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REPORT

on the role of EU regions and cities in implementing the COP 21 Paris Agreement on climate change
(2017/2006(INI))

Committee on Regional Development

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the role of EU regions and cities in implementing the COP 21 Paris Agreement on climate change (2017/2006(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,
- having regard to the Paris Agreement, Decision 1/CP.21 and the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the UNFCCC, and the 11th Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP11) held in Paris, France from 30 November to 11 December 2015,
- having regard to Articles 7(2) and 11(2) of the Paris Agreement which recognise the local, subnational and regional dimensions of climate change and climate action,
- having regard to its legislative resolution of 4 October 2016 on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 6 October 2016 on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2016 UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco (COP22)²,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 October 2017 on the 2017 UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn, Germany (COP23)³,
- having regard to the new UN Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular goal 11: to ‘make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’,
- having regard to the provisions of the Pact of Amsterdam establishing the Urban Agenda for the EU,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2015 on the urban dimension of EU policies⁴,
- having regard to the European Environment Agency (EEA) reports No 12/2016 ‘Urban adaptation to climate change in Europe 2016’ and No 1/2017 ‘Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2016’,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 2 March 2016 entitled ‘The road from Paris: assessing the implications of the Paris Agreement’ (COM(2016)0110),

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0363.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0383.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0380.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0307.

- having regard to the Commission communication of 16 April 2013 on ‘An EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change’ (COM(2013)0216),
 - having regard to the European Committee of the Regions opinion entitled ‘Towards a new EU climate change adaptation strategy – taking an integrated approach’ (CDR 2430/2016 - 08/02/2017),
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 18 July 2014 on ‘The urban dimension of EU policies – key features of an EU urban agenda’ (COM(2014)0490),
 - having regard to Article 8 of the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) (Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013), which provides that ‘the objectives of the ESI Funds shall be pursued in line with the principle of sustainable development’¹,
 - having regard to the Partnership Agreements and programmes under the CPR, which, pursuant to Article 8 CPR, shall promote ‘resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation’,
 - having regard to the specific thematic objectives supported by each ESI Fund, including technological development and innovation, the shift towards a low-carbon economy, climate change adaptation and the promotion of resource efficiency,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 3 March 2010 entitled ‘Europe 2020 – A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
 - having regard to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Regional Development and the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (A8-0045/2018),
- A. whereas the increase in extreme weather events is a direct consequence of human-induced climate change and will continue to have a negative impact on many parts of Europe with greater frequency, making its inhabited ecosystems more vulnerable; whereas, according to scenarios of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the earth’s temperature could rise by between 0.9 and 5.8 °C by 2100;
- B. whereas the 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP), which will guide European environment policy until 2020, identifies the improvement of the sustainability the Union’s cities as a priority objective, along with the three key horizontal objectives of protecting, conserving and enhancing the Union’s natural capital, of turning the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy and of safeguarding the Union’s citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to their health and wellbeing;
- C. whereas climate change could exacerbate societal changes if no further steps are taken;

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 342.

whereas, taking into account the important migration flows that are predicted as a result of these global climate changes and are implied by the consequences of population movements that will place new demands on the infrastructure of cities;

- D. whereas, according to the key findings of EEA report No 12/2016, the reality of climate change is already being felt in the EU in the form of extreme weather phenomena and gradual long-term effects such as hurricanes, storms, desertification, droughts, land and shores' corrosion, heavy rains, heat waves, floods, the rise in sea levels, water shortages, forest fires and the spread of tropical diseases;
- E. whereas, as a result of climate change, there is an increased risk of the disappearance of some plant and animal species and the incidence of infectious diseases caused by climatic factors; whereas areas, such as the outermost regions and other regions of the EU that may suffer from topographic vulnerability, experience the effects of climate change even more keenly;
- F. whereas, moreover, recent studies show that various observed changes in the environment and society, such as changes in forest species, the establishment of invasive alien species and outbreaks of disease, have been caused or exacerbated by global climate change, making people, nature and the ecosystems they inhabit more vulnerable unless concrete measures are taken; whereas integrated EU support to improve solidarity and the exchange of best practices among Member States would help to ensure that the regions most affected by climate change are capable of taking the necessary measures to adapt;
- G. whereas climate change is affecting the social disparities that have already been widening in the EU over the past decade, increasing the vulnerability of the weakest populations of society who are less able and have fewer resources to cope with its effects; whereas the vulnerability of individuals to the effects of climate change is to a large extent determined by their ability to access basic resources and whereas public authorities ought to guarantee access to those basic resources;
- H. whereas almost 72.5 % of the EU's population, approximately 359 million people, live in cities; whereas, moreover, the EU is responsible for 9 % of global emissions and urban areas account for 60 to 80 % of global energy consumption and around the same share of CO₂ emissions;
- I. whereas the urban infrastructure choices made will have an impact on cities' capacity to withstand climate change; whereas cities, companies and other non-state actors have mitigation potential in the range of 2.5-4 billion tonnes of CO₂ by 2020 ; whereas regions and cities are capable of reducing global emissions by 5 % to meet the Paris Agreement targets and whereas they have the potential to reduce global emissions significantly;
- J. whereas Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 ('Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable') aims to substantially increase, by 2020, the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters, and to develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk

management at all levels;

