



Eurocities Culture Forum 2025

**Spaces for vibrant cultural and creative scenes –
Building blocks of a developed cultural and creative scene**

24-26 September 2025

Background

What do cultural spaces of the future look like in cities?

This will be the main focus of the Eurocities Culture Forum, taking place in Brno on 24–26 September 2025. We will explore how culture can reshape our cities—physically, socially, and imaginatively. We will dive into the future of shared multifunctional centres that serve as cultural, social, and innovation hubs, strengthening communities and promoting sustainable urban development. We'll examine how abandoned sites and brownfields can be revitalised through creativity, transforming forgotten spaces into engines for regeneration, economic growth, and community pride. And we'll tackle how to make cultural heritage more accessible rethinking the role of historic buildings in contemporary life, harnessing technology, and ensuring culture is open to all generations.

Cities take centre stage at the forum. With plenty of space for city presentations and dedicated time for exchanges and networking, the Brno forum will foster meaningful dialogue among urban practitioners, enabling them to share insights, build connections, and spark new collaborations.

Programme overview

Tuesday, 23 September	Pre-forum event – afternoon	Pre-forum event arranged by the city of Brno: Brno Culture Forum, focused on the city of Brno's future culture strategy <i>Please note this is not an official event of the Culture Forum but an opportunity offered by the city of Brno to interested Eurocities members.</i>
Wednesday, 24	Pre-forum event - afternoon	Meeting of UNESCO Creative Cities of Music <i>Please note this is not an official event of the Culture Forum but an opportunity offered by the city of Brno to interested Eurocities members.</i>

September	evening	Newcomer Session Welcome reception
Thursday, 25 September	morning	Plenary session – keynote speech, panel discussion with city practitioners, signing of the Eurocities Lille Call to action on sustainable culture
	afternoon	Speed-networking sessions Political track Thematic site visits
	evening	Official dinner
Friday, 26 September	morning	Working groups meetings (in parallel)
	afternoon	Eurocities business session Steering group meeting
	evening*	Cultural programme and discounts for specific events include festival Faktor K.
Saturday, 27 September	morning*	Cultural programme and discounts for specific events include walking tours (TIC BRNO)

Contacts

Eurocities	Julie Herve'	Julie.herve@eurocities.eu	+32 4 92 73 10 99
Brno	Lukáš Pavlica	pavlica.lukas@brno.cz	+420 542 172 462

Agenda

Pre-forum events DAY 0: 23 September 2025

Venue: tbc

13:00 – 18:00

(optional) Brno Culture Forum focused on the city's future culture strategy – open to all interested cities

Please note that this is not an official event of the Culture Forum, but an initiative by the city of Brno, which will present the draft of its new Strategy for Culture and Creative Industries for 2026–2035. The event will focus on identifying key areas of interest, sharing city visions, and fostering opportunities for cooperation. The main theme will be the revision and renewal of cultural policy documents and strategic objectives. Brno is also planning a broader international dialogue on this topic, and cities in a similar situation—such as those with expiring strategic documents—are warmly invited to join the discussion and share their outlooks.

For more information on this session, please email majickova.veronika@brno.cz

Pre-forum events DAY 1: 24 September 2025

Venue: Old Town Hall (Radnická 8, Brno)

11:00 – 16:30

(optional) Meeting of Brno UNESCO creative cities of music

Meeting point: Old Town Hall (Radnická 8, Brno)

This is not an official event of the Culture Forum, but an opportunity offered by the city of Brno. This is a meeting of UNESCO Creative Cities of music, but the event is also open to Eurocities members who are interested to join the agenda at any stage. Here is the detailed agenda:

11:00 – Gathering of participants at the Old Town Hall & welcome and introduction to the programme

11:00 – 14:30 – City walk

During the walk, experts will present how music and creativity can function in public space and how Brno connects urbanism, cultural heritage, and the live music scene. Locations in the walks include:

- Denis Gardens
- Basilica of the Assumption of Our Lady
- Zelný trh (Vegetable Market Square)
- Capuchin Square
- Monogram (coffee break)
- Roman Square
- Alfa Passage
- Janáček and Mahen Theatres
- Orlí Street Theatre

14:30 – 16:15 – Lunch, networking session, and sharing best practices at Wine Therapie

