



European Committee
of the Regions

ENVE

EU Green Deal initiatives for regions and cities

Fostering the potential and synergies of EU Green Deal initiatives for regions and cities

Cities and regions are considered as key implementation grounds for the European Green Deal. The multiple crisis and the current geopolitical situation have changed the context in which local and regional authorities operate, thus requiring a more simplified and supporting framework.

With a
multitude of EU
initiatives

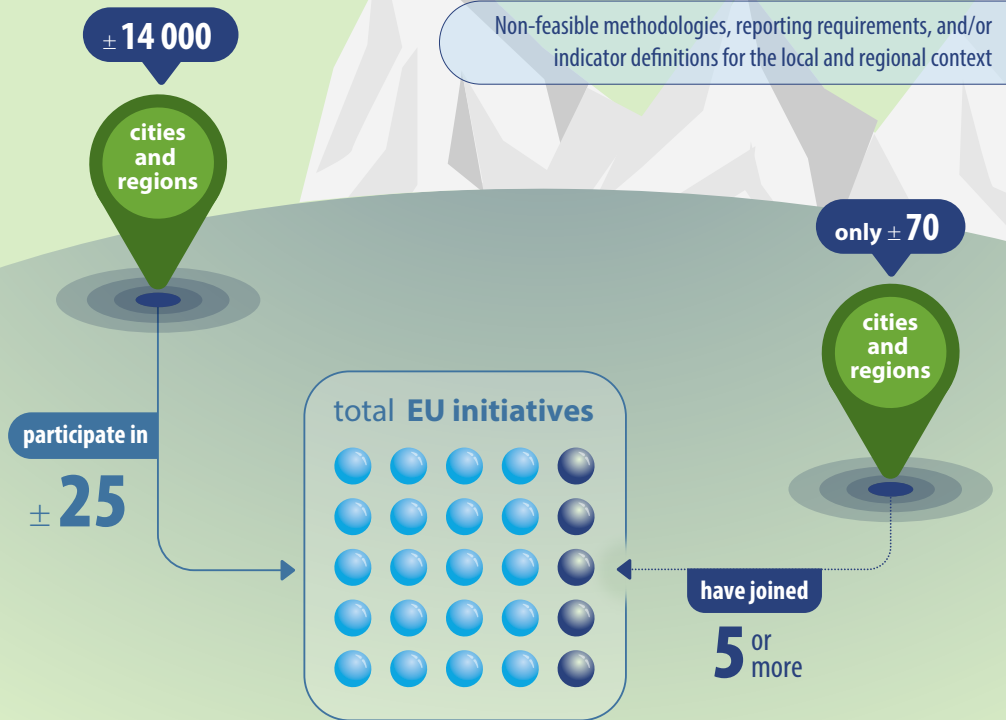
the
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A multitude of EU initiatives provides support to local and regional authorities for the European Green Deal implementation

EU initiatives uptake by local and regional authorities



Main challenges for local and regional authorities to stay engaged in the initiatives

- Vague objectives and/or unclear communication and information from the initiative
- Lack of time, resources, and capacity to absorb all materials, comply with reporting requirements, and join activities
- Non-feasible methodologies, reporting requirements, and/or indicator definitions for the local and regional context

Local and regional authorities main expectations when joining the initiatives

- 01 have direct access to EU funding
- 02 gain knowledge and tools for strategic planning
- 03 improve internal mobilisation of politicians and actors

What is at stake?

EU initiatives need to ensure the right support and easier access to funding to all local and regional authorities in an inclusive manner

The European Committee of the Regions underlines that the road towards climate neutrality requires a deep transformation of regions and cities

We call on the EU Institutions

- to encourage a general shift in focus from EU debates on Green Deal policy objectives and planning processes towards implementing projects and prototyping pragmatic solutions on the ground
- to launch a new EU chapter on local and regional policies for the Green Deal, building on the experience of the Green Deal Going Local initiative of the European Committee of the Regions and embedding its narrative and principles in all major EU funding and supporting programmes
- to better connect political pledges with implementation mechanisms and direct funding in order to ensure that political commitments can be followed by consequent actions
- to develop long-term and structural synergies between supporting EU initiatives including vertical integration of the initiatives into national and regional supportive frameworks for local authorities
- to provide sufficient flexibility to adapt to certain characteristics and tailor the support to local and regional needs considering the particular DNA of each city and region and not trying to squeeze them into a "one size fits all" approach

We further encourage the European Commission

- to upscale the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy to become the umbrella initiative by exploiting stronger synergies with other initiatives as well as to further support the EU Mission on Climate Neutral and Smart Cities, in order to strengthen multilevel governance
- to put further emphasis on smart monitoring systems to track progress also in areas such as biodiversity, water management or circular economy. These monitoring systems should be fully aligned with national requirements, possibly based on tangible outcomes, and should not create additional burdens to local and regional authorities
- to develop dedicated learning environments based on the model of the URBACT communities to foster replication in as many cities and regions as possible redesigning the conditions for mutually reinforcing capacity-building and financial assistance
- to set up a single platform connecting the different initiatives acting as entry point for all local and regional authorities in order to give them easier access to the initiatives
- to work towards a new shared visual identity to make sure the EU identity is strongly reflected and easily recognisable in the initiative(s) branding



The proliferation of initiatives and commitments makes it more difficult for many regions and cities to take up the opportunities offered by the EU due to the complex framework, procedures and lack of administrative capacity.

We call for a simplified and more integrated framework where EU initiatives are complementary, clearly linked to policy objectives, complement each other without duplication and have dedicated funding streams”

Andries GRYFFROY (BE/EA)
Opinion Rapporteur



European Committee
of the Regions

The opinion was adopted on 6 July 2023 at the plenary session
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Online version



Created in 1994, after the entry into force of the Maastricht Treaty, the European Committee of the Regions is the EU's assembly of 329 regional and local representatives from all 27 Member States, representing over 447 million Europeans.

Its main objectives are to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council have to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the Court of Justice of the European Union as a means of upholding EU law where there are breaches to the subsidiarity principle or failures to respect regional or local authorities.

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