

# EU cities and regions leading the way against climate change

COP21 IN PARIS



EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

# Table of Contents

The European Committee of the Regions	1
Markku Markkula, President of the European Committee of the Regions	2
Miguel Arias Cañete, European Commissioner for Climate action and Energy	3
Park Won-soon, Mayor of Seoul and President of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability	4
Tine Heyse, Deputy Mayor of the City of Ghent (Belgium)	5
Holger Matthäus, Senator of the City of Rostock (Germany), Presidents of Climate Alliance	5
Cities and regions offer the solution to climate change	10
Pioneer – Initiate – Practice	10
Cities and regions contribute to global climate negotiations	12
The European Committee of the Regions in Paris	14
What we want	15
A HIGHER LEVEL OF AMBITION	16
AN INCLUSIVE CLIMATE GOVERNANCE	16
AN AGREEMENT ACCEPTABLE FOR ALL	16
City mayors teaming up: adaptation and mitigation	17
The New Integrated Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, supporting cities and regions	18



Photos  
European Union | iStock | Shutterstock.



## The European Committee of the Regions

Europe's local and regional governments are contributing to tackling climate change with concerted action. The European Committee of the Regions supports this process and represents the local and regional levels in debates within the European Union.

Created in 1994, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) is the EU's political assembly of regional and local government representatives. Its mission is to involve subnational governments in the EU's decision-making process, increasing the participation and involvement of the EU's citizens in policy-making.

The CoR's 350 members – governors, regional presidents, mayors or elected representatives of EU regions and cities – ensure that regions, cities and municipalities are given a voice within the EU. Members complement their activities in their own constituencies by meeting regularly at the European level to prepare and vote on recommendations that help shape EU policy and legislation.

### Events in Paris co-organised by the Committee of the Regions:

#### → “Facing climate change: Rethinking our global development model, Act II”

1 December 2015, Climate Generation Area (room n°1), le Bourget, Paris  
co-organised with China Europa Forum

#### → “Regions and citizens acting together against climate change”

2 December 2015, 9.00-16.00, Halle Pajol, 20 esplanade Nathalie Sarraute, Paris, in partnership with Île de France, ARENE and FEDARENE; **registration required**

#### → “Community energy: accelerating sustainable energy roll-out in Europe”

4 December 2015, 14.30-17.30, Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental, 9 place d'Iéna, Paris, co-organised with ICLEI Europe, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the French ESC

#### → “Flagship event on Cities and Regions – The Globalisation of the Covenant of Mayors”

8 December 2015, 14.30-17.15, EU pavilion Luxemburg room, co-organised with the European Commission



[More events on](#)

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions





## Markku Markkula

### President of the European Committee of the Regions

Climate change is one of the greatest threats of our time and science has proven that our planet is warming up. The unescapable truth is that it's a race against time: we need to drastically change our behaviour and stop temperatures rising above the internationally agreed maximum 2°C. We cannot negotiate with the atmosphere which is why this COP21 must be a success but this needs bold commitment and decisive action.

Climate change is a challenge that cannot be resolved alone. National governments rely on cities and regions to turn international commitments into reality. Indeed, cities and regions often take the initiative far exceeding the level of ambition shown at national level and above. The Covenant of Mayors shows just that: over 6,500 signatories representing 200 million citizens voluntarily committed to meeting and exceeding the EU's CO<sub>2</sub> reduction objective. Thanks to the support of the European Commission, they have turned the Covenant into a European success story: the world's biggest climate and energy initiative at local and regional level.

**What is clear from this is that only through governments at all levels working side-by-side can we find a long-term answer to climate change. This is why it is imperative that we have a clear reference to the role of local and regional government in the final COP21 agreement.**

In Paris I will work together with local and regional leaders from across the globe and tell developed and emerging countries that they must be more ambitious – because we, the cities and regions of the world, are behind them. We are already doing it on the ground and we are ready to do more. The European Committee of the Regions – the EU assembly of cities and regions – called on the EU to upgrade its own commitment of cutting 1990 levels of greenhouse gas emissions by 50% instead of 40% by 2030. The world needs to become carbon neutral by 2050.

The COP21 negotiators cannot be afraid to take ambitious decisions as they are necessary for our collective future. These decisions, coupled with a global climate governance based on the principle of multi-level governance, will allow us to translate shared objectives into concrete results. These decisions will help us along the path towards a low-carbon economy creating new jobs, saving money, time and creating a sustainable future for all.





## Miguel Arias Cañete

### European Commissioner for Climate action and Energy

As the preparations for the historic COP21 meeting in Paris gain momentum, the expectations that a global agreement on climate change will be reached are running high. The Convention will be a landmark in the fight against climate change, and the European Union is working hard to ensure that the outcome of the negotiations lays the foundations for an ambitious transition towards a low-carbon economy.

Almost 200 countries of the world will sit together in Paris to tackle climate change. The EU is resolved to address global warming, leading the international efforts to meet the 2°C target. We are well on track to meet our climate and energy targets in 2020, and we have approved the 2030 climate and energy framework, committing ourselves to an ambitious reduction of our greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% in 2020 compared to 1990 levels.

Yet we are aware that we would not be able to sustain our ambitions without the work of the local and regional administrations. The regions and cities of Europe are at the forefront of our efforts to address climate change, as it is at the local level where the real change takes place, and where important battles can be won.