- K. whereas municipal authorities are among the main beneficiaries of European funding;
- L. whereas Article 7(2) of the Paris Agreement recognises that ‘adaptation is a global challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions’; whereas action by local authorities and non-state actors is key to enabling governments to implement their commitments within the framework of global climate action;
- M. whereas the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change (COM(2013)0216) as well as the respective EU regulations on the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds identify main objectives and associated policy actions, notably through the introduction of mechanisms such as ex-ante conditionalities and climate-relevant thematic objectives in the 2014-2020 Cohesion Policy Framework, such as thematic objectives (TO) 4: ‘Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors’; TO5: ‘Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management’ and TO6: ‘Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency’, which have led to more and better-focused climate action funding under at least some of the ESI Funds;
- N. whereas regions and cities have demonstrated their commitment to the UNFCCC process through their involvement in the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) and Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) initiatives;

General context

1. Welcomes the role played by the EU in the Paris/COP 21 Agreement and its role as world leader in the fight against climate change; points out that Europe has one of the most ambitious climate change goals in the world; urges that climate change mitigation be considered an important priority in EU cohesion policies in order to meet and maintain the Paris Agreement/COP21 commitments by promoting clean energy innovation, the circular economy, renewable energy and energy efficiency, without prejudice to the necessary adaptation measures, while maintaining the basic role and objectives of cohesion policy in line with the Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU);
2. Approves the approach to tackling climate change put forward in the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations) and the Pact of Amsterdam (Urban Agenda for the EU); stresses that Europe must become a true world leader in renewable energy as proposed by the Commission and recalls that the EU’s urban agenda contributes to the implementation of the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the objective of inclusive, safe and sustainable cities; takes into account, in this context, the variety of differences among European local authorities and their varying potential; calls for a flexible, tailor-made approach in the implementation of Urban Agenda, providing incentives and guidance to fully exploit the potential of cities;
3. Recalls that its resolution of 14 October 2015 on Towards a new international climate agreement in Paris¹ calls on the Member States to consider complementary greenhouse

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0359.

gas (GHG) reduction commitments; underlines the need for a maximum of transparency and scrutiny of the COP21 process;

4. Invites the Commission and the Member States to implement ambitious targets for mitigation and adaptation in line with existing EU legislation on climate action, and following the request made by the Committee of the Regions in its opinion of 9 February 2017 on Towards a new EU climate change adaptation strategy taking an integrated approach;
5. Deplores irresponsible strategies that put the environment at risk, such as certain economic activities and specific industrial sectors that generate high levels of pollution, and stresses the responsibility of all sections of society for contributing to measures that are vital to reversing a trend that threatens life on the planet; stresses the fact that there is a lack of information on the measures taken by some industrial sectors to combat the effects of pollution and on finding less polluting solutions; regrets, however, that certain opinion leaders in the fields of science, the media and politics, continue to deny the evidence of climate change;
6. Regrets the stated intention of the US to withdraw from the Paris Agreements and welcomes the large number of non-federal actors, in particular US states and cities, who have reaffirmed their commitment to meet the targets set by the Paris Agreement; encourages the local and regional authorities in the United States that wish to be involved in fighting climate change to cooperate and partner with other public and private partners in their projects and to exchange good practices in this regard; calls for new governance that could secure funds for climate action and for better integration of regions and cities and their representative bodies;
7. Emphasises that cities need to play a decisive role in tackling climate change, in coordinated interdependence with national authorities and their surrounding regions; encourages further engagement between subnational leaders and national governments at international level through platforms such as Friends of Cities; believes that in the specific case of integrated sustainable urban development, local authorities should be empowered not only to select projects, but also to prepare, design and implement local development schemes; underlines the possible positive aspects for growth and green jobs;
8. Notes that local authorities are responsible for implementing the majority of the mitigation and adaptation measures for climate change and most of the EU legislation on the subject; stresses the need to act on urban planning, mobility, public transport and infrastructure, the energy performance of buildings, education campaigns, smart cities, smart grids and regional subsidies in order to implement the Paris Agreement;
9. Notes that city mayors are directly accountable to their constituents for their decisions, and can act more effectively and quickly and often with immediate results which have a major impact;
10. Calls for national governments to help cities and regions to fulfil international commitments to support climate and energy initiatives at local and regional level;
11. Points out that climate change interacts with social and economic factors and that this

requires an overarching vision, which will be effective on a local and regional scale;

