

The background is a vibrant, stylized illustration of a city at night. In the foreground, a dancer with long dark hair, wearing a red dress and black arm warmers, is captured in a dynamic pose with one arm raised. The city behind her features large, brightly lit buildings with abstract, colorful patterns on their facades. The scene is illuminated by warm orange and yellow lights, with green and blue light beams cutting through the air. The overall atmosphere is energetic and artistic.

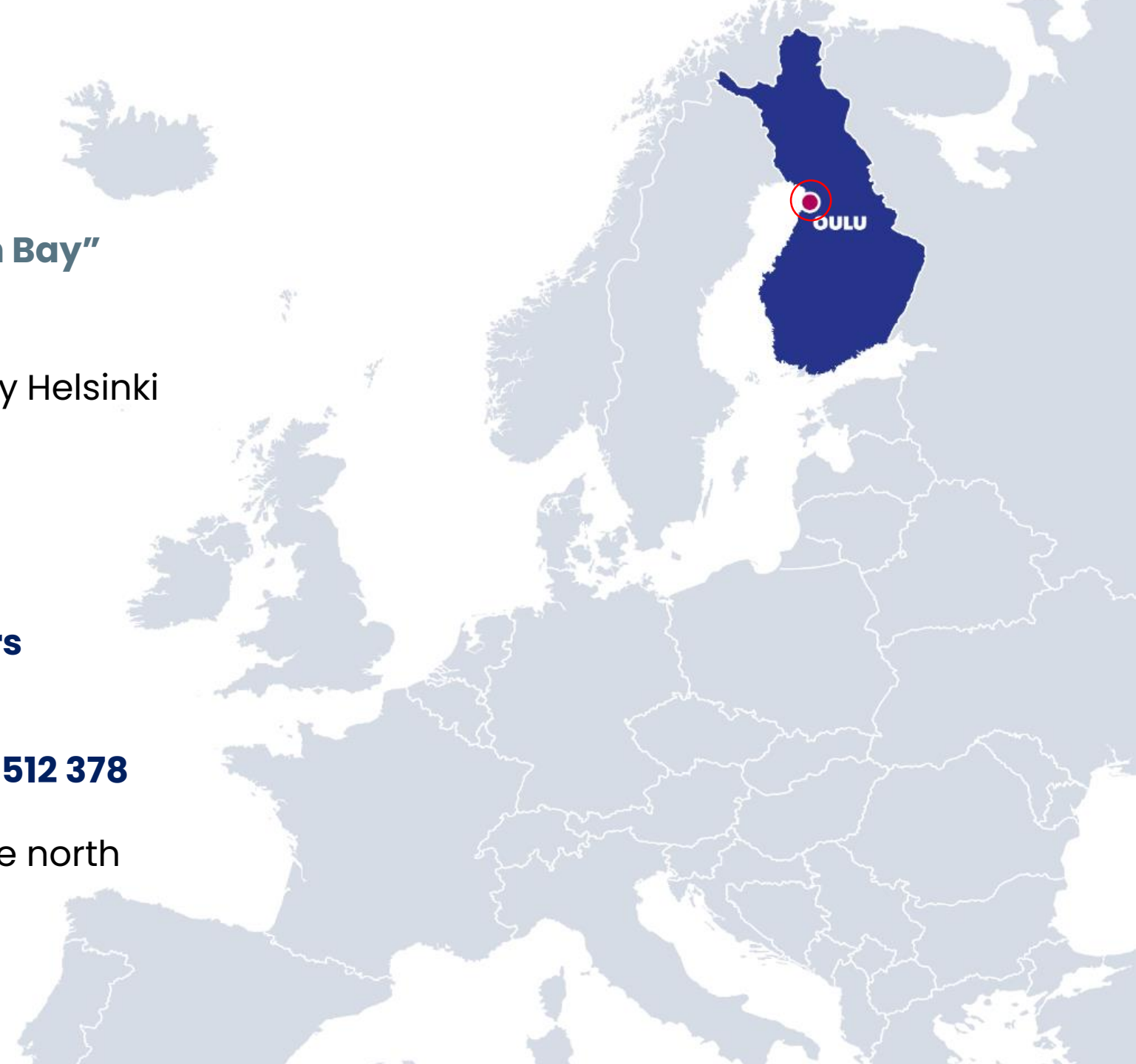
# **OULU EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2026**



# Oulu

"Creative tech-city by the Bothnian Bay"

- ~ 600km North from the capital city Helsinki
  - **50 min** flight
  - **5h 50min** by train
- Residents in Oulu: **209 551**
  - Foreign citizens in Oulu: **7 123**
  - Average age in Oulu **39,2 years**  
(Finland: 43,6 years)
- Residents in **Oulu2026** region: **512 378**
  - Easily accessible, light of the north







**Extreme,  
wonderous  
winter**







**Bright, lively  
summer**







**Dark,  
luminous  
autumn**





# Oulu2026 region

Oulu2026 region covers also 32 municipalities, cities and towns from the North

- Oulu was the applicant city, the ECoC title belongs to the entire region
- Region will have an active role in the culture programme
- **The Open Call projects will take place within [this region](#).**