**The Committee of the Regions’ support of European regions and cities, and its backing to initiatives like the Covenant of Mayors and Mayors Adapt, is an indispensable pillar in our strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance resilience to the effects of climate change, and increase ambition over time.**

Together, we are working to make European regions and cities more energy-efficient, well-connected, sustainable and prosperous. We want to create smart, resilient and energy-efficient municipalities, and to develop smarter urban transport networks, upgraded water supply and waste disposal facilities, and more efficient ways to light and heat buildings.

In the build-up to the historic climate negotiations in Paris, I am confident that we will make our aspirations come true and pave the way for a more sustainable and climate resilient world.







## Park Won-soon

### Mayor of Seoul and President of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

Leadership at all levels of government and civil society is needed to tackle climate change, which poses a serious threat to humanity and to our environment. A significant majority of greenhouse gases released into our atmosphere comes from cities, while human settlements in all parts of the world are already impacted by this global challenge. This highlights the significance of local governments in planning, implementing and monitoring climate action. By developing sustainable and innovative solutions that address mitigation, adaptation and enhanced resilience to a changing climate, multiple benefits can be gained – both locally and globally.

ICLEI engages in three key areas in the post-2015 period, namely:

- **Accelerate local and subnational climate action by strengthening partnerships** (*working with local and regional governments, their networks and their partners*)
- **Enhance vertical integration through effective multilevel governance** (*exploring ways to optimize coordination and implementation efforts with national and other levels of government*)
- **Strengthen processes and procedures that accelerate climate action** (*from access to climate finance through the Transformative Actions Program (TAP) to enhanced reporting in the carbonn Climate Registry – the global reporting platform for all local and subnational governments that supports integrated reporting to help track local climate action and its contribution to INDCs*).

Local and sub-national governments need support, empowerment and stable policy frameworks to optimize their engagement and leadership. They can also inspire national-level policymaking to raise and complement pre-2020 ambitions at the national and global level.

The partnership between government levels can in particular enhance the implementation of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). National governments can benefit from the ambitious voluntary commitments that local and regional governments are undertaking – for example through the Covenant of Mayors, the Compact of Mayors, and the Compact of States and Regions. A significant effort is now needed to coordinate vertically integrated reporting of measurable, reportable and verifiable (MRV) climate action.

In 2015 we conclude a successful Local Government Climate Roadmap, launched in 2007 as a global advocacy process. The next phase will focus on scaling up and accelerating successful approaches to bridge the gap between the implementation of the COP 21 outcomes and its expected impact. ICLEI will work closely with its members and partners on climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience – to move towards a more sustainable future!

[www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org)



**Tine Heyse**

Deputy Mayor of the City of Ghent (Belgium), and



**Holger Matthäus**

Senator of the City of Rostock (Germany),  
Presidents of Climate Alliance

An international climate agreement can only be successful if all levels of government work closely together. The over 1,700 member cities of Climate Alliance show in their everyday work that local authorities hold the solutions to global issues.

In the European Union, we have been building for more than seven years now on the achievements of the Covenant of Mayors and its sister initiative Mayors Adapt. The renewed Covenant of Mayors initiative was just launched and overwhelmingly supported by the Covenant Community. It takes on many of the suggestions highlighted by Climate Alliance: long term vision for 2050, concrete 2030 target, bringing mitigation and adaptation closer together as well as up-scaling the initiative to the international level.

Climate Alliance has a long history of voicing the messages of local governments in the international negotiations process and is taking a stand with a strong presence in Paris. Building on our 25 years of experience in multilevel climate action in Europe and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon Rainforest, the members of Climate Alliance bring the following key messages to the international climate talks:

- **Local and regional authorities are taking integrated and long term action on** climate change mitigation and adaptation and propose many, replicable, local solutions.
- **Financial and legal frameworks** should be elaborated and improved to **enable local and regional authorities to implement coherent climate measures. Financial facilities** like the Green Climate Fund should be **directly accessible for local authorities.**
- **Forests should be kept separate from carbon markets,** and the crucial role of indigenous peoples in safeguarding rainforest ecosystems needs be recognised.

The single most important message we can share in COP21 is the **success of the Covenant of Mayors initiative.** The EU can proudly put it forward as part of its diplomacy, and we are also ready to involve our partners in other parts of the world to spread the bottom-up character of the initiative. Climate Alliance members **have been working closely with partner cities around the world** and are engaged to **continue these efforts** under the umbrella of the Global Covenant of Mayors.

This is why we are delighted to explore together with the Committee of the Regions and partners from different continents how the Covenant of Mayors can be exported and adapted beyond Europe, in order to strengthen our collaboration for local climate action worldwide.

For more than 25 years, Climate Alliance member municipalities have been acting in partnership with indigenous rainforest peoples for the benefit of the global climate. With over 1,700 members spread across 26 European countries, Climate Alliance is the world's largest city network dedicated to climate action and the only one to set tangible targets: each member city, town and district has committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 10 percent every 5 years.