12. Warns of the societal costs and of the economic impact caused by GHG emissions that are currently affecting urban infrastructure, public health and social care systems which are - at certain times and in certain cities and regions - overburdened and which face a precarious economic situation; notes that these systems will thus be placed under additional strain and will be required to meet growing and more complex needs; welcomes the potential economic benefits for cities that invest and lead the way in low-carbon infrastructure, including reduced power costs, decreased maintenance costs and reduced spending on public health, which is improved by reductions in pollutants;
13. Recognises that mitigation and adaptation are long-term processes that transcend both election cycles and decisions taken at local and regional level, and calls for mitigation and adaptation to be seen as a source of opportunities in the face of other challenges such as employment and action to improve health, the quality of life and public services; notes that the Paris Agreement envisages the active engagement of Non-Party Stakeholders through the technical examination processes on mitigation and adaptation;
14. Recognises the vital role of regions, cities and towns in promoting ownership of the energy transition and in pushing for climate and energy-related targets from below; notes that regions and urban areas are the most suitable for testing and implementing integrated energy solutions in direct cooperation with citizens; stresses the need to stimulate the energy transition and local investment in climate mitigation and adaptation measures; highlights that clean energy innovations and small-scale renewable energy projects could play a major role in achieving the targets of the Paris Agreement; urges the Commission and the Member States to embark on providing access to financial measures that take account of the specific features and of the long-term value of local energy communities for the energy market, the environment and society, and to promote the role of single prosumers in connection with renewables, with a view to greater self-sufficiency and self-generation; calls on cities and regions to take the lead in the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy production in order to reduce GHG emissions and air pollution;
15. Reiterates the need for regions to implement Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings and Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, and calls for the Structural Funds to be focused or boosted in order to promote energy efficiency in public buildings and self-sufficiency in municipalities through regenerative energy; and calls for cooperative Citizens' Energy Projects to be supported under the Structural Funds and through a reduction of the administrative burdens at national and regional level;
16. Notes that, according to the most recent statistics, the EU's share in the global GHG emissions is approximately 10 %, and that, therefore, without global action the negative climate trends cannot be reversed; points out, however, that the EU could play a leading role in this respect, particularly by promoting clean energy solutions and technologies;
17. Recalls that the EU Urban Agenda is promoting a new working method whereby the potential of cities is fully used in order to respond to global climate change challenges, and which involves paying particular attention to better regulation, access to finance and the exchange of knowledge;

The EU and cohesion policy

18. Takes the view that the future multiannual financial framework (MFF) should, where appropriate, increase its level of ambition in relation to achieving climate goals, and that there should be an increase in the proportion of spending earmarked for this purpose;
19. Recalls the commitment to devote at least 20 % of the EU budget for the period 2014-2020 (approximately EUR 212 billion) to climate-related action; asks the Commission and the Member States to take due note of the European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 31 from 2016, which warns that there is a serious risk that the 20 % target will not be met if no additional measures are taken, and calls for the Commission to keep Parliament updated on progress in this important area; stresses that in the European Social Fund, as well as in the agricultural, rural development or fisheries policies, there has been no significant shift towards climate action and not all potential opportunities for financing climate-related action have been fully explored;
20. Emphasises the key role that cohesion policy has to play in tackling the challenges of climate change at regional and local level; reiterates the need to increase the post-2020 cohesion policy budget; stresses that cohesion policy should pay particular attention to urban investment in air quality, the circular economy, climate adaptation, solutions for the development of green infrastructure and energy and digital transition;
21. Supports the creation of a cost-benefit tool to enable local government to understand the impacts of projects in terms of carbon reduction and to enable them to take full advantage of financing opportunities available at EU level;
22. Believes that cohesion policy should encompass both the mitigation and adaptation approaches, differentiating between them, but bearing in mind that they need to be coordinated, and putting in place clear financing mechanisms to stimulate and provide incentives for policies and measures in each area; takes the view that these mechanisms could be implemented through clear and measurable investment plans with the participation of cities and regions (including public authorities, industry, stakeholders and civil society), and that this participation should also cover the implementation and evaluation stages;
23. Notes that only fifteen Member States have adopted an action plan and an adaptation strategy, with few concrete measures on the ground; believes that the future planning of ESI Funds should be better integrated with the national energy and climate plans for 2030; emphasises that, in the future Multiannual Financial Framework, the mainstreaming of climate objectives should be further improved, for instance by linking cohesion policy investment more closely to Member States' overall plans to deliver the 2030 target; points out that the EU's climate goals will have to be taken into account, therefore, in assessing the Partnership Agreements, while operational programmes will have to maintain a close link to each Member State's adaptation strategies and plans with a view to achieving coordination and coherence at all levels of planning and management, particularly in cases where EU funds account for a high percentage of the public spending available; observes that, as a result, the assessment of operational programmes will have to consider how effective they have been in contributing to cutting GHG emissions, while aiming at a common tracking methodology and monitoring process in order to avoid green-washing;

