicia; local newspapers, radio and online TVs from the cities of the North of Portugal and Galicia; among others.

**National:** public news agency Lusa; public broadcaster RTP and RTP2 (focused on cultural content), private broadcasters SIC and TVI; public radio broadcasters Antena 1, 2 and 3, private media groups with a variety of media that include national newspapers, radio and TV: Grupo Renascença, Cofina, Media Capital, Global Media, Sonacom, Observador; cultural websites Gerador (special collaboration in *Media Culture – Euroregional Platform* [see page 51]) and Comunidade Cultura e Arte; UMBIGO Magazine; Canal 180; among others.

**International:** all members of the European Alliance of News Agencies (EANA), which includes members from varied European territories, from Agence France Press to the Bulgarian News Agency; Euronews; EUobserver; Euractiv; Voxeurop; ECoC News; Politico Europe; The Brussels Times; culture channels Arte and Mezzo; Latvian public broadcaster Latvijas sabiedriskais medijs – LSM; online magazine and European network linking up more than 90 cultural journals and associates in 35 countries Eurozine; Spanish public broadcaster TVE; for its international dimension, newspapers The Guardian and The New York Times, radio broadcasters BBC and NPR; among others.

### Some measures to ensure wide coverage of the event

**International journalists welcome!** Braga'27 will regularly invite journalists to come to Braga and accompany the city's preparation for the title Year. From 2023 to 2026, two visits per year will be scheduled for journalists to discover the stories Braga has in common with Europe and the peculiarities that make the city and the region unique.

In 2027, a special task force will welcome international journalists – providing accommodation, workspace and a guide/interpreter – to cover the title Year programme and create long-term stories based on the legacy projects and their development over the years.

**School of storytellers** One of the main issues in covering a foreign event is the cost of sending a team of multiple collaborators to the field, especially when we are talking about audiovisual content. During the bid process, Braga'27 communication team became an expert on developing social media content with professional quality and interest, and a strong storytelling and informative style, with audiovisual, photography and written content based on the experiences and life stories of our citizens. In 2026, we will open a school of storytelling aimed at local, national and international young professionals that wish to have work experience at a major initiative such as the ECoC. Students will be invited to work with the Braga'27 communication team, providing content for the event and fuelling the international media that can't make it to the event or can only attend on specific occasions. This way, our global media friends can share meaningful content from Braga'27 without facing the difficulties of regularly travelling to Braga. At the same time, this will help lower our ecological footprint by reducing the number of flights and cargo vehicles.

## Q39 Citizens as communicators

We have the pleasure of living in a city and a region known for its friendly population eager to share its wonders and help international visitors find their way into the beautiful heritage, exquisite gastronomy and festive celebrations that take place all year round. The Braga'27 brand already has a place in citizens' hearts. We will continue this friendly relationship throughout the preparation years with some ideas such as the ones that follow.

**The social media pack** after the recommendation, we will launch a social media pack for citizens to show their support for Braga'27 on social media. A cover photo, a profile picture frame, and a story will be provided each year for those who wish to share their love for the ECoC 2027.

**Diaspora ambassadors** Braga and the Minho region have strong emigrant communities spread throughout Europe and the world that maintain a tight connection to their roots. We will approach Portuguese emigrant organisations in Europe and the Americas, ensuring that our emigrant communities act as informal ambassadors of both EU and Braga'27 brands, raising awareness about the fact that Braga will host the initiative in 2027 and organising special trips to Braga during these communities' habitual month-long vacation in Portugal in August.

**Travel in green style** Travelling for a deserved holiday?

Take the Braga'27 exclusive merchandising with you! Tote bag, sleep mask, yoga mat, t-shirt, beach towel, backpack, vegan sneakers, you name it, we have it. We will challenge sustainable local, national and international brands to develop a fair trade and green line of merchandising for locals and visitors to travel in style

while advertising Braga'27 and its concept. Braga-based ZOURI, an eco-vegan footwear brand that uses plastic trash from the Portuguese coast, already started a conversation with us to create customised Braga'27 sneakers, in case the city is recommended to be the ECoC 2027.

**Young people's ideas** We were surprised by the creativity that Generation B27 (see Q15) showed when asked "How to pass Braga'27 message to youngsters?". A treasure hunt, a quiz game, a digital vox pop, or even an inter-school art exhibition! We want to put some of these ideas into action at a European level, involve young people from different European countries and get the media attention they deserve to pass on the **Contemplaction** message.