Climate Alliance



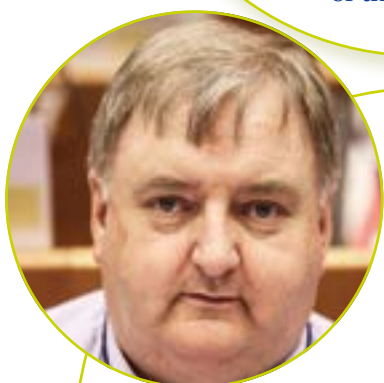
“Kirklees Council in the UK is installing solar panels on the roof of 2,000 social homes. Tenants will save nearly the equivalent of 2 weeks rent on their homes each year in reduced energy costs.”

**Andrew Cooper, Councillor at Kirklees Council, United Kingdom, Member of the European Committee of the Regions.**



“We are committed to a low carbon economy based on innovation. The Basque Strategy for Climate Change 2050 foresees a 40% GHG emission reduction for 2030 and 80% for 2050”.

**Iñigo Urkullu Renteria, President of the Basque Country, Member of the European Committee of the Regions.**



“In Ireland, Tipperary County Council has recently installed 800 photovoltaic solar panels on public buildings such as fire stations, libraries, civic offices and public recreation centres. This project alone has increased Ireland’s total PV capacity by 44%”.

**Hughie McGrath, Councillor of the Tipperary County Council, Member of the European Committee of the Regions.**



“Initiated by my region Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur, the MEDCOP 21 conference in June 2015 brought together almost 1500 stakeholders from the civil society in the Mediterranean in order to identify concrete solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

**Annabelle Jaeger, Member of Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Regional Council, rapporteur of the CoR’s opinion “Towards a new agreement on climate in Paris”**



“Emilia Romagna region approved its new main goals to be reached by the end of 2020: REDUCTION of the waste production up to 25% and RE-USE up to 70%.”

**Simonetta Saliera, President of the Regional Parliament of Emilia Romagna, Member of the European Committee of the Regions.**





“Since 2012, the Energy and Climate Programme of Saxonia, Germany, leads the way towards the reduction of CO2 emissions by 25% compared to 2009. More than 120 measures contribute to this goal in the sectors of traffic, industries, trade and services and involves various stakeholders from politics, administration, science, economy, education as well as civil society. Our evaluation report shows that we are well on the way.”

Heinz Lehmann, Member of the Saxonian Landtags, Member of the European Committee of the Regions.



“Thanks to its District Heating project, the Castilla y León Government reduces CO2 emissions by more than 6,800 tons. District Heating consists of a heating network fueled by forest biomass which will provision 30 public buildings ranging from various publicly owned buildings to the campuses of the University of Valladolid and Esgueva and Miguel Delibes universities.”

Juan Vicente Herrera Campo, President of the Regional Government of Castille and Leon, Member of the Committee of the Regions.



“The City of Espoo is making large efforts on smart and sustainable transport. We will welcome a metro line in the city and we are investing 3 additional million euros in charging stations in order to have a clean public transport hub connecting the metro to a network of 150 electric buses.”

Sirpa Hertell, City Councillor of Espoo, Member of the Committee of the Regions



“Rhône-Alpes, has committed to the Under2MoU to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% by 2050. Rhône-Alpes was also one of the first 19 regional governments to submit its data and commitments to the Compact of States and Regions, an international accounting tool recognised by the United Nations, thus contributing to international climate governance worldwide and underlining the action potential of subnational governments”

Bernard Soulage, Vice-president for Europe and international relations of the Rhône-Alpes region and Member of the European Committee of the Regions.