24. Urges that cohesion policy investments should be consistent with an effective climate policy to guarantee environmental sustainability;
25. Emphasises that innovation policy and the urban dimension are suitable fields for synergies between climate goals and cohesion policy's broader economic goals; calls, therefore, for specific provisions to be developed for sustainable urban development and urban innovation, so that these fields enjoy noticeably better financial health in post-2020 cohesion policy;
26. Calls on the various partnerships working on issues related to climate mitigation in the framework of the Urban Agenda for the EU to swiftly adopt and present their action plans; calls, furthermore, on the Commission to take into account the proposals contained therein, specifically with reference to better regulation, funding and knowledge in the future legislative proposals;
27. Stresses that, in order to deliver the longer-term objectives of the Paris Agreement, greater coherence is needed in relation to investments with a long-term decarbonisation trajectory for the regional/Member State/EU market as a whole, and calls for measures to facilitate access to funding that will allow smaller cities and regions to access funding; stresses, furthermore, that priority funding should be made available for carbon-dependent regions so as to allow a smooth transition towards a low-emissions economy, and that priority should be given to transition to alternative employment for workers in carbon-intensive industries; calls on the Commission to propose that, in the post-2020 cohesion policy framework, the delivery of emission reductions (along with other actions such as reclamation works or activities aimed at regenerating and decontaminating brownfield sites) should be an important element in assessing the performance of Operational Programmes;
28. Stresses the importance of using additional financial instruments and policies, such as the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the Connecting Europe Facility and Horizon 2020, in order to finance projects that will help mitigate or adapt to climate change;
29. Insists that grants to cities and regions continue to be the main form of EU funding under cohesion policy, and of climate actions in particular; stresses, however, that, in spite of the improved coherence and precision of climate-relevant impact and result indicators, the latter are not sufficient to establish the level of the cohesion policy's contribution to delivering the EU's overall climate objectives and considers that the monitoring and tracking system for climate-related expenditure needs improvement in order to ensure that EU expenditure provides a specific, measurable contribution towards the delivery of the EU targets; calls for an adaptation roadmap to monitor regional and local climate action, and calls on the Commission to assess the percentage of funds that Member States spend at local level on reducing GHG emissions and on ensuring spatial adaptation to climate change;
30. Recognises the role of Integrated Territorial Development Instruments, such as Integrated Territorial Investment and Community-Led Local Developments (CLLDs), that can be used by cities as additional tools in financing sustainable urban development strategies or functional areas; calls for integrated local bottom-up approaches and strategies to ensure more efficient use of resources, to build resilience and adapt to the

impact of climate change in the areas most affected by it;

31. Recognises that EU cities contain the vast majority of Europe's research and development industry focused on climate change; calls on the Commission to provide increased support for cities and regions in the fields of training and awareness-raising, financial guidance, know-how, communication, research and development, education in climate protection and advice both on mitigation and adaptation, notably by strengthening existing instruments such as the urban investment advisory platform URBIS, URBACT and the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) Initiative; calls on the Commission to ensure that these industries take full advantage of global research cooperation and to reinforce these instruments to help local governments deliver fit-for-purpose projects, as well as to access financing options in order to test innovative solutions in urban development strategies; calls for non-EU subnational authorities to be able to voluntarily participate in European science, research and technology initiatives, such as H2020, both formally and informally, in order to meet collective targets; believes that financial facilities such as the global climate funds should be directly accessible to local authorities; believes that synergies between cohesion policy and research and innovation policies should be strengthened to ensure the rapid deployment of new low-carbon technologies;
32. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the Horizon 2020 Programme devotes greater attention and funding to innovation and research projects in the area of the circular economy and sustainable cities; encourages Member States, with the support of the Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB), to strengthen the administrative capacity of regions and cities in order to enable them to take full advantage of the public and private financing opportunities available at EU level;
33. Calls on the competent authorities to tackle the problem of waste with a view to bringing the circular economy to fruition and promoting modes of disposal other than the incineration for waste that is not reusable or recyclable;
34. Believes that, in the forthcoming programming period, climate change will need to be mainstreamed into territorial cooperation programming; highlights the important role played by territorial cooperation, cross-border cooperation and macro-regional strategies in the actions carried out by regions and cities, both within and outside of the EU's borders, and reiterates the need to strengthen this tool politically and financially, both for mitigation and adaptation; underlines that a framework for the implementation of joint actions and policy exchanges between national, regional and local actors from different Member States, such as Interreg, is particularly appropriate for tackling climate change and carrying out suitable actions aimed at mitigating its effects; welcomes, in this regard, the fact that seven of the 15 transnational Interreg programmes across Europe finance strategies, pilot actions, training and tools, to help towns build up capacities to lower CO₂ emissions and mitigate climate change in order to reach EU targets;

Cities and regions

35. Welcomes initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and the role a number of cities and regions have played in the fight against climate change and in environmental protection; urges cities and regions to cooperate and

- incorporate the fight against climate change into the institutional agenda to an even greater extent and as a matter of urgency; recommends that urban authorities implement and regularly update smart urban long-term planning strategies and innovative approaches such as the smart city initiative; stresses the need for sustainable and energy efficient housing projects and smart buildings that will save energy, renewable energy investments, environmentally friendly public transport systems, further support for projects promoting low-carbon cities and regions and for alliances of cities and local and regional governments cooperating to combat global warming;
36. Notes the importance of implementing a reporting framework based on objective parameters and tried-and-tested methodologies, and of monitoring climate actions undertaken by cities and regions in order to share data on climate commitments and to increase transparency among actors to achieve climate targets;
 37. Recalls that the transport sector is also responsible for emissions of both GHGs and air pollutants that are hazardous to health, the concentration of which in urban air is regulated by Directive (EU) 2016/2284 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants; takes the view that regions and cities have enormous potential to reduce GHG emissions from transport, and highlights the need for funding for initiatives that facilitate local and regional low-carbon mobility; stresses the importance of cities taking a leading role in promoting the use of public transport and in promoting the electrification of public and private transport, and calls for a number of model regions to be promoted for the purpose of research into intelligent, interconnected transport systems between urban and rural areas;
 38. Welcomes initiatives by cities, such as smart cities and smart grids, that seek to reduce GHG emissions and increase resource efficiency; stresses that regions have to improve green city arrangements by promoting energy and digital transformation and that solutions such as smart grids offer the potential to deliver energy more efficiently to homes and buildings; recognises that collaboration between businesses and cities helps to create innovative and inclusive solutions and calls for them to be promoted; stresses the need to step up investments in other sustainable solutions such as green infrastructure and, in particular, in increasing woody vegetation cover in cities; recalls that not only must emissions be reduced, but the CO₂ absorption capacity of soil must also be increased, and calls for increased protection for existing and newly established urban forests in the EU regions;
 39. Underlines that locally produced seasonal food can reduce the GHG emissions from transport and thus reduce the overall carbon footprint of the food; calls on the Commission to work with the food sector in order to increase local and regional sustainable food production, and welcomes voluntary measures (such as traffic light labelling) to ensure the visibility of the climate impact and carbon footprint of food and other products; calls for EU-wide common indicators to enable voluntary but comparable labelling and calls on local authorities to conduct information campaigns, to raise awareness about the carbon footprint of food;
 40. Points out that mitigation measures must be planned on the basis of a fair distribution of the efforts and benefits among the various actors, and that adaptation measures must focus on protecting the most vulnerable sections of the population as a whole;

