



European Committee
of the Regions

Delivering the Pact for the Mediterranean with regions and cities

**Mediterranean challenges are
local and borderless, so must be the solutions**

Climate change, water scarcity, migration and youth brain drain hit Mediterranean regions and cities first. Yet, funding and decisions often remain channelled through national structures. Stronger territorial governance would improve ownership, visibility and effectiveness. These shared challenges cannot be addressed by any country or territory alone; they require cooperation across all shores of the Mediterranean.

The Pact is an ambitious strategic framework to enhance cooperation and strategic relations between the EU and Southern Mediterranean partners, based on 3 pillars: people, stronger economies, and a safer, more resilient Mediterranean.

3

PILLARS

The Pact is implemented through an Action Plan built through 21 Euro-Mediterranean cooperation actions, but local actions are missing.

21

ACTIONS

57% of authorities surveyed say partnering and connecting is their main expectation from Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

57
%

Climate change adaptation and mitigation is the first priority identified by 32% of authorities surveyed, followed by inclusive socio-economic development.

32
%

Less than 2% of parliamentarians in the Middle East and North Africa are aged 30 or under.

LESS THAN
2
%

Local and regional cooperation across the Mediterranean has grown since the Barcelona Process began in 1995.

30+
YEARS

ARLEM calls for:

A seat at the table for regions and cities

Involve local and regional authorities in co-designing, implementing and monitoring the Action Plan through the Joint group of Senior Officials, with ARLEM as the key institutional channel.

Listen locally before deciding nationally

National governments should set up focal points and channels with municipalities and regions, so local input shapes national positions before they are defined.

Make EU funding reachable for LRAs

Dedicated funding windows for regions and cities in Interreg NEXT MED, NDICI–Global Europe and Horizon Europe, plus technical assistance, capacity-building especially in the South and local support from EU delegations.

Scale up what already works

Build on proven local projects instead of isolated initiatives, with a matchmaking platform helping smaller municipalities showcase successes and find partners across the Mediterranean.

Islands and coasts on the frontline

Reflect island, coastal and arid territories across all pillars: energy isolation, water scarcity, rising seas, heatwaves and storms need tailored measures and dedicated support.

Put resilience and civil protection first

Make water resilience and civil protection central to the Action Plan, with regions and cities fully involved in disaster preparedness, early warning and recovery.

Give young people a real say – and a reason to stay

Involve youth meaningfully, not symbolically, at local level; ease visas for education, culture and sport; and create local opportunities so young people can choose to stay.

Migration beyond a security lens

Recognise regions and cities as first responders along migration routes and give them the means to manage reception, inclusion and public services.

Catalan regional government (Spain), Skåne County (Sweden) and nine Catalan municipalities worked with the Oriental region, Morocco to promote awareness of the risks of irregular migration, legal alternatives, and available professional opportunities within the region.

MedCities supports municipalities of Gabès (Tunisia), El Mina (Lebanon), Madaba (Jordan) and Tétouan (Morocco) in the planning and design of green and socially inclusive spaces, addressing challenges such as critical climate risk in Mediterranean urban areas, Heat island effect, temperature increase, lack of water resources.

Aude Department (France) worked with the municipality of Soliman (Tunisia) to preserve the protected wetland of Sebkhia (Ramsar site) and improve access to clean water for all.

The success of the Pact will depend on the genuine involvement of local and regional authorities, taking into account the specificities of all territories."

Marie-Antoinette Maupertuis (FR/EA)

President of the Corsican Assembly, ARLEM co-rapporteur

The Pact will succeed only if all levels of governance jointly address the Mediterranean's shared challenges and opportunities."

Jamal Abu Obeid

Mayor of Great Ramtha (Jordan), ARLEM co-rapporteur

To find out more about the ARLEM report and its mapping of territorial projects, scan the QR code