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

**Global problem**

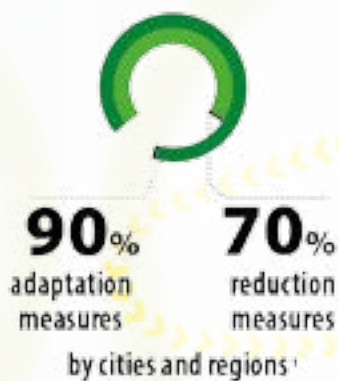
**local solutions**

**#cop21**

**Ending climate change starts in cities and regions**

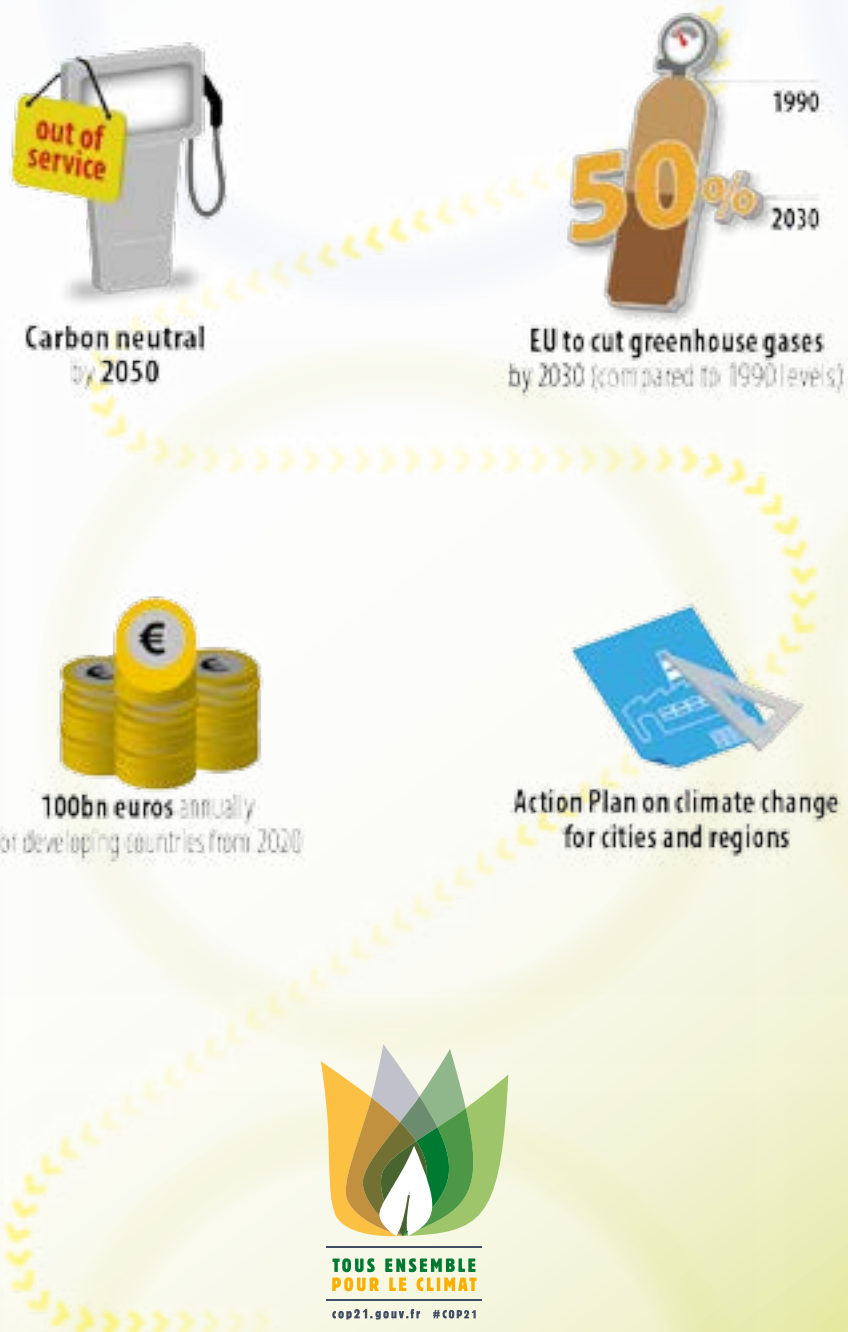


**Ending climate change starts in cities and regions**



6,500 cities and regions already committed to cutting 40% of greenhouse gases by 2030

## COP21: What the CoR wants



**Cities and regions must be recognised within the COP21 agreement**

1. UNPD report, Charting a new low-carbon route to development: A primer on integrated climate change planning for regional governments (2009)



@EU\_CoR



[www.facebook.com/committee.of.the.regions](http://www.facebook.com/committee.of.the.regions)

European Committee of the Regions | Directorate for Communication  
Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 99–101 | 1040 Bruxelles/Brussel | Belgium

[www.cor.europa.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu)

© European Union, 2015



# Cities and regions offer the solution to climate change

## ■ PIONEER – INITIATE – PRACTICE

Cities and regions turn visions into action. In Europe they are responsible for implementing as much as 70% of the EU's policy. Policies decided at higher levels are realised by local and regional authorities that transform broad strategies to concrete action. Cities and regions will also turn the Paris agreement into climate action on the ground.

But cities and regions go beyond implementation. In the European Union, local and regional authorities are already pioneering, initiating and practising the protection of our climate:



1. **Cities and regions pioneer green initiatives.** Cities and regions green their investments and activities, through drawing up contracts based on green procurement principles or through retrofitting and renovating public buildings such as hospitals, schools and infrastructures entailing a more efficient use of energy and water.



2. **Cities and regions initiate best practice.** In acting as pioneers, cities and regions create a multiplier effect stirring up private capital flows towards green technologies and sustainable projects. They share and exchange best-practices, through institutions like the European Committee of the Regions, and inspire other local and regional authorities to follow their lead.



3. **Cities and regions practise climate action.** Green cities and regions intervene in mobility, for instance by promoting soft mobility and green spaces. They take new ways to involve the public to enhance biodiversity through green roofs or through vertical greening of walls. They support the transition to low-carbon economies by setting up green subsidies for individuals and businesses - they are facilitators of change.

Such concrete climate actions are visible for citizens who benefit in their daily lives.

“Only by switching to energy-efficient street lighting, Europe could save up to 3 billion euros in energy costs, and save 11 million tons of emitted CO<sub>2</sub>.”

The European Investment Bank





Annabelle Jaeger,  
member of the European Committee  
of the Regions, writes in the Guardian:

“Local authorities are ultimately responsible for making policy a reality. According to UNDP estimates, more than 70% of climate change reduction measures and up to 90% of climate change adaptation measures are undertaken by local government.”

“Projects delivered locally are designed to reflect local circumstances and it is these tailor-made solutions that allow us to take effective action. It is essential for these local experiences to be fed back to the highest decision-making bodies so that obstacles and potential improvements can be identified, saving time and money.”



[Read more](#)

Ultimately, we should not forget that climate action begins and ends with people. In our communities results and successes stem from public support. Education, information and pedagogy are tools used by local and regional leaders to secure acceptance and behavioural change, which is vital for any reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

This can impact demand for good, creating new markets and in turn orienting companies towards more sustainable ways of production.

