

# Present and future prospects for foreign action by sub-national bodies

A comparative perspective

GLOBAL DEBATE - 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023



Summary by Berta Parellada i Vall, double degree Law and Global Governance & Economics and Legal System student at ESADE (Ramon Llull University). She did an internship at DIPLOCAT from June to July 2023.



#### **Location**

La Rambla 14, principal  
08002 Barcelona



#### **Contact**

+34 936 405 470

[info@diplocat.cat](mailto:info@diplocat.cat)

[www.diplocat.cat](http://www.diplocat.cat)



[@CataloniaPD](https://twitter.com/CataloniaPD)



[@Catalonia\\_Diplocat](https://www.instagram.com/Catalonia_Diplocat)



Generalitat de Catalunya  
**Institut d'Estudis  
de l'Autogovern**



#### **Location**

Baixada de Sant Miquel, 8 - Palau Centelles  
08002 Barcelona



#### **Contact**

+34 933 429 800

[iea.presidencia@gencat.cat](mailto:iea.presidencia@gencat.cat)

[iea.gencat.cat](http://iea.gencat.cat)



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# 1. Conference opening

DIPLOCAT and the Catalan Institute for Self-Government Studies (IEA), in collaboration with the Ministry of External Action and the European Union of the Government of Catalonia, organised a conference on 5 May 2023 entitled “Present and future prospects for foreign action by sub-national bodies”. The seminar took place at the Pedralbes Palace in Barcelona and was opened by the Catalan Minister for Foreign Action and the European Union, Meritxell Serret Aleu, who welcomed participants to the event. Also present were the Secretary General of DIPLOCAT, Laura Foraster i Lloret, and the Director of the IEA, Joan Ridao Martín.

The first speaker was Laura Foraster, who highlighted the fact that foreign action has no longer been exclusive to states for some years, and that there is an increasing number of actors who play a key role in the field. She pointed out that since the establishment of democracy and the approval of the Spanish Constitution and the regional statutes of autonomy, the autonomous communities in Spain have developed their foreign action to a greater or lesser extent, on the basis of their own specific competences. The development of these policies has not been straightforward or free of controversy, a fact that has led to the filing of various appeals for infringement of the Constitution and has led the Spanish Constitutional Court to build up a wide-reaching body of jurisprudence on the subject.

Foraster also noted that the purpose of the debate was to put forward arguments and answers to some of the key questions surrounding the foreign action of non-state entities, both from an academic point of view, during the first round table, and from a more practical point of view in the second one, comparing the actions deployed by different territories.

Joan Ridao spoke about the legal repercussions of this regional development and noted that foreign action by sub-national bodies has often given rise to tensions in the area of international law. In fact, the IEA played an important role in the drafting of the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia, especially with regard to foreign action. The sentence of the Statute by the Spanish Constitutional Court broadly reinterpreted the concept of competency to direct foreign policy by the Spanish Government.

Catalan Minister Meritxell Serret emphasised Catalonia’s international dedication and the Government’s desire to exercise its competencies in full. Nor does it renounce the possibility of extending those competencies, in view of the fact that the ultimate aim remains the creation of a Catalan Republic. Despite the legal rulings, reality keeps moving forward, she said, before going on to explain that her Ministry continues to establish bilateral relationships, engage in international cooperation and contribute to multilateral organisations. She



also recalled that the recently announced foreign action body of the Government of Catalonia will serve to move forward and have more and better internationalisation tools.

Serret said that international relations and foreign action are not exclusive to states or anyone in particular, but are a task that local administrations and civil society also do. Therefore, all democratic institutions and especially sub-national governments are potential actors in these relationships. This is what multilevel international governance and the attempt to solve major global challenges are all about, when all the actors who can provide solutions must be able to act in a coordinated manner. Everyone agrees that global challenges require local solutions, well adapted to the specificities of each place but internationally coordinated. The most recent example was the management of the Covid-19 pandemic and the coordination needed between all governments and international actors. Climate change is a present example. Serret believes that it is necessary to maximise Catalonia's foreign action capacity. Catalonia has a vocation to maintain international relations and to cooperate, especially in the two priority geographical areas of Europe and the Mediterranean.

