

CITIES IN THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

OPPORTUNITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES





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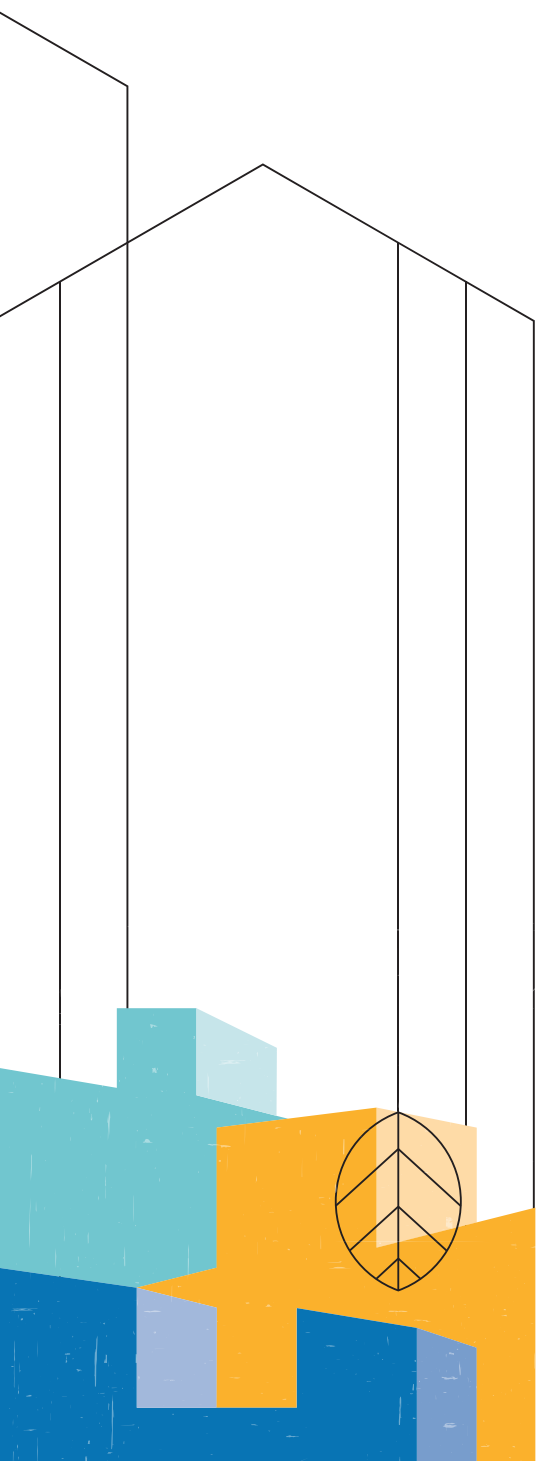
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A WORD FROM OUR NETWORKS

Cities, towns and regions are at the heart of the European Green Deal.

Without the long history of their engagement with climate neutrality, transforming urban and regional life, including living conditions, energy use, housing, transportation, production, and consumption for millions of Europeans, the deal would be nothing more than a pipe dream. Local and regional governments have not only enabled but also shaped the Green Deal and are now cornerstones of bringing it to life.

The European Green Deal recognises the key role local and regional governments have as:

- Planning authorities for the ecological and economic transformation of their territories
- Partners of member states in developing and implementing policies
- Key sources of information and resources for residents, providing guidance and trusted advice
- Actors in decarbonising their own buildings and services and leading by example.

The European Green Deal is also at the heart of local and regional action, where it represents an opportunity to enable and accelerate their work in boosting sustainability, prosperity and wellbeing for all people. As networks representing Europe's local governments, we call for an ambitious and appropriate transposition of the EU legislation into national laws over the coming years, and for comprehensive financial and technical support from the EU and member states to ensure local governments can seize these opportunities. Along with the many new planning obligations, local and regional governments must have the means to implement the green transition.

Supporting local authorities in planning and investing for the implementation of the European Green Deal is the only way to create a climate neutral, resilient Europe. This would generate local investment opportunities for European industry and SMEs, but also allow us to share the benefits of the transition with everyone in Europe for a fair and just future.

