



Briefing on Activities, November 2019- September 2020

Lobby and communication

This November 2019, Atlantic Cities was [recognized by the European Space Agency](#) as key stakeholder on their Atlantic Regional Initiative. The ESA, European agency dedicated to the exploration of the space, has addressed the need to develop a portfolio on the Atlantic region for space applications due to its geostrategic position and political relevance.

The 13th of November, Atlantic Cities and other partners [were present at the Interreg Annual Atlantic Event in Porto](#) as part of the project Atlantic Youth Creative Hubs – AYCH, financed within the framework of the European program INTERREG Atlantic Area. María Montoiro Salvado, EU projects manager was there on behalf of the Atlantic Cities.

The OCDE Local Development annual Forum held in Antwerp (Belgium) on 10th to 11th December 2019, was focused on “Right Skills, Right Jobs, Right Places”. Represented by the Atlantic Cities projects manager, María Montoiro Salvado, the Atlantic Cities [was glad to count with two key participants](#): its President and Mayor of Viana do Castelo (Portugal), José María Costa, and Cork City Council, represented by Denis Barrett.

As [we were preparing for the European Maritime Day in Cork](#), Atlantic Cities received the invitation from the European Commission to discuss about the new Atlantic Action Plan currently undergoing discussion at the European Institutions. Jose Maria Costa, ACA president and Mayor of Viana do Castelo [was invited to speak at a key session together with DG MARE and other stakeholders](#) on May 15th between 11:30 – 13:00. He is also member of the Committee of the Regions.

At the end of January, in Bologna (and early March online), the Secretary General of the Atlantic Cities (ACA), Tamara Espiñeira, [attended a strategy meeting of the Cities for Cooperation – C4C platform](#), a specific cooperation platform composed by ACA, Eixo Atlántico, Medcities and the Foro of Adriatic and Ionian Cities. At their meeting in Italy, the C4C members jointly analyzed the particular challenges that territorial cooperation presents for European cities, in their cross-border, transnational and even neighborhood spheres.

The Atlantic Cities has submitted a workshop proposal for the 2020 UN Ocean Conference which was to be held in June 2020 in the city of Lisbon, our member city. The workshop proposed [relies under the topic: Cities as coastal ecosystems; leveraging linkages between SDG 14 and SDG 11](#) at which Atlantic Cities from the 5 EU Atlantic Countries would be represented as well as a group of youth ambassadors.



For Europe day, we had a [video message from the Atlantic Cities president](#). It has subtitles in all 4 Atlantic Languages. We had also a message from the Mayor of A Coruña. Both Viana do Castelo and Santiago de Compostela sent formal greetings for our 20th anniversary. More [policy videos can be found at our YouTube](#) channel.

In July, after 10 years of Atlantic Cities' cooperation in the development of the Atlantic Strategy, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission has [launched the Atlantic Action Plan 2.0](#), during the month of our 20th anniversary. An updated action plan embracing a maritime strategy aimed at promoting sustainable blue economy and the European Green Deal. The [Atlantic Strategy Group](#) is a transnational political board leading the Atlantic Maritime Strategy. Atlantic Cities takes part as an advisory member. This role, allows Atlantic Cities to be in direct contact with national representatives from the Atlantic Arc Member States as well with most relevant actors at European level on maritime policies and funds.

The new communication strategy is currently being put into place, with a new website made by Ms. Espiñeira. After the lockdown, cooperation with our consultants from BUG was relaunched.

Projects

The [Atlantic Regional Initiative](#), led by the European Space Agency, and of which the Atlantic Cities network is part as an expert, published a call for tenders in order to address topics such as the blue economy, renewable energies and Atlantic cities and their ports; Atlantic Cities' members will soon receive proposals for the pilot actions. Atlantic Cities has also contributed to the creation of this initiative from its origins.

She4Sea aims to make more visible and to promote the work and way of life of the maritime sector among young people, especially girls. Since only 2% of people working in the maritime field are women, [it is an opportunity to encourage girls and women](#) to pursue a blue professional career, a dimension that was defended in March 8th. María Montoiro Salvado from Atlantic Cities, thanks to the liaison role led by the Brittany region, met the Director of Toulaine, Anne Le Page, on 28th January 2020 in Brest. [The objective of this meeting](#) was to share experiences and work together for the development of common strategies. At the [All Atlantic Research Forum](#), Atlantic Cities presented this initiative as a key element for protecting our Atlantic coastal communities for a blue future.