## 2. The implication of Spain's Foreign Action and Service Act (LASEE) for autonomous communities

### First round-table

The first round-table focused on the implications of Spain's Foreign Action and Service Act (LASEE) for the various Autonomous Communities (AC). Those taking part included Joan David Janer Torrens, Professor of International Public Law at the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB), and Esther Zapater Duque, Professor of International Public Law at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB). The discussion was moderated by Mireia Grau Creus, Head of Research at the IEA.

Janer Torrens explained which competencies are exclusive to the Spanish state according to the Constitutional Court, and mentioned the signing of international treaties, the right to engage in diplomacy, and the generation of obligations and responsibilities at international level. In accordance with article 149.1.3 of the Spanish Constitution of 1978, the Spanish State has exclusive competencies in matters of international relations, and that is why it refers to the actions of the autonomous communities as "actions with international relevance". The communities with last-generation statutes (Catalonia, Balearic Islands, Valencia, Aragon, Castile and Leon, Andalusia and Extremadura) contain specific provisions for foreign action.

The speaker also highlighted the differentiation made by the Constitutional Court between the member states of the European Union and the countries of the rest of the world. With the former, the actions by AC are almost considered as if they were domestic politics and there are no constitutionality problems. The problem appears when the AC carry out non-European international external actions. Although only 8 statutes of autonomy contain specific provisions on foreign action, the majority of AC have been, to a greater or lesser extent, active in this area.

The statutes of autonomy establish that the AC must be able to project their powers and interests, create offices abroad, sign cooperation treaties, participate in State delegations that negotiate international treaties, and must also be able to request the State to sign treaties on matters affecting

their competency. Catalonia also foresees the promotion of public diplomacy. For its part, the State must inform the AC about the international treaties that affect them.

Janer returns to the concept of international relations and points to a key judgement of the Spanish Constitutional Court that establishes a before and an after in the definition of this term. From 1978 to 1994, the court's view was very strict: only the State could carry out international relations. This started to change in 1989 after a ruling in a conflict of positive competition related to an agreement between Galicia and the Danish Government. Although the court ruled that it was unconstitutional as it was an exclusive competence of the State, there were 4 particular votes that began to pave the way for a change of perspective. The change arrived in 1994 with the Spanish challenge of the Basque governmental structure that provided for the opening of an office of the Basque Government in Brussels. With the STC 165/1994 sentence of May 26, Spain's Constitutional Court clearly states that the AC must be able to project themselves abroad.

The Spanish Constitutional Court encompasses the international relations of the State in three main elements: the assumption of international commitments through treaties, the right of delegation, which is to send diplomatic representatives, and the direct or indirect generation of obligations and international responsibility. The State is responsible for these actions. Later on, the Spanish Government adds a new element by adopting two ordinary laws, which unlike the statutes of autonomy have organic rank: Law 2/2014, of 25 March, on the Action and the Foreign Service of the State, and Law 25/2014, of 27 November, on Treaties and other International Agreements. The first recognises the AC as subjects of external action, but adding a task of control and supervision by the State and establishing review mechanisms. In addition, it ensures that the AC will be able to sign international agreements as long as these are administrative in nature or are non-normative, therefore not involving the assumption of international obligations. The two laws respond to the need to organise Spain's foreign policy. Beyond the limitations on the action of the AC, it is important to highlight that the external action law also imposes an obligation on the State: the promotion of the external action of the autonomous communities.

Remembering the ordinary rank of these two laws, Janer Torrens also remarked that the most recent statutes of autonomy commented above are of a higher rank, and do not provide for any type of coordination or supervision by the State. Therefore, it is natural to consider the compatibility of these rules. The fact that the external action law has such an abstract wording has two sides: it can either give the autonomous regions great scope for action or allow a great deal of intervention by the State.