**Hop on the contemplative taxi** In Portugal, taxi drivers are sometimes known as grumpy and not so nice. We believe this is because they spend so much time stuck in traffic, who can blame them? In 2027, we want to change this preconceived idea and transform taxi drivers into the city's front of house, welcoming visitors with a contemplative smile and a car well apparelled with information about the ECoC and its cultural programme. The local taxi company Central Andique has already contacted us and we plan to deepen this collaboration after the recommendation.

## **Q40** Communicating the EU

For the year 2027, Braga'27 is planning a series of actions that emphasise the fact that the European Capital of Culture is an initiative of the European Union. Apart from the decision that all online and offline communication materials will bear the EU logo, we will invite EU representatives, as well as elements from other ECoC cities and the Unesco Creative Cities Network, to the opening and closing ceremonies. During the title Year, the programme's conferences and talks will also invite representatives of official European institutions to participate in these discussion panels.

Another concern of Braga'27 is raising awareness among local citizens that the ECoC is an initiative of the EU. With that in mind, we created four communication moments for 2027:

The city's most important roads and great avenues will be flanked with alternating flags of Braga'27 and the EU, and all of the programme venues, as well as public and official institutions in the city, will bear the European Union flag.

The local campaign "TU ÉS EU" is a billboard advertising campaign aimed at local and national citizens, but also international audiences, located at the city's main arrival points (train station, bus terminal and main motorway access points). The billboards will have a "you are here" design and a message in Portuguese – "TU ÉS EU" (a pun that has a double meaning: "You are me" and "You are EU [European Union]"). Billboards will also have a translation into English: "YOU ARE EU" that foreign audiences may understand too.

Our cultural programme includes a project designed specifically to celebrate Europe Day on 9 May, where

all 27 Member States will be represented (page 54) in a series of events which include outdoor activities in the city centre. To highlight the celebration, we will use the traditional Minho Region pilgrimage street decoration (colourful arches with lights and flowery drawings that cross the streets and point the way to the festivity) customised with the blue and yellow colours and stars of the EU.

In 2026, anticipating the title Year and showing its importance and relevance for Europe, we will send a gift to Liepāja 2027 that will remind us of the importance of European friendship while also remembering that we have time to get where we want to go. A special Torrestir truck (the local transportation company) will be wrapped in the Braga'27 and EU brands, loaded with a gigantic "cabeçudo" (traditional papier mâché gigantic head) created by a local artisan. It will pop up in a few major European capitals on its way (Madrid, Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Warsaw and Riga) to contemplate the richness and diversity of Europe. In Brussels, our "cabeçudo" will stop by the Berlaymont building to greet the President of the European Commission. This journey will cross several countries, symbolically uniting the two ends of Europe and creating an imaginary communication channel. We will make sure that this adventure gets good international coverage from the European broadcasting media. The truck will have a solar panel ceiling that can reduce fossil fuel consumption by 20%. After the recommendation, we will contact Liepāja 2027 communication team to see what they can offer us in return, giving this communication moment a bigger impact on European media and reinforcing that the ECoC is a European Union action.

# Capacity to deliver



## **Q41 Political support and commitment**

Since the pre-selection phase, the ECoC team has been working with all political parties represented in the Municipal Council and Assembly. Several meetings were held with the city councillors and deputies, as well as specific committees from the Municipal Assembly, reinforcing the project's relevance and the enthusiasm and commitment surrounding it. This joint support is already visible in the unanimous approval of the bid book and the city budget for the ECoC, voted by all parties at the city Assembly on 30 September 2022.

Beyond the city's frontiers, the ECoC candidacy always counted on a strong involvement of the neighbouring cities' from *Quadrilátero Urbano – Barcelos, Guimarães and Vila Nova de Famalicão* – and the *CIM Cávado* territory. They have already signed formal letters of cooperation in the pre-selection phase and have now formalised their financial support for the joint projects.

Next, the announcement of shortlisted cities cleared a path for wide regional support, since Braga was not the sole competitor in the North region before it. We were now able to broaden our action plan to include the entire region and become a meaningful and compelling opportunity for the territory, recognised by all other 85 municipalities of the North Region of Portugal as well as several regional institutions and agencies. On 30 May 2022, these municipalities and organisations approved with one voice the formal cooperation and support agreement with Braga's bid for the ECoC 2027. We went on to gather 4,1 million euros from the Region, strengthening its involvement with the ECoC project.

