



**Braga
Candidacy
for a seat on the
EUROCITIES
Executive Committee**

2020-2023



Dear colleagues, Members of EUROCITIES

It is with great pleasure that I am announcing the candidacy of Braga for the EUROCITIES Executive Committee for the next three years. At a time when the European project faces crossroads and complex issues, the cities of EUROCITIES – the network of the biggest European cities – need to be united and together. The crisis of COVID-19 only reinforced the emergency of a stronger and united EUROCITIES and I believe it is time for us to contribute more with a refresh approach in the executive committee.

As Mayor of the City of Braga, I'm devoted to be an engaged member in the EUROCITIES Executive Committee to strengthen its role as the most important and influential network at the European level. I will put a dedicated team of my city to work with EUROCITIES' excellent team in Our headquarters in Brussels. This candidacy is an opportunity to expand the range of cities represented in this committee, thus contributing to an increase of the network's diversity and scope. This candidacy also represents a step up in our commitment as a city with EUROCITIES and its work. I remember, it has been since 2006, Portugal does not have a representative in the ExCom and this is an opportunity to change that. Our pact with Your cities is to provide all of my knowledge acquired throughout my political and professional career, transposing to EUROCITIES my concerns, experiences, energy

and solutions that a city like Braga can offer. One of our biggest demands within the European Commission and other European Institutions is precisely to have a more representative role in the policy making process. We should also have more elected officials and politicians participating in the activities and initiatives of EUROCITIES. I will work to assure this.

I also want to congratulate all the current leaders of EUROCITIES. Mayor Anna Rönig Jerlmyr has done a fantastic job, leading us and reinforced the role of the network. But also all the staff in Brussels lead by the Secretary General Ana Lisa Boni, who is working very hard, specially in these pandemic times, and making EUROCITIES a relevant and decisive partner to all the cities and our partners all across Europe. I want to work alongside all of them to help EUROCITIES the best I can.

Dear Mayor and colleague, I am asking for your support to Braga's candidacy for the EUROCITIES Executive Committee, hoping that I can count with your vote in November, in our virtual AGM meeting.

Best regards,



Mayor Ricardo Rio

Ricardo Rio is the Mayor of Braga since 2013 and was re-elected in 2017. President of the Euro-region “Eixo Atlântico” who brings together 38 of the biggest cities from the North of Portugal and Galicia, Spain. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of Global Parliament of Mayors since November 2019. Currently he is President of the Intermunicipal Community of Cávado (NUTS III) and Quadrilátero Urbano, an intermunicipal association representative of a population of more than 600 thousand inhabitants. Through his years as Mayor of Braga, was invited to be a member Champion Mayors initiative from OCDE, which brings together mayors of the five continents, who are committed to the sustainable and inclusive growth. He is one of the Portuguese representatives at the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and he is a member of the Portuguese delegation of the Committee of the Regions. During his term, Braga joined several international organizations besides EUROCITIES in 2016, such as ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and UCCLA - Union of the Portuguese Speaking Capitals. In

addition, it has endorsed international movements, such as the Global Covenant of Mayors.

In his professional life, he was the Secretary-General of the Portuguese Association of Financial Analysts and the Director of the Capital Markets Institute of Euronext Lisbon. At the same time, he kept working as a public and business consultant for several years, having participated in several Programmes of the Porto Business School. Ricardo Rio was also a university professor in different universities.

Regarding public offices, Ricardo Rio was a council member and the leader of the opposition of the City Hall of Braga between 2005 and 2013, having been a member of the Municipal Assembly of Braga, during the term of 2001 to 2005.

He is 47, married and father of three daughters. He was born in Braga and graduated in Economics at University of Porto, where he also completed the coursework of the MSc in Economics. He also completed the Advanced Course in Political Studies of the IEP (Institute of Political Studies) at the Catholic University of Lisbon.

Braga's engagement in EUROCITIES

Braga joined EUROCITIES in 2016 and since then participate in every major gatherings of the network, as the Cooperation Platform and all the Annual Conferences in Milan, Ljubljana, Edinburgh and Prague.

Despite being one of the most recent members of EUROCITIES, Braga has been actively participating in several initiatives, especially the Mayor of Braga with his commitment and direct engagement within the network. Since then, Ricardo Rio has already participated in several EUROCITIES initiatives, such interventions in the Annual Conferences, the EUROCITIES Mayors Summit in Brussels or in the launch of “Cities4Europe – Citizens for Europe” campaign, which was held in Brussels. Furthermore, since Braga joined EUROCITIES it has participated in several forums, with a particular emphasis on the Economic Development, Social Affairs, Knowledge Society and Mobility Forums. In 2018, the city of Braga organized the Forum of Economic Development, which took place between 26 and 28 March, under the slogan “the Cities' Role in the economy of knowledge”.