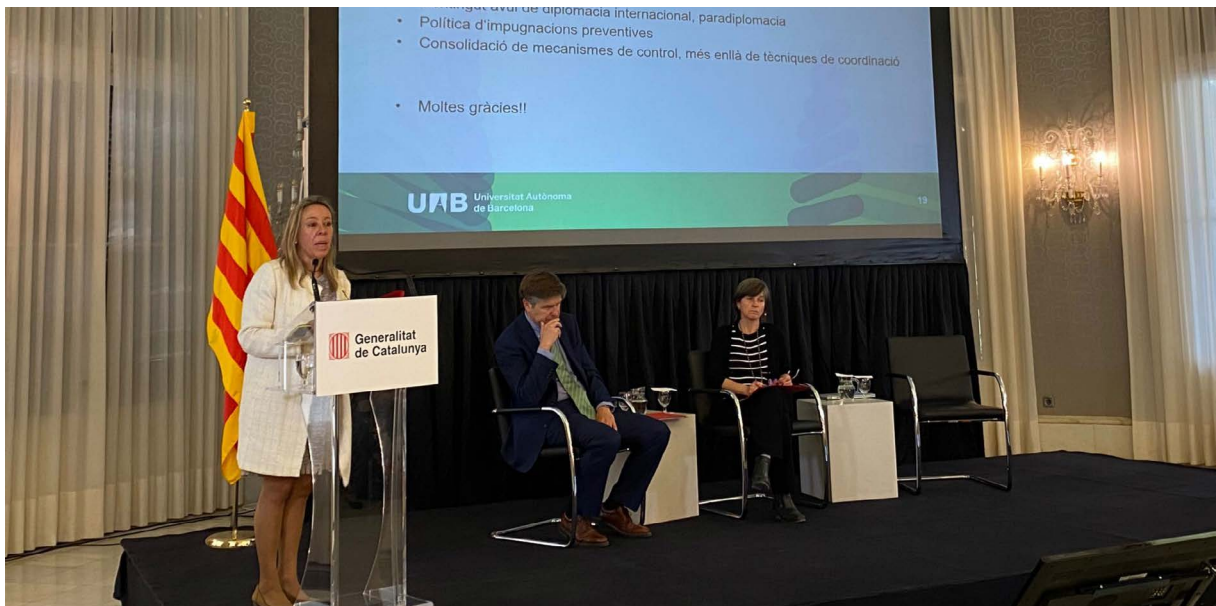
In 2014, the Government of the Canary Islands, despite not including external action in its Statute of Autonomy, filed the appeal of unconstitutionality 7774/2014 against the Spanish external action law considering that it entailed a loss of autonomy for the Canary Islands and a totally disproportionate intervention by the State. Two years later, the sentence 85/2016, of 28 April, ruled on the constitutionality of Spain's foreign action law, justified in the principle of unity of action. However, there was no lack of criticism towards this decision, specially by Catalan magistrate Xiol Ríos, who stated that the sentence was the result of an omnimode vision of the State that did not correspond to global society today and the number of actors involved.

Janer Torrens concluded that both the LASEE and the legislation on treaties represent a step forward for foreign action on the part of the AC, as they establish a common framework for action regardless of whether such action is included in the respective statutes of autonomy. However, he also noted that the Spanish state's desire to coordinate and centralise could have a negative impact in this respect.

In her talk, Esther Zapater Duque specifically referred to state interference, giving the example of the 2016 sentence by the Spanish Constitutional Court against certain articles of the Catalan Foreign Action Act. She described the sentence as very ambiguous and confusing, and went on to criticise the continuous questioning of competencies such as public diplomacy or paradiplomacy. Zapater often feels that Spain applies a policy of preventive challenges and explained the need for a clear distinction between mechanisms of coordination and those that are purely mechanisms of control.

Zapater began her speech with some conceptual definitions, but clarified that there is no firm definition of terms such as international relations, foreign policy or foreign action. The UAB Professor said that a legal approach like the one of Janer Torrens can be made, but it must be understood that we are dealing with open concepts. We are talking about the possibility of political influence, of having the capacity to carry out actions related to the conceptual and material framework for action, etc. A good example is also the evolution of the concept of external relations within the framework of the European Union, since initially it was understood in a purely economic way, while now it includes other elements.

