

# **GIJÓN DECLARATION**

## **25th Anniversary of the Atlantic Cities Network**

*Adopted at the General Assembly in Gijón, 15 May 2025*

As part of the celebrations marking its 25th anniversary, the Atlantic Cities Network — founded by the Rennes Declaration in 2000 — reaffirms its commitment to sustainable development, territorial cohesion and the active defence of the European Atlantic coastline.

Throughout this quarter of a century, the network has represented the interests of the cities of the Atlantic Arc before the European institutions and has promoted transnational cooperation as a key tool for addressing common challenges. Today, in the face of the climate emergency, territorial imbalances and the need for greater local participation in European governance, Atlantic cities are renewing our commitments with a joint vision, rooted in the territory and oriented towards the future.

### **PRIORITY AREAS FOR ACTION**

#### **1. Green transition and climate resilience**

- Promote local policies that reduce emissions and pollution, especially in sectors linked to the blue economy.
- Work to protect coastal, marine and river ecosystems, including wetlands and urban natural areas.
- Make progress in the renaturalisation of urban and river environments to increase the resilience of our cities to the effects of climate change.
- Plan ahead, especially in coastal municipalities, adapting to phenomena such as sea level rise.

#### **2. Urban sustainability and responsible planning**

- Promote sustainable urban planning that balances development, biodiversity and energy efficiency.
- Protect and restore green and public spaces in cities, close to coastal areas, for public use and climate adaptation.
- Strengthen coordination between municipal departments (Environment, Urban Planning, Safety, Sport, Culture, etc.) for comprehensive coastal management.
- Revalue the link between city and nature, promoting healthy and sustainable environments.

#### **3. Blue economy, Atlantic gastronomy and sustainable tourism**

- Promote a responsible blue economy that generates sustainable and innovative employment. With a focus on circularity and water security

- Support Atlantic gastronomy as cultural heritage and an economic driver, with the aim of creating a common identity
- Promote short distribution channels, local consumption and support for sea and inland producers.
- Develop sustainable and inclusive blue tourism, aligned with the conservation of national and cultural heritage.

#### **4. Social cohesion, participation and equality**

- Promote environmental awareness campaigns aimed at all citizens, with a special focus on education and the community.
- Encourage healthy lifestyles, integrating sustainability and well-being and advancing in the definition of the “Atlantic diet”.
- Ensure gender equality in sectors linked to the blue economy, empowering women and overcoming stereotypes.
- Ensure that the development of the blue economy and tourism benefits all sectors of society, especially the most vulnerable groups.

#### **5. Atlantic governance and European leadership**

- Consolidate the role of Atlantic cities as relevant stakeholders in European strategies.
- Actively participate in the formulation of a European Blue Deal, in coordination with the Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Strengthen the network’s institutional presence at key European events such as European Maritime Days and in cooperation projects such as INTERREG.
- Advocate for a cohesion policy that is well-funded and adapted to the specificities of the Atlantic area, contributing to the territorial balance of Europe.

Furthermore, on the occasion of their 25th anniversary, the cities of the Atlantic Cities Network reaffirm their commitment to **continue working together** for a more sustainable, inclusive and connected Atlantic coastline in Europe

**United by the Atlantic, committed to a common future.**

**Signed in Gijón, on 15 May 2025.**