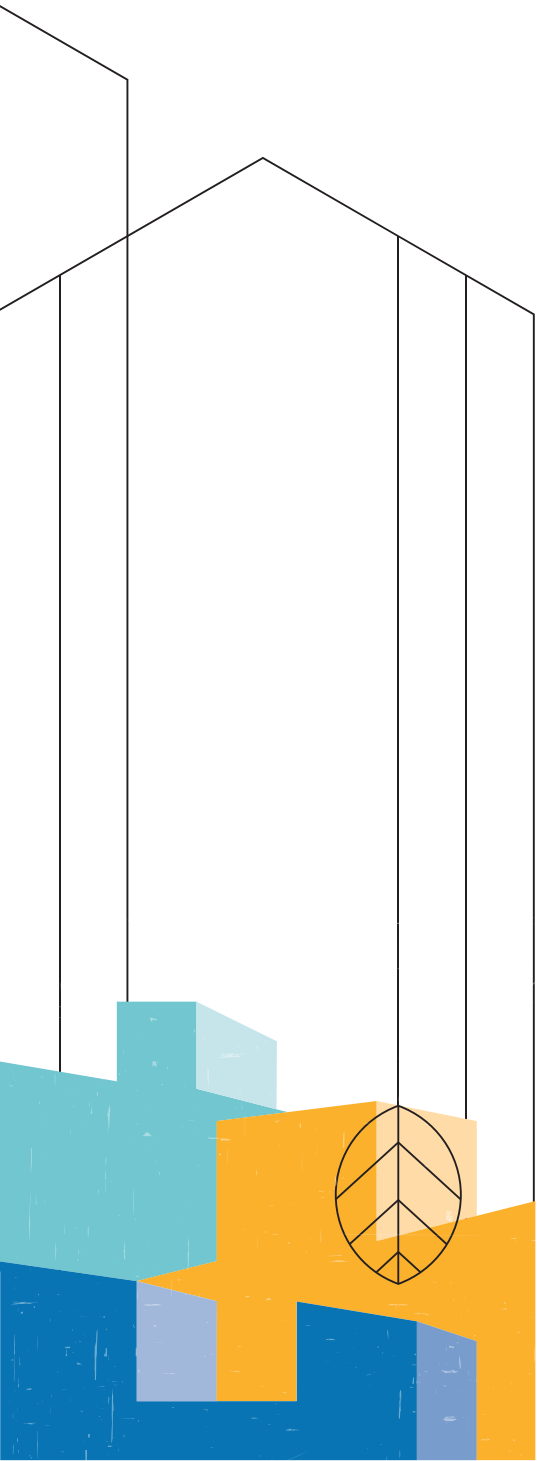


Energy Cities' mission is to empower cities and citizens to shape and transition to futureproof cities. We showcase concrete alternatives deployed by cities, we advocate to change politic and economic governance at all levels, and we foster a wide cultural change leading to a futureproofed society. Energy Cities community is made up of local leaders of thousands of cities in 30 European countries.

www.energy-cities.eu

Eurocities wants to make cities places where everyone can enjoy a good quality of life, is able to move around safely, access quality and inclusive public services and benefit from a healthy environment. We do this by networking more than 200 larger European cities, which together represent some 150 million people across 38 countries, and by gathering evidence of how policy making impacts on people to inspire other cities and EU decision makers.

www.eurocities.eu



INTRODUCTION

The essential role of local governments has been increasingly recognised in the legislation of the European Green Deal. The objective of this publication is to list the new opportunities and obligations for local governments within the Green Deal, and to raise awareness on the key role they will be called upon to play.

The European Green Deal is the European Commission's ambitious plan to achieve EU climate neutrality by 2050, aligning with the Paris Agreement goals. A cornerstone of the European Green Deal is the EU Climate Law which sets an intermediate target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55% compared to 1990 levels by 2030. This broad initiative requires revising current laws and introducing new directives across sectors such as energy, climate, environment, mobility, nature, buildings, agriculture, and industry. Local authorities play a critical role across these sectors due to their responsibilities, leadership, and geographic scope.

For instance, in the energy sector, cities are called upon to enhance energy efficiency and integrate renewable energy sources, as highlighted by directives like the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive. These include obligations for public buildings to reduce energy consumption and opportunities to develop infrastructures that are powered, heated, and cooled by renewable energy.

Similarly, the social climate fund offers cities financial support to mitigate the social impacts of climate policies, providing opportunities to invest in energy-efficient housing and sustainable transport systems that benefit all residents, especially the most vulnerable.

There has been a push to pass much of the Green Deal legislation, particularly in the energy sector, before the European elections in June 2024. However, certain areas, like mobility and air quality, may face delays. Member states have two years to transpose the directives into national legislation and then begin implementation. However, European legislative texts always leave certain room for manoeuvre to the member states, with exceptions and possible interpretations. It will therefore be important to monitor how the Green Deal is translated in each member state.



ENERGY

ENERGY EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE



ENERGY

THE REVISED DIRECTIVE AIMS TO INCREASE THE EU AMBITION ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE NEW EU HEADLINE TARGETS OF A 55% EMISSIONS REDUCTION BY 2030. IT ESTABLISHES 'ENERGY EFFICIENCY FIRST' AS A FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF EU ENERGY POLICY.

This Directive entered into force on 10 October 2023 and is to be transposed into national legislation by the end of 2025.

The revised **Directive** is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu. And the European Commission published guidelines on the interpretation of the Article 5, 6 and 7 for the public sector and buildings. It includes a table summarising all public sector obligation and timeline.

Energy Cities proposes an **EU tracker** on the State of Play for local heating and cooling plans in the 27 EU Member States. Have a look to know how your country ranks and take inspiration from other states on transposing the new heating and cooling obligation.

The Directive introduces an **obligation for the public sector combined to achieve an annual energy consumption reduction of 1.9%** (Article 5). This target is indicative before 11 October 2027 and mandatory after. It does not apply to public bodies in local administrative units with a population of less than 50 000 until 31 December 2026, and it does not apply to public bodies in local administrative units with a population of less than 5 000 inhabitants until 31 December 2029. In addition, local authorities have to introduce energy efficiency measures in their long-term planning tools.

Public bodies have an obligation to annually renovate at least 3% of the total floor area of the heated and/or cooled buildings they own with a useful floor area of over 250 M2 (including local governments) to be transformed into at least nearly zero energy buildings or zero-emission buildings (Article 6). For member states, the choice of which buildings to renovate can be influenced by cost-effectiveness and technical feasibility.