The foreign action that AC can carry out is defined in the statutes of autonomy approved from 2006, by Spanish laws 2/2014 on Action and Foreign Service and 25/2014 on Treaties and other international agreements, in addition to the rulings of the Constitutional Court STC 85/2016 of 18 April and STC 228/2016 of 22 December. Zapater stated that in the last few years, there has been a clear involution. The current framework distinguishes between action in the European Union and all other external action. She also described the need to link any foreign action with a specific title of the Statute as oldfashioned.



Also concerning terminology, the Spanish Constitutional Court uses the concepts of international subject and actor. We know what a subject is, so anything that is not a subject can be an international actor. Here you can include, for example, multinational companies capable of influencing the international arena. Zapater does not agree, however, with placing the sub-national entities among them, as she considers that this does not correspond to the political or legal reality of the current world.

The Constitutional Court considers unity of state action, institutional loyalty and cooperation as basic principles. According to her, however, it is dangerous and restrictive to use these concepts to justify supervision mechanisms, since institutional loyalty and cooperation are reciprocal principles.

Zapater explained that the Catalan Law 16/2014 on external action and relations with the European Union was pioneering. It has been partially criticized for lack of concreteness and imprecision in the legal technique. She does not agree with these criticisms, pointing out that you cannot understand a law without also understanding the political and social context in which it was created. A context that, in this case, would not have allowed it to go any further without encountering strong resistance. She also assured that this law was very necessary and convenient to regulate the external and European action of the Catalan Government.

In this regard, the sentence of the Spanish Constitutional Court STC 228/2016 established the constitutionality of the generality of the law and considered it adjusted to the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia (EAC), although it declared the unconstitutionality of certain parts. In addition, she adds that this sentence was widely criticised, as it is a confusing sentence based on preventive principles.

The aspects validated by the sentence are diverse. Firstly, it clearly endorses the foreign action of Catalonia linked to its competencies, its Statute and its interests. It is important that the court identifies one term with the other, as this provides more room for action. Another point endorsed by the ruling is the conclusion of collaboration agreements (arts. 2d and 7.2e of the Law), the validation of the functions of Catalan delegations abroad and the European Union (arts. 5-9 of the Law) and the external representation of the Catalan Government abroad (arts. 29-33 of the Law).

However, this same sentence declares the unconstitutionality of the concept of public diplomacy, an interpretation that Zapater described as anachronistic. The Court also considers unconstitutional the relations of the Catalan Government with other governments and consular bodies, and in relation to the right to self-determination (art. 3e), the court itself contradicts what it had said in the STC 42/2014 ruling on Catalonia's declaration of sovereignty and the right to decide.

For Zapater, the key to the implementation of the law consists in finding a balance between the principle of unity of external action and the system of distribution of powers provided for in the Spanish Constitution and assumed in the Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia, in a context of prior inspection and potential unconstitutionality.

The latest rulings have shown to what extent this implementation of the Foreign Policy Act is conditioned by conflicting powers, and Zapater gave some examples. First, the STC 77/2017 of 21 June, a positive competition conflict promoted by the State against the 2016 Decree relating to the Catalan Ministry of Foreign Action, with a partial estimate in relation to the concept of foreign action and nuances of the State attorney's interpretation of the contribution to State structures. Secondly, the STC 135/2020 of 23 September, also with a partial estimate, concluding that certain articles are not unconstitutional if they are interpreted in a certain way. The third example is STC 36/2021 of 18 February, a conflict of powers raised by the Catalan Government against certain articles of the International Adoption Regulation approved by RD 165/2019 of 22 March. Here the Government of Catalonia did not question that it was the State that carried out the agreement, but its execution falls within the competence of the Government and, therefore, it is logical that the autonomous communities, in this case Catalonia, play a role in it.

These rulings show the level of conflicting competencies that exist, and for the future Zapater believes that the only solution is to make small steps forward. If constitutional conflicts arise from these, it will be a way to better define some concepts that currently do not have an unequivocal definition neither in the academic nor in the legal field. Just as she had done at the beginning of the intervention, the speaker concluded by reminding that the concept of diplomacy and paradiplomacy of the Spanish Constitutional Court does not correspond to that of today, which is much broader and more diverse. Before finishing, Zapater made it clear that in her opinion coordination techniques are one thing and control mechanisms a very different one.