41. Recognises the diversity and specific nature of regional vulnerabilities and potential, and points out that challenges, resources and the most effective measures may vary in each territory; reiterates, therefore, its commitment to the principle of subsidiarity and stresses that cities and regions must have the necessary competence and sufficient political, administrative and financial autonomy to plan and implement individual actions; stresses the need for cities to tailor their own urban planning by investing in green infrastructure, mobility, public transport and smart grids to meet the targets set out in the Paris Agreement; reiterates that local and regional authorities (LRAs), as the tiers of governance closest to each citizen and also closest to the impacts of climate change-related challenges, have the most comprehensive insight into many problems and therefore underlines the importance of providing LRAs with the administrative capacity and financial tools to develop tailor-made solutions for mitigating climate change;
42. Calls for more effective multilevel governance with full transparency that could better involve local government, regions and cities and their representative bodies in the EU's decision making process and within the UNFCCC process; calls for coordination among all public authorities to be promoted and guaranteed, and for the involvement of the public, and of social and economic stakeholders, to be fostered, and calls on the Commission to promote the coordination and exchange of information and best practices between Member States, regions, local communities and cities; points out that participatory models of local governance should be encouraged;
43. Welcomes the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's decision to draft a special report on cities and climate in 2023, a commitment which will drive an increase in research into the importance of cities in combating climate change; believes that cities should provide input into the 2018 Global Climate Report; believes, furthermore, that cities and regions can influence policy making following the Paris Agreement, implementing a strategic approach to tackle global warming and support mitigation and adaptation measures in urban areas, where more than half of the world's population lives; calls on the Commission to advocate a multilevel vision of climate action in this process in order to promote an inclusive climate regime which recognises the actions taken by local and subnational authorities;
44. Calls on national authorities to bring about decentralisation and give better effect to the subsidiarity principle, thereby enabling local and regional authorities to play a stronger role in tackling climate change;
45. Notes that many elements of industry are investing in green transformation and have committed to a decarbonisation policy; recognises that collaboration between businesses and cities creates innovative and inclusive solutions for climate action and helps the EU reach its targets; recalls that industry plays a key role in financing and closing the investment gap in urban areas; calls for the promotion of city-business partnerships;
46. Highlights that smart planning and investments in low-carbon, climate-resilient urban infrastructure can improve the environment and citizens' quality of life, create jobs, and stimulate the local and regional economy;
47. Calls on cities and regions to take advantage of EU initiatives, such as the Urban Innovative Actions, to deploy pilot projects in the field of sustainable urban

development;

48. Welcomes the ‘Women4Climate’ initiative and the private sector’s involvement in this initiative, which should contribute to greater involvement of leading women in the fight against climate change in order to strengthen their leadership skills and to encourage the next generation of leading women to participate in the fight against climate change;
49. Recognises the special responsibility on the part of cities to tackle climate change given that they account for 70 % of global CO₂ emissions, and reiterates Parliament’s commitment to achieving the successful global roll-out of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, including the Initiative on Climate Change Adaptation (‘Mayors Adapt initiative’), the Under 2 Degrees Memorandum of Understanding, the Pact of Amsterdam and the Regions Adapt initiative; believes that the commitments made in the Paris City Hall Declaration in 2015 will only be met through engagement with the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and encourages all EU and non-EU cities to join the Covenant of Mayors and without prejudice to their participation in other sectoral or institutional networks with the same objectives to commit to ambitious climate action and to organise exchanges of experiences of good practices; notes that a number of Action Plans submitted by cities contain commitments through to 2020 and therefore urges that additional work be undertaken by these cities up to 2030; believes that the EU should continue to give cities autonomy to plan their climate mitigation strategies as they often result in more ambitious targets;
50. Stresses the need for a clear reference to the role of local and regional governments in the Paris Agreement in order to ensure a long-term response to climate change; underlines that the EU has to work on the ground with cities and regions to make EU regions and cities better connected and more sustainable, create energy-efficient municipalities and develop smarter urban transport networks;
51. Believes that the transfer of knowledge and experience should be encouraged at local and regional level, given the wealth of experience acquired by individual regions and cities, as well as by certain regional environmental protection or energy agencies;
52. Believes that European and international or worldwide organisations and associations or networks of cities, municipalities, and regions should be put to use in order to make for better cooperation when dealing with climate change problems at local and regional level;
53. Notes that during COP 22 in Marrakesh, local and regional authorities developed the Marrakesh Roadmap for Action which highlights the need for the more direct involvement of local authorities and which should be formally recognised as part of the official discussion on climate change, rather than considered as having the same status as other non-state actors, such as NGOs and the private sector;

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54. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Member States and the national and regional parliaments of the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is a scientifically proven fact whose symptoms and consequences are becoming more and more noticeable both for the public and for holders of public office. The temperature increase in the EU over the past decade has been faster than in the rest of the planet¹; we are witnessing a rise in extreme temperatures, forest fires, droughts, floods and storms; exotic invasive species and loss of biodiversity, competition for water², and energy demand.