They can also introduce building renovation passports for the same 3% of the building stock yearly and delay the requirements to achieve NZEB standards until 2040.

For buildings not owned by public bodies, they should negotiate energy improvements for example at trigger points, such as an extension of the lease, with the owner.

Member States will be able to choose which buildings to include in the 3% renovation requirement with due consideration of cost-effectiveness and technical feasibility. **Less stringent rules can be applied to several categories of buildings**, such as buildings officially protected because of their special architectural or historical merit and buildings used as places of worship and for religious activities, or service national defence purposes.

Social housing can be exempted where renovations are not cost neutral or would lead to rent increases not balanced by energy savings. Member states must ensure that **municipalities with at least more than 45,000 inhabitants prepare local heating and cooling plans**. Member states are required to support them financially and technically (Article 25.6).

To fight energy poverty, the Directive introduces a new requirement for a share of the end-use energy savings to be delivered among **people affected by energy poverty**, vulnerable customers, low-income households and, where applicable, people living in social housing. The share of savings will be determined by the proportion of households living in energy poverty as declared by Member States in their NECPs. (Article 24)

RENEWABLE ENERGY DIRECTIVE



THE DIRECTIVE AIMS TO INCREASE THE SHARE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE EUROPEAN ENERGY MIX. IT INCLUDES A NEW TARGET OF 45%, WITH THE MINIMUM BINDING TARGET OF 42.5% (PREVIOUSLY 40%) BY 2030. THE REVISED DIRECTIVE ALSO DEFINES SUB-TARGETS FOR SPECIFIC SECTORS. FOR EXAMPLE, AT LEAST A 49% RENEWABLE ENERGY SHARE IN BUILDINGS SHOULD BE ACHIEVED BY 2030.

This directive entered into force on 20 November 2023 and is to be transposed into national legislation by 20 November 2025.

The revised **Directive** is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu

The EU Funded project SCCALE 203050 developed a **Community Energy municipal guide**.

The European Commission published **guidance on designating renewables acceleration areas**, highlighting the important role of local authorities and communities in this process.

Cities and regions must include renewables in their planning. They are encouraged to develop heating and cooling infrastructures powered by renewables, consult the network operators and participate in energy communities and self-consumption initiatives (Article 15).

As the public sector must lead by example, member states can provide access to third parties to use the roofs of public and mixed public-private buildings, including local and regional buildings, for renewable energy production.

Moreover, member states should map the deployment of renewable energy before 21 February 2026 and determine 'renewables acceleration areas' in coordination with local and regional level (Article 15b).

It is also important to note that, since 21 February 2024, all renewable energy planning, construction and operation and the connection of such plants to the grid are presumed as being in the 'overriding public interest' (Article 16).

ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS DIRECTIVE



BUILDINGS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OVER ONE THIRD OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN THE EU. THIS DIRECTIVE AIMS TO IMPROVE THE ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS AND REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY 60% (COMPARED TO 2015) IN THE BUILDING SECTOR BY 2030 TO ACHIEVE A ZERO-EMISSION BUILDING STOCK BY 2050. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO INCREASE THE RATE OF RENOVATIONS, FACILITATE TARGETED INVESTMENTS IN THE SECTOR AND INTRODUCE MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE ENERGY POVERTY.

This directive entered into force on 28 May 2024 and must be transposed before 29 May 2026.

The revised Directive is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

The European Commission will provide guidelines for the establishment of one-stop shops.

On Energy Cities' website you can find a **guide** to implement one-stop shops in your city developed by the EU funded project "Innovate".

A paper on **cities social trends** is available on Eurocities' website.

Eurocities developed a **report on Housing and Homelessness**.

Eurocities produced recommendations on "**Better buildings for climate-neutral cities**".

National building renovation plans must be developed by member states to reduce energy consumption.

For residential buildings, a trajectory approach was adopted, asking member states to calculate a trajectory representing a progressive decrease of the average energy consumption (2020-2050). They will have to ensure that residential buildings decrease their energy consumption **by 16% by 2030 and between 20-22% by 2035**.

Moreover, **55% of the decrease of the average primary energy use is achieved through renovation of worst-performing buildings**.

They should also include a trajectory for non-residential buildings that considers but does not necessarily prioritise the worst-performing buildings. These provisions for non-residential buildings include **renovating by 2030 the 16% worst-performing segment, and renovating by 2033 the 26% worst-performing segment**. Flexibilities and exemptions are foreseen for worship places, officially protected/heritage buildings, holiday homes and temporary buildings.

These **plans must be elaborated in consultation with local governments** and must include targets for 2030, 2040 and 2050. These should be accompanied by a plan to address barriers to financing and workforce (Article 3).

As of 2028 all new public buildings owned by public authorities and as of 2030 all new buildings will be required to be Zero Energy Buildings (which includes a requirement to have no fossil fuels on-site) (Article 7).

Subsidies for the installation of stand-alone boilers powered by fossil fuels will not be allowed as of 1 January 2025, and member states will be required to set out measures for the phase-out of fossil fuels in heating and cooling with a view to **a complete phase-out of boilers powered by fossil fuels by 2040**. [Guidance](#) from the European Commission have been published.

