



PRESS STATEMENT

City and regional networks back Parliament's position on EU budget

Parliament recommendations would help shape a budget in line with territorial realities

Brussels/Frankfurt, 18 May 2026 – Leading European networks representing some 2,000 cities and regions across Europe in the Local Alliance welcome the European Parliament's **draft report** on the proposed National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) within the next EU budget for 2028–2034. The joint report from the REGI, BUDG and AGRI Committees marks an important step in shaping a future EU budget that is both effective and responsive to territorial realities.

The Local Alliance particularly welcomes the Committee's push to strengthen the role of regional and local authorities in the design and implementation of EU funding instruments, reinforcing partnership principles, and multilevel governance. The report highlights the importance of territorial innovation and transition plans such as Territorial Just Transition Plans and Smart Specialisation Strategies and calls for dedicated funding for all regions and for sustainable urban development in a bid to safeguard cohesion policy principles and preserve place-based approaches.

The European Parliament's proposed improvements respond to growing concerns over the possible dilution of cohesion policy objectives, the marginalisation of regions and cities in delivering EU priorities and the risk of weaker transparency and accountability in the allocation of EU funds.

For the next steps of the negotiations, we call on the co-legislators to follow the European Parliament's clear positioning and ensure that the future EU budget:

- Preserves a strong and adequately funded cohesion policy as a cornerstone of European integration and solidarity;
- Guarantees meaningful involvement of local and regional authorities through robust multilevel governance and partnership principles;
- Maintains a clear territorial dimension, ensuring that policies are tailored to the diverse needs and capacities of Europe's regions;
- Ensures transparency, accountability, and accessibility in the design and implementation of NRPPs.

The Local Alliance also welcomes the draft report's recognition of local climate and energy planning, notably through references to the Sustainable Energy and



Climate Action Plans developed under the EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. This recognition acknowledges the central role cities and regions already play in turning EU climate and energy goals into concrete investment priorities – a message recently conveyed by Covenant of Mayors Board Members to the report’s co-rapporteurs.

“The National and Regional Partnership Plan model, if shaped with multilevel governance as a guiding principle, could become a powerful tool for delivering on EU priorities with the kind of place-based, territorial responses our citizens need. Member States would be well advised to build on the European Parliament’s suggestions in making these plans the basis for genuine partnerships between national, regional and local governments. Barcelona Province is living proof that we achieve more when all levels of government work together,” comments Marc Serra Solé, Covenant of Mayors and Climate Alliance Board Member; Deputy Climate & Energy Transition Chair, Deputy Citizens’ Participation Councillor, Barcelona Province, Spain.

As the legislative process on the EU budget moves forward, the Local Alliance remains committed to engaging constructively with co-legislators to ensure the new framework strengthens, rather than undermines, Europe’s territorial cohesion and democratic governance.

Notes to Editors

Undersigned networks from the Local Alliance: Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management (ACR+); The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR); Climate Alliance; Energy Cities; Eurocities; ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability.

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THE CLIMATE ALLIANCE

For over 30 years, Climate Alliance member municipalities have been acting in partnership with indigenous rainforest peoples for the benefit of the global climate. With some 2,000 members spread across more than 25 countries, Climate Alliance is Europe’s largest city network dedicated to comprehensive and equitable climate action. Recognising the impact our lifestyles can have on the world’s most vulnerable people and places, Climate Alliance pairs local action with global responsibility. climatealliance.org

THE LOCAL ALLIANCE

The Local Alliance brings together eight leading networks of municipalities and regions from across Europe to speak with one voice to EU heads of state and government on energy and climate issues. In this alliance, Climate Alliance has been working alongside ACR+, CEMR, Energy Cities, Eurocities, FEDARENE, ICLEI Europe and POLIS since 2024 to turn the European Green Deal into reality for every citizen across Europe and to ensure the voices of cities and regions are heard in key EU policy arenas.