Many sectors are being affected: the primary sector and tourism, along with public services such as health and the water and energy supply. The economic costs of climate change are extremely high, even with moderate levels of change. Moreover, Europe's Mediterranean basin is more vulnerable and faces higher costs, which means that climate change has implications for territorial cohesion in the EU³.

Climate change is also accentuating social disparities across the EU; some social groups are more exposed than others (owing to poor health, low income, inadequate housing, lack of mobility, and gender, among other factors). Energy poverty is already a fact of life for many Europeans. Similarly, Europe has a responsibility to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of climate change outside Europe: famine, drought and hurricanes, and an unfair development model, are generating a wave of climate refugees who are arriving in the EU, and particularly in its cities, in search of a decent life.

STRATEGIES AND AGREEMENTS

The EU is responsible for 9% of global emissions, and its cities generate 75% of them. In the face of this challenge, the EU launched a Strategy on adaptation to climate change back in 2013. The signing of the Paris Agreement (COP21) strengthened the EU's commitment in the fight against climate change⁴, created a link with the SDGs (also signed by the EU) and in turn established the appropriate framework for the EU to shape its policies, which must transcend all other levels: Member States, regional and local authorities, private sector and citizens.

The adoption of this Agreement thus represents an opportunity for global well-being and development. The selfish withdrawal from the Agreement by the US, which is the world's largest producer of GHG, makes the road ahead more difficult but we must not change course.

The EU has already been moving in the right direction through its Climate and Energy Package: a 40% cut in GHG emissions by 2030; a 27% improvement in energy efficiency; and a 40% share of renewable energy. The extent to which these targets are being met varies widely from one territory to another, and the challenge in the coming years will be to provide particular assistance for the most vulnerable territories. At all events, more ambitious sectoral objectives will need to be pursued in order to achieve the global targets set out in the Paris

¹ *EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change*, COM(2013)216 final.

² *Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2016, key findings*. EEA, 2016.

³ COM(2013)216 final.

⁴ *The Road from Paris: assessing the implications of the Paris Agreement...*, COM(2016)110 final.

Agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT

Cities, optimal level for the fight

Climate change is a systemic change that interacts with socio-economic factors: the demographic challenge, social segregation, migration, urbanisation, technological change, and the transition to a low-carbon economy. This makes it more necessary than ever to adopt a comprehensive approach combining sectoral and cross-cutting, multilevel, tangible and intangible, public and private, technological and ecosystem-based measures. This comprehensive approach is much more feasible and practicable at local level. Local authorities are always the level of government that is closest to citizens¹.

More than 70% of Europeans and 73% of jobs are based in urban areas: cities bear a great deal of responsibility for global warming, and at the same time they offer a great deal of potential in terms of solutions. The main areas of action are: mobility and transport; the energy performance of buildings; the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services (including food, which is an important factor); waste management; air quality; spatial and urban planning. All these aspects are already listed as priorities in the Urban Agenda for the EU (Pact of Amsterdam).

Cities have repeatedly highlighted the need for EU support in the following areas with a view to implementing solutions to tackle climate change: a mandatory legal framework, capacity building, awareness-raising and training, the technical and scientific knowledge base, and financing.

Prioritising mitigation without forgetting adaptation

The possible solutions can be grouped into two categories: adaptation and mitigation. These two categories in turn stem from three possible approaches²:

- Coping: adaptation in response to climate and the effects felt, without explicit planning or without consciously focusing on climate change;
- Incremental: adaptation where the central aim is to maintain the essence and integrity of a given system;
- Transformational: adaptation that changes the fundamental attributes of a system in response to climate, in order to mitigate its effects.

The coping and incremental approaches are based on proven technology and experience, maintain the current level of services and do not call the prevailing way of life into question. They need to be combined with transformational solutions that tackle the systemic nature of climate change, addressing the primary causes.

Up to now, however, the action taken by cities has chiefly been geared to adaptation,

¹ *Urban Agenda for the EU 'Pact of Amsterdam'*, 2016.

² *Urban adaptation to climate change in Europe 2016, transforming cities in a changing climate*. European Environment Agency, 2016.

particularly through the coping approach. Adaptation measures have been adopted, even though they may not be labelled as such or form part of a global strategy (natural disaster reduction, water management, creation of urban green spaces...). Nonetheless, they can be highly effective: in the long term, every euro invested in flood prevention could save six euros in damage. The coping and incremental approaches are, however, limited in terms of technological capacity and the final GHG balance. Furthermore, scandals such as ‘dieselgate’ have helped to make public opinion more sceptical of these approaches.