Also, from 2030 onwards, member states must include the estimated **life-cycle Global Warming Potential (GWP)** in the energy performance certificate for all new buildings. This is calculated by combining the greenhouse gas emissions embodied in construction products with direct and indirect emissions from the use stage and is expressed in kgCO₂e/m² (Article 7 and Annex III).

One of the main measures is that (where feasible) **public building roofs must be equipped with solar panels** in existing buildings with a floor area larger than 2000m² from 2028, before 2029 if larger than 750m², and 2031 if larger than 250m². Moreover, from 2028, this will be required for existing non-residential buildings which undergo any renovation that requires a permit (Article 9).

In Article 12, **new rules concerning infrastructures in buildings for sustainable mobility** were introduced:

By 2028, all non-residential buildings with more than twenty parking spaces must have at least one recharging point for every ten parking spaces.

Buildings owned or occupied by public bodies shall be pre-cabled for at least one in two parking spaces by 1 January 2033.

Bicycle parking spaces should represent at least 15% of the building's user capacity. This includes spaces for bicycles with larger dimensions (e.g. cargo bikes).

This Directive also mandates **one-stop shops for energy performance of buildings** that target all actors involved in building renovations to be rolled out for every 80,000 inhabitants or at least one per region (Article 18). Other options include at least one in areas where the average age of the building stock is lower than the national, or where member states will implement integrated district renovation programmes. There is also an alternative based on proximity: in locations that can be reached within 90 minutes of average travel time.

According to the directive, **Members States must support training for local authorities, grant access to public funding for local authorities** and local authorities should have access to the energy performance data of buildings in their territory to support heating and cooling planning (**Article 17 & 19**). This will be very important for local governments' capacities to implement all new measures mandated by the EU.

ELECTRICITY MARKET DESIGN DIRECTIVE



THE EU AIMS TO BUILD A RENEWABLE-BASED ENERGY SYSTEM WITH LOWER ENERGY BILLS AND IMPROVED CONSUMER PROTECTION (INCLUDING PUBLIC AUTHORITIES) WITH MORE PRICE STABILITY.

The text agreed upon in the interinstitutional negotiations (trilogues) in December 2023 is expected to be adopted in the plenary vote in the European Parliament in March 2024.

It shall be transposed into national legislation two years after its formal adoption.

The revised Directive will be available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu. The provisional agreement is [available here](#).

To learn more about Power Purchase Agreements, check the [briefing](#) on the website of Energy Cities.

The Directive outlines the option for local public authorities to invest in energy sharing (self-consumption) with other customers like households or small- and medium-sized enterprises in a limited geographical area. An energy sharing organiser must be designated; it can be a local public authority (Article 15). Member states shall ensure that energy sharing projects owned by public authorities make shared electricity accessible to vulnerable or energy poor customers or citizens (at least 10% on average of the energy shared).

It also lays out an obligation (Article 50(4a)) for European Transmission System Operators (TSOs) to offer clear and transparent information on the capacity available for new connections and update users on the status of their request. Moreover, TSOs/DSOs must collaborate in publishing information on the capacity available for new connections (Article 53(3)). This aims to respond to the need for more transparency expressed by municipalities as relations with Distribution System Operators (DSOs).

The Directive establishes two types of contracts: Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs - Article 2(77) and Article 19a) and contracts for difference (CfDs - Article 2(76) and Article 19b) to support new Renewable Energy Sources installations. Such contracts would encourage forward markets and the development of renewable energies, offering security to investors, but limiting profits by redistributing them to end consumers. The Directive foresees the possibility of state support for new nuclear facilities via CfDs and already existing coal power plants as part of 'already authorised capacity mechanisms' and if these are 'duly justified'.

GAS PACKAGE (DIRECTIVE & REGULATION)



THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THIS DIRECTIVE AND REGULATION IS TO ENABLE AND FACILITATE THE TRANSITION BY ENSURING THE RAMP-UP OF A HYDROGEN MARKET AND AN EFFICIENT MARKET FOR GAS, INCLUDING GREENHOUSE GASES. IT ALSO PROVIDES SOME LEGAL BASIS FOR THE DECARBONISATION OF THE GAS MARKET, INCLUDING GAS DECOMMISSIONING. IN THE PACKAGE, THE LOCAL LEVEL IS MAINLY MENTIONED IN THE DIRECTIVE.

In April 2024, the Parliament voted on the adoption of the revised gas package. The revised package is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

The regulation will become directly applicable six months after its publication.

As regards the directive, member states will have two years to adapt their national legislation to the provisions of the directive.

There is an obligation for gas transmission system operators and hydrogen transmission network operators to regularly submit a **ten-year network development plan**. In this process, relevant distribution system operators for gas, hydrogen, electricity, and heat, including those owned and managed by local governments, must be consulted (Article 51).

Hydrogen distribution network operators and gas distribution network operators must consider the local heating and cooling plans developed by local authorities according to Article 25.6 of the Energy Efficiency Directive when developing their hydrogen distribution network development plan (Article 52) and their natural gas network decommissioning plans (Article 52b).

For the development of these plans, other distribution operators, including electricity and heat, must also be consulted.

Hydrogen distribution network development plans shall include an assessment of the existing and potential future needs of hard-to-decarbonise end users and an assessment of the options for repurposing natural gas pipelines. These must be submitted every four years.

