



FIRST UCLG WORLD FORUM OF REGIONS

16 – 18 November 2021

Concept Note

Registration is required by 12 November - [click here](#)

The first meeting of the World Forum of Regions will promote **debate and exchange on the fundamental role of regions** in promoting a territorial vision of global agendas, world and urban phenomena, and, above all, how they overlap.

During this important global inflection, it is essential to strengthen the commitment of local and regional governments to international agendas, as underlined by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his report "Our Common Agenda"

2021 marks five years since the adoption of the New Urban Agenda at the Habitat III Conference held in Quito. Many advances and transformations have been launched since then, particularly some that confirm its integration with other global agendas such as the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Generation Equality Forum, and the importance of taking into account territorial approaches.

Under the presidency of CONGOPE, the UCLG Forum of Regions will bring together regional governments from all continents, along with local and national governments, academia, civil society, experts and international partners such as the UN to foster spaces to jointly create an ecosystem of cities and territories and to rethink how to work together and coordinate international efforts to build a dignified, resilient and sustainable future for people and the planet.

The world summit of regions will be an opportunity to share experiences, policies, priorities and **proposals to move towards joint action** at the international level based on the perspective of regional territories and governments. In addition, it will offer a meeting space for the relationship between all organisation and local, national and international agendas.

Our common challenge is a new social contract that places the care of people and the planet at the centre of territorial policies. Regional governments are key actors to improve ties and collaborative governance towards a future of solidarity with communities and present and future generations.





FORMAT

The sessions of the World Forum of Regions will have an online (16-17 November 2021) or hybrid format, onsite and online, on **18 November 2021**. Within the framework of the UCLG World Council that will take place in the context of the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona from 16 to 18 November 2021, a limited number of authorities will be invited to attend the high-level dialogue on 18 November in person. In addition, all the sessions will enable online participation, via the Zoom platform.

There will be simultaneous interpretation in Spanish, English and French.

GENERAL AGENDA

Day 1	Opening Session and Panels: innovative territories in transforming scenarios
Debate 1	Proposals for ecological transformation, multilevel governance and social justice
Debate 2	The territories that provide care, and are competitive, connected and cohesive, are unstoppable
Day 2	Roadmap: Strengthening the Voice of the Regions
Debate 1	The regions on the global agendas
Debate 2	World Declaration of the Regions – Towards Quito+5
Day 3 In the framework of the UCLG World Council	High Level Political Dialogues and Joint Declaration
Dialogue I	Building territories as integrated ecosystems: a pact for the planet
Dialogue II	Accelerating the urban agendas from regional governments: a pact for people
Closing session	World Declaration of the Regions – Towards Quito+5

OBJECTIVES

✓ Development of joint agendas of the regions

Bring about the articulation of actors that transform the urban agenda and international processes, with a unique role for the benefit of people and the planet. *Based on the Forum discussions, a proposal for joint actions at global level will be defined.*

✓ Institutional strengthening

Generate knowledge through political dialogue between regions and key players in the world system, and learn about good practices, experiences and visions. *Ways*





to continue making progress in improving the participation of the regions globally will be explored.

✓ **Peer-to-peer cooperation**

Provide support and cooperation to strengthen the capacities of the regions towards territorial development under the prism of an integrated ecosystem of intermediate cities, capitals, metropolises, territories and local actors. *The regions will be able to submit their proposals for topics and methods of peer-to-peer cooperation and learning.*

✓ **Join forces in international positioning**

Ensure that the regions are integrated into multilateralism, in line with their transformative role in the territories. *At the end of the Forum, the declaration of the regions in the world will be adopted.*

THEMATIC LINES OF THE UCLG FORUM OF REGIONS

Since the Durban Congress in 2019, regional governments have agreed on a series of topics to work on together, which form the basis of the current concept note. The roadmap towards the Forum of Regions 2021 is available [at this link](#). Through this process, the three topics to be followed as thematic lines of the First Forum of Regional Governments are defined:

1. Territories as integrated ecosystems, care at the core for a sustainable and equitable recovery

Inequalities are not limited to large urban centres and a broad vision is required to address the specificities of each locality and the diverse needs of the population, while also understanding the relationship and impact between cities, territories and countries. Therefore, there is a clear need for multilevel governance that takes into account the integrated ecosystem of cities and territories.

Outstanding among the key lessons of the pandemic is the importance of ensuring quality public services for the entire population, particularly the most vulnerable. As demonstrated by the pandemic, the territorialisation of public services emerges as an urgent objective and an obligation of social justice. Putting care at the core of territorial organisation is essential to address intra- and inter-urban, rural-urban disparities, considering the strategic position of intermediate cities. In this field, regional governments have powers that influence access to and quality of health services, and provide a territorial vision that observes the state of the situation in a comprehensive manner, throughout the ecosystem of cities and territories.





The regions are articulators of territorial ecosystems, contributing to better governance to avoid leaving any person or place behind

2. Territories to advance, together for a sustainable future

The New Urban Agenda is considered a platform to accelerate localisation of the SDGs, and in particular the fulfilment of SDG11 on cities. 2021 will mark five years since the adoption of the agenda in Quito, a key moment to review the progress made to date and promote the role of regional governments in local, urban and territorial sustainable development.

The Forum of Regions proposes an approach to territories to enable progress based on analysis of the simultaneous presence of three main aspects: Territorial **Cohesion**: the regions provide a comprehensive framework of the links between cities and territories, which allows the existing gaps to be addressed and opportunities for all; **Competitiveness**: cities and territories must be fitted with the tools, infrastructures and resources necessary to achieve resilience and sustainable development; and physical and digital **Connectivity**: infrastructure and mobility in the territory need additional attention. Digital transformation to adapt to new times requires equitable and sustainable digital access, even in the remotest areas.

We the regions support and contribute to innovation and territorial development and are committed to global transformation

[See video on Territories to Advance here.](#)

3. Resilient and green territories, ecological transformation, the key to the future of the planet

Actions to resolve the climate emergency are a priority on the regional governments' agenda. The territorial perspective is essential to reinvent a relationship with nature, which takes into account the right of present and future generations to enjoy a healthy, resilient and just planet. In 2021 there are important events such as the Food Systems Summit, the COP 15 on Biodiversity and the COP 26 on Climate Change, which will define new international frameworks of collective implementation.

Regional governments will play a key role in enhancing ambition and accelerating actions of transition to inclusive and zero-emission societies. Food systems provide a concrete example of the importance of addressing urban-rural linkages, especially during the recovery from the pandemic, as well as for the protection of rural tourism and common water and natural resources.





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FORUM OF
REGIONS 2021**
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The regions as key agents of sustainable development to achieve global agendas in the territories.