## 3. Different models of foreign action in various European countries and in Spain

### Second round-table

The second round-table discussion examined different models of foreign action within the context of Europe and in Spain. The moderator was Gerard Vives Fernández, Director-General for the Representation of the Government of Catalonia Abroad and in the European Union. The speakers were Conchi Quintana, Director of External Action of the Basque Government; Antoni Vicens, Director General of External Relations of the Government of the Balearic Islands; and Lukas Van Damme, Head of the Bilateral Cooperation Team of the Government of Flanders.

The subjects discussed during this second round-table session included organisation and logistics, how foreign delegations work, relations with Brussels and the EU, multilateral issues, collaboration with other sub-national bodies, and training programmes for those who work in the head office and for those who work in different locations around the world.

Conchi Quintana spoke about the Basque model and the importance of the diaspora in its foreign policies. The cornerstone of its external action is the utility for the Government and the other Basque public institutions and socio-economic agents. She explained that the Basque Country has always been internationally connected and has had delegations around the world. Today, its foreign action strategy is based on internationalisation.

On the great value of the Basque citizens abroad, she explained that the Government has a directorate-general that depends directly on the Lehendakaritza, the Basque presidency, which works on the basis of a law dating from 1994. There are two other directions, that of the European Union, and that of general foreign action and international organisations. Beyond the traditional Basque community, there is currently a new Basque community made up mainly of young people who have left the country, either for professional or personal reasons, and who must be recognised. This recognition is materialised in the creation of an archive of the diaspora and in the formalisation of a postgraduate degree with the University of the Basque Country, with whom they collaborate on a number of projects such as Basque language and culture courses or to attract young people to return to the Basque Country.

Quintana also shared the term they usually use to refer to those who have already left: the *enara* community, which means swallow in Basque, due to the fact that they are people who go from one place to another. Precisely for this community they are designing the HanHemen - Basque Global Network project, with the aim of facilitating communications and being able to quickly understand their difficulties or needs. The importance lies in the fact that each member of the *enara* community

is, in a way, an ambassador of the Basque Country and helps to position it in the world. In addition, the recognition of what it means for these young people to leave their land makes it possible to empathise with other migrant populations.

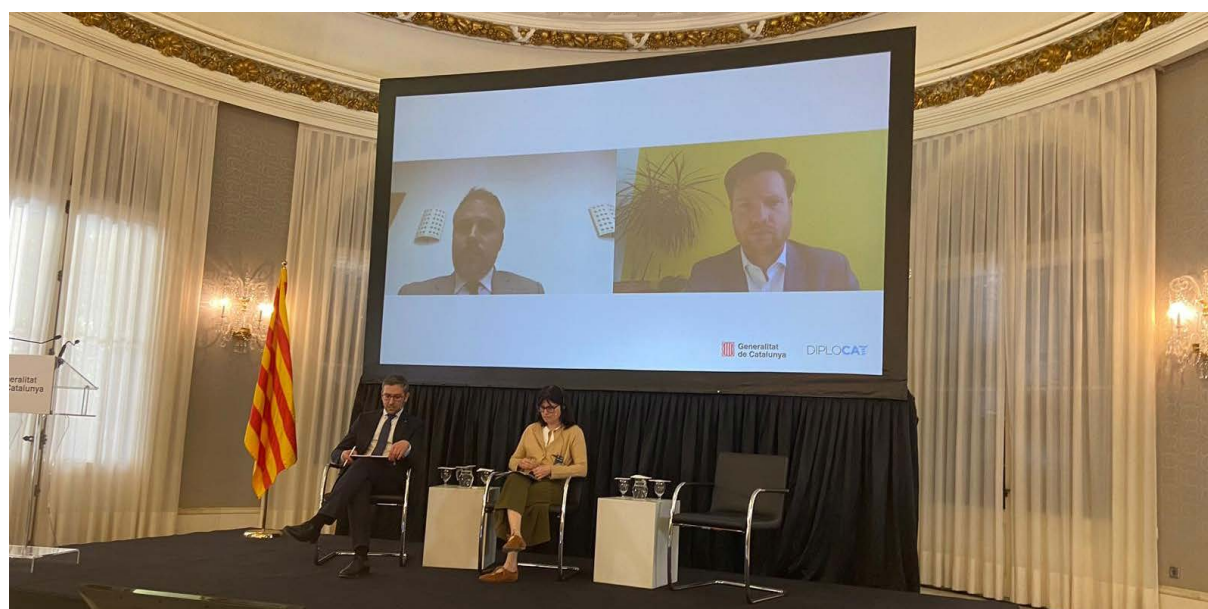
As for the network of delegations around the world, they have one in New York that serves as an opportunity for them to capture the trends of the moment and talk to international organisations and share good practices. On the other hand, Quintana also indicated that they have signed a collaboration agreement with the Organisation of Ibero-American States in areas such as human rights, coexistence, education and equality.