At yet another level, the local and regional representation is now reinforced in the candidacy's Strategic Council that includes a representative of the Archdiocese, the Regional Tourism Agency and CCDR-N – North of Portugal Managing Authority. Adding to that, all the Northern Region's municipalities have designated persons of contact for the ECoC initiative, allowing us to develop a regional support network that will facilitate everyday needs during implementation.

As for the Euroregional level, the ECoC project has the support of the Regional Government of Galicia (*Xunta de Galicia*). This endorsement was formally approved by the President of the *Xunta de Galicia* on 12 September 2022, leading to a greater commitment of these Spanish regional authorities and stakeholders. Braga's candidacy has also gathered the support of the *Eixo Atlántico do Noroeste Peninsular*, a supra-municipal entity of 39 local Authorities in Galicia and the North of Portugal, including the main cities of the Euroregion Galicia-North Portugal, in charge of defining common strategies for coordinated development in the Euroregion.

# Q42 Infrastructure projects

NR.	PROJECT	TIMELINE	PLANNED BUDGET	INVESTMENT 2021/2022	EXECUTOR	FUNDING SOURCES	LINK TO BRAGA'27
<b>CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b>							
1	Francisco Sanches Cultural Hub	2021-2023	2 700 000 €	1 341 000 €	MoB	CB	Creators Academy
2	Media Arts Centre	2022-2025	6 000 000 €	200 000 €	MoB	CB	Flows
3	Contemporary Art Museum	2022-2024	15 000 000 €		DST Group	PF	Stop Making (Non)sense
4	Santa Marta das Cortiças musealisation of heritage site	2021-2025	230 000 €	30 000 €	MoB	CB	Extremo
5	Santo António das Travessas musealisation of the roman ruins	2021-2025	410 000 €	100 000 €	MoB	CB	The Roman Connection
6	Ínsula das Carvalheiras Musealisation of the roman site	2021-2024	3 000 000 €	153 000 €	MoB	CB	Myth
7	Roman Theatre ruins intervention and renovation	2021-2025	410 000 €		MoB	CB	
8	Alto da Cidade Roman Baths renovation of museological infrastructure	2021-2025	82 000 €	10 000 €	MoB	CB	Salus, Fountains of Healing
9	Convento de São Francisco de Real monument conservation and restoration	2021-2025	2 582 146 €	267 820 €	MoB	CB, EU	Tour d'Europe on Journalism
10	Casa dos Crivos (audiovisual gallery) renovation	2022-2023	140 000 €	20 000 €	MoB	CB	Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform
11	Museu da Imagem (photography museum) renovation	2022-2023	140 000 €	20 000 €	MoB	CB	Encontros da Imagem
12	Torre de Menagem (medieval tower) renovation	2021-2025	140 000 €	20 000 €	MoB	CB	Get Lost
13	Mercado Cultural do Carandá (cultural hub) renovation	2022-2023	160 000 €	10 000 €	MoB	CB	Metamorpho
14	Conservation and restoration of several monuments	2021-2025	610 000 €	110 000 €	MoB	CB	The Art of Caring – School for Conservation
15	Mosteiro de São Martinho de Tibães monument conservation and restoration	2022-2026	3 206 500 €		DRCN, MoB	RRP	Ode to the Baroque
16	Museu dos Biscainhos (Baroque architecture and decorative arts museum) renovation and digital transition	2021-2026	1 401 320 €		DRCN, MoB	RRP	Baroque, a Labyrinth of Transmutations
17	Museu de Arqueologia D. Diogo de Sousa (archeology museum) renovation and digital transition	2021-2025	483 890 €		DRCN, MoB	RRP	Footnotes, guide with museum instructions
18	Caminhos de Santiago de Compostela (Way of Saint James) renovation	2021-2025	88 000 €		MoB	CB	Write the Way
19	Passos Memory Center	2023-2025	200 000 €		PA	CB	Europe Day Pilgrimage
20	Fábrica Confiança – Multipurpose and Cultural Space	2023-2024	1 200 000 €		MoB	RRP	Common Good
<b>PARKS AND GREEN SPACES</b>							
21	Sete Fontes Eco Park	2021-2023	3 700 000 €	50 000 €	MoB	CB	Granary
22	Rio Cávado riverfront parks and river beaches renovation	2021-2025	2 495 000 €	2 054 700 €	MoB	CB	Spring Rites
23	Parque das Camélias (urban park) renovation	2021-2025	332 000 €	119 000 €	MoB	CB, EU	Ceramic Bodies
24	Parque da Ponte (urban park) renovation	2021-2025	418 000 €		MoB	CB	Solstice Parade
25	Parque Urbano Ponte e Picoto	2022-2024	3 000 000 €		MoB	CB	Behind God's Back
26	Quinta Pedagógica (educational farm) renovation	2021-2024	510 000 €		MoB	CB	Eating is Wanting
<b>SPORTS AND LEISURE INFRASTRUCTURE</b>							
28	Multifunctional sports hall	2021-2025	5 205 000 €	30 000 €	MoB	CB	New Temples
<b>PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE</b>							
29	Central Bus Station renovation	2021-2025	700 000 €	95 400 €	MoB	CB	Connecting Commutes
30	BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)	2022-2024	150 000 000 €		MoB	CB, EU	
31	Cycling infrastructure	2021-2023	3 570 000 €	1 092 500 €	MoB	CB, EU	Get Lost