But cities and regions are not only acting on the ground. In acting locally they also think globally. Cities and regions around the world are teaming up for climate action in trans-continental organisations such as ICLEI – Local Government for Sustainability (<http://www.iclei.org/>), Climate Alliance (<http://www.climatealliance.org/>) or nrg4SD, the network of regional government for sustainable development (<http://www.nrg4sd.org/>). Cities and regions are also active in the areas of energy and sustainable development through decentralised cooperation across the world and through twinning partnerships. They have much to contribute to climate negotiations in the global arena.

For cities and regions  
“Act local, think global”  
and  
“Think local, act global”  
are two sides of  
the same coin.



## Cities and regions contribute to global climate negotiations

When the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was launched in 1992, the parties to the agreement acknowledged that sustainable development could not be achieved if it was implemented by national governments alone. While cities and regions were recognised as a civil-society group, they were not considered as a level of government within UN fora and were put at the same level as industrial lobbies and NGOs. Nonetheless, cities and regions have slowly emerged as indispensable stakeholders during global climate talks owing to their expertise of policy-making.

Since the creation of the UNFCCC, the world's regions and cities have started to work together to voice their position and perspective. They have seized the opportunity to exchange best practice and knowledge of local climate policy, and – when international negotiations stall – promoted local action as global solutions for climate change.

**Cities and regions are now recognised for their commitment and role as climate champions though they continue to struggle to be recognised as a true governmental partner.**



“The local dimension is extremely important in facing issues related to climate change and energy. The Sardinia Region, through sustainable policies in the fields of waste management, green public procurement, energy and adaptation strategy to climate change, commits to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% within 2030, compared to 1990 levels.”

Francesco Pigliaru, President of Sardinia Region, Italy, Chair of Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE) of the European Committee of the Regions.



Over the years, regions and cities have become increasingly active in an effort to demonstrate that solutions to climate change do exist. In addition to the Covenant of Mayors, some of the initiatives and events include:

- The **Under 2 Memorandum of Understanding** has so far brought together 46 regions. They have voluntarily committed that their emissions be at a level believed necessary to limit global warming to less than 2°C by the end of this century.

Collectively they represent more than \$14.6 trillion in GDP and 497 million people. If the signatories represented a single country, it would be the second largest economy in the world.



- The **Compact of Mayors** is a global coalition of city leaders who have pledged to tackle climate change by reducing their cities' greenhouse gas emissions, tracking their progress and preparing for the effects of climate change. To date,

324 cities, representing 319 million inhabitants worldwide and 4.4% of the global population, have committed to the Compact.



**“Raising  
Global Level of  
Ambition Through  
Local Climate Action”**

**Local Government  
Climate Roadmap**

- The **World Summit Climate and Territories** on 1-2 July 2015, Lyon, France, where local and regional governments, NGOs, young people, workers and business associations from around the world gathered to sign a common

declaration **“Placing territorial action at the heart of the response to climate challenge”**.

- In addition, the Summit was the culmination of an intense process of cooperation in which all the participating local and regional governments made pledges to increase their action on climate issues, and made recommendations and concrete proposals for the global climate agreement due to be reached in Paris.

At UNFCCC level, cities and regions organise themselves as an umbrella group and follow a roadmap intended to mobilise activities worldwide, to structure local efforts to confront the climate challenge, and to gather feedback that can be reflected in the new COP agreement.



- The **Local Government Climate Roadmap** is coordinated by ICLEI which is the focal point of the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities in the UNFCCC. The roadmap is supported by local and regional networks and leaders across

the world and follows three principles: recognise, engage and empower local and subnational governments in the global climate regime. Currently, the draft text for the negotiations in Paris makes reference to local and regional authorities.



**Local Government  
Climate Roadmap**  
Recognize • Engage • Empower



## The European Committee of the Regions in Paris

At the COP21 in Paris, cities' and regions' voice in Europe will be put forward through the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), an observer within the Delegation of

the European Union. Markku Markkula, President of the European Committee of the Regions, will be accompanied by three CoR members:



Markku  
Markkula  
President of  
the European  
Committee  
of the Regions  
(CoR)



Francesco  
Pigliaru  
President of  
Sardinia, Italy, Chair of the CoR's  
Commission for Environment,  
Climate Change and Energy,  
stirring up the work of the  
CoR on climate



Annabelle  
Jaeger  
Regional councillor  
of the Provence-Alpes-  
Côte d'Azur in France and  
President of the regional  
environment agency, CoR  
rapporteur on the  
COP21



Kata  
Tüttö  
Local councillor of  
Budapest district 12, Hungary,  
and CoR rapporteur on the  
future of the Covenant of Mayors  
Commission for Environment,  
Climate Change and Energy,  
stirring up the work of the  
CoR on climate

They will bring their practical solutions and achievements to Paris. Their work will be two-way: they will channel cities' and regions' feedback and needs to the EU delegation, emphasising the need to include a territorial approach within the new global climate governance and to persuade developed countries to maintain their current

level of ambition; they will convey the EU's ambitious position to local and regional authorities from across the world, so that they encourage their national authorities to accept stronger commitments on action to mitigate for climate change.





