

PRESS RELEASE

Conference in Brussels "Striving for a greener Mediterranean: Sustainable mobility solutions for a greener & better experience living and visiting the Mediterranean"

The European Urban Transports Community project presents policy proposals to move towards a more sustainable mobility in tourist areas in the Mediterranean

Transport generated by tourism activities represents the 73% of the total CO2 emissions with a forecast to double in 2030, according to the Eurobarometer October 2021

The Urban Transports Community project, led by MedCités, has made proposals for the implementation, at the European level, to jointly planning mobility and tourism; increase networking between cities; and have more funding.

11st May 2022, Brussels - In the framework of the conference "Striving for a greener Mediterranean: Sustainable mobility solutions for a greener & better experience living and visiting the Mediterranean", organized in Brussels by the **Urban Transports Community project**, funded by the European program **Interreg Med Programme** and **led by MedCités**, a set of policy proposals have been put forward to move towards a more sustainable tourism mobility in the Mediterranean. The event was supported and sponsored by MEP Ignazio Corrao, Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism.

According to the **October 2021 Eurobarometer survey**, transport accounts for **73% of total CO2 emissions from global tourism-related activities** - 40% is for air transport, 30% for cars and 3% for other transport Systems with a forecast to double total emissions by 2030.

To improve the current and future situation, **the Urban Transports Community's policy proposals propose to conceive of mobility and tourism as an inseparable binomial** when planning, collecting data and drawing up, for example, **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans**; to increase **multilevel cooperation** between different administrations to share good practice, build a **common regulatory framework** and promote interregional infrastructure, such as **Eurovelo routes** for cycling between states or the **European night train** network and allocate more powerful funding programs to more sustainable mobility management.

8 pilot programs in 5 mediterranean regions

The **Urban Transport Community project** has carried out 8 pilot tests on sustainable mobility in various areas of the Mediterranean (specifically in Misano, Rimini, Ravenna, Castellón de la Plana, Rethymno, Larissa, the **Barcelona Metropolitan Area** and **Larnaca**, these two cities members of MedCités), based on pioneering experiences from various Mediterranean cities, on which the political proposals have been presented today in Brussel..

Pioneering experiences include the labeling of cycling tourist routes in **Misano (Italy)**; the development of cycling routes and the digitization of information in **Zadar (Croatia)**; electric mobility solutions for tourists and

residents of **Rethymno (Greece)**; in **Larnaca (Cyprus)**, the implementation of mobility policies derived from the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan; in **Ravenna (Italy)** and **València (País Valencià)**, the pilot was based on improving access to the cruise port and urban accessibility; in **Rimini** and **Misano (Italy)**, the development of a system for collecting data on transport uses to understand the habits and impacts of visitors to major events.

The **Secretary General of MedCities, Josep Canals Molina**, explained that: *“We have come to the heart of the European Union to say out loud that we need to implement bold policies in this field; also to vindicate the role of city councils as main actors for the change; and to ask for a better coordination between different administrations to move towards more sustainable and greener mobility. We also need more funds place on mobility plans that could help **to reduce the impacts on tourist areas in the Mediterranean** and across Europe. The Urban Transports Community (UTC) project has worked side by side with the **city councils** of the cities involved, studying the cases implemented, the advantages and disadvantages. The UTC is a very important platform for the exchange of knowledge for the different Mediterranean territories in order to pave the way for more sustainable mobility”.*

The **Urban Transports Community project** on going since 2016 and **led by MedCities**, works in 5 thematic fields: active mobility, mobility in tourist destinations, use of Big Data for intelligent traffic management, shared mobility, new approaches to planning and electromobility.

More miles and safer cycling paths in Europe

The **European Federation of Cyclists (EFC)**, through its CEO, Ms. Jill Warren and the Urban Transport Community have agreed to demand to Europe *“more investement in building safe infrastructure to reduce the number of bicycle accidents to zero. And more political commitment is needed to prioritize bicycle policies, and the planning of 1,000 km more cycling routes”.*

These transformations must be accompanied by changes in the behavior and adoption of the bicycle observed in recent years. A good example is the adoption of the bicycle by many inhabitants in the port city of **Dürres**, an important tourist destination. The **Mayor of Durres** (MedCities member city), Ms. Sako Emiriana, present at the event, highlighted: **“The ambition of Dürres and the Mediterranean cities to ensure the safe and accessible use of bicycles, also in the most touristic coastal areas”.**

The [October 2021 Eurobarometer survey](#) already showed **that 82% of Europeans are willing to change their travel habits for more sustainable practices**, including the consumption of locally sourced products, the reduction of waste and water consumption, taking the option of traveling out of season, even to less visited destinations, or choosing transport options based on their ecological impact.

MedCities

MedCities is a network of 67 city councils and metropolitan areas, founded in 1991 in Barcelona, which helps Mediterranean local governments to improve the quality of life of their cities through their strategic priorities. MedCities develops on the three shores the Mediterranean. The projects are part of the entity's guiding principles: sustainable development, climate crisis mitigation and economic and social equality. MedCities' activities focus on five main lines of action: strategic city planning, sustainable urban services, social cohesion, economic development, and the environment and biodiversity. MedCities has the support of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, the Barcelona City Council, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Diputació de Barcelona. He is a member of the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance.

For more information:

Mireia L. Baeta

MedCities Communication Officer

mlopez@amb.cat - www.medicities.org