

Manifesto of the XXXIII Crue-Sustainability Conference "University and City: towards climate neutrality."

Valencia, 27 October 2023

Spanish cities are currently undertaking their ecological transition to comply with the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. They are signing up to the European Green Pact and drawing up their roadmap towards climate neutrality. But, to transform cities, the collaboration of society as a whole is essential. To achieve a climate-neutral city, there must be a strong commitment to a decarbonised urban model.

The decarbonisation of cities and the green transition towards climate neutrality require an ambitious agenda whose ultimate goal is to turn our cities into spaces for coexistence, which requires environmental, economic and social sustainability. A decarbonisation that involves the improvement of urban air quality, the implementation of sustainable mobility, the naturalisation and enhancement of biodiversity in green areas and public spaces, carbon-neutral buildings, more sustainable urban planning models and other measures to adapt to climate change that make the increasingly frequent droughts and heatwaves more bearable, and a fully circular management of our waste.

Decarbonised cities, in line with the principles of a just green transition, must be inclusive and democratic spaces where the knowledge and innovation universities can offer are the success guarantee of the wide range of institutional, economic and civic actors that must co-participate in their implementation.

Furthermore, universities are spaces for multi-stakeholder cooperation in an open and pluralistic environment. Consequently, the alliances of university institutions with other entities emerge as an ideal collaboration model to respond to the challenge of the Climate Mission.

With regard to the role that Spanish universities can play in the decarbonisation of cities, the Crue-Sustainability plenary meeting held at the Universitat Politècnica de València agreed on the following recommendations to Spanish universities:

- The promotion of transdisciplinary research that responds to the challenge of the European climate mission. The holistic approach is inherent to sustainability issues, and therefore, the integration of different disciplines in solving problems is necessary.

- The push of collaborative mechanisms based on shared interests beyond the usual transactional knowledge model. Besides providing services, universities and cities need to build a shared future with reciprocal relationships.

-The opening up of university campuses available as spaces for debate and experimentation on an urban scale. Universities have the capacity to attract citizens, public administrations and the business network by acting as intermediaries.

- The participation in developing new forms of governance that are effective decision-making tools based on scientific knowledge.

About Crue-Sustainability

Crue Sectorial Commission of Spanish Universities, constituted in 2009 and currently chaired by the Rector of the University of Burgos, Manuel Pérez Mateos. The aim of the Commission is to exchange the experiences of Spanish universities in the areas of sustainability, health, occupational risk prevention and gender and equality policies, as well as to coordinate and promote good practices and cooperation in these areas.