Antoni Vicens explained that in the Balearic Islands they are restructuring their European island policy to make it more effective and pragmatic. He defended insularity as a key axis, ensuring that they tried to take a leadership position during the presidency of the Balearic Islands in the Commission of Islands of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR), with an eye on an island policy at the level of the European Union. Additionally, greater cohesion of insular territories was sought both with regard to the Committee of the Regions, and within the framework of the actions of lobbying through the Islands Commission of the CPMR and in collaboration with the State.

Until then, the external action of the Balearic Islands had been quite small and there was only one External and European Union Action Service. The intention was to take advantage of the Spanish presidency of the Council of the European Union to reach an Islands Deal that would allow them to create the first insular agenda of the European Union, and this was decisive as it conditioned all the rest of the external action.

With regard to the relationship with the European Union, the Committee of Regions allowed them to present the first opinion of the Balearic Islands Government's own initiative on the [sustainable use of natural resources within the Mediterranean insular context](#). Looking towards the future, the intention is to insularise all opinions, which means including their interests in all those commissions in which they participate. In fact, article 174 of the Functioning Treaty recognizes that some territories, including the islands, have a permanent geographical disadvantage and therefore must be represented in the opinions.

Vicens stressed the importance of maintaining a fluid dialogue with the Permanent Representation of Spain, collaborating with the other regional offices in Brussels and directly with the Secretary of State for the European Union, in order to advance in matters that are of interest to them, as was the Islands



Deal. It is also necessary to maintain this dialogue with MEPs who are focused on the aforementioned issues.

Despite all these efforts, he recognised that there is no external action in the Balearic Islands with enough power to be able to participate in multilateral organisations like the Basque Government does. Even so, they tried to take advantage of a pilot project with the OECD to develop the insular dimension within the framework of this international body. Vicens highlighted a key factor in the external action of sub-national bodies: the need to be extremely agile and have a great capacity for adaptation. In this way, when a situation like the one mentioned in the previous case arises, it can be used to benefit the interests of the territory.

Lukas Van Damme began his speech by highlighting how Flanders' foreign policy is based on the Latin principle *in foro interno, in foro externo*. This means that they act internationally in all those areas in which they have the competency within Belgium. He emphasised that this is a constitutional right, as well as signing binding international treaties and appointing diplomatic representatives abroad.

In addition, he mentioned the particularity of the fact that the Flemish delegations that exist around the world are part of the Belgian embassies, sometimes sharing the same building and sometimes in independent ones. He explained that Flanders will be responsible in the next Belgian presidency for the areas of fishing, industry, culture and youth. The basis of external action therefore rests on the competencies that Flanders has. Consequently, as far as multilateral organisations are concerned, they also participate in those areas in which they have competence.

All three speakers also spoke about the importance of scholarships and the generation of talent. In the case of the Balearic Islands, Vicens emphasised that it is essential that young people learn to work in a decentralised manner, and that is why they have a programme that allows them to work part of the time from Palma de Mallorca and the rest from Brussels.

