

UNISCAPE GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025

23 June, EPICenter, Nova Gorica

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Opening

1.1 Welcome and speech of the President

The President of UNISCAPE, Sasa Dobričič, chairs the meeting and welcomes all participants attending the General Assembly at the EPICenter in Nova Gorica.

In her opening remarks, she thanks the hosting institutions and the local organizers for their efforts in facilitating the meeting in the framework of the initiatives connected to the cross-border region of Nova Gorica–Gorizia. She emphasizes the importance of strengthening collaboration among member universities and maintaining active engagement within the network, particularly in relation to contemporary landscape challenges in Europe.

1.2 Approval minutes GA 2024 meeting

The President invites participants to review the minutes of the 2024 General Assembly meeting. Members are asked whether there are comments or proposed amendments. No objections or suggestions are raised. The minutes are therefore **unanimously approved**.

1.3 Adoption of the agenda

The President presents the proposed agenda for the 2025 General Assembly. Participants are invited to suggest modifications or additional items.

No changes are proposed and the agenda is **unanimously adopted**.

2. Network organs and regulation

2.1 Network composition

The Office Manager presents the updated document regarding the composition of the network. The number of active members remains unchanged compared with the previous year, with **35 member institutions** participating in the UNISCAPE network.

No new memberships have been introduced during the past year.

2.2. *Tour de table*- Representatives of Universities

Representatives of the member universities are invited to briefly present their current activities through three keywords summarizing their main research directions or institutional priorities related to landscape studies.





This round of interventions highlights the diversity of academic approaches within the network, ranging from landscape planning and cultural heritage to ecological resilience and territorial governance. Participants emphasize the value of maintaining interdisciplinary collaboration among institutions and continuing to exchange research perspectives.

2.3. Proposal for PhD Students/Early Researchers Representatives at the Executive Board

The President introduces a proposal aimed at strengthening the involvement of younger scholars within the network. The proposal suggests the creation of a representation mechanism for PhD students and early-career researchers within the Executive Board structure.

The discussion stresses the importance of encouraging generational renewal, supporting emerging scholars, and fostering stronger connections between doctoral research and the network's activities.

The Assembly expresses general support for the initiative, agreeing that the Executive Board will further develop the proposal and define the practical modalities for implementation.

3. Activities

3.1. Proposals for next year events

Members discuss potential initiatives and collaborative events for the coming year. Several universities express interest in organizing seminars, workshops, and thematic meetings related to landscape governance, cultural landscapes, and cross-border territorial cooperation.

Participants underline the importance of maintaining a balanced program of activities that includes academic conferences, research exchanges, and field-based workshops.

3.2 Report on past year events

The President briefly reviews the main activities carried out during the previous year within the network. Although no major large-scale events were organized under the UNISCAPE umbrella during this period, several member institutions continued to collaborate informally through research exchanges, lectures, and academic initiatives related to landscape studies.

3.3. Website and communication

The Office Manager reports on the ongoing improvements in the network's communication tools, particularly the website.

Efforts are being made to strengthen the visibility of UNISCAPE activities, publish institutional documents, and provide updated information on the network's initiatives. The importance of maintaining regular communication among members and ensuring broader dissemination of research outcomes is emphasized.



4. Administration and financial situation

4.1 Balance sheet 2024 approval

The financial balance sheet for the year 2024 is presented to the Assembly.

Total incomes: €31,500.00

€30,000.00 from membership fees

€1,500.00 contribution for website support from Fundación CICOP

Total expenses: €28,198.86

Main expenditure items include:

€371.55 bank account and credit card expenses

€6,128.26 taxes

€13,445.00 staff salary

€325.62 administration and office expenses

€793.72 web and communication costs

€6,710.91 financial controller / accountant services

€423.80 travel expenses

The balance result for 2024 is + €3,301.14.

Financial availability at the beginning of the year (01/01/2024): €2,805.27

Final availability at 31/12/2024: €6,106.41

The Assembly acknowledges the positive balance and the stability of the organization's finances. Members are invited to approve the document. No objections are raised, and the **2024 balance sheet is unanimously approved.**

4.2 Draft budget 2025 approval

The President presents the draft budget for the year 2025.

The expected revenues are mainly derived from membership fees, assuming a similar level of participation from the network's members. Operational costs are expected to remain largely consistent with those of the previous year, covering staff support, administration, accounting services, and communication activities.

The proposed draft budget is submitted to the Assembly and **approved without objections.**

4.3. Financial Responsibility

The Assembly reiterates the importance of maintaining clear financial oversight within the organization.



The responsibilities related to financial management—including coordination with the accountant, preparation of annual financial reports, and communication with members regarding membership fees—continue to be monitored under the framework previously established by the Executive Board.

5. Nova Gorica-Gorizia UNISCAPE Declaration on Borderless Landscapes

A central moment of the General Assembly is the discussion of the UNISCAPE Declaration on Borderless Landscapes, prepared in connection with the symbolic cross-border context of Nova Gorica and Gorizia.

The President introduces the document, emphasizing its relevance to the mission of UNISCAPE and its alignment with the principles of the Council of Europe landscape policies and the broader European dialogue on territorial cooperation.

The declaration reflects on landscapes as shared cultural and ecological spaces that transcend political borders and encourages stronger academic collaboration across European regions.

Following discussion and several positive remarks from participants, **the Assembly formally approves the Nova Gorica–Gorizia UNISCAPE Declaration on Borderless Landscapes.**

6. Next General Assembly meeting

Participants discuss possible contexts for hosting the next General Assembly. The Executive Board will further evaluate proposals and communicate the location and date of the 2026 General Assembly in due course.

7. *Any other issue*

No additional issues are raised by the Assembly.

Closing of the General Assembly meeting

The President thanks all participants for their active involvement and contributions to the discussion. She reiterates the importance of maintaining strong collaboration among member institutions and continuing to develop the UNISCAPE network as a platform for academic exchange and landscape research in Europe.

The meeting is officially closed.