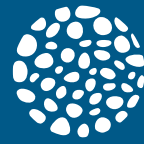




Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



Anna Lindh  
Foundation  
— EUROMED —

# Mediterranean Capitals of Culture & Dialogue

A yearlong celebration  
of Euro-Mediterranean identities  
and cooperation



## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2026



## Overview

The Euro-Mediterranean region boasts a rich and diverse heritage, shaped by centuries of cultural exchange and interaction. A melting pot of different languages, traditions and customs, the region shares a heritage and a deep sense of identity and belonging. Today, this cultural legacy continues to inspire and inform our shared values and aspirations, reminding us of the importance of building bridges and fostering understanding between different cultures and communities.

In that spirit, the 43 Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean launched the “Mediterranean Capitals of Culture & Dialogue” (MCCD) initiative during their **7<sup>th</sup> Regional Forum** in November 2022.

Based on the call of Ministers of Culture of the Euro-Mediterranean region on 17 June 2022 in Naples, as well as the recommendation of more than 200 young representatives from civil society of over 20 countries at the Forum des Mondes Méditerranéens on 7 February 2022 in Marseille, this initiative was shaped to further promote the diversity and shared identity of the Euro-Mediterranean region and contribute to a better mutual understanding of its peoples.

Learn more about the initiative’s background and objectives:



## How is the initiative shaped?

**2 cities** 1 North  
1 South

**1 year**

Highlighting the cities’ rich Euro-Mediterranean cultural identities

Involving their populations in all their diversity

Culminating on the Day of the Mediterranean (28 November)

## The initiative core objectives

The cultural programmes of the selected capitals will include a great variety of activities that count with the participation of different civil society actors: from art exhibitions, music, film, fashion, food festivals and concerts, to sports events, workshops and roundtables, all citizens are encouraged to take part in the initiative.

### EURO-MEDITERRANEAN IDENTITY

Encouraging intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding across the Euro-Mediterranean region: the initiative will aim to combine local objectives and realities with solid regional visions.

### TERRITORIAL COOPERATION

Promoting innovative partnerships at the local level to enhance regional integration: collaboration will be open to all eligible cities, irrespective of previous cooperation and territorial collocation, to promote fruitful interactions of territories with limited integration.

### BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

Strengthening the role of civil society, and particularly young people, in shaping Euro-Mediterranean cooperation: every step of the initiative is designed and implemented in close cooperation with networks of youth and civil society actors.



## Who can apply?

- Cities (represented by their public local or regional authority), regardless of their size.
- Located in a country of the Union for the Mediterranean, regardless of whether the city is on the coast or inland.
- Never designated Mediterranean Capital of Culture & Dialogue before.

## Awarding criteria

Consult the official website for more information on the application process, the awarding criteria and evaluation grid:



EURO-  
MEDITERRANEAN  
DIMENSION

PROGRAMME

CIVIL SOCIETY  
ENGAGEMENT

GOVERNANCE AND  
MANAGEMENT

FINANCIAL  
CAPACITY

COOPERATION  
BETWEEN THE 2  
CAPITALS

COMMUNICATION

ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT



The **Mediterranean Capitals of Culture and Dialogue of 2025** are **Tirana** and **Alexandria**!

Look into the **official website** if you want to further discover the first edition of MCCD:

[medculturecapital.com](https://medculturecapital.com)



## Timeline

### Launch of the call for applications 2026

Opening of the call

**7 February 2024**

Online info-sessions

**February 29, March 28, April 26, May 24, June 27 2024**

### Closure of the call for applications 2026

Deadline for applications

**7 July 2024**

### Evaluation of the applications

Assessment by the Advisory Committee

**October 2024**

Deliberations by the UfM Senior Officials and selection of the two cities

**November 2024**

### Announcement

Announcement of the two Mediterranean Capitals of Culture 2026

**28 November 2024**

## Help us spread the word!

Check out our [Trello Communication Board](#) to disseminate the initiative within your networks.

## Contacts

**Rim Filali Meknassi**, UfM Secretariat  
**Alessandro Lamonica**, ALF Secretariat  
[info@medculturecapital.com](mailto:info@medculturecapital.com)





## They have endorsed the initiative:



*I am delighted that the initiative, launched by the Ministers of Culture of the Mediterranean at the Conference convened by the Italian Government in Naples on 16 and 17 June 2022, will be implemented. The Mediterranean Sea has played a key role in shaping Italian culture over the centuries (...) and I strongly believe in the importance of preserving, promoting and celebrating this cultural richness, pluralism and sense of common identity throughout the Euro-Mediterranean region.*

**Gennaro Sangiuliano**

Minister of Culture of Italy



*Culture has the power to bring people together, to foster understanding and dialogue, and to create a sense of belonging. I believe this initiative will be crucial in strengthening these bonds and building a more cohesive and harmonious Mediterranean community. By designating a Mediterranean Capital of Culture and Dialogue, member states of the UfM will showcase their rich cultural heritage and demonstrate their commitment to promoting cultural exchange and dialogue across the region.*

**Her Royal Highness  
Princess Rym Ali**

Jordan



*The announcement of Tirana as the 'Mediterranean Capital of Culture and Dialogue' 2025 is an excellent news for the promotion of Albanian culture. The organization of the International Cultural Weeks (...), the wonderful atmosphere of Tirana as the "European Youth Capital", brought the impressive blooming of the number of tourists during 2023, which was also reflected in the number of visitors to museums, archaeological sites, castles and monuments. I am convinced that Tirana will be a shining capital of culture, which will expand the hospitality and tolerance, the richness and beauty of the Albanian soul.*

**Elva Margariti**

Minister of Culture of Albania  
(2019-2024)



*Malta would like to reiterate its support for initiatives that bring together the states that border upon or have an interest in the Mediterranean region, a policy which Malta has pursued over several decades. Malta warmly supports the concept which lies behind the creation of this initiative, which seeks to promote people-to-people interaction while contributing to the better understanding across the Sea.*

**Owen Bonnici**

Minister for the National Heritage,  
the Arts and Local Government  
of Malta



*In an era of divisive politics and tragic conflicts, this initiative is proof of the power of culture to build bridges and promote much-needed dialogue. While it is important to acknowledge the differences that make us unique, now more than ever we must find beauty, resilience, and strength in our shared identity as Mediterraneans.*

**Nasser Kamel**

Secretary General of the Union for  
the Mediterranean



[ufmsecretariat.org](https://ufmsecretariat.org)

