

26-27 NOV 2025 — BARCELONA

CONFERENCE OF MEDITERRANEAN CITIES

BARCELONA+30: EMPOWERING LOCAL ACTION FOR REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION

26-27 November 2025, Barcelona

The Conference of Mediterranean Cities Barcelona+30 will take place on the occasion of the 10th UfM Regional Forum/30th anniversary of the Barcelona Process, to be held in Barcelona on 28 November 2025. The Conference, organised by MedCités, the Municipality of Barcelona, the European Institute of the Mediterranean, with the support of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area, the Barcelona Provincial Council and Catalonia International, seeks to foster an inclusive and forward-looking dialogue among Euro-Mediterranean policymakers, civil society actors, academia, and socio-economic players from across the region. While reflecting on three decades of the Barcelona Process and its impacts, the event will explore future pathways for reinvigorating the role of local authorities in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and dialogue.

The event will take place back-to-back with MedCités annual General Assembly, to create greater opportunities for members' engagement and participation.

The conference will offer simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Arabic and Turkish.

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Context

Cities have played and continue to play a crucial role in Euro-Mediterranean integration by driving decentralised cooperation, fostering territorial diplomacy, and promoting sustainable development at local level. Since the adoption of the Barcelona Declaration in 1995, local authorities have proven to be powerful agents of change, implementing sustainable practices, fostering dialogue, sharing lessons learned, and driving progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Being on the frontlines of regional challenges, their work enhances everyday environmental protection, promotes social inclusion, strengthens economic resilience, and connects policy with tangible benefits for citizens on the ground.

Indeed, without the active engagement of local authorities, no policy can truly be implemented in a way that reflects the lived realities of communities, as they are the essential link between strategy and action, translating global and regional frameworks into concrete, context-sensitive initiatives.

Their proximity to citizens ensures that policies are not only executed, but adapted, monitored, and improved based on real needs and feedback. Moreover, they have shown a consistent commitment to strengthening what unites the region, serving as bridges for peace and solidarity.

The recent appointment of a European Commissioner for the Mediterranean, and the review of regional strategies of cooperation, notably around the Pact for the Mediterranean and the reform process undertaken by the Union for the Mediterranean, are powerful signals of renewed commitment. Local authorities must be integral actors to this process, to ensure a balanced, equal and pragmatic partnership. This Conference is a timely opportunity to build on 30+ years of decentralised cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area, and to advocate for a strengthened role of local governments in shaping the region's future.

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Programme

Simultaneous interpretation in English, French, Arabic and Turkish is offered

Day 1 – 26 November 2025

Saló de Cent, Barcelona City Council (Plaça Sant Jaume)

Master of ceremony: Fàtima Saheb, poet and writer

16h30 – 17h00 | Welcoming remarks

- **Jaume Collboni**, Mayor of Barcelona and President of Barcelona Metropolitan Area
- **Clare Hart**, Acting President of MedCités
- **Cecilia Garcia Gasalla**, Director of Cooperation with Africa, the Arab World and Asia, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU and Cooperation

17h00 – 17h20 | Keynote address

- **HRH Princess Rym Ali**, President of the Anna Lindh Foundation

Introduced by **Amb. Senén Florensa**, Executive President of the European Institute of the Mediterranean

17h20 – 18h15 | Cities as players for peace in the Mediterranean

- **Maria Eugènia Gay**, Second Deputy Mayor in charge of International Relations, Barcelona City Council
- **Maher Canawati**, Mayor of Bethlehem
- **Alba Barnusell Ortuño**, Mayor of Granollers, representative of Mayors for Peace, and President of the Social Sustainability, Life Cycle and Community Area of the Barcelona Provincial Council

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- **Jasmin Ademovic**, Councilor and Chairperson of the Commission for International Cooperation, Sarajevo

Moderator

Luca Gervasoni, Founder and Director of the NOVACT Institute

18h15 – 19h00 | **Cities as frontliners of climate change and sustainable development in the Mediterranean**

- **Clare Hart**, Acting President of MedCités and Vice-President for International Relations of Montpellier Métropole Méditerranée
- **Jordi Castellana**, Vice-President of International Relations and Digital Metropolis of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area and Secretary of MedCités
- **Vahap Seçer**, Deputy President of the Union of Municipalities of Türkiye and Mayor of Mersin Metropolitan Municipality
- **Lubna Farhat**, Elected council member of Ramallah Municipality (tbc)

Moderator

Roger Albinyana, Managing Director of the European Institute of the Mediterranean

19h00 | **Cocktail dinner**

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Day 2 – 27 November 2025

Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat (Palau de Pedralbes)

9h15-10h | **Opening roundtable**

30 years of Barcelona Process. Local diplomacy on the spotlight: lessons learnt and future perspectives

- **Nasser Kamel**, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean
- **Jaume Duch**, Minister of European Union and Foreign Affairs at the Government of Catalonia
- **Joško Klisović**, Member of the Assembly of Zagreb and Chair of the ARLEM Commission

Moderator

Neila Akrimi, Leading expert on Euro-Mediterranean Relations and City Diplomacy

Discussant

Lorenzo Kihlgren Grandi, Founding Director of City Diplomacy Lab

10h-10h15 | **Keynote address**

- **Dubravka Šuica**, European Commissioner for the Mediterranean

10h30-11h | **Coffee break**

11h-12h15 | **Roundtable 1: First responders - The frontline position of local authorities in regional challenges**

- **Hussein Hamayel**, Governor of Jericho and the Jordan Valley (tbc)
- **Mustapha Hijazi**, Mayor of Saida
- **Ahmet Aras**, Mayor of Muğla
- **SiMohamed Kaabour**, Councilor of Genoa

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Moderator

Sylvia Bergh, Associate professor in development management and governance at the International Institute of Social Studies

Discussant

Giulia Sostero, Coordinator of the Africa, South West Asia and Türkiye Department at the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA)

12h15-13h30 | **Roundtable 2: Barcelona 30+ - Embedding local realities in the next generation of regional cooperation**

- **Majlinda Bufi**, Mayor of Roskovec
- **Hussam Shakhshir**, Mayor of Nablus
- **Abdel Hamid Karimeh**, Mayor of Tripoli (tbc)
- **Nassar Fakh Lanjri**, 1st Vice-President of Tetuan

Moderator

Emilia Sáiz, Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Discussant

Joumana Sweiss, Programme Officer for Interreg NEXT MED

13h30-13h45 | **Closing statements**

- **Josep Canals Molina**, Secretary General of MedCities
- **Amb. Senén Florensa**, Executive President of the European Institute of the Mediterranean
- **Maria Eugènia Gay**, Second Deputy Mayor in charge of International Relations at the Barcelona City Council, and sixth Vice-President and deputy delegate for International Relations and Agenda 2030 of the Barcelona Provincial Council

13h45 | **Joint lunch** (with participants of the parallel side-event of the 10th UfM Regional Forum: *Regional Resilience and Recovery - advancing collective responses to crisis*)