## What we want

### ■ TOWARDS A NEW AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE

Rapporteur: Annabelle Jaeger



“The civil society in my region has been widely mobilised for the COP21. A large number of activities and events in 2015 has heightened the awareness that everybody needs to be involved in tackling climate change: Citizen, businesses, municipalities, associations and so on: we took part in a worldwide debate about climate organised on 5 June 2015 and hosted the Alternatiba mobilisation events took place in several cities of the region.”

Annabelle Jaeger, Member of Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Regional Council, rapporteur of the CoR’s opinion “Towards a new agreement on climate in Paris”

- The European Committee of the Regions fully supports the EU’s position and its ambition to close the gap between pledges already made by countries and the level of action needed to tackle the global climate threat.



#### The position of the European Union:

The EU wants to achieve an ambitious, balanced, transparent and legally binding agreement in Paris. It supports the inclusion of adaptation to climate change within the agreement to protect the most vulnerable communities. It advocates for the agreement to be dynamic with a 5-year cycle to review national commitments and their implementation in view of technological advances, increasing their level of ambition to stay on track below 2°C.

## ■ A HIGHER LEVEL OF AMBITION

- **A higher level of ambition.** The world should aim to be carbon-neutral by 2050, the EU should raise its contribution to 50% of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction by 2030, and other developed countries as well as emerging economies should raise their ambition.
- **Recognition and support of local and regional authorities work on climate.** Regions' and cities' potential to lower greenhouse gas emissions remains largely untapped and is instrumental in the transition to low-carbon economy and in unblocking tense international negotiations.
- **Negotiating parties should look at the work undertaken by cities and regions** in the EU and elsewhere, notably under the Covenant of Mayors and the Under2 MoU initiatives, as models which can help build trust between Parties and increase the level of their ambition of commitments.

## ■ AN INCLUSIVE CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

- **A system of climate governance based on a multi-level governance approach is necessary** to ensure all levels of governments are involved in climate policy and maximise the contributions of all communities to tackling climate change. Such a governance system is about fluid communication between local, regional, national and international government and about taking decisions quickly and cost-effectively.
- **Starting by negotiating parties formally recognising in the agreement text and COP decisions that cities and regions are part of**

**the solutions** and can provide essential input to optimise climate action – as non-Party governmental stakeholders – clearly distinct from non-state actors with civil society and business.

- A day dedicated to regions and cities during COPs should be formalised and serve as opportunity for **mayoral-regional-ministerial dialogues** and exchange of views.
- **A COP decision on an Action Plan for cities and regions** – as exists within the Convention on Biological Diversity – would complement the structured dialogue and support good implementation by defining a modus operandi between local and regions authorities and countries. This would amount to a flexible application of the principle of multi-level governance at the international level.

## ■ AN AGREEMENT ACCEPTABLE FOR ALL

- While EU countries, the other developed countries and emerging countries should step up their efforts to **mitigate climate change**, the agreement should also **integrate adaptation to climate change**, which poses a major threat to the most vulnerable and poorest populations of the world.
- **Direct and simplified access to technical assistance and global climate funding facilities** should be effectively ensured. Access should be open to cities and regions that are particularly vulnerable to climate change and that need support to implement commitments or adaptation measures.





# City mayors teaming up: adaptation and mitigation

## ■ THE COVENANT OF MAYORS

Bottom-up approaches, multi-level governance, the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation are important keywords when it comes to solutions to climate change. The Covenant of Mayors successfully combines all of them. More than 6,500 signatories representing 210 million inhabitants testify to the success of multi-level governance in the field of climate and energy.

Launched by the European Commission in 2008, the Covenant of Mayors brings together Mayors from Europe, voluntarily committed to reducing their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Building on its success, a new Integrated Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy has been launched combining climate change mitigation and adaptation under one single umbrella.

The European Committee of the Regions fully supports the Covenant of Mayors. Under the patronage of rapporteur Kata Tüttö, the Committee of the Regions will continue to support the initiative. Mayors serving both as

members of the European Committee of the Regions and the Covenant of Mayors can encourage others within the Committee to become new signatories.

The Covenant of Mayors is not limited to Europe. It already has signatories from other parts of the world and can be exported to a global level. The European Committee of the Regions will also support its future development through cooperation partnerships, for example with its ARLEM (Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly) network as well as with Chinese cities.



““European cities are turning from grey to green: more than 6,500 cities in Europe target, on average, 28% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction by 2020 because they can do better and because they are already doing better.”

Kata Tüttö, Councillor of Budapest, Hungary, rapporteur of the CoR's opinion on “The Future of the Covenant of Mayors”

“Budapest is richly gifted with thermal water. We use it wisely and don't just bath in it but we heat the pools of the City Zoo – reducing its carbon footprint by 500 tonnes per year.”

# The New Integrated Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, supporting cities and regions



“[I welcome] this bottom-up approach which has worked so well in Europe (...) [The Covenant of Mayors] is the world’s biggest urban climate and energy initiative, and a European success story to be exported on the road to Paris.”

