

Organizing:



**ACT LOCAL TO GO GLOBAL:
Localizing the SDGs
for leaving no one and no place behind**

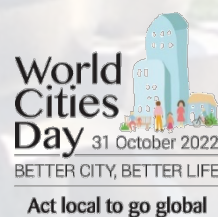
**Opening of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat
and celebration of the World Cities Day**

Monday, 31st October 2022

17:30 -20:15 hrs.

Venue: Conference room.

Historical Archive of Euskadi, Bilbao



I. Introduction

The success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development hinges on effective collaboration between all relevant actors. Knowledge, resources, skills, and partnerships will need to be mobilized on an unprecedented scale to implement all of the 17 SDGs.

The multiple interconnected crises the planet is facing are putting the achievement of the SDGs at risk. More efforts are therefore needed to ensure inclusive and coordinated recovery from the pandemic and get countries back on track to achieve the SDGs.

The current global situation has elevated more than ever, the essential role of multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the Decade of Action. Effective localization is equally essential.

Spain has demonstrated on numerous occasions its commitment to sustainable development, global solidarity, and effective multilateralism, as well as its concerted support for local engagement in addressing global priorities and, in line with the above, localizing the SDGs.

On 11 July 2022, during the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Government of Spain announced a whole-of-Government and civil society approach sparking a global effort for local action and impact on the ground. The Government of Spain, the Basque Government, the Bilbao City Council, and the BBK formally offered their support for localizing the SDGs through a contribution to the UN Joint SDG Fund and launched the candidature of Bilbao, as Host of the Secretariat of the Local2030 Coalition. The Coalition is an initiative created to enhance synergies and align coordinated actions across the United Nations to leverage the power of local action to achieve the SDGs. The *Local2030* Coalition Steering Committee Members and Directors appreciated and unanimously endorsed this proposal.

As a result, the official opening of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat is being organized in Bilbao, on the margins of the World Cities Day, annually celebrated on the 31st October.

The official launch of the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat is part of the event "**LOCALIZING THE SDGs: ACTING LOCAL TO GO GLOBAL**", co-organized by UN Habitat and the Government of Spain through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Ministry of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda, the Basque Government, and the City Council of Bilbao, along with the support of UNDP and BBK Foundation, and members of the Local 2030 Coalition.

II. ACT LOCAL TO GO GLOBAL: Localizing the SDGs for leaving no one and no place behind

In 2020, the UN Secretary-General launched the [Decade of Action](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/)¹, a global call to action to drive global progress towards achieving SDGs by 2030. The Decade of Action identifies local action as one of the key levels of intervention to achieve the SDGs. In 2021, the Secretary-General's Report "Our Common Agenda" clearly recognizes that "cities, local authorities and, specifically, Voluntary Local Reviews are key actors and processes for advancing sustainable development and inclusive multilateralism".

Effective localization is therefore essential for the achievement of the SDGs. This has a special relevance as all of SDGs include targets related to competences and responsibilities for local and

¹ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/>

regional governments, particularly to their role in delivering urban basic services and promoting integrated, inclusive, and sustainable urban and territorial development.

The future of humanity is undoubtedly urban. According to UN-Habitat's [World Cities Report 2022](#)², people continue to move to cities and the population of existing cities is growing, with 68% of the world's population living in cities by 2050. Thus, local governments have a critical role in being at the front lines of crises, as well as in planning for inclusive, resilient, and green recovery, as the **New Urban Agenda**³(NUA) points out. Cities are the drivers of change and the main actor in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals, acting as an invisible chain connecting and advancing implementation across all the SDGs. In the city setting, while the SDGs are the "what," the New Urban Agenda is the "how."

Cities around the world are demonstrating their commitment to SDG implementation and are developing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) for sharing their progress, experiences, and practices on the SDGs, complementing Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).

Spain's Commitment to the SDGs

"Spain is firmly committed to the 2030 Agenda, having defined institutional governance structures specifically dedicated to multi-stakeholder and multi-level coordination, as well as strategic frameworks for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, from a whole-of-governments and whole-of-society approach.