Among other initiatives Braga has participated

in, it should also be highlighted its participation in two study visits promoted by the Forum of Culture (to Barcelona/Terrassa in 2017 and Leeuwarden in 2018) and in the founding meeting of the Working Group of Long-term Investments of the Economic Development Forum. Braga had participated in several Working Groups and since 2018 is the Chair of the WG of Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the EDF. Braga is also an active member of the WG Roma Community Integration of SAF and in 2019 we have hosted a meeting with more than 20 cities in our city.

Braga was also one of cities actively engaged in the “Cities4 Europe – Citizens for Europe” campaign and was the fifth city to sign the pledge of the European Union Pillar of Social Rights. Ricardo Rio signed a strong commitment to invest € 10,5 million in affordable long-term care and the Vice Mayor Firmino Marques participated in the session in Brussels to promote this initiative. In these times of Pandemic, Braga participated in several online meetings and remains focused in the activities.



Our priorities for EUROCIITIES

The next three years will be crucial for Europe and Braga's candidacy to the EUROCIITIES Executive Committee fits in the spirit of freedom, openness and cooperation that this network stands for. Europe is facing a lot of challenges and with the Pandemic of Covid-19 still active we must stand together and united. These last few months have been a challenge for all of us. In addition, as we are entering in the fall, we are all committed to surpass the second wave of the pandemic and provide to our citizens the comfort and the safety they all deserve. However, we must look ahead of us and prepare the day after of pandemic. Is the same for EUROCIITIES, Our network must prepare to in a near future to resume its physical activities, so the first months of the next mandate will be center on this. .

A stronger EUROCIITIES

EUROCIITIES made a fantastic job renovating its structure and its functionality. Unfortunately, the pandemic situation created some roadblocks but the response of the network is being fantastic. Working alongside the cities, the structure in Brussels led by our secretary-general Ana Lisa Boni maintained the network running and we never stopped working Together. Now we must consolidate the changes made in these last few years and I will dedicate my mandate to contribute to this effort. I believe we must work better in the communications field. Our new website is fantastic and can be an

important tool to that. EUROCIITIES should work with all the cities to raise the awareness of the network and make citizens know better our work, because it will make us stronger and better known in our communities.

A more influential EUROCIITIES

EUROCIITIES has a very important role at European level, especially at the level of the European Commission. Cities and Mayors are the ones closest to the citizens and the ones who best understand their concerns, so it is crucial that European institutions listen more and more to what mayors have to say. Thus, we consider essential that cities unite even more to push national governments and European institutions to pay attention to cities when big decisions are taken at the European level and significantly affect cities and Our citizens.

A more engaged EUROCIITIES

One of top priorities for the next term, and Braga intends to work with our partners, is to create a bigger engagement in the network. We believe it is important that city mayors, as well as council members and other elected officials, have a greater engagement in the EUROCIITIES initiatives, even to strengthen the political weight of the network with other external partners, be it national governments or European entities. This will be contribute to achieve a greater external influence. To do that, we need to create more opportunities for

politicians, as the mayor's summit or other type of gatherings like this. Mayors must have a bigger role in the political side of EUROCIITIES.