16:15 – 16:30 – Return to the Old Town Hall

16:30 – Closing of the meeting

For more information on this session, please email pavlica.lukas@brno.cz

DAY 1: 24 September 2025

Venue: New Town Hall, Dominikánské nám. 1

17:30	Registration Participants will be able to collect their badge in the lobby. The badge will be valid for all three days of the event.
18:00 – 18:45	Newcomers' welcome session First time attending the Culture Forum? This session is for you! In this session, participants can gain a deeper understanding of Eurocities' organisational structure and learn about the advantages of being a member. They will learn about the thematic areas of the Culture Forum and the different opportunities that offers for its members. Additionally, this session will provide a space for participants to engage in discussion with Eurocities' team and voice specific needs and interests of their cities.
18:45 – 21:00	Welcome reception Join fellow participants for a Brno welcome and networking with friends old and new. • Martin Příborský, Member of the City Council, Brno • Bailie Annette Christie, Deputy Mayor, Glasgow & Chair of the Culture Forum

DAY 2: 25 September 2025

Venue: **Brno Exhibition Centre** (Trade Fairs Brno), Výstaviště 405/1, 603 00 Brno

8:15 – 9:00	Transfer to main venue by special tram We invite participants to meet at the tram stop on <u>náměstí Svobody (Freedom Square)</u> by 8:15 a.m. to take the 8:20 tram together to the Brno Exhibition Centre. This special tram is free for Eurocities participants. It's a nice opportunity to start the day as a group, but if you prefer, you are of course welcome to make your own way to the venue.
9:00 – 9:30	Registration A registration desk is open for all Forum participants to collect their badge.
9:30 – 9:50	Official Welcome • Martin Příborský, Member of the City Council, Brno • Jiří Kučera, Head of Section One, Brno The morning session will be moderated by Daniel Styles, COO, Vitamin Cultural Centre
9:50 – 10:10	Keynote speech by Lenka Štěpánková Lenka Štěpánková is currently working as an architect at BVV – Trade Fairs Brno, where, in addition to design work, she also serves as the project manager of the Open 5G HUB Brno within the Living Lab team. She completed her doctoral studies in urban design at the Faculty of Architecture, Brno University of Technology (2016–2022) and gained also experience in academia, participating in numerous research projects and publications in the fields of urbanism and architecture. Her professional focus includes urban design, exhibition architecture and sustainable approach within event industry.
10:10 – 10:40	Coffee break & family photo

DAY 2: 25 September 2025

Venue: **Brno Exhibition Centre** (Trade Fairs Brno), Výstaviště 405/1, 603 00 Brno

10:40 – 12:15

Spotlight on new cultural spaces in cities: good practices in action & plenary dialogue with participating cities

To spark dialogue and inspiration, the session will open with a presentation of practices from selected initiatives, followed by a plenary discussion featuring the cities below:

- **Turku (Finland) – Art House Turku: The city's 'living room' in a former factory**

Art House Turku is a rapidly expanding cultural centre housed in a former tobacco factory in Turku's Old Town. Opened in 2022, it now houses three galleries, a cinema, artist studios, educational spaces, and around 20 creative businesses. The project's hybrid public-private funding model offers a practical blueprint for cultural spaces championing artistic livelihoods.

Presented by **Jere Pensikkala** CEO of Art House, Turku

- **Gothenburg (Sweden) – Relocating the Kunsthalle: Cultural centres beyond the core**

As part of Gothenburg's strategic reimagining of cultural infrastructure, the Gothenburg Kunsthalle is relocating from its central site to Slakthusområdet, a former meatpacking district on the city's periphery. The project aims to cultivate new cultural epicentres within the city, rethinking key cultural spaces to build inclusion across a highly segregated urban landscape.

Presented by **Petra Johansson**, Artistic Director of Göteborg Konsthall, Gothenburg

- **Leeuwarden (The Netherlands) – Bouwurk: Modular architecture for a mobile cultural space**

Bouwurk (*The Build*) is a modular, mobile cultural space built from circular materials. It serves as a creative hub for community-driven cultural programming at the heart of Leeuwarden, and after 100 days it will relocate to the Spoordok residential development area. Bouwurk shows how adaptive, sustainable cultural spaces support evolving societal and urban needs.

