

2B-BLUE at Smart City Expo 2025: Strengthening Circular Governance Across the Mediterranean

The Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona has, since 2011, become the world's leading global event on urban innovation. As the biggest and most influential gathering dedicated to transforming cities, it brings together top-tier companies, public institutions, policymakers, researchers, and changemakers committed to shaping more sustainable, efficient, and human-centered urban environments. In an era defined as the *Century of Cities*, where innovation flows through our neighborhoods and technology reshapes how we live and work, the Expo serves as a catalyst for bold ideas and collaborative solutions. It is here that global pioneers meet to co-create smarter, more resilient cities—demonstrating what becomes possible when vision meets action.

This year's edition once again reaffirmed its role as a vibrant platform for knowledge exchange, business opportunities, and forward-looking urban strategies. With cities increasingly positioned as key actors in addressing global challenges—from climate resilience to circular economy transitions—the Expo continues to foster the ecosystem needed to build better places for all.

2B-BLUE at the MED Innovation Summit: ReWeaving Circular Governance in the Mediterranean

As part of Smart City Expo 2025, the MED Innovation Summit hosted the side event “ReWeaving Circular Governance in the Mediterranean,” an initiative of the Interreg Euro-MED Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission. This special session brought together innovators, researchers, local authorities, and industry representatives to explore how circular governance can drive systemic transformation across the Mediterranean region.

The Mediterranean faces growing environmental and resource challenges, and this summit highlighted how coordinated governance models and cross-sector collaboration are essential to building resilient and prosperous territories. A particular spotlight was placed on textiles, one of the largest waste-generating sectors in Europe, where only 1% of discarded materials are currently recycled into new garments. The Summit emphasized the need to rethink waste as a resource and to accelerate transitions aligned with the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles.

The programme combined moderated discussions, practical case study presentations, and interactive exchanges. Two dynamic panels showcased flagship Euro-MED projects—including VerdeInMED, REPPER, and ProcuraMED—illustrating how local and regional initiatives can scale up circular solutions by integrating governance, procurement, and entrepreneurship.

Representation of 2B-BLUE: UMU, IMIB, and CTN Contribute to the Mediterranean Dialogue

2B-BLUE was strongly represented with contributions from its partner institutions. Speakers included:

- Jesús Argente (University of Murcia – UMU)
- Ana Rotter (National Institute of Biology – IMIB)
- Jose Manuel Antón García (Marine Technology Center – CTN)

Their interventions helped highlight the innovative work of the 2B-BLUE project, which is piloting transformative labs and digital governance tools that connect land- and sea-based economies. Through systemic innovation and participatory approaches, 2B-BLUE is demonstrating how governance models and digital platforms can accelerate collaboration across sectors and territories. These contributions reinforced the project's central role within the MED Mission and its commitment to fostering sustainable, circular economies throughout the region.

The event attracted over 50 participants, all engaged in exploring new pathways toward circularity. Their presence reflects the growing momentum behind Mediterranean cooperation and the shared ambition to unlock new opportunities through innovation-driven governance.

Looking Ahead

The participation of 2B-BLUE and its partners underscores the project's dedication to advancing circular governance and promoting sustainable economic models in Mediterranean cities and regions. By joining forces with leading innovators and decision-makers at Smart City Expo 2025, the project continues to strengthen its impact and visibility on the international stage.

We look forward to sharing more insights soon—including the official wrap-up video of the MED Innovation Summit—and to continuing our work toward a more circular, resilient, and collaborative Mediterranean future.