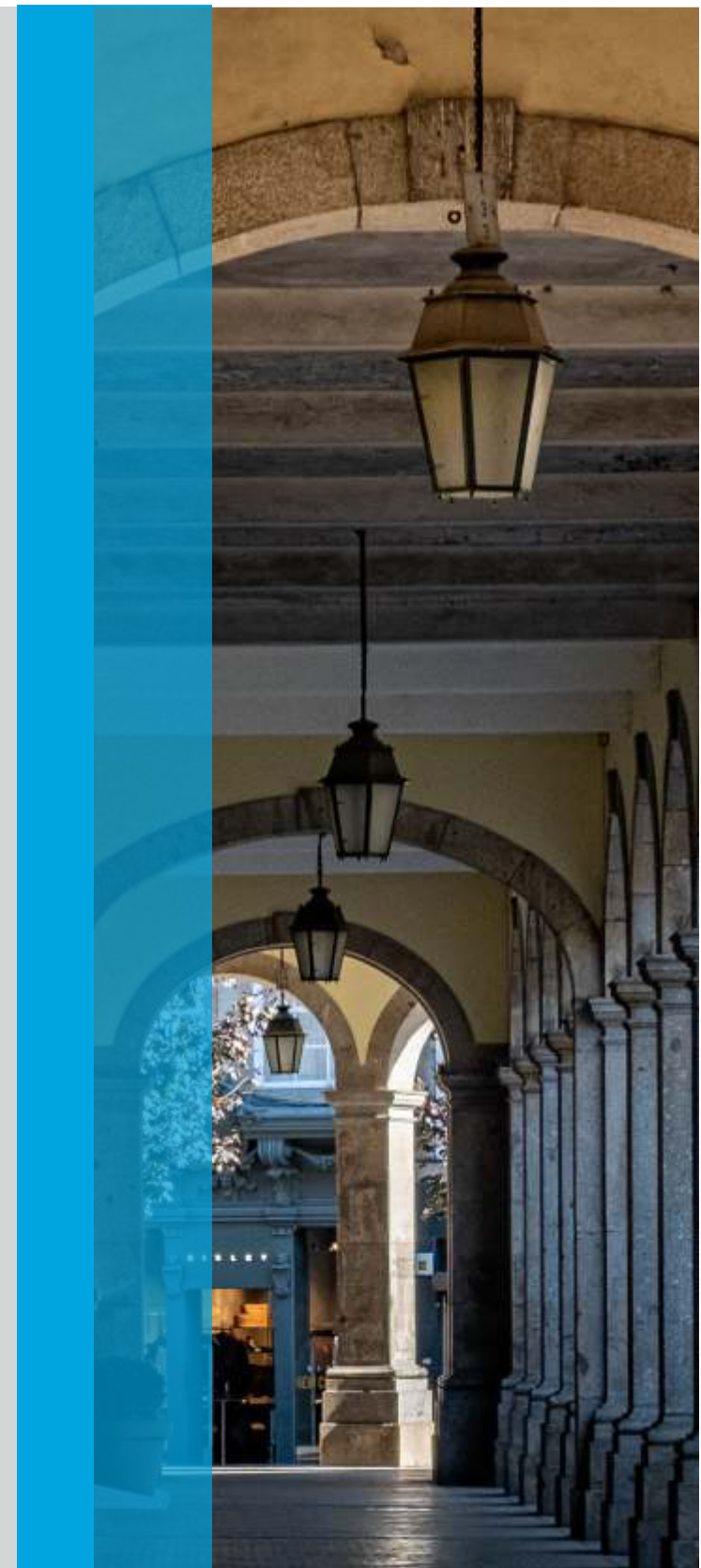
Increase cooperation between cities

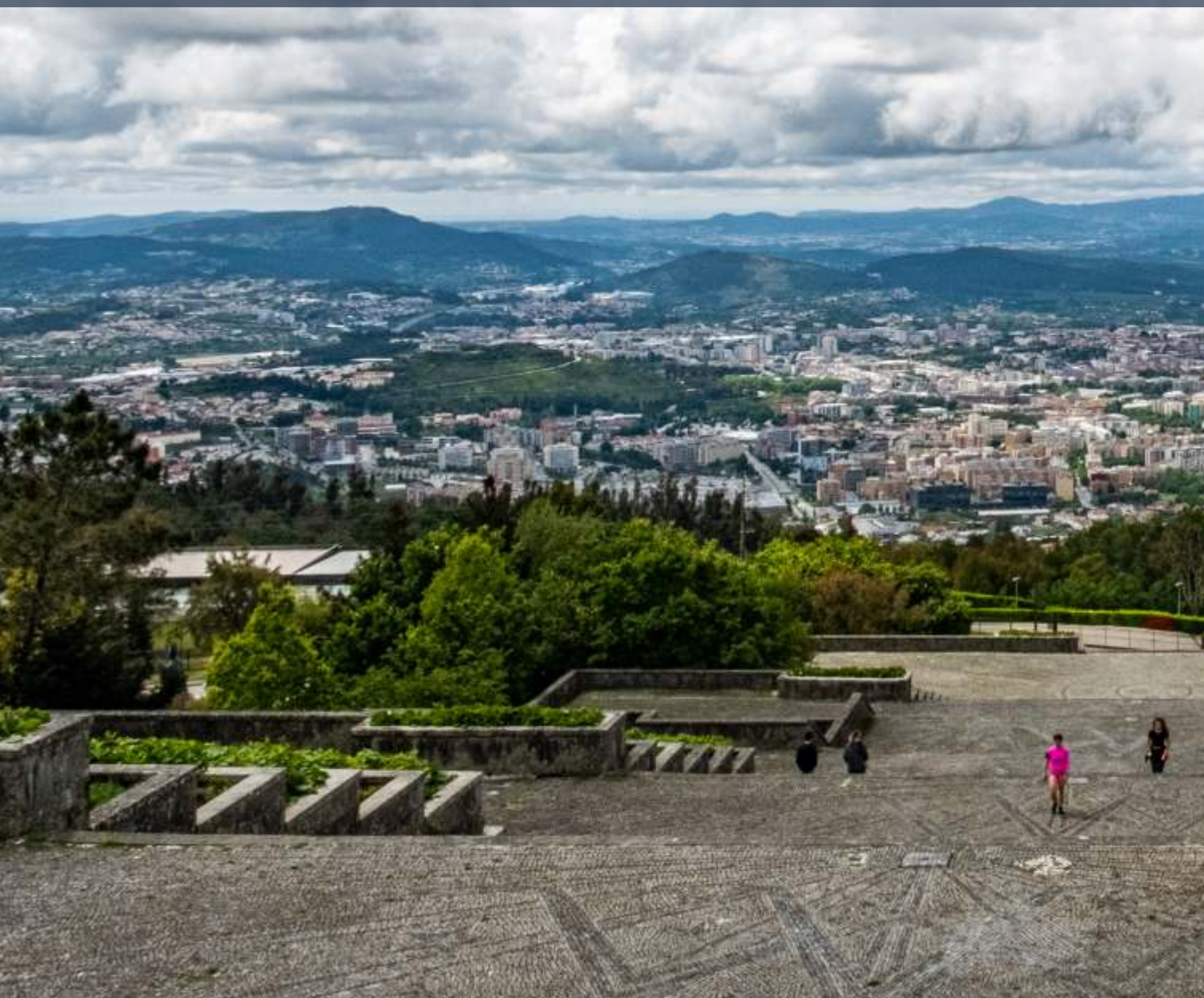
EUROCIITIES should encourage more the emergence of bilateral and multilateral projects between the cities. The network should encourage the creation of joint projects between cities. Some scopes of action of the cities that have not received much attention, for instance as youth policies, can be developed through special projects led by cities and participated by EUROCIITIES itself.

EUROCIITIES in the International cooperation

EUROCIITIES is the biggest and most important network of cities in Europe, gathering cities from within and outside the European Union. However, we also believe it is important to continue to work with other partners all around the world and with other global cities networks, acting as the global representative of European cities. Braga will work with other partners to solidify this position and to represent our continent in such an organizations, like United Nations or OECD.

Braga's commitment to EUROCIITIES is absolute and we will dedicate time, effort and resources to enhance our work in the network. Be it through the active engagement of the Mayor, but also through other deputy mayors, advisors and other professionals of the city. In addition, the possibility of the election for the EUROCIITIES Executive Committee will be a stimulus not only for the Municipality, but also for Braga and Portugal.





Braga – a brief overview

Considered one of the youngest European cities, Braga combines perfectly its two-thousand-year old History with an invigorating youth and vitality. As the third largest city in Portugal, Braga has more than 190 thousand inhabitants and is the capital of Minho Region, with more than 1 million inhabitants.