Worryingly, more than 75% of European cities have taken barely any significant steps to adapt to climate change. There is also a clear geographical divide between cities in the north and west of Europe and those in the south and east. In other words, it is precisely the cities located in regions that are more vulnerable to climate change that are facing the greatest difficulties in adapting to that change.

The main barriers that have been identified are: lack of awareness among politicians and decision-makers, lack of technical knowledge and difficulties in accessing funding¹. The role of state and regional authorities in all this is ambivalent: they do not actively support more innovative measures, generally for legal or sectoral reasons; and there are non-technological barriers to developing new models of urban planning, mobility and renewable energy.

Looking beyond adaptation, climate change mitigation must be a priority. This requires a shift in mentality, including the way in which we organise our lives and work. Change is cross-cutting and multidisciplinary, and mitigation is consequently a long-term process that starts with city planning and transcends election cycles and deadlines for decision-making at local level, not to mention the boundaries of the city itself, which is linked to its surrounding region.

Establishing a connection between climate change mitigation and other challenges that are closer to citizens (such as improving health or identifying new economic opportunities) could be an effective way of involving the whole social body of the city in the short and medium term. To achieve this, awareness-raising and education are vital.

Well-equipped and proactive governance encompassing a broad range of actors and shouldering vertical and horizontal commitments is a basic prerequisite for the planning and successful implementation of adaptation and mitigation processes. This governance includes a strong role for cities in shaping policies whose implementation will then become binding; the ‘Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy’ is an example of such governance that should be encouraged.

Recognising the multifactoral nature of the problem

Moving towards a low-carbon economy requires changes in technology, energy, the economy, finance and society. It entails increased efforts to tackle the nexus between climate change, natural resources, prosperity, stability and migration.

All EU policies should therefore be geared to this objective. This report focuses on changes to cohesion policy, but other policies (CAP, Horizon 2020, energy, environment) are also vital

¹ *Adaptation Strategies for European Cities*, EC – Directorate General for Climate Action, 2013.

in order to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement at all levels from local upwards.

At local level, it is crucial for adaptations to be cross-cutting and not confined to the 'environment' department: cities must combine climate change with other urban policies such as economic development, urban regeneration and improvements to quality of life. It is vital to have sufficient capacities to tackle the multisectoral nature of the fight against climate change, to improve governance in this area through active commitment from all local actors (including citizens and the private sector), and to make better use of the resources allocated.

Ensuring coherence, improving and facilitating access to funding

Some EU financial instruments could nevertheless contribute more to the fight against climate change, as the ECA found¹ in the case of the ESF and EMFF. With regard to other lending or insurance instruments, it will be crucial to provide more information for cities on how to access and combine the various funds. Action needs to be taken to promote carbon pricing, make a downward adjustment to fossil fuel subsidies and foster renewable energy and energy efficiency, while all the time paying attention to employment so that the energy transition towards environmentally sustainable development is also socially sustainable.

Expanding, improving and disseminating the knowledge base

Creating methods and knowledge is essential in order to identify the starting point for cities in relation to climate change, and to verify the effectiveness of measures and the desirability of implementing them.

The work carried out through European mechanisms such as the ADAPT platform, the EEA, the JRC and ESPON deserves recognition and applause. This work has provided a good deal of information at EU level, but we still need information and appropriate indicators at city level covering both the effects and risks of climate change: regional projections and indicators of impacts, vulnerabilities and results, along with calculations of the costs and benefits of adaptation, combined with an effective communication strategy to disseminate best practice and results.

¹ *Spending at least one euro in every five from the EU budget on climate action: ambitious work underway, but at serious risk of falling short*, ECA, Luxembourg, 2016.

24.11.2017

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

for the Committee on Regional Development

on the role of EU regions and cities in implementing the COP 21 Paris Agreement on climate change
(2017/2006(INI))

Rapporteur: Gilles Pargneaux

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that regions and cities have already demonstrated their commitment to combating climate change in their capacity as major contributors to the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) and Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) initiatives; welcomes initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, including the Initiative on Climate Change Adaptation ('Mayors Adapt initiative'), the Under 2 Degrees Memorandum of Understanding, and the RegionsAdapt initiative; encourages more EU cities to join these initiatives and to commit to ambitious climate action; believes that the contribution of such initiatives should be acknowledged and encouraged by subnational and national governments and intergovernmental organisations;
2. Notes that local authorities are responsible for implementing the majority of the mitigation and adaptation measures for climate change and most of the EU legislation on the subject; stresses the need to act on urban planning, mobility, public transport and infrastructure, the energy performance of buildings, education campaigns, smart cities, smart grids and regional subsidies in order to implement the Paris Agreement;
3. Notes that nowadays, most Europeans live in cities; notes also that the urban infrastructure choices made by those responsible for cities will have an impact on cities' capacity to withstand climate change, since more frequent rainfall, flooding and heat waves are likely to be among the challenges that Europe's cities will face as a result of climate change;

