



Local & Regional  
Europe



COP25  
CHILE  
MADRID 2019  
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Resilient & decarbonised  
societies by **2050**

The path for municipalities and regions



## Resilient & decarbonised societies by 2050

# **COP25: The path for municipalities and regions**

### 1. Tackle the world's climate challenge through ambitious local leadership and action, including within UNFCCC in collaboration with global partners

The level of change required to mitigate emissions and to adapt can only be achieved by strong political commitment and leadership, at all levels of government and in partnership with citizens and the private sector. The local level plays a key role in achieving the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. In many Member States, the local level is at the forefront, working with ambitious climate targets and local solutions—including various initiatives, partnerships and tools such as sustainable climate and energy action plans (SECAPs) and climate budgets.

Since the COP in Paris in 2015, local and regional authorities have increasingly been welcomed as important partners for the international agreements. CEMR is working at this level especially through the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments, coordinated by UCLG.

CEMR has advocated for the role of subnational governments in mitigation and adaptation at COP meetings and at the UN climate summit in September 2019, to boost climate ambition, to assist its members in their dialogue with their central governments in the production of Nationally Determined Contributions and to support local and regional governments in their path towards creating resilient societies and territories.

Decentralised cooperation contributes to achieving decarbonised societies. The international community should promote this cooperation, particularly within the framework of the Global Covenant of Mayors and the PLATFORMA strategic partnership for development and decentralised cooperation. Thousands of European local and regional governments are already working with their peers to implement environmental projects in developing countries and on south-south, north-south and north-north decentralised cooperation. Efforts must be focused where the greatest positive effects can be expected.

### 2. Provide the right regulatory frameworks, financial and technical resources for local action implementation

National, EU and international regulation must respect the diversity of regional and local conditions and not be unnecessarily detailed, allowing for different local and regional solutions on how to achieve commonly agreed targets. Policy should be, wherever possible, technology neutral. There is no single solution, since climate, resources, capacities and socio-economic factors vary across nations. National governments and the EU should recognise an active role for local and regional authorities in the design of climate mitigation and adaptation policies and regulations, including in the Nationally Determined Contributions and the EU National Energy and Climate Plans.

Local and regional governments require broad legal and financial competence in order to take action and work together with citizens and the private sector. There is also a need for national and EU financial instruments for awareness-raising, capacity-building and investment to implement policy. Increased and adequate pricing of CO<sub>2</sub> and reduced subsidies on fossil energy are important potential sources for financing action. The new EU multiannual financial framework needs to recognise that more EU funding and investments are needed for local actors to implement actions and develop projects.



The European Green Deal proposed by the new EU Commission should be an opportunity to achieve this. At the same time a just transition needs to fully recognise and accommodate the social effects through designated support and funding. All Member States are different and flexibility is needed in this respect.

### 3. Increase ambition in line with the Strategy for a Sustainable Europe by 2030 and the EU's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050

The European Commission's reflection paper "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030" provides a basis for future concrete measures to be taken at the local level. Through a bottom-up perspective, local and regional authorities can be transformed into resilient habitats that are adapting to climate change and improving a society, in accord with the four dimensions of sustainable development (environmental, economic, social and cultural).

We also share the EU's long-term vision of decarbonising our societies with ambitious targets and actions which go in the direction of the 2 and 1.5 °C paths of the Paris Agreement, becoming carbon neutral by 2050 and adapting our cities to a changing climate.

Local and regional governments need to encourage and support the EU's commitments on climate action and influence EU policy and financial instruments in order to get a supportive framework. We recognise the large-scale challenges that exist and that these require a decentralised, bottom-up approach with clear actions in which all levels of government are required to contribute and have the capacity to do so. We advocate a multi-level governance approach and decentralised actions. This means including the sub-national level in the drafting and development of the National Energy and Climate Plans.

### 4. Localise and decentralise the Sustainable Development Goals to achieve the urban and global agendas

The outcomes of COP22 in Marrakech in 2016 were closely linked to the implementation of the SDGs and the Urban Agenda of Habitat III. CEMR supports the global climate agendas and the achievement of their objectives through the localisation of the SDGs.

Estimates show that 65% of the 169 targets underpinning the 17 SDGs cannot be reached without the engagement of and coordination with local and regional governments. The Policy Committee of CEMR agreed in 2018 to work on localising the SDGs and territorialising sustainable development actions in the areas of climate, energy and environment that can be integrated into a larger EU Strategy to achieve the UN 2030 Agenda.

The local and regional levels play an essential role in turning these international ambitions into practical realities. The localisation process of the 2030 Agenda should therefore come with a real commitment to strengthening multi-level and multi-sectorial alliances, respecting the principle of diversity and different local and regional solutions. SDG 7 (energy), SDG 13 (climate) and SDG 17 (international partnerships), will receive special attention in this context.

## Contact

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Local & Regional  
Europe

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions is the united voice of Europe's local and regional governments federated through 60 national associations.

CEMR is the European section of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), through which it represents European local and regional governments at international level.

Founded in **1951**

**60** member associations

**41** countries

**100,000** local and regional governments

**16** committees and expert groups

## CEMR member associations

**Albania**  
SHBSH

**Austria**  
GEMEINDEBUND  
STÄDTEBUND

**Belgium**  
BRULOCALIS  
UVCW  
VMSG

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**  
SOGFBiH  
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\*Associate, observer and invited members

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