

June 18, 2025

Covenant of Mayors Guidebook: New 2025 Edition to Strengthen Local Climate Action

Key policies: *Covenant of Mayors, European Green Deal, European Climate Law, EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, EU Climate Neutrality Objective 2050, Horizon Europe Missions framework, EU Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change*

The **European Commission** has published a **new 2025 edition of the Covenant of Mayors guidebook**, providing updated and enhanced guidance to help cities and local authorities **reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate change and address energy poverty** at community level.

The revised guidebook supports local authorities participating in the **Covenant of Mayors**, one of Europe's flagship initiatives for climate action at local and regional level.

Empowering cities at the forefront of climate action

Cities and local authorities play a decisive role in tackling climate change. Since its launch in **2008**, the Covenant of Mayors has supported **more than 11,000 cities and local authorities across Europe** in developing and implementing **Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs)**.

The new guidebook reflects the growing responsibilities and ambitions of local governments as climate impacts intensify and social challenges, such as energy poverty, become more acute.

Updated guidance aligned with EU climate ambition

The 2025 edition takes into account the latest EU policy developments, notably the **European Green Deal** and the **European Climate Law**, under which Covenant signatories commit to:

- Achieving **climate neutrality by 2050**
- Increasing the **resilience** of their territories to climate impacts
- Addressing **energy poverty** in a systematic and socially just manner

The guidebook strengthens methodological guidance and ensures alignment with the EU's long-term climate objectives.

Stronger methodologies and practical tools

The updated guidebook introduces several important improvements, including:

- Enhanced guidance on **greenhouse gas emissions inventories**, including clearer scope and boundary definitions
- Improved methodologies for **climate risk and vulnerability assessments**, adaptable to local contexts, resources and priorities
- New and expanded approaches for **energy poverty assessment**, an increasingly pressing issue for many municipalities

The document provides **step-by-step instructions**, practical examples and answers to frequently asked questions, helping cities move from planning to implementation.

Beyond theory: supporting implementation on the ground

To complement the guidebook, **five technical documents** will be released, offering detailed instructions for the preparation and implementation of SECAPs.

These plans act as strategic roadmaps for addressing the Covenant of Mayors' three core pillars:

- **Climate change mitigation**
- **Adaptation to climate impacts**
- **Energy poverty alleviation**

The guidebook bridges the gap between theory and practice by showcasing **real-world examples from municipalities across Europe**, demonstrating how climate ambition can be translated into concrete local projects.

Synergies with EU Missions

The guidebook highlights examples from cities participating in two **Horizon Europe Missions**:

- **EU Mission on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities**
- **EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change**

These examples illustrate how local climate action can benefit from EU-level innovation, peer learning and mission-oriented approaches.

Ensuring methodological consistency

The **Joint Research Centre (JRC)** ensures methodological consistency across the Covenant of Mayors initiative. Since the first guidebook was published in **2011**, followed by an updated edition in **2018**, the 2025 version reflects evolving policy contexts and emerging best practices in **urban climate governance**.

Background

Cities and local governments are increasingly recognised as **critical actors in limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C** and building climate-resilient societies.

Explicitly referenced in both the **European Green Deal** and the **EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change**, the Covenant of Mayors has become a **cornerstone of Europe's local climate action framework**, supporting cities in turning climate commitments into tangible results.

Source: https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/jrc-news-and-updates/covenant-mayors-guidebook-new-edition-more-effective-climate-change-action-2025-06-18_en