



Eurocities Cooperation Platform 2025: Building Bridges



26-28 November 2025, Vilnius

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20th Eurocities Cooperation Platform

Programme overview

Time	Description	Venue
Wednesday, 26 November		
14:30	Registration	Vilnius City Municipality, Konstitucijos pr. 3, Vilnius
15:00-17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Funding catch-up and info session Learn how Eurocities can support your city in identifying the right funding programmes and building strong partnerships. This session will offer an open space for dialogue and peer exchange among city representatives on their experiences with EU funding. Through interactive discussions, participants will share perspectives, explore key challenges, and consider possible pathways for joint action. <i>Room: Hall on the 20th floor</i>EU advocacy: navigating the EU institutions' maze This session provides participants with a thorough understanding of how to effectively engage with the complex landscape of EU institutions to advocate for local interests. Participants will gain insights into the functioning of key EU bodies, the legislative process, and how cities can influence decision-making at the EU level. The session also delves into the practical tools used for lobbying and advocacy, and explains	

	<p>how Eurocities contributes to shaping EU policies. By learning how to actively participate in Eurocities' advocacy efforts, attendees will be better equipped to represent their city's interests in the EU arena, maximising impact on EU legislation and initiatives.</p> <p><i>Room: City Council Hall on the 2nd floor</i></p>	
17.00-17.30	<p>Newcomers session</p> <p>New to Eurocities or a new contact officer? Learn about how Eurocities works and get an overview of Eurocities funding services as well as an introduction to the collaboration space.</p> <p><i>Room: City Council Hall on the 2nd floor</i></p>	
17.40-18.10	<p>Getting the Most Out of Eurocities' Online Tools (Collaboration space & Odoo)</p> <p>This session will provide a short introduction (or a refresher!) on Eurocities' online platforms for members. Participants will learn the basics of navigating the Collaboration Space, including how to find key information, access resources, and add new contacts, as well as an overview of Odoo, the platform used to manage mailing subscriptions.</p> <p><i>Room: City Council Hall on the 2nd floor</i></p>	
19:00 – 23:00	Informal reception	<p>Mo Museum</p> <p>Address: Pylimo g. 17, Vilnius, 01141 Vilniaus m. sav., Lithuania</p>
Thursday, 27 November		
8:00	Registration	<p>AC Hotel Vilnius</p> <p>Address: Vasario 16-osios g Street 5, 01106 Vilnius, Lithuania</p>
9:00-09:45	<p>Opening plenary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome from Vilnius: Simona Bieliūnė, Deputy Mayor of Vilnius - Welcome from Eurocities vice president: Anna Rebes, Barcelona - Welcome: André Sobczak, Eurocities Secretary General <p><i>Room: Dali+Goya</i></p>	
10:00-13:00	<p>Study visits</p> <p>1. Lukiškės Prison 2.0 & Teambuilding Crafts</p> <p>Once a notorious prison, Lukiškės has been transformed into a vibrant cultural hub in the heart of Vilnius. Today it hosts over 200 artist studios, exhibitions, and has even served as a filming location for Netflix hits like Stranger Things 4, Clark, and Young Wallander. A guided tour offers a glimpse into its dark</p>	