Presented by **Jantine Verver**, Senior advisor for economy, tourism and international affairs, Leeuwarden

- **Brno (Czech Republic) – CO.LABS: A collaborative space for independent culture**

CO.LABS is a newly renovated space for independent artists and cultural workers without a permanent base in Brno. It offers shared studios, event spaces, and support for original projects in the contemporary arts and civic engagement, as well as leading on concepts developed in-house. Blending culture and sports facilities, CO.LABS is a great example of a multi-use cultural space which successfully integrates interdisciplinary activities and organisations.

Presented by **Simona Augustín**, Executive and Artistic Direction, CO.LABS

Moderated by Mgr. **Blanka Marková**, Ph.D., independent expert in the field of cultural and creative industries management and cultural strategy development

DAY 2: 25 September 2025

Venue: **Brno Exhibition Centre** (Trade Fairs Brno), Výstaviště 405/1, 603 00 Brno

12:15– 12:30	Eurocities Lille Call to action on sustainable culture: official signing moment The Eurocities Lille Call to action on sustainable culture is a political commitment from Mayors to develop cultural policies and activities that are greener and more inclusive. 56 cities have already signed it since it was launched in June 2023. This session is an opportunity for elected representatives to sign the Eurocities Lille Call to action on sustainable culture. Please find more information here. • André Sobczak, Secretary General, Eurocities • Marie-Pierre Bresson, Deputy Mayor, Lille	
12:30-14:00	Lunch break	
14:00 – 15:30	Speed-networking sessions An interactive networking session for cities to share their knowledge and experience. Participants will be able to attend 2 different sessions. A list of city initiatives can be found here (pg. 11). A digital catalogue with descriptions of each initiative and links to additional resources will also be available.	14.00 – 17.00 Political track (political representatives only) - Cultural spaces, political choices: state-of-the-art, opportunities and challenges The programme includes a visit of Villa Tugendhat and a networking meeting moderated by André Sobczak, Eurocities Secretary General, and Bailie Annette Christie, Deputy Mayor of Glasgow and Chair of the Eurocities Culture Forum. Transportation to and from the venue will be provided by the City of Brno. Political representatives will receive a detailed agenda by email prior to the forum.
15:30 – 18:00	Site visits Parallel themed site visits around the city of Brno - some of them are within walking distance, for some others Brno provides bus transport to the location. Buses for the site visits will depart at 3:30 p.m. from the Brno Exhibition Centre. After the visits, a return bus to náměstí Svobody (Freedom Square) will leave at 6:00 p.m. from the same stop. Throughout the transfers, participants will be accompanied by a member of the host city staff from Brno, who will be happy to assist. - Site visit 1 - Brno's cultural and creative underground and Brno Art Open As part of the tour, we will explore Brno's underground, a space often used for cultural and creative events. A highlight will be a visit to the unique and atmospheric water tanks. You will also learn about Brno Art Open – a project bringing sculptures into the streets and breathing new life into public spaces. The current edition is focused on the area around the historic water tanks.	