Natural gas network decommissioning plans must be developed by natural gas distribution operators (including municipally owned ones) when a reduction in gas demand is expected. They shall identify the required infrastructure adaptations and prioritise demand-side solutions that do not require new infrastructure investments. These plans shall be updated at least every four years and shall cover a ten-year period. Distribution system operators serving less than 45,000 connected customers may be exempted from the development of such decommissioning plans (Article 52b).



SOCIAL

SOCIAL CLIMATE FUND



SOCIAL

THIS REGULATION ESTABLISHES THE SOCIAL CLIMATE FUND (THE 'FUND') FOR THE PERIOD FROM 2026 TO 2032. TO COINCIDE WITH THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE ETS FOR THE BUILDINGS AND ROAD TRANSPORT SECTORS. THE FUND SHALL PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO MEMBER STATES (THROUGH A PRE- DETERMINED FINANCIAL ALLOCATION) FOR THE MEASURES AND INVESTMENTS INCLUDED IN THEIR SOCIAL CLIMATE PLANS (THE 'PLANS').

Proposed in 2023 as part of the Fit for 55 package, the Social Climate Fund has been agreed by the legislators in the end of 2022.

As a performance-based instrument, member states need to submit Social Climate Plans to the European Commission to be eligible for the Fund.

The European Commission published a support note for the implementation of the Social Climate Fund including a list of local good practices for cost effective measures and investments

Further guidance on the Social Climate Plans is expected from the European Commission in January 2025.

In December 2024, the Local Alliance published a briefing on the regional and local dimension and state of play of the consultations on the Social Climate Plans, covering 14 Member States.

The Regulation is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

Each Member State must draft a Social Climate Plan and submit it to the EU Commission by 30 June 2025. As with the Recovery and Resilience Plans, these will be assessed and discussed in an iterative process with the member states.

These plans must contain measures and investments aimed particularly at alleviating the impact of the new Emissions Trading System proposed for buildings and road transport and curtailing energy poverty amongst vulnerable households, transport users and micro-enterprises. Eligible measures and investments include temporary direct income support to vulnerable households and structural support measures such as building renovation and energy-efficient housing, affordable energy-efficient systems, including the electrification of heating and cooling, integration of energy from renewable sources, incentivising active consumption (through energy communities, energy sharing, etc), zero and

low emission mobility and transport, and education and awareness campaigns on cost-effective energy efficiency measures.

Article 4 and Article 5 of the legislation require Member States to conduct public consultations with regional and local governments, as well as with social actors and relevant stakeholders. The Social Climate Plan should include a summary of how stakeholders' feedback is reflected in the Plan. Article 22 further stipulates that Member States ensure complementarity, synergy, coherence and consistency among different instruments at the EU, national and local or regional levels, both in the planning phase and during implementation.

The Fund presents a key opportunity for cities to support a fair climate transition through addressing energy and transport poverty, for example through targeted programmes that prioritise vulnerable population groups.



CLIMATE

EUROPEAN CLIMATE PACT



CLIMATE

THE EUROPEAN CLIMATE PACT IS A MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE UNITED IN THE TRANSITION TOWARDS CLIMATE NEUTRALITY. IT IS OPEN TO ALL INDIVIDUALS AS WELL AS ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS ASSOCIATIONS OR CITIES.

To learn more about the Climate Pact, check out the website: www.climate-pact.europa.eu

Cities can engage in the European Climate Pact by joining as members, together with other partners such as engaged citizens or organisations throughout Europe. The Climate Pact offers resources to learn and exchange about climate change, develop and implement collective solutions, and take inspiration from local examples.

Policymakers and local leaders such as mayors can become Ambassadors of the Climate Pact.



ENVIRONMENT

EU NATURE RESTORATION REGULATION



ENVIRONMENT

THE REGULATION HAS AN OVERARCHING RESTORATION OBJECTIVE FOR THE LONG-TERM RECOVERY OF NATURE IN THE EU'S LAND AND SEA AREAS WITH BINDING RESTORATION TARGETS FOR SPECIFIC HABITATS AND SPECIES. THESE MEASURES SHOULD COVER AT LEAST 20% OF THE EU'S LAND AND SEA AREAS BY 2030, AND ULTIMATELY ALL ECOSYSTEMS IN NEED OF RESTORATION BY 2050. IT IS THE FIRST LAW OF ITS KIND TO FOCUS SPECIFICALLY ON THE RECOVERY OF NATURE IN EU MEMBER STATES (AND NOT JUST THE PROTECTION).

The Regulation was adopted by the European Parliament on 27 February and in the Environment Council on 17 June and came into force 20 days after its publication in the EU Official Journal

Cities and regions' **open letter** on need for EU Nature Restoration Regulation.

The **adopted law**.

Member states are obliged to ensure **no net loss in the total national area of urban green space and urban tree canopy cover by 2030** (with the possibility to exclude urban ecosystem areas in which the share of urban green space in urban centres and urban clusters exceeds 45% and the share of urban tree canopy cover therein exceeds 10%). **Post 2030**, they must **ensure an increase in both urban green space and tree canopy cover** (Article 8) until satisfactory levels are reached; these 'levels' are to be determined by member states following guidance from the European Commission

Member states have set a target to **restore at least 25,000 km of rivers to free-flowing rivers within the Union by 2030**. To achieve this, they are obliged to create an inventory of artificial barriers to the connectivity of surface waters and identify the barriers that need to be removed (Article 9).