Miguel Arias Cañete, EU  
Commissioner for Climate  
Action, 2015 Covenant of  
Mayors Ceremony



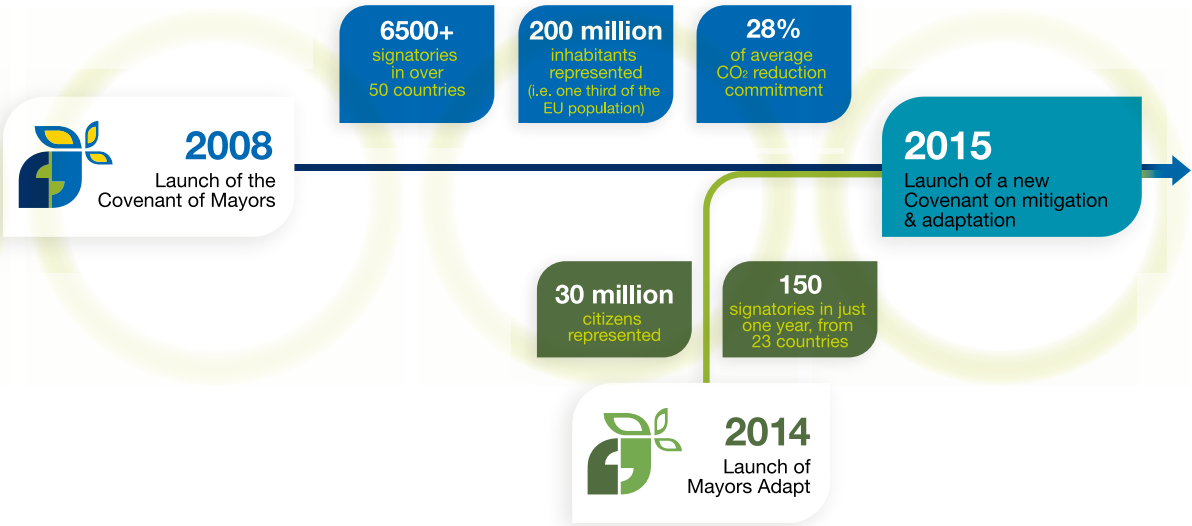
Pictures:  
© the Covenant of Mayors

Hundreds of city representatives flocked to the European Parliament in October 2015 to see the **New Integrated Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy** launched – merging both key pillars of climate change (mitigation and adaptation) under one single umbrella initiative.

In an international context marked by conflicting views, difficult trade-offs and negotiations, the new Covenant of Mayors stands out as a unique example of increasing synergy and cooperation.

The Covenant of Mayors has already been delivering: the Covenant signatories have a proven track record of comprehensive measures addressing key CO<sub>2</sub> intensive sectors with sound and credible mechanisms to ensure report and monitoring. With their renewed commitments, signatory cities pledge action to support implementation of the new 2030 EU targets, a joint approach to tackling mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and the extension of the initiative to a more global scope.

## ■ KEY DATES AND FIGURES





## ■ THE COVENANT OF MAYORS & MAYORS ADAPT – FLASHBACK, KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Since its launch in 2008, the **Covenant of Mayors** has grown into a bottom-up movement in its own right, bringing together over 6,500 committed cities, hundreds of provinces and regions and covering more than a third of the EU population – and the figures continue growing every day. Over the years, it has been given greater emphasis and recognition in EU legislation, notably in the Energy Union strategy (EC, 2015) and the European Energy Security strategy (EC, 2014), pressing needs for accelerated energy transition and greater energy autonomy.

Building on the success of the Covenant of Mayors, the Mayors Adapt initiative was launched in 2014 relying on the same governance model, inviting cities to make political commitments and take action to anticipate and prepare for the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Whereby the “original” Covenant of Mayors focused on climate mitigation via sustainable energy strategies, Mayors Adapt introduced a parallel process for cities wishing to tackle the issue of adaptation to climate change. Within only

a year, over 150 cities committed to the Mayors Adapt initiative, in a determined effort to strengthen their capacity to adapt to the consequences of climate change, and seize the associated opportunities to build more inclusive, climate resilient communities and infrastructures.

### What do the Covenant of Mayors and its sister initiative Mayors Adapt represent?

- A growing and inclusive community, gathering today thousands of cities committed to local sustainable energy and climate actions,
- An unprecedented multi-level governance model, engaging national and sub-national authorities and involving stakeholders and citizens,
- A mainstream instrument, gaining prominence in the main EU policies and financial instruments,
- A reference framework for action, flexible and adjustable to local realities,
- The first-of-its-kind movement combining bottom-up legitimacy with institutional credibility, as the cities commit to adopting target-based action plans which are then submitted to EU scrutiny,
- An innovative platform to network, share knowledge, capacities and experiences.
- A **unique success story** in Europe, now to be expanded to other regions of the world!

Endorsing moment in the hemicycle of the European Parliament, 2015 Covenant of Mayors Ceremony:



# THE NEW COVENANT – Reinforced commitments and scope of action for an integrated climate response at local level

## ■ THE NEW ELEMENTS: 2030 HORIZON, INTEGRATION OF MITIGATION & ADAPTATION AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Last summer, the European Commission launched a consultation process with the support of the European Committee of the Regions to collect cities' views on the future of the Covenant of Mayors. The response was unanimous: 97% called for a new target beyond 2020 and 80% called for a longer-term target. The majority also endorsed the 2030 objectives for a minimum 40% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and supported the integration of mitigation and adaptation to climate change under a common umbrella.