Braga has always taken a strategic and central regional role: From Bracara Augusta and the Roman times to the present day, for both its privileged geographical location and its dynamism, Braga plays a leading role in the economy, social, culture, knowledge and technology of the region.

Its centrality and relevance provides its inhabitants an excellent quality of life in various sectors: Health, Employment, Education, Security and Culture.

Furthermore, the City of Braga has tried to foster these and other fundamental criteria to meet the needs and expectations of its inhabitants; developing policies for cohesion and social equality, family support as the primary core of the community, as well as policies for raising awareness of sustainable growth, promoting innovation and creativity as development engines.

Economically, the City considers that

Economic Promotion, Investment Attraction and Internationalization are the key vectors of the strategic measures adopted by the Municipality in order to foster Dynamism, Innovation, Knowledge and Creativity in Business Sector, towards a new local and regional economic cycle.

In addition, this municipal commitment to promote development based on the transfer of knowledge, technology and eco sustainability has been advertising the city of Braga as a "cluster" of technological industries and an increasingly attractive pole for Investment.

Braga has also been generating interest as a destination in new Tourism segments: Religious and Cultural Tourism (one of the main interests of those visiting us), Business Tourism, City Breaks, and Gastronomy and Wineries are now new key products to promote tourism in the Jewel of Minho, the greener region of Portugal.

Braga was the European Capital of Youth in 2012 and Ibero-american Capital of Youth in 2016. Braga is UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts and is running for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2027. The Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte is classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