The provisional agreement sets the target to **reverse the decline of pollinator populations at the latest by 2030** and achieve thereafter an increase in pollinator populations (Article 10).

Article 13 on the planting of 3 billion additional trees: when implementing Articles 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, member states **shall aim to** contribute to the commitment of planting at least three billion additional trees across Europe by 2030.

Article 14 on national restoration plans outlines that member states shall determine and map urban ecosystem areas as referred to in Article 8 for all their cities and towns and suburbs. They may aggregate the urban ecosystem areas of two or more adjacent cities and/or towns and suburbs into one urban ecosystem area common to those cities and/or towns and suburb. According to article 14.5, member states shall set satisfactory levels of green space and tree canopy stipulated in Article 8 by 2030 at the latest.

EU SOIL MONITORING & RESILIENCE DIRECTIVE



THE NEW DIRECTIVE SETS OUT MEASURES TO MONITOR AND ASSESS THE HEALTH OF SOILS. IT AIMS TO ADDRESS KEY SOIL THREATS IN THE EU, SUCH AS EROSION, FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES, LOSS OF SOIL ORGANIC MATTER, SALINISATION, CONTAMINATION, COMPACTION, SEALING, AS WELL AS LOSS OF SOIL BIODIVERSITY. IT PROVIDES A MONITORING FRAMEWORK AND ASKS MEMBER STATES TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS POTENTIAL CONTAMINATED SITES.

On 10 April 2024, Parliament adopted its position at first reading, meaning the file could proceed beyond the end of the previous mandate, but a second reading will be needed. The Parliament weakened the provisions within the proposal, removing obligations for member states to define and implement sustainable management practices, for example.

The Council adopted its General Approach in June 2024 and trilogues started in October.

Member states shall designate the **competent authorities responsible** at the appropriate level for carrying out the measures outlined in this Directive. Member states shall designate one competent authority for each soil district established in accordance with Article 4 (Articles 4 and 5 Commission proposal).

Member states shall establish a **monitoring framework and monitor soil health and land take for each soil district** including specific soil health indicators and land take and soil sealing indicators (Article 6 Commission proposal).

Member states shall assess the soil health in all their soil districts based on the data collected and assess the impact of land take and soil sealing on the loss of ecosystem services (Article 9 Commission proposal).



WATER

URBAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT DIRECTIVE



WATER

THE EU'S URBAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT DIRECTIVE CURRENTLY IN FORCE IS MORE THAN 30 YEARS OLD. SINCE ITS ADOPTION IN 1991, THE QUALITY OF EUROPEAN RIVERS, LAKES AND SEAS HAS IMPROVED. YET EXISTING POLLUTION STILL NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED AND IS NOT COVERED BY THE CURRENT REGULATION. TO ADDRESS THIS, THE COMMISSION HAS PROPOSED AN UPDATE TO THE DIRECTIVE.

On 29 January 2024, the Council and the European Parliament's negotiators reached a provisional political agreement on a proposal to review the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.

This agreement must still be approved by both co-legislators.

Provision is made for the Directive to enter into force 20 days after its publication in the Official Journal.

Eurocities' **statement** is available on its website.

The Directive foresees that the urban wastewater treatment sector could play a critical role in significantly reducing GHG emissions and helping the EU achieve its climate neutrality objective. It introduced an energy neutrality target, meaning that, **by 2045, urban wastewater treatment plants will be required to produce energy from renewable sources** (Article 11 of the new proposal on the energy neutrality of urban wastewater treatment plants).

It also extended the **obligation to apply secondary treatment** (i.e. the removal of biodegradable organic matter) to urban wastewater before it is discharged into the environment to all agglomerations of 1,000 population equivalent (p.e.) or more by 2035 (Article 6 Commission proposal).

The co-legislators also aligned the thresholds and timelines for **tertiary treatment by 2039** (i.e. the removal of nitrogen and phosphorus) and **quaternary treatment by 2045** (the removal of a broad spectrum of micropollutants) in larger plants of 150,000 p.e. and above.

Tertiary and quaternary treatment obligations by 2045 will also apply to smaller agglomerations of 10,000 p.e. and above that discharge in areas meeting certain risk-based criteria (Articles 7 and 8 of the (new) Commission proposal).

To cover the additional costs entailed by quaternary treatment and in accord with the 'polluter pays principle', **producers of pharmaceuticals and cosmetics causing urban wastewater pollution will contribute a minimum of 80% of the costs of this additional treatment** through an extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme (Article 10 of the new proposal on extended producer responsibility).



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Ongoing negotiations of the trilogue started on 5 February 2024.

The co-legislators agreed on some provisions, but the most sensitive items remain to be discussed.

The Belgian Presidency is confident they could reach a deal before the EU elections.

You can read Eurocities position on the Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive.

PACKAGING & PACKAGING WASTE DIRECTIVE



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

THE NEW PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE REGULATION, A REVISION OF AN EARLIER DIRECTIVE, WILL SET TARGETS FOR REDUCING AND RECYCLING PACKAGING THAT WILL STIPULATE CERTAIN LEVELS OF RECYCLABILITY AND RECYCLED MATERIALS IN NEW PACKAGING.