	<p>past and creative present, showcasing how Vilnius repurposes historic sites into dynamic spaces for art, culture, and community.</p> <p>As part of the visit, participants are invited to a team-building craft workshop with Lithuanian artist Jolita Vaitkutė's team, held right inside her studio in the prison.</p> <p>2. 'City Laboratory' at Sapieha Park (Tech Park Tech Zity) & Teambuilding Crafts</p> <p>Sapieha Park, a historic green space in central Vilnius, has been revitalised into a hub where history, community, and innovation meet. Home to a thriving tech park and the City Laboratory, it fosters urban sustainability and citizen engagement. The Laboratory combines a café, event space, hydroponic and educational gardens, eco-innovations, a gallery, and even a DIY playground for children. A community fridge further promotes solidarity and sustainability by sharing food freely.</p> <p>During the visit, participants will explore the park and City Laboratory, then join a team-building craft workshop—an opportunity to create together, enjoy coffee or tea, and network in an inspiring setting.</p> <p>3. City Conversion: Tour of Paupys District</p> <p>The Paupys District is a flagship example of Vilnius' city conversion approach. Once an industrial area, it has been reimagined as a vibrant and sustainable neighborhood that blends modern living with thoughtful urban design. Today, Paupys offers a mix of residential, commercial, and cultural spaces, all built with an emphasis on green architecture, energy efficiency, and community well-being. Public areas invite social interaction, while sustainable practices showcase how cities can balance growth with environmental responsibility.</p> <p>Visitors will experience firsthand how industrial heritage has been transformed into a dynamic, forward-looking urban hub. Paupys has become such a model for quality development that it inspired Vilnius to establish its '10 Principles for Quality Architecture'.</p> <p>4. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)</p> <p>Based in Vilnius, EIGE is the EU's knowledge centre on gender equality. The institute produces independent research, gathers data, and develops tools that help policymakers design inclusive and transformative measures across all areas of life. Its work supports EU institutions, Member States, and candidate countries</p>	
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	<p>in making informed, evidence-based decisions from a gender perspective.</p> <p>This visit offers participants the chance to meet EIGE representatives, learn about their research and services, and explore opportunities for future cooperation.</p>	
13:00-14:00	<p>Lunch</p> <p><i>Room: Restaurant</i></p>	
14:00-15:30	<p>Information sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Healthier Cities: A Transversal Approach in Eurocities <p>Health is high on the agenda at local, national and EU level. Health is a truly transversal topic: many local policies and actions have a direct or indirect impact on people's physical and mental well-being. From tackling noise pollution and promoting active mobility, to improving access to health services for migrants, cities play a vital role in shaping healthier urban environments.</p> <p>This session will provide contact officers with an overview of how Eurocities integrates health across its different forums and working groups — through project implementation, peer learning, and advocacy for EU policies that protect and promote health. Participants will also hear from member cities about how they approach this cross-cutting issue in their own contexts.</p> <p>The session will include a focus on the Food policy, illustrating how urban food policies contribute to better health outcomes (both physical and mental health). Examples will highlight how member cities are improving the nutritional quality of school meals by promoting more plant-based, minimally processed foods; strengthening community connections and mental well-being through urban food gardens; and ensuring that healthy, sustainable diets are accessible and affordable for all.</p> <p><i>Room: Picasso</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solidarity in Action: Cities Respond to Democratic Challenges <p>Cities are where citizens experience democracy first-hand, but also where it is increasingly under pressure. This session will show how Eurocities supports cities under strain and fosters solidarity through leadership and city diplomacy.</p> <p>Contact officers from Budapest (Hungary) and Osmangazi (Turkey) will share concrete insights from projects and initiatives that build democratic</p>	

	<p>resilience. The session will explore how international solidarity can help cities navigate complex political environments. It will also identify ways Eurocities can make this solidarity more visible and systematic, empowering local leaders to uphold democratic values.</p> <p><i>Room: Goya</i></p> <p>- Climate Adaptation, Resilience and Preparedness Climate change impacts are intensifying in cities, where over 75% of EU residents live, a share expected to rise above 83% by 2050. Urban areas as highly vulnerable to heatwaves, heavy rainfall, water scarcity, flooding and sea-level rise, with dense built environments and limited green space worsening heat and flood risks, especially for vulnerable residents. Strengthening urban climate resilience is therefore essential to protect people, infrastructure, ecosystems and social cohesion.</p> <p>Eurocities members are leading on planning, building standards, incentives and early warning systems, but challenges remain. As the European Commission develops a new integrated framework for risk management and climate resilience, Eurocities has created a Task Force on Climate Adaptation and Resilience and launched the Eurocities Pulse survey with CIDOB to gather evidence on cities' progress, barriers and needs, leading to a publication in March 2026. This session will present ongoing work and collect cities' inputs, including interest in joint projects on climate resilience.</p> <p><i>Room: Dali</i></p> <p>- From ambition to action: Cities shaping the EU anti-poverty strategy In her State of the Union 2025, Ursula von der Leyen announced her ambition integrate in the first ever EU anti-poverty strategy the objective to eradicate poverty by 2050. What can the EU do to turn this ambition into a reality? How can cities contribute? In this session you will find out more about the upcoming anti-poverty strategy and Eurocities' key recommendations. Together, we will exchange on how your city can contribute to the advocacy on combatting poverty and how it connects with the EU multi-annual financial framework negotiations.</p> <p><i>Room: Gaudi</i></p>	
15:30-16:00	Coffee break	