15:30 – 18:00	- Site visit 2 - Brno's Industrial Heritage The city of Brno, often referred to as the "Moravian Manchester," was one of the largest and most important centres of the wool industry in the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the 19th century. Production (including wool processing, engineering, and other industries) continued during the First Czechoslovak Republic and later after nationalization following World War II. In the 1990s, most of the factories ceased operations, and the industrial sites either found new owners and uses or became so-called brownfields. As part of the tour, you will have the opportunity to visit the premises of Nová Zbrojovka, which is also home to the cultural centre Industra. - Site visit 3 - CO.LABS Cultural centre CO.LABS is an open, creative, and independent platform that actively supports, develops, and fosters the growth of the cultural sector in the region. It serves as an open platform and shared space for independent entities and individuals without a permanent venue—not only for the process of creation and work, but also for presentation and personal development. In addition to its supportive role, CO.LABS develops its own concepts focused on original projects in the fields of contemporary performing, visual, and musical arts, as well as civic engagement. At the end of September, CO.LABS will be undergoing final preparations for its grand opening following an extensive renovation. As part of the tour, visitors will have the chance to see the space before it officially opens to the public. CO.LABS is a great example of the successful integration of various organizations, including the connection of cultural and sports facilities. - Site visit 4 - Creative Brno Creative Brno is a city-run platform dedicated to supporting creative industries in Brno. One of its flagship projects is the transformation of the former prison complex Káznice, located in the socially excluded area of Cejl, into the Brno Creative Centre. The Káznice complex is already in use today – for cultural and social purposes – gradually opening the space to the public. Káznice represents a unique example of repurposing a historic site for cultural and creative uses that foster community building, support local development, and sensitively integrate the space into the life of the city. The site will include presentation of KUMST, a creative hub focused on supporting professionals in the creative sector. - Site visit 5 - Tour of the exhibition grounds and the multipurpose hall The Brno Exhibition Centre is a unique complex with a rich history dating back to 1920s. With a net exhibition area of 130,000 square meters, the venue ranks among the largest exhibition grounds in Europe. Many of its buildings are considered gems of modern architecture. The exhibition centre is a home to the most renowned trade fair administration in Czechia, one of the most prominent trade fair organizers in Central Europe. The venue also regularly hosts major congresses with accompanying exhibitions, conventions, balls, sporting events, political summits, as well as festivals and concerts. It serves as a hub connecting various sectors. The site also includes the newly constructed modern multipurpose venue ARENA BRNO. This is the City of Brno's largest strategic project, equipped with state-of-the-art technologies to provide visitors with an exceptional experience of both cultural and sports events.
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DAY 2: 25 September 2025

Venue: **Brno Exhibition Centre** (Trade Fairs Brno), Výstaviště 405/1, 603 00 Brno

- **Site visit 6 - VIDA! Science Centre: A meeting place of science, culture, and creativity**

Brno is a leading centre of science, research, and innovation in Central Europe. With a strong tradition dating back to Gregor Johann Mendel, the founder of modern genetics, the city continues to be at the forefront of scientific advancements. The tour will therefore focus on a place that connects science, culture, and creativity. [VIDA! Science Centre](#) is an entertainment science park near the Brno Exhibition Center that opens the doors to knowledge in a fun way for visitors of all ages. The phrase by Jan Amos Comenius, nicknamed the Teacher of Nations, "SCHOOL THROUGH PLAY!" takes on a new dimension here. Participants can look forward to a guided tour of the venue and a science show Masters of Balance. Can you balance objects on one finger? Or even stand on your head? It's not that hard when you understand one important thing – the centre of gravity. In the Masters of Balance science show, we'll explore where the centre of gravity is hidden and why it plays such a key role in walking, standing, and other types of movement. Participants will also have the opportunity to try out all the park's attractions on their own.

Social event

Venue: Filharmonie Brno, Komenského náměstí 534/8, 602 00 Brno

19:30 – 22:00

Official dinner

After a day full of sessions and site visits, you can join fellow participants for an evening of good food, music and networking at the **Brno Philharmonic - Besední dům**, one of the most important buildings in Brno's historic centre. Dress code is business casual.

DAY 3: 26 September 2025

Venue: various venues

9:30 – 12:45 (including a 30 min coffee break)	Parallel group meetings <i>Please note that all 4 groups meet at different venues.</i> Working group ‘cultural services and culture for inclusive cities’ Venue: Knihovna Jiřího Mahena - Kobližná 70/4, 602 00 Brno Detailed agenda here. Working group ‘cultural leadership and management’ Venue: Fresco Hall at Old Town Hall - Radnická 8, 602 00 Brno-střed, Czechia Detailed agenda here. Working group ‘art and culture in the public space’ <i>Please note that the meeting point for this working group is at 9:00</i> Venue: Domini park - Husova 712 (8th floor), Brno Detailed agenda here. Task force on sustainable culture <i>Please note that the meeting point for this working group is at 9:15</i> Venue: Open gardens - Údolní 33, 602 00 Brno Detailed agenda here. <i>Brno colleagues will lead participants to the lunch venue. Participants who will leave right after lunch either need to leave their luggage at their hotels or will have to take them with them from one venue to the other. The distances are max 15 min walking.</i>
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch break <i>Venue: Cabaret des Péchés, Dominikánské nám.2, 602 00 Brno</i>
14:00 – 15:15	Eurocities business meeting: what’s new, and what’s next? (Eurocities members only) <i>Venue: Cabaret des Péchés, Dominikánské nám.2, 602 00 Brno</i> - The big picture: what’s new in the EU bubble? - Recent and future Eurocities work on culture - Forthcoming activities and opportunities for Eurocities members - Eurocities membership update - Save the dates! Next culture forum in Gothenburg on 30 Sept - 2 Oct 2026 Moderated by Bailie Annette Christie, Deputy Mayor, Glasgow & Chair of the Culture Forum
15:30 – 16:15	Culture forum steering group meeting (steering group members only) <i>Venue: Cabaret des Péchés, Dominikánské nám.2, 602 00 Brno</i>