Cities very important stakeholders for reaching the targets to be set in the regulation, as they are responsible for setting up collection schemes for packaging waste. They can also leverage procurement to demand packaging in line with the criteria set in the regulation.

The contents of the Directive will be updated after an agreement is reached in trilogue.

CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS REGULATION (CPR) (2022)



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

ON 30 MARCH 2022, THE COMMISSION ADOPTED A PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION LAYING DOWN HARMONISED CONDITIONS FOR THE MARKETING OF CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS. IT WAS PART OF A PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS AIMED AT MAKING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS THE NORM IN THE EU, BOOSTING CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODELS AND EMPOWERING CONSUMERS FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION.

In December 2023, the Council and Parliament reached a provisional deal on CPR. It still needs to be endorsed by both institutions.

No transposition is needed for Regulations. It would require between 12 and 20 months to implement the measures.

At first, there will be a period of transition from the previous legal framework to the new framework that will last 15 years from the date of entry into force of the new regulation (until 2039).

On the Eurocities website, you can find stories of cities working with **reduce reuse and recycle to rebuild**

The new EU Construction Products Regulation (CPR) will provide local authorities with access to reliable product performance information, to compare products across different manufacturers and countries. This harmonised approach empowers local governments to set performance requirements, facilitating better informed decision-making for public projects and infrastructure development.

The revised Regulation includes the mandatory declaration of the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of construction products for their life cycle. The list will be extended to other indicators after four years and will cover all life cycle indicators after six years.

It also provides for the creation of a construction products digital passport system, similar to those proposed in the eco-design regulation.

The Commission will be empowered to establish mandatory minimum environmental sustainability requirements through delegated acts for the public procurement of construction products to incentivise the supply of and demand for environmentally sustainable products.

However, the revised act underdelivers when it comes to how the sustainability measures should be regulated, as the setting of those measures will continue to mostly be set out by industry-led standardisation processes, with limited oversight from EU institutions or local authorities. On top, the level of ambition will likely remain low and slow to deliver on the necessary climate measures at the rate the sector needs to decarbonise.

WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

THE REVISION OF THE WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE TARGETS TEXTILES AND FOOD TO ENSURE THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THESE TWO SECTORS. THE PROPOSAL AIMS TO BRING ABOUT A MORE CIRCULAR AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TEXTILE WASTE, IN LINE WITH THE VISION OF THE EU STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE AND CIRCULAR TEXTILES.

In the European Parliament, the plenary vote of the ENVI Committee is scheduled for March 2024.

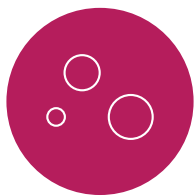
The Belgian Presidency aims to reach an agreement with the member states before the end of Presidency in June 2024.

Trilogues may start before the EU 2024 elections but will resume with the new European Parliament.

The Commission proposed compulsory and standardised Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems for textiles across all EU member states. Producers will bear the costs associated with textile waste management (member states will be obliged to collect textiles separately by 1 January 2025) with a calculation of the costs based on the environmental performance of textiles.

In parallel, the Commission proposed that member states reduce food waste in processing and manufacturing by 10% and jointly at retail and consumption (restaurants, food services and households) by 30% (per capita) by 2030.

The contents of the Directive will be updated after an agreement is reached in trilogue.



AIR QUALITY

EU AMBIENT AIR QUALITY DIRECTIVE



AIR QUALITY

THE NEW AMBIENT AIR QUALITY DIRECTIVE IS CURRENTLY UNDER REVISION TO UPDATE THE EU AIR QUALITY OBJECTIVES IN ACCORD WITH THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING, ESPECIALLY THE LATEST WHO RECOMMENDATIONS ON SAFE LEVELS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN HEALTH AND BIODIVERSITY. THE REVISION INCLUDES NEW POLLUTANTS TO BE REGULATED, MORE BINDING AIR QUALITY TARGETS, FURTHER ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR CITIZENS AND NGOS, AND UPDATED MONITORING AND MODELLING REQUIREMENTS TO BETTER TRACK AIR POLLUTION IN CITIES.

The European Parliament and Council reached a political agreement on the text in March 2024. However, an ultimate vote in Parliament is necessary before the final text is endorsed by Member States, which should happen in Autumn 2024. From then on, Member States will have two years to transpose the directive into national legislation.

Eurocities' recommendations on the proposal for a revised Ambient Air Quality Directive is available on its website.

The following are some of the most important measures extracted from the final text agreed by the co-legislators:

Member States have to designate the **competent authorities and define zones, territorial units and agglomeration** for air quality management purposes (art 5).

Strengthened **EU air quality targets** by 2030 imply necessary updates to **air quality plans** in cities and regions to meet the specifications of the new ambition (Article 13, Annex I). Cities having a competence on air quality will also be expected to prepare **air quality roadmaps** to ensure attainment of the air quality objectives at the attainment deadline (art 19).

New indicative **measures to abate air pollution** in cities are also proposed to diminish the impact of certain sources of air pollution in urban areas (Article 19 & Annex VIII B.2 a-f).

In terms of monitoring, **monitoring supersites** will have to be installed in urban areas in order to measure the concentration of a wide range of pollutants including pollutants that are not currently regulated such as ultra fine particles (art 10).