MoB – Municipality of Braga  
DRCN – Regional Agency of the Ministry of Culture  
CB – City Budget  
PF – Private Funding  
RRP – Recovery and Resilience Plan  
EU – European Fund  
PA – Parish Administration

Open for the cultural  
programme timeframe overview

The Applicant  
**City of Braga**

Team  
**Bid book**

Team  
**Braga'27**

Texts  
**Ana Bragança**  
(Q13-Q15)

Mission Team  
Coordinator  
**Cláudia Leite**

**Carolina Lapa**  
(Q1, Q6, Q36-Q40)  
**Cláudia Leite**  
(Q16-Q35, Q41-Q42)

Executive and  
Programme  
Coordinator  
**Joana Meneses  
Fernandes**

**Eva Gräfer**  
(Q10-Q12)  
**Joana Meneses  
Fernandes**  
(Q1-Q9, Q34-Q35, Q42)  
**Rafaela Neiva Ganga**  
(Q4)

Outreach Coordinator  
**Ana Bragança**

**Sergio Lago**  
(Q6 on Media Culture –  
Euroregional Platform)  
**Tiago Azevedo**  
(Q6 on Get Lost  
and Salus, Fountains  
of Healing, Q10-Q12)

Outreach and  
Production  
**Cláudia Cibrão**

European and  
International  
Cooperation  
**Tiago Azevedo**

Editing and Revision  
**Carolina Lapa**  
**Cristina Farinha**  
**Eva Gräfer**  
**Joana Meneses  
Fernandes**  
**Samuel Silva**  
**Tamina Šop**

Communication  
Coordinator  
**Carolina Lapa**

Communication  
and Digital Strategy  
**Mariana Volz**

Graphic Design  
**Design by OOF**

External Relations  
Assistance  
**Natacha Correia**

Photo Credits  
**José Delgado**  
(p. 41 with a word of  
gratitude to the family  
of the photographer)  
**Gonçalo Costa**  
(pp. 18, 72, 78)  
**Joana Sousa**  
(p. 7)

Bid Advisor  
**Cristina Farinha**

Programme and  
Outreach Advisor  
**Hugo Cruz**

European and  
International  
Cooperation Advisor  
**Eva Gräfer**

**Lais Pereira**  
(pp. 2, 4, 14, 17,  
22, 26, 30, 34, 42,  
46, 48, 52, 58, 61,  
65, 70, 80, 90, 98)  
**Pedro Guimarães**  
(p. 66)

Monitoring and  
Evaluation Advisor  
**Rafaela Neiva Ganga**

Printing  
**Gráfica Maiadouro**

Visual Identity and  
Graphic Design  
**Design by OOF**

This bid book is  
printed in recycled  
and certified FSC®  
paper.