Due to their own highly decentralized political and administrative nature, local and regional governments are key actors in the development of the 2030 Agenda. The distribution of administrative powers, proximity to citizens, or the promotion of endogenous local development strategies, point to a leading role for local and regional governments, which must be at the forefront throughout the public policy cycle"⁴

In this sense, the Basque Government has been one of the first sub-national governments, globally, to develop transversal strategies for the incorporation of the 2030 Agenda as a transforming axis of public policies with sustainable development as a horizon. On the other hand, Bilbao is a clear example of the transformative localization of the 2030 Agenda.

III. Programme⁵

18:00 | [Welcome and institutional remarks](#)

- **Juan Mari Aburto**, Mayor of Bilbao.
- **Lilith Verstrynge**, Secretary of State for the 2030 Agenda, Ministry for Social Rights and the 2030 Agenda of Spain.
- **Amina J. Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

2 <https://unhabitat.org/wcr/>

3 <https://unhabitat.org/about-us/new-urban-agenda>

4 Spanish Candidature to host the Local2030 Coalition Secretariat in Bilbao presented at the High Level Political Forum on July 11th 2022.

5 The event will be closed with attendance by invitation only (120 capacity).

- **José Manuel Albares**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain.
- **Iñigo Urkullu**, President of the Basque Government (Lehendakari).

18:35 | [Panel Session on the occasion of the World Cities Day](#)

- **Maria Eugenia Simarro**, General Director of Organization and Resources of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces FEMP.
- **Clara Arpa**, CEO of Arpa, Member of the UN Global Compact Board, and UN Global Compact Spain President.
- **Eider Inunciaga**, BBK Kuna Director.
- **Filomena Ruggiero**, Vice President of the Sustainable Development Council.
- **Ragnheidur Elín Arnadóttir**, Director of the OECD Development Centre.

Moderator: **Shipra Narang Suri**, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat.

19:20 | [Closing](#)

- **Pilar Cancela**, Secretary of State for International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation of Spain.
- **Jonan Fernández**, Secretary General of Social Transition and 2030 Agenda, Basque Government.

Local2030 Coalition Steering Committee, UN Directors Group, and Local2030 Hubs:

- **Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).
- Video messages.

Final Remarks from the Local2030 Coalition Co-chairs:

- **Haoliang Xu**, UN Assistant Secretary-General, and Assistant Administrator and Director of Bureau for Policy and Programme Support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- **Maimunah Mohd Sharif**, UN Under-Secretary-General, and Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

Background: World Cities Day and Urban October

[Urban October](https://urbanoctober.unhabitat.org/)⁶ was born to raise awareness, promote participation, generate knowledge, and engage the international community to focus on how to improve urban life and ensure that urban development leaves no one and no place behind. The month begins with World Habitat Day on the first Monday of the month, October the 3rd this year, and ends with World Cities Day on 31 October.

[World Cities Day](https://urbanoctober.unhabitat.org/wcd)⁷ aims to promote global interest towards sustainable urban development, boost cooperation between countries and cities to find opportunities and address the challenges posed by urbanization. World Cities Day contributes to the deployment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is recognized as a priority outreach platform by the New Urban Agenda.

The overall theme of World Cities Day is *Better City, Better Life*. This year's sub-theme is ***Act Local to Go Global***, it aims at advancing the technical and political debate on the localization of the SDGs as a comprehensive roadmap to enhance inclusive human settlements, and organize political inputs to implement global recommendations in local contexts. It also aims at sharing and hearing from best examples of participatory processes and inclusion related to SDG localization that can be extrapolated and tailored to different contexts; and defining concrete hands-on learnings and recommendations on how to effectively implement the SDGs to reduce inequalities within cities and across territories.

It is expected that this WCD promotes the acceleration of SDG implementation in cities and territories among stakeholders and constituencies, and implements recommendations to foster inclusive policies and to raise the voices of the most left behind.

⁶ <https://urbanoctober.unhabitat.org/>

⁷ <https://urbanoctober.unhabitat.org/wcd>