Citizens and NGOs will also have more legal ground to challenge air quality plans, which may imply more court cases in that area as well (Chapter VII).



MOBILITY

EURO 7 REGULATION



MOBILITY

EURO 7 IS THE LATEST GENERATION OF AIR QUALITY STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO MOTOR VEHICLES. THESE STANDARDS ARE EXPECTED TO FURTHER CONTRIBUTE TO THE REDUCTION OF TRAFFIC POLLUTION IN CITIES.

The regulation will be available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu. The **provisional agreement is** already available.

Depending on the type of vehicles, entry into force will occur during the period between 2026 and 2029.

Cities will be able to apply these new standards to better plan their air pollution trajectory and conduct modelling exercises. In addition, they will be able to employ the new standards as a basis for defining a new criterion of low emission zones.

The Euro 7 regulation will tackle pollutants from traffic that remain unaddressed so far, such as tyre or brake wear particles. This will constitute the highest volume of air pollution emitted by zero-emission vehicles in the future (Article 4 and Annex I).

REGULATION ON CO₂ EMISSION PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR CARS & VANS



MOBILITY

THE CO₂ REGULATION SETS THE APPLICABLE CO₂ EMISSIONS LIMITS FOR NEW CARS AND VANS PLACED ON THE EUROPEAN MARKET. THE REGULATION ALSO INCLUDES A PHASE-OUT DATE FOR THE SALE OF NEW VEHICLES RUNNING ON A COMBUSTION ENGINE IN 2035.

The Regulation will enter into force in 2024. New CO₂ emission reduction targets applicable for carmakers will be introduced in 2025, 2030 and 2035.

The revised **regulation** is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

While transport and road transport represent a high share of the total volume of CO₂ emissions in the EU (transport represents 25% of the total volume of CO₂ emissions), the regulation is expected to drastically reduce the emissions of the sector, contributing to the EU climate neutrality targets (Article 1).

Besides reducing CO₂ emissions, the market boost of zero-emission vehicles underpinned by the new regulation will also reduce traffic air pollution in cities drastically and noise pollution to some extent.

REGULATION ON CO₂ EMISSION STANDARDS FOR HEAVY-DUTY VEHICLES



THE NEW REGULATION SETS CO₂ EMISSION LIMITS FOR HEAVY-DUTY VEHICLES, I.E. TRUCKS, BUSES, LORRIES, COACHES, ETC.

With the formal adoption of the agreement, the regulation will be available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

The **provisional agreement** is already available.

The regulation will contribute to the deployment of zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles, providing significant CO₂ and air pollutant emissions reduction in cities (Article 3a).

The new regulation also includes a phase-out date in 2035 for the sale of new internal combustion engine buses in the EU, thus only allowing local public transport authorities to procure zero-emission vehicles after that date (Art 3b).

ALTERNATIVE FUELS INFRASTRUCTURE REGULATION (AFIR)



THE NEW AFIR SETS TARGETS FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF AN ALTERNATIVE FUELS' INFRASTRUCTURE IN EUROPE. E.G.: ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS OR HYDROGEN REFUELLING STATIONS.

The regulation entered into force in 2023 and is applicable since April 2024. Deployment targets will become enforceable in 2025, 2027, 2030 and 2035.

The revised **regulation** is available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu.

The project **Move 21** can provide information on multimodal and interconnected hubs for freight and passenger transport in cities.

The USER-CHI project proposed a **handbook** on the Stations of the Future and will provide policy recommendation.

The targets set in the regulation are expected to boost the demand for electric vehicles, thus reducing CO₂ and air pollutant emission in cities (Articles, 3, 4, 6).

It is also expected that the targets be implemented at the local level, depending on the content of national deployment plans for which national authorities may consult local authorities (Article 14).

Specific targets for the deployment of charging points for heavy duty vehicles in 2025 (at least 900 kW) and 2030 (at least 1 800 kW) are set per urban node (Article 4). Similarly, a target of at least one publicly accessible hydrogen refuelling station is set for 2030, per urban node (Article 6).

TEN-T REGULATION



THE NEW TEN-T REGULATION SETS PRIORITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR TRANSPORT CORRIDORS IN EUROPE FOR ALL TRANSPORT MODES. IT ALSO EMPHASISES THE ROLE OF URBAN AUTHORITIES BY GRANTING SPECIAL STATUS TO A LIST OF 430+ 'URBAN NODES'. COMPRISING OF A CITY AT ITS CORE WITH MORE THAN 100.000 INHABITANTS OR THE BIGGEST CITY IN THE NUTS 2 REGION (EUROSTAT CLASSIFICATION).

With the formal adoption of the agreement, the regulation will be available on the website: www.eur-lex.europa.eu. The **provisional agreement** is already available.

More information can be found on the website of the **Move 21** project.

The regulation defines several obligations for the urban nodes:

- to develop Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) by December 2027;
- for authorities (cities and their functional urban areas) to report on the collection of sustainable mobility indicators by 2027;
- for authorities to equip their territory with a multimodal passenger hub in 2030 and a multimodal freight hub by 2040.

The status of urban nodes may also lead to improved involvement of urban authorities in the development of the transport infrastructure in Europe, while offering potentially better access to certain funding instruments, such as the TEN-T regulation (Art 40).

NOTES







