



*The post-2020 European budget: post-Brexit challenges
and scenarios for the Atlantic Cities*

*General Assembly of the Conference of Cities of the
Atlantic Arc*

Final Declaration - June 15, 2018

Donostia / San Sebastian

The local authorities of the Atlantic Arc recall that the Conference of the Atlantic Arc Cities was created in 2000 with the aim of developing a space of solidarity and projects within its network. Today, thanks to its 20 members, it represents almost 400 local authorities in the regions of the European Atlantic seaboard.

Prospects for new configurations of the European budget and European cohesion policy

After the presentation at the end of May of the proposals of the European Commission on the multiannual financial framework and the draft new regulations of the European funds post 2020, the cities of the Atlantic Arc, gathered in General Assembly, in Donostia / San Sebastian, approve:

1. the scenario of a cohesion policy for all the Regions of Europe,
2. the pooling of EU investments around five major thematic objectives (instead of 11 for 2014-2020),
3. support for the development of local development strategies and sustainable urban development (at least 6% of the ERDF),
4. the effort to simplify administrative rules for the management and control of funds and programs
5. The maintenance of fundamental programs such as Erasmus + (relatively increased), LIFE +, the Solidarity Fund and the Fund for Adaptation to Globalization

invite to consider:

6. the importance, in the face of the new challenges facing the European Union, of aligning the European Commission's proposal with that of the European Parliament for a strategic budget of + 1.3% of GDP and not + 1.1 of GDP.

Challenges for the cities of the Atlantic Arc

The strategic and thematic objectives are proposed by the European Commission:

- ✓ a smarter Europe: research and innovation, digitization, SME competitiveness, skills development,
- ✓ a greener Europe with low carbon emissions: energy transition, circular economy, adaptation to climate change, prevention and risk management,
- ✓ a more connected Europe: digital, TEN-T, sustainable mobility and multimodal urban mobility,

- ✓ a more social Europe,
- ✓ and a Europe closer to the citizens by encouraging the sustainable and integrated development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives

The cities of the Atlantic Arc consider globally:

1. that these strategic and thematic objectives constitute interesting prospects for shared management and partnership in defining the strategies and actions of future operational programs 2021 - 2027
2. European Territorial Cooperation is a complementary and highly strategic tool to meet these objectives
3. that a particular vigilance will nevertheless be observed in the implementation of thematic concentration, in order to achieve a good balance in taking into account the issues and priorities of our Atlantic territories

The cities of the Atlantic Arc specify and invite to consider also that:

4. the research and innovation potential that our territories, especially in the maritime and digital fields, economic and social transitions, ecological and energy transitions to operate, are at the heart of the development of jobs and skills of tomorrow.
5. the challenge of energy and ecological transition also has a particular dimension for the Atlantic coast in terms of development of renewable energy production, especially marine energy efficiency and smart energy management networks, renovation building in ocean areas ...
6. The Atlantic Maritime Strategy and its action plan must be able to regain visibility and operational translation in future programs and devices. The creation of a maritime fund dedicated to "blue growth" would be a good lever for this purpose.
7. the issue of attractiveness and connection to major transport networks is a strong challenge for our Atlantic territories in view of the forthcoming revision of the TEN-T. An extension of the Atlantic Corridor, particularly in the context of Brexit and possible direct links with Ireland, is crucial. Complementarily, the intermodality of networks and urban mobility must irrigate our territories and offer alternative and sustainable solutions for everyday travel.
8. The integration of integrated urban strategies must go well beyond a minimum of 6% of the ERDF. Urban governments design and implement service and equipment development strategies that extend beyond the administrative boundaries of cities and towns. They bring the equilibrium and the development of vast interdependent territories, including rural ones, in connection with the Regions. Cities focus on social exclusion issues ... In this respect, particular attention will be given to the decentralized implementation of the ESF + shared management programs.

9. European cooperation is to be maintained and strongly encouraged, in particular an INTERREG program for the Atlantic Area in order to continue our shared projects and remain open to our partners in British regions and cities in the context of Brexit in accordance with the procedures to be defined

Cities engage for Europe's future

The Atlantic cities have also adopted the San Sebastian Charter today, which shows that local governments are key for the future of the European project as a link between citizens and European institutions.

Therefore, they request that:

1. The role of mayors as political representatives and social guarantors is recognized at European level, with broader participation in the Committee of the Regions and opportunities to participate as observers (in a system similar to that of the United Nations General Assembly) to the European Parliament.
2. In accordance with the principles adopted in the Amsterdam Pact, cities are taken into account in the decision-making process, as actors, as beneficiaries, but also as spokespersons for citizens.
3. The European Urban Agenda should be included in future policies. In this sense, the current European Agenda Partnerships should be applied in a practical way in the programming of European policies.
4. The European Urban Agenda is aligned both with global urban policies and with the United Nations Urban Agenda.
5. European urban policy moves from principles to actions, with a pragmatic approach:
 - ✓ The proximity to citizens and their daily problems.
 - ✓ Immediate response to impacts.
 - ✓ Establishment of networks at the local, regional, national and international levels.
 - ✓ Sensitive response to social needs.
 - ✓ Flexibility, proportionality and trust.
6. The Atlantic cities propose the continuity of innovative urban actions and the URBACT program, but also initiatives with a strong European added value, such as support for city twinning or international relations. A strong urban dimension in territorial cooperation programs is essential.