Post-Forum events: 26 September 2025

evening*	(optional) Cultural programme and discounts for specific events Brno is also preparing a rich off-program for members of the network, including the opportunity to visit various organizations or events with discounted admission. This offer will also include the Faktor K festival.
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Post-Forum events: 27 September 2025

Venue: different venues across Brno

Different times	(optional) Walking tours (TIC Brno) and other cultural programmes Brno is also preparing a rich off-program for members of the network, including the opportunity to visit various organizations or events with discounted admission. Walking Tour, TIC Brno If you're visiting Brno for the first time and want to get to know its main sites, join this one-hour guided walking tour in the city centre at 10:00. The accessible route meets at the Old Town Hall ((Stará radnice) and proceeds as follows: Tickets are available here. TIC Brno, Old Town Hall, Radnická 8, 602 00 Brno-střed, https://www.gotobrna.cz/en/ Opera Aida, National Theatre Brno At 19:00, at the world-renowned Brno Opera, immerse yourself in the sounds of one of Giuseppe Verdi's most celebrated works. Aida is filled with all the hallmarks of classic Italian romantic opera - love, duty, jealousy, intrigue, grand choral scenes and tragic death. Two nations are at war, but in the midst of the battlefield, a far more intimate drama unfolds between the Egyptian princess Amneris and the military commander Radamès. The opera includes English subtitles. Eurocities members receive a 10% discount by entering the promo code EUROCITIES10. Tickets can be purchased online here or in person. More information on all these off-programme activities can be found here.
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Speed-networking sessions

An interactive networking session for cities to share their knowledge and experience. Participants will be able to attend 2 different sessions presented by the following cities and Czech cultural organisations (more to follow). A digital catalogue with descriptions of each initiative and links to additional resources will also be available.

Cities:

- [Belfast](#) - From vacant to vibrant: Rethinking cultural infrastructure to support artists
- [Berlin](#) - Culture on wheels: Mobile cultural spaces as neighbourhood hubs
- [Bordeaux](#) - The cultural recycling centre in a submarine base: A new model for circular culture (This presentation will focus on the space itself. Detailed information on the activities and next steps will be presented during the 'Sustainable culture' task force on Friday morning).
- [Eindhoven](#) - Urban culture: Promoting inclusion through community co-design
- [Florence](#) - Challenges for inclusive access to cultural heritage: Perspectives from the Brancacci Chapel
- [Ghent](#) - Winter circus to innovation hub
- [Kortrijk](#) - From disruptive places to hidden gems: Putting young people at the centre of cultural placemaking
- [Leeds](#) - A cultural heritage framework for Leeds
- [Leipzig](#) - House of Festivals: The sound of Leipzig's independent arts scene
- [Leuven](#) - Scenes of Justice: Reimagining the Town Hall as a democratic and civic cultural space
- [Lille](#) - 20 years of cultural placemaking: From 'Crazy houses' to sustainable and inclusive cultural policy
- [Lisbon](#) - A theatre in every neighbourhood: Decentralising culture, expanding opportunities
- [Milan](#) - Culture without barriers: Accessibility in the museum network of the Milan municipality
- [Osmangazi](#) - Preserving industrial heritage: Adaptive re-use of the Romangal silk factory
- [Oulu](#) - The Aalto Silo: Reactivating culture in a modernist landmark
- [Tampere](#) - Meanwhile spaces: Temporary art hubs in public premises
- [Tilburg](#) - The Textile Campus: Weaving a city's future from its past
- [Torino](#) - Culture in motion: Mobile and temporary spaces for inclusion
- [Uppsala](#) – Hospitalet: Psychiatric hospital to creative hub