16:00-17:00	<p>Advocacy overview: Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)</p> <p>On 16 July, the European Commission presented its proposals for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Unfortunately, the proposal falls short of cities' needs and ambitions. It foresees merging Cohesion Policy with the Common Agricultural Policy into a single national envelope, with no mandatory urban chapter or earmarked funding for cities. This approach mirrors the design of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, replicating many of its well-known shortcomings.</p> <p>During this session, we will provide an overview of the ongoing discussions on the MFF and present Eurocities' advocacy strategy to amend the Commission's proposal. The session will also equip contact officers with practical tools and key messages to raise awareness within their city administrations and to actively contribute to Eurocities' joint efforts to ensure that the future EU budget is fit for cities, empowering them to deliver on Europe's key priorities.</p> <p><i>Room: Goya+Dali</i></p>	
17:00-18:00	<p>ExCom</p> <p><i>Room: Gaudi</i></p>	
19:00	<p>Cooperation Night Dinner</p> <p>It will provide an opportunity for colleagues to come together, share laughter, and reflect on the years spent collaborating, including the challenges and misunderstandings they've faced while advancing city policies and other initiatives.</p> <p>In a friendly, informal setting, participants will have the chance to connect over their shared experiences. There's always room for growth, humour, and new connections!</p> <p>The evening will also feature some surprises for attendees, and, of course, no celebration would be complete without a dance floor!</p>	<p>The Energy and Technology museum</p> <p>Address: Rinktinės g. 2, Vilnius, 09312 Vilniaus m. sav., Lithuania</p>
Friday, 28 November		
09:00-10:30	<p>Learning loop - 20 years of the Cooperation Platform</p> <p>This interactive session explores what makes Eurocities membership meaningful in practice and provides opportunities for cities to learn from peers' experiences while co-developing ideas to strengthen engagement and collaboration. Participants engage with experiences and challenges from cities across Europe, gaining insights into effective strategies for</p>	<p>AC Hotel Vilnius</p> <p>Address: Vasario 16-osios g Street 5, 01106 Vilnius, Lithuania</p>

	<p>mobilising teams, involving leadership, and measuring the impact of network participation.</p> <p>The session is divided into three thematic rooms:</p> <p>1. Mobilising City Teams: Internal Engagement Strategies – Focuses on motivating city staff across departments to participate, encouraging cross-department collaboration, raising awareness of network opportunities, and recognising staff contributions. <i>Room: Gaudi</i></p> <p>2. Learning Together: Measuring Impact of Eurocities Membership – Explores evidence-based approaches for assessing the value of network participation, including data collection, evaluation frameworks, qualitative interviews, and lessons learned from city-to-city collaboration. <i>Room: Picasso</i></p> <p>3. From Council to Collaboration: Engaging City Leadership – Highlights strategies to involve mayors, deputy mayors, and council members in network activities, linking outcomes to policy priorities and overcoming competing demands on leaders' time. <i>Room: Dali</i></p>	
10.30-11.00	Coffee break	
11.00-11.30	<p>Lessons from the Learning loop & 20 years of the Cooperation Platform</p> <p>Discussion - Looking Back, Moving Forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heidi Hesske, Leipzig - Anne Rännäli-Kontturi, Oulu - Milosz Gos, Warsaw <p><i>Room: Dali+Goya</i></p>	
11.30-11.50	<p>Reporting from Learning Loop session</p> <p><i>Room: Dali+Goya</i></p>	
11:50-12:30	<p>Updates from the network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation Eurocities 2026 Utrecht - Policy, Projects, Communication, Membership <p><i>Room: Dali+Goya</i></p>	

12:30-13:00	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saulius Gomez, Vilnius - Anna Rebes, Barcelona - André Sobczak, Eurocities <i>Room: Dali+Goya</i>	
13:00	Lunch <i>Room: Restaurant</i>	