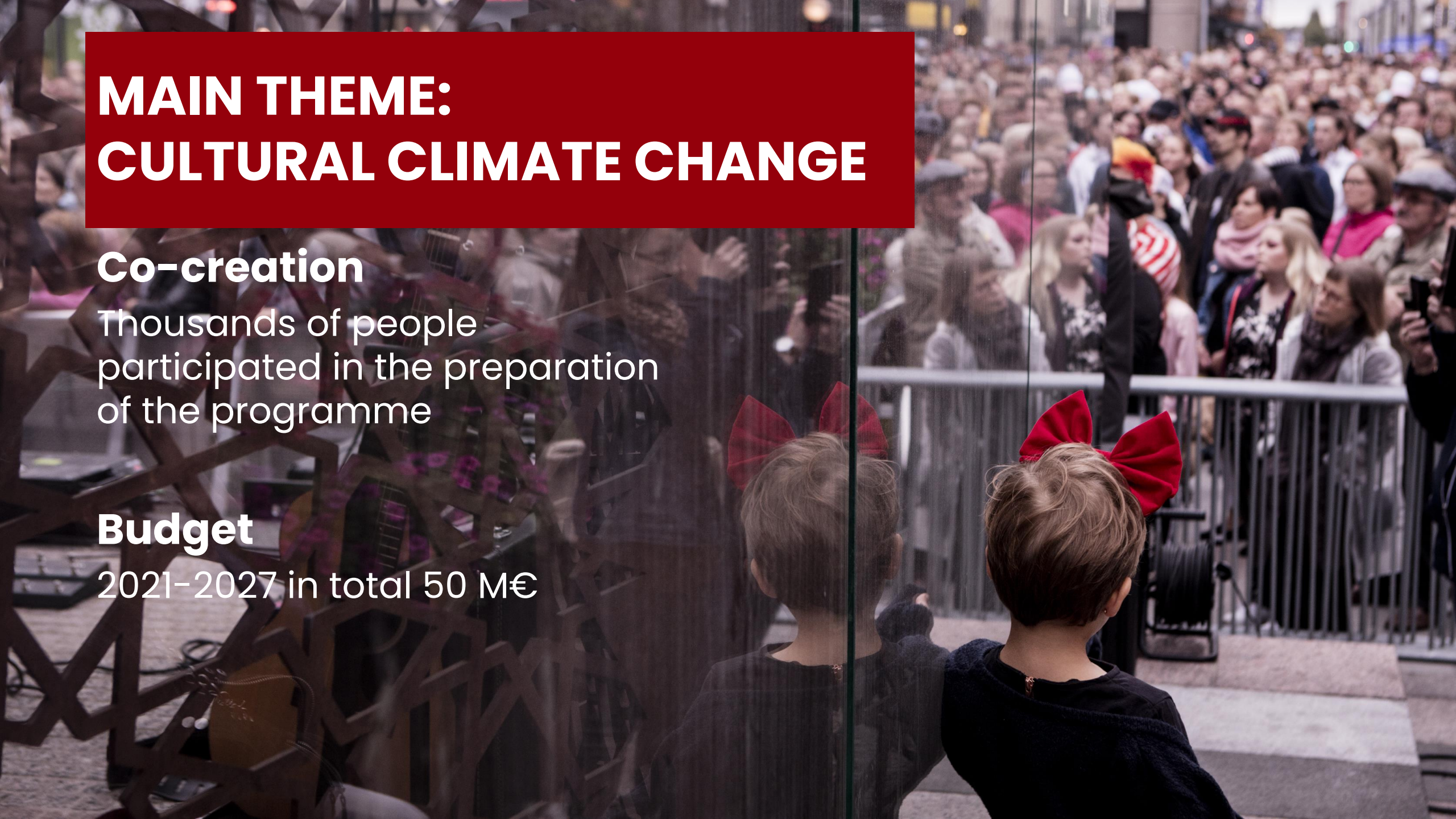
# MAIN THEME: CULTURAL CLIMATE CHANGE

## Co-creation

Thousands of people participated in the preparation of the programme

## Budget

2021-2027 in total 50 M€





# THE GOALS OF OULU2026

## FROM A COLD TECH CITY TO A **VIBRANT, GRIPPING CITY**

- Oulu's reputation as a city of culture strengthens in Finland by 25% and Oulu's international visibility grows by 25% by 2027
- 50% of the events of the cultural programme's projects take place outside of established cultural facilities
- Net migration is positive among young adults (25–34 years) in 2027





# THE GOALS OF OULU2026

## FROM AN UNBALANCED COMMUNITY TOWARDS **EQUAL CULTURAL RIGHTS**

- 40% of Oulu2026 projects are implemented outside of Oulu city centre
- 10% of residents participate as volunteers and 80% as an audience in Oulu2026 activities in the project area
- 80% of Oulu's residents feel that, by 2026, it is good for everyone to be in Oulu

## FROM A PERIPHERIC AREA TO A **CREATIVE AREA** WITH NEW JOBS

- 80% of Oulu2026 projects are implemented via international cooperation
- 70% of Oulu2026 projects combine art and technology
- The creative economy in the Oulu region has grown by 20% and the number of jobs in the creative sector has grown by 30% by 2027





Brave Hinterland



Cool Contrasts



Wild City



CULTURAL CLIMATE CHANGE



## WILD CITY

Oulu is on the cusp. We could settle for being a tame municipal city on the fringe. Or we could go Wild. We choose Wild.

With Wild City we bring wildness into the city by celebrating the wilderness around it. Creating a new cultural approach with our unique northern vibe. Oulu as a cultural laboratory, going wild for Europe.

What exactly is a creative city in the middle of the wild nature? What is a lively, creative village? How do art, subcultures and creative spaces fill emptiness, silence and darkness?

## COOL CONTRASTS

Oulu is the kingdom of great contrasts – positive, but also challenging. Contrasts such as the nightless nights of the midnight sun and sunless days in the heart of winter. Contrasts have the power both to connect and disconnect, but also to create something new.

## BRAVE HINTERLAND

Oulu is the kingdom of great contrasts – positive, but also challenging. Contrasts such as the nightless nights of the midnight sun and sunless days in the heart of winter. Contrasts have the power both to connect and disconnect, but also to create something new.





# Thank you, Let's meet in social media!



[www.oulu2026.eu](http://www.oulu2026.eu)



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