Photography  
**Lais Pereira**

Videography  
**Neva Films**

CO-FINANCING

**NORTE  
2020**  
PROGRAMA REGIONAL DE INTERVENÇÃO

**PORTUGAL  
2020**

 **UNÃO EUROPEIA**  
Fundo Europeu de  
Desenvolvimento Regional

  
**FSC**  
www.fsc.org

2023

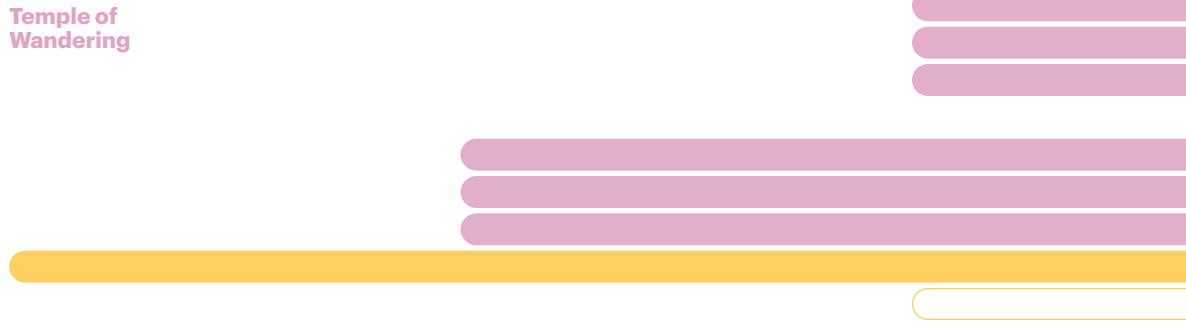
2024

2025

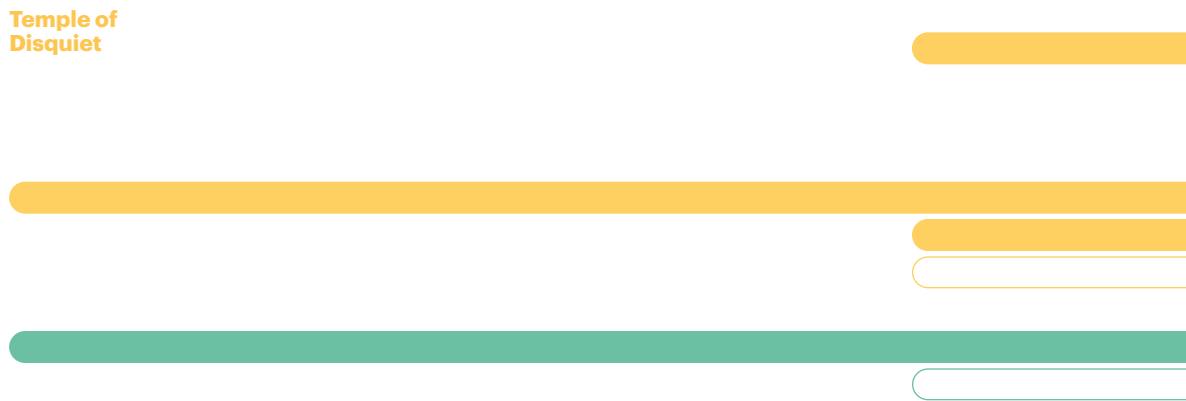
**Temple of  
Empathy**



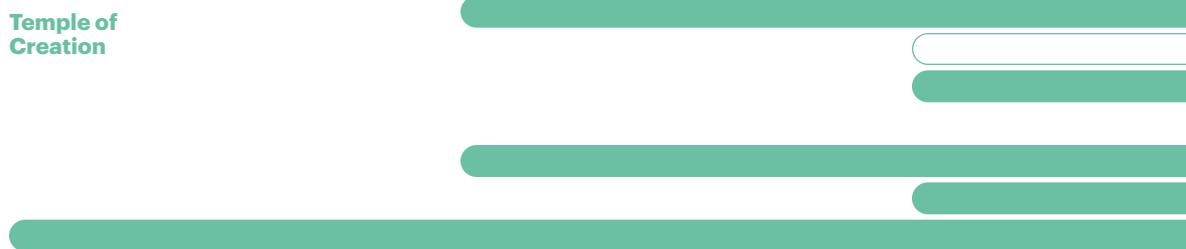
**Temple of  
Wandering**

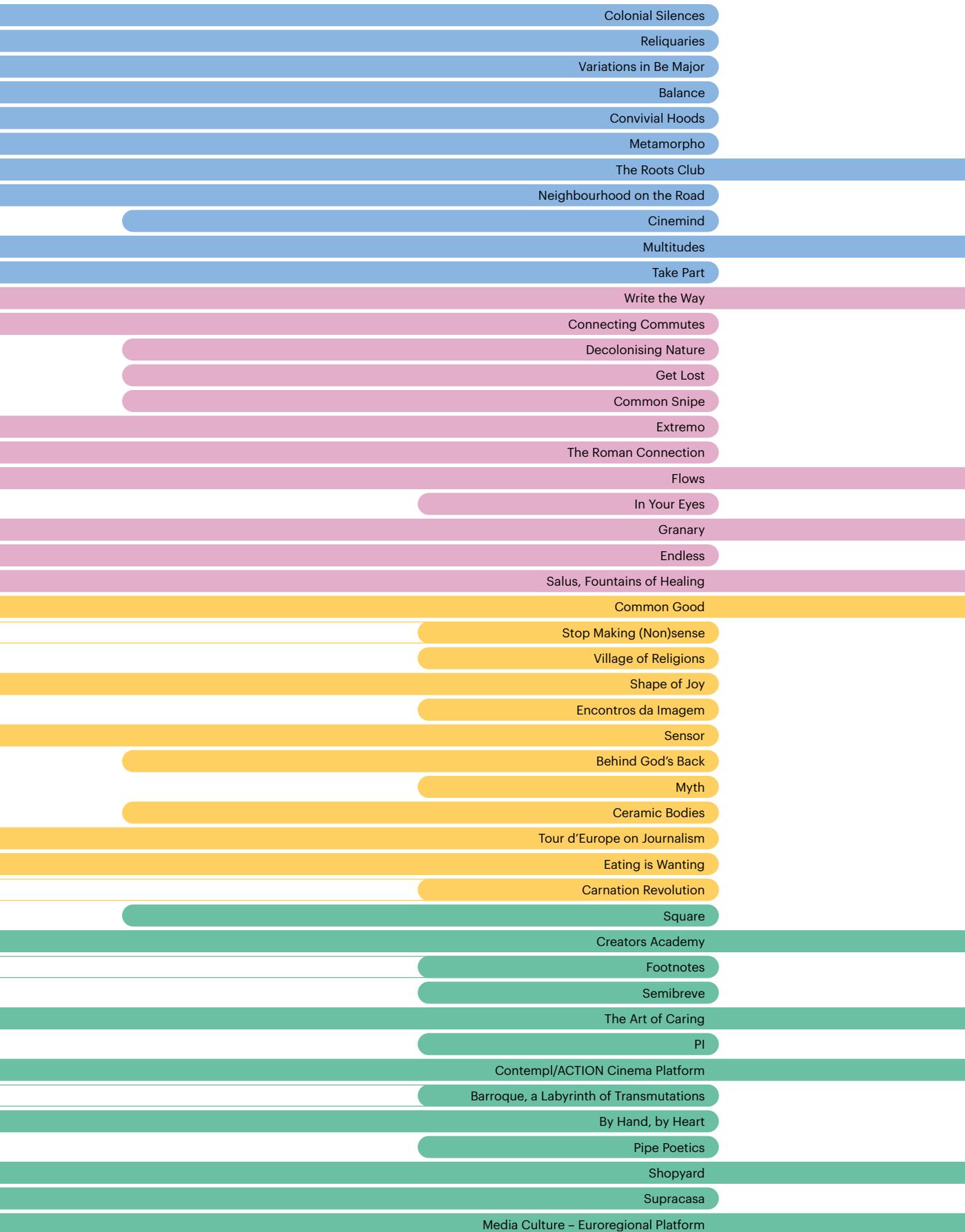


**Temple of  
Disquiet**



**Temple of  
Creation**





The Braga'27 bid team wishes to thank all citizens that, in one way or another, contributed with their time, ideas and enthusiasm for imagining the Braga of 2027.

We also wish to thank the outstanding reception of this candidacy during this final selection phase at the Euroregional level.

A word of gratitude to the members of our Strategic Council and Local Advisory Council, for their valuable contributions.

Instagram  
Facebook  
Youtube  
**braga27cec**

[www.braga27.pt](http://www.braga27.pt)



**Teatro Circo de Braga  
EM, S.A.**