These new commitments were announced during the joint Covenant of Mayors and Mayors Adapt Ceremony on 15 October 2015. The three pillars of the strengthened Covenant: mitigation, adaptation and secure, sustainable and affordable energy (see the graph below) have been formally endorsed at this occasion.

The new Covenant of Mayors is also set to broaden its reach with the launch of a global chapter.



“By launching the new covenant, the local authorities indicate what the next steps are and explicit their long term commitment. This is a very strong signal from local authorities indicating they want to take action within their competences.”

Daniël Termont, Mayor  
of Ghent (BE)



“The response to climate urgency can also become an opportunity for local development, job creation and the emergence of a new societal model”

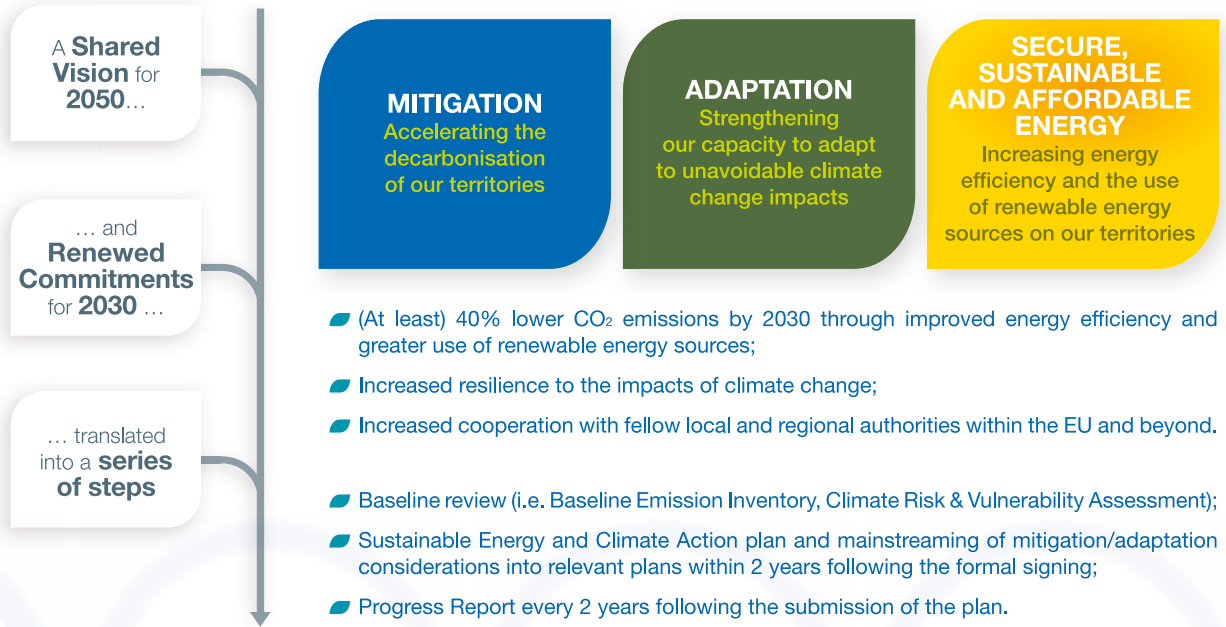
Johanna Rolland, Mayor  
of Nantes (FR)



“Opening up the model worldwide offers an opportunity to allow cities and regions across the globe to collaborate, share ambition and set the future agenda on climate change”

Markku Markkula, Committee of the  
Regions President, at the ... 2015  
Covenant Ceremony

## ■ THE COVENANT: A VISION IN MOTION



*Towards more sustainable, attractive, liveable, resilient and energy efficient local authorities*

## ■ COP21 CONTRIBUTION: THE COVENANT AS AN EU MODEL FOR REPLICATION

Because the climate challenge requires cross-sector and multi-stakeholder solutions, the aftermath of the COP21 should provide more than a new global treaty based on a collection of unilateral commitments. The Covenant of Mayors has introduced an institutional novelty in the European climate policy landscape by encouraging local leaders to voluntarily support the implementation of EU-adopted targets. It has paved the way for new more inclusive and all-embracing governance models and methods of working together, and can therefore be showcased to the world as a unique EU success story of integration and multi-level cooperation.

In the context of the Lima Paris Action Agenda (LPAA), the Covenant of Mayors is an official data partner of the “Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action” (NAZCA) portal. This UNFCCC platform showcases the commitments and actions

of non-party stakeholders, including local and sub-national authorities. The Covenant of Mayors will provide by far the largest data set integrated into NAZCA.

### MORE INFORMATION



Websites:

[www.covenantofmayors.eu](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu)

[www.mayors-adapt.eu](http://www.mayors-adapt.eu)



Contacts:

[info@eumayors.eu](mailto:info@eumayors.eu)

[helpdesk@mayors-adapt.eu](mailto:helpdesk@mayors-adapt.eu)



EUROPEAN UNION



**Committee of the Regions**

November 2015

Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat, 101 \_ 1040 Bruxelles/Brussel \_ BELGIQUE/BELGIË  
Tel. +32 22822211 \_ Fax +32 22822325  
[www.cor.europa.eu](http://www.cor.europa.eu)



Follow us  
[@EU\\_CoR](https://twitter.com/EU_CoR)



[www.facebook.com/committee.of.the.regions](https://www.facebook.com/committee.of.the.regions)