

Dr Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission;
Teresa Ribera Executive Vice-President
for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition;
Wopke Hoekstra Commissioner
for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth

Brussels, 30 June 2025

Subject: EU Mayors call for an ambitious domestic EU 2040 climate target

Dear President von der Leyen,

Dear Executive Vice-President Ribera,

Dear Commissioner Hoekstra,

As mayors of European cities, we write to you with a strong and united voice in support of a binding target to **reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 90% by 2040**, as highlighted by the [European Commission Impact Assessment on the 2040 target](#) and the [European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change \(ESABCC\)](#).

Our cities are at the forefront of the green transition. Every day, we implement policies that reduce emissions, scale up renewable energy, and invest in sustainable mobility and resilient infrastructure while engaging citizens and local businesses. These efforts are not abstract ambitions: they are concrete actions, policies and investments, rooted in local needs and already delivering tangible benefits for our citizens.

However, to succeed, we need a **clear and ambitious framework at the EU level**. A binding EU 2040 climate target is essential to provide long-term certainty to businesses, unlock investment, and accelerate innovation. Further delays in adopting such a target risk widening the investment gap and jeopardising our ability to meet the 2050 climate neutrality goal.

Cities are already doing more than their fair share to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. Many of us have adopted goals that go beyond national ambition and are delivering results faster than anticipated. Yet we cannot do this alone. National and EU frameworks must reflect the urgency and scale of the challenge and enable faster and deeper action from the local level. A binding 2040 target aligned with science will empower cities to continue leading, while ensuring coherence and ambition across all levels of governance.

This 90% reduction should be **achieved domestically**, through real emissions cuts within Europe. We must not rely on international credits or off-setting mechanisms. Europe must take full responsibility for its share of the global effort to tackle the climate crisis.

At the same time, this transition must be **just and inclusive**. No one should be left behind. That is why the efforts toward decarbonisation must be backed by strong and sustained EU support, including clear earmarking in the 2028-2034 Multiannual Financial Framework, to ensure that all regions and communities can access the resources, skills and infrastructure they need to succeed in the green transition.

Beyond necessity, climate neutrality is a strategic imperative. By investing in local renewable energy and energy efficiency, we strengthen Europe's security, competitiveness, and reduce our dependence on fossil fuel imports, which are all key to **ensuring Europe's strategic autonomy in a changing global context**.

We urge the European Commission to reaffirm its global climate leadership ahead of this crucial COP30 by adopting a robust, science-based 2040 climate target. Cities and regions are not just implementers of European climate goals; they are policymakers, investors, and first responders and they stand ready to co-create and drive forward the necessary sectoral legislation to implement the 2040 climate target. Leveraging multilevel governance structures and partnerships, cities and regions can play a key role in ensuring an ambitious and effective climate agenda. This approach will also strengthen the EU's credibility and influence on the global stage at a critical moment for international climate diplomacy.

We count on your leadership to ensure that Europe stays firmly on course towards climate neutrality, with cities leading the way on the ground.

Yours sincerely,

Jaume Collboni, Mayor of Barcelona and Eurocities Vice President

Matthias De Clercq, Mayor of Ghent and Eurocities President

Sharon Dijksma, Mayor of Utrecht

Haris Doukas, Mayor of Athens

Maider Etxebarria, Mayor of Vitoria-Gasteiz and Vice-President of ICLEI Europe

Lasse Frimand Jensen, Mayor of Aalborg and Vice-President of ICLEI Europe

Gunn Marit Helgesen, Councillor of Telemark County, President of KS, Association for all Local and Regional Authorities in Norway, CEMR President

Martin Horn, Mayor of Freiburg, in his capacity as the President of ICLEI Europe

Jevgeni Ossinovski, Mayor of Tallinn

Ricardo Rio, Mayor of Braga

Johanna Rolland, Mayor of Nantes, and President of Nantes Métropole

Luísa Salgueiro, Mayor of Matosinhos, President of National Association of Portuguese Municipalities (CEMR member) and member of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy - Europe Political Board

Giuseppe Sala, Mayor of Milan and Vice Chair of C40 Cities

Eirik Lae Solberg, Governing Mayor of Oslo and Vice Chair of C40 Cities

Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, Mayor of Malmö and President of ICLEI

Lars Henrik Weiss, Lord Mayor of Copenhagen

With the support of C40 Cities, CEMR, Eurocities and ICLEI Europe