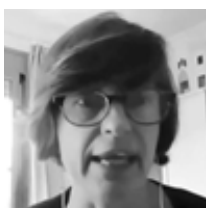
# Annex. Participants



## > LAURA FORASTER I LLORET

### SECRETARY GENERAL OF DIPLOCAT

She has a degree in Business Administration and Management from Pompeu Fabra University and in Humanities from the Open University of Catalonia. She has a masters degree in European Studies, for which she studies at Leaven University and specialist training in public diplomacy and Election Observation Missions. From 2012 to 2018 she was the executive director of DIPLOCAT and, previously, she had served as head of the cabinet of the Minister of Commerce, Tourism and Consumption (2003-2006) and of Innovation, Universities and Enterprise (2006-2010). Before that, she worked in Brussels, carrying out different tasks at the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions, the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to the European Union and the European Parliament. She has been Secretary-General of DIPLOCAT since December 17, 2018.



## > MIREIA GRAU CREUS

### HEAD OF THE RESEARCH AREA OF THE INSTITUTE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT STUDIES

PhD in Political and Social Sciences from the European University Institute of Florence. Professor of Political Science and Administration. She has previously been a Professor of Political Science at the University of Murcia, a visiting lecturer at KU Leuven and has taught in various master's programs around the world. His publications have focused on the field of intergovernmental relations, federalism and multilevel government. (Font: gencat.cat).



## > JOAN DAVID JANER TORRENS

### PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

Degree in Law with extraordinary honors (1995) and doctorate with the qualification of excellent *cum laude* (2000). He completed a master's degree in European Law (1996) at the College of Europe in Natolin (Poland) thanks to a scholarship granted by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the period 2006-2010, he held the Jean Monnet Chair in European Union Law awarded by the European Commission at the University of the Balearic Islands. He has carried out research stays for a period of 15 months at the European University Institute in Florence, at the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and at the University of Munster. Since 2020, he is the main researcher of a research project granted by the Ministry of Science and Innovation relating to territorial conflict situations and the scope of the obligations of the States involved. He is the author of books, chapters and doctrinal studies on International Law and European Union Law.



## > CONCHI QUINTANA

### DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL ACTION OF THE BASQUE GOVERNMENT

Agricultural engineer from the Public University of Navarra, she worked for more than 11 years at the World Rural Forum. Later, she worked for 5 years at the Provincial Council of Álava as an advisor in the Cabinet of the Deputy General. And finally she served as Director of External Relations for the 6 months prior to becoming Director of External Action of the Basque Government, her current position.



## > JOAN RIDAO MARTÍN

### DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT STUDIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CATALUNYA

Doctor in Political Science and Administration from the University of Barcelona, and degree in Law and Master in Law from the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Advanced Diploma in Constitutional Justice from the University of Pisa. His research career has revolved around the territorial organization of the State and Catalan public law, parliamentary law, political participation and good governance, as well as political coalitions and governance. He is the author of multiple publications and Cross of Honor of the Order of San Raimon de Penyafort and Medal of Honor of the Illustrious Bar Association of Barcelona.



## > MERITXELL SERRET ALEU

### CATALAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN ACTION AND EUROPEAN UNION

She has a degree in Political Science and Administration and has a postgraduate degree in General Business Management. Between 2016 and 2017 she was Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Generalitat de Catalunya. She is currently a deputy in the Parliament of Catalonia, where she acts as deputy spokesperson for the Esquerra Republicana parliamentary group. Additionally, she is president of the Investigative Commission on the Espionage of Political Representatives, Activists, Journalists and Their Families by the Kingdom of Spain with the Pegasus and Candiru Programs, and also spokesperson for the Foreign Action Commission, Transparency and Cooperation.



## > LUKAS VAN DAMME

### HEAD OF UNIT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIVISION AND MEMBER OF THE BILATERAL COOPERATION TEAM OF THE GOVERNMENT OF FLANDERS, SPECIALIZING IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

He holds a degree in Political and Social Sciences from the University of Antwerp, also a master's degree in Political and Social Sciences and another in Environmental Sciences from the same university. He has held different diplomatic positions representing Belgium and others linked to Flanders' foreign action since 2008. He was also, from 2005 to 2007, Liaison Officer of the Council of Europe for programs in Southeast Europe.