This winter, together with ISINOVA, the Institute of Studies for the Integration of Systems, an independent Italian research institute, Atlantic Cities was working in a H2020 proposal to [create an urban integrated food system that rationalises](#) both production and distribution. On 6th December took place in Brussels an info session on the upcoming call for proposals



concerning the [ERA-NET Cofund focused on Urban Accessibility & Connectivity](#). This call applies to result oriented data towards the improvement of smart green & integrated transports in cities.

After a successful three-year phase where ACA was in charge [of EU capitalisation, ECORIS3, led by Fomento de San Sebastián](#), enters its second phase, dedicated to implementing action plans and disseminating the knowledge acquired. The partners met this semester first on a retrospective of the project and administrative issues.

Moreover, the Action Plans and pilot actions were discussed, highlighting the plans for Donostia-San Sebastian and Cork, ACA member cities.

The EURE partners [gathered in Italy for the third meeting of the project](#). The Agency for the Development of the Empolese Valdelsa (ASEV) hosted this meeting that took place on 21-22 January 2020 in Empoli (Italy). The partners, guided by the EURE pool of experts, discussed the structure of the regional reports, the goals achieved to-date and future steps. EURE project was working [during the first semester of 2020](#) in the definition of urban challenges specific to the Brittany region and the good actions adopted by the regional government to inspire EURE territories towards an urban sustainable development. In particular, it was assessed the Brittany urban challenges on air pollution, noise pollution, social inclusion, adaptation and mitigation. Taking as a starting point the axis 3 on energy efficiency of the Brittany Operational Programme, [the Atlantic Cities held a study visit in Brest in November 2019 with the 8 other European partners of the EURE project](#). The objective was to highlight the work on energy efficiency as part of the Brest Métropole Climate Plan. In addition, at the end of January 2020, the Atlantic Cities also organized a meeting in Brest with local stakeholders in order to share the work in progress within the EURE project and to go further on local sustainable development strategies in terms of energy efficiency.

All along the first semester of 2020, the [Atlantic Cities Atlantic Youth Creative Hubs](#) – AYCH project, co-financed by the ERDF under the Interreg Atlantic Area programme, has worked on its adaptation to new circumstances due to COVID19 impact on its planned activities delivery. Always keeping in mind our main target: support youth, we deliver online activities all along this period. Moreover, we invite young Europeans aged from 3 to 17 years old to take part in [a contest and show their ideas](#) to a broader public about how they wish to see our cities in the future in terms of sustainability and quality of life. Their voices matter! In 2019, an assessment highlighted [the key role of ACA](#), as it was responsible for bringing 3 members to the project (Brest, Gijon and Saint-Nazaire).

During lockdown, as many young people saw their internships and exchanges canceled, we decided to propose [full remote internships, in the framework of the Atlantic Futures program](#). The dimension of [promoting entrepreneurship in the Atlantic Futures](#) (FA)



programme has reflected positive results throughout this year. We can highlight the case of the young businesswoman Anne Vicenzotti, an experience recognized as a success story by the European Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises – EASME. Likewise, it is worth to point out the case of the young entrepreneur Fernando Losada. Moreover, [Atlantic Futures was selected at French level and sent to the European Commission](#) for its subsequent selection process. The winners will be awarded at the SME Assembly on 16th and 17th November in Berlin.

The Atlantic Cities as the unique urban forum for the Atlantic is in permanent search for its member cities' opportunities at European level. To this regard, the Atlantic Cities was present [at the European City Facility launching webinar](#) last 7th April 2020.

Events

On November 27 and 28, the Secretary General of the Atlantic Cities, Tamara Espiñeira, visited Galicia [to hold several meetings](#). The first was the biannual meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the INTERREG Atlantic Area program. In parallel, in the framework of relations with our members, Espiñeira held consultation meetings at the political level with the teams from A Coruña and Santiago de Compostela.

On 5th December 2019, the Atlantic Cities projects manager, María Montoiro Salvado, together with European institutions and regional and local representatives [took part at the "Generation Z and Zero Emission Transport" conference](#) at the Benelux house in Brussels.

On 29th January 2020, elected members of the local government of A Coruña, ACA's member city and member of the Executive Bureau of the Atlantic Cities held [a meeting with the Secretary General of the Atlantic Cities](#), at the City Council premises.

The [Executive Bureau of the Atlantic Cities](#) met online on 15th September. Topics were the next strategical steps for the Atlantic Cities network and the preparations for the Atlantic Cities General Assembly.

Moreover, in the framework of Atlantic Cities' 20th anniversary, the network and its members will hold [several online workshops during the European Week of Cities and Regions](#). This important presence of the network and its members responds to a lobby campaign developed during lockdown, specially concerning the workshop on the 20th anniversary and the one on the Atlantic Maritime Strategy.