## > ANTONI VICENS

### DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

He holds a degree in Marine Sciences from the The University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and in Political and Administrative Sciences from the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), subsequently obtaining a master's degree in Diplomacy and International Public Service from the Autonomous University from Barcelona (UAB) and in Integral Logistics and Operations Management from the Open University of Catalonia (UOC).



## > GERARD VIVES FERNÁNDEZ

### GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT ABROAD AND THE EUROPEAN UNION OF THE CATALAN MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL ACTION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Born in Barcelona in 1979. He holds an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Administration (specialisation in International Relations, UAB, 2001) and a master's degree in Diplomacy and International Relations (specialisation in EU Affairs, Diplomatic School, 2007). Since July 2021 he has served as Director General for the Representation of the Government Abroad and the European Union of the Ministry for Foreign Action and Open Government of Catalonia. Before that, in 2015, he began his work as advisor for strategic and prospective analysis in the Directorate General for Multilateral and European Affairs, in the Secretariat for Foreign and European Affairs and in the Minister's Office of the ministries of the Presidency (2015) and of Foreign Affairs, Institutional Relations and Transparency (2016 to 2021). Between 2011 and 2015 he worked in Brussels in the field of design and implementation of advocacy strategies involving EU institutions and Member States as an officer at the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD) and as European Regional Coordinator for Beyond 2015, a campaign created in 2010 to influence the negotiation process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



## > ESTHER ZAPATER DUQUE

### PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC INTERNATIONAL LAW AT THE AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA (UAB)

She holds a PhD from the UAB and had previously completed Doctoral and Third Cycle studies at the following centers: Master in European Studies from the UAB, Master in Law and European Institutions from the University of Louvain-la Neuve (Belgium) and DEA from the University of Paris II-Panthéon-Assas (France). In addition, she has been an advisor to the Commission of the European Union in the Directorate of Energy, has carried out research stays at the European University Institute of Florence, the International University Institute of Luxembourg and the University of Bologna and has been a Professor visiting the following universities: Autonomous University of Madrid, University of Salamanca, Panthéon-Assas, Moscow State Law Academy and Toulouse-Capitole. She has also published on the external action of the European Union, its energy policy and on gender issues. She has held the position of Vice-Dean of Students (2004) and of International Relations (2007) of the Faculty of Law of the UAB.

# The member entities of DIPLOCAT

## » Public institutions and municipal entities

- Government of Catalonia
- Barcelona City Council
- Tarragona City Council
- Girona City Council
- Lleida City Council
- Vielha e Mijaran City Council
- Barcelona Provincial Council
- Tarragona Provincial Council
- Girona Provincial Council
- Lleida Provincial Council
- General Council of Aran
- Catalan Association of Municipalities and Counties (ACM)
- Federation of Municipalities of Catalonia (FMC)

## » Entities of the business sector

- General Council of the Official Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Catalonia
- Entrepreneurs association Foment del Treball Nacional
- Association of Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Catalonia (PIMEC)
- Confederation of Cooperatives of Catalonia
- Multi-Sector Business Association (AMEC)
- Private Foundation of Entrepreneurs (FemCAT)

## » Entities of the social, trade union and sports sector

- The Group of Entities of the Voluntary Sector of Catalonia
- Trade union Unió General de Treballadors de Catalunya (UGT)
- Trade union Comissions Obreres de Catalunya (CCOO)
- Football Club Barcelona

## » Universities, business schools and academic institutions

- University of Barcelona (UB)
- Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB)
- Technical University of Catalonia (UPC)
- Pompeu Fabra University (UPF)
- University of Lleida (UdL)
- University of Girona (UdG)
- Rovira i Virgili University (URV)
- Ramon Llull University (URL)
- Open University of Catalonia (UOC)
- University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC)
- International University of Catalonia (UIC)
- Abat Oliba CEU University (UAO CEU)
- Barcelona Institute of International Studies (IBEI)
- EADA Business School
- Barcelona School of Economics (BSE)