4. Highlights the fact that cities, companies and other non-state actors have mitigation potential in the range of 2.5-4 billion tonnes of CO₂ by 2020¹, more than India emits in a year, and that this is similar in magnitude to the 4-6 billion tonnes of CO₂ that the UN projects that the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) adopted in Paris will cut by 2030, a decade later;
5. Stresses that regions and cities play a key role in tackling climate change, that alone they are capable of reducing global emissions by 5 % to meet the Paris Agreement, and that in concert with other tiers of government and the private sector, they have the potential to reduce global emissions by 46 %²;
6. Recalls that the transport sector is responsible for emissions of both greenhouse gases (GHGs) and air pollutants that are hazardous to health, whose concentration in urban air is regulated by Directive (EU) 2016/2284 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants³;
7. Recalls that Article 7(2) of the Paris Agreement recognises that ‘adaptation is a global challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions’;
8. Recognises that action by local authorities is key to enabling governments to implement their commitments within the framework of global climate action;
9. Emphasises that non-state actors are becoming a core element of the post-Paris climate regime and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process; stresses that they could make valuable contributions to the facilitative dialogue and the global stocktake, and could contribute to a more effective review process under the Paris Agreement;
10. Calls for the enhancement of both individual and coordinated action at EU, regional and local level to adapt to the impact of climate change;
11. Stresses that cities are driving urban policy-making, with the ability to link initiatives with national action plans and focus on initiatives with the greatest impact; calls for the deeper involvement of local government in the EU's decision-making process;
12. Notes that city mayors are directly accountable to their constituents for their decisions, and can act more effectively and quickly and often with immediate and impactful results;
13. Calls for new governance that could secure funds for climate action and for a better integration of regions and cities and their representative bodies, such as the Committee of the Regions at EU level, within the UNFCCC process, so as to establish a permanent direct dialogue between the different levels, starting at local and regional level; notes

¹ Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) report, December 2015.

² Arup study entitled ‘Deadline 2020. How cities will get the job done’.
<http://www.c40.org/researches/deadline-2020>

³ Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC (OJ L 344, 17.12.2016, p. 1).

that the announcement of the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement led many US states and cities to reiterate their commitment to respecting the US nationally determined contribution (NDC) to reduce US emissions by 26 to 28 % by 2025 compared with their 2005 level, and that given the particular context, local and subnational authorities should be an integral part of the UNFCCC process, in order for their positions to be represented within that process and to facilitate the dissemination of local best practices with regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation;

14. Stresses the need for a clear reference to the role of local and regional governments in the Paris Agreement in order to ensure a long-term response to climate change; underlines that the EU has to work on the ground with cities and regions to make EU regions and cities better connected and more sustainable, create energy-efficient municipalities and develop smarter urban transport networks;
15. Points out that by 2030, almost 60 % of the world's population will live in urban areas; notes that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 ('Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable') aims to substantially increase, by 2020, the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters, and to develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels; notes that, according to the 2014 UN World Urbanisation Prospects, 54 % of the world's population lived in urban areas in 2014, up from 30 % in 1950; notes that this figure is expected to reach 66 % in 2050;
16. Calls for the new global structure to formally involve local and regional authorities in the preparation and implementation of a clear climate action plan for the Paris Agreement; stresses that this structure must monitor binding targets, monitor progress through evaluation mechanisms and provide tailored financial instruments to transform commitments into tangible results;
17. Calls for coordination among all public authorities to be promoted and guaranteed, and for the involvement of the public, and of social and economic stakeholders, to be fostered;
18. Calls for an adaptation roadmap monitoring regional and local climate action and incorporating the latest data on adaptation action in the EU, including for reporting on the EU NDC;
19. Is concerned that the increase in extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, heavy storms, floods and droughts, are a direct consequence of human-induced climate change, will continue to have a negative impact on many parts of Europe and will do so with greater frequency, making people, nature and the ecosystems which they inhabit more vulnerable unless concrete measures are taken and the water cycle is restored; stresses the need to step up investments in green infrastructure that can help cities to keep cool and provide protection and relief during extreme weather events; notes that cities and regions are interlinked and depend on other cities and regions to provide them with essential services such as food, water and energy, and the infrastructure to deliver them; underlines that effective adaptation planning and development calls for solid information about the future climate risks facing a city and about how this translates

into physical and economic vulnerabilities; recalls that there are still some cities without city-specific climate risk information to inform planning and development decision-making processes at local level, and that this calls for a joint and comprehensive approach combining dialogue and partnerships which crosses sectors and governmental levels; calls for integrated EU support to improve solidarity and the exchange of best practices among Member States and to ensure that the regions most affected by climate change are capable of taking the necessary measures to adapt;

20. Urges regions, cities and towns to establish specific adaptation plans to ensure that their vulnerability to climate change is reduced;
21. Stresses the need to step up investments in green infrastructure that can help cities to reduce temperatures and provide protection and relief during extreme weather events;
22. Notes that, in particular, increasing woody vegetation cover in cities, involving careful selection of the appropriate species for a given area, decreases sensible heat flux and air temperature, effectively improving the microclimate of cities and human thermal comfort; believes that this consideration should form the basis for the land-use planning and urban projects of EU cities;
23. Stresses the need for regions to implement and regularly update regional programmes containing measures to facilitate adequate adaptation in order to fight climate change effects, and that all regions must cooperate in formulating plans for adaptation to the impact of climate change and in developing integrated plans for coastal zone management and water resources;
24. Recalls that the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change (COM(2013)0216) identifies three main objectives and associated actions: 1) promoting action by Member States; 2) encouraging Member States to adopt comprehensive adaptation strategies; and 3) providing LIFE funding to support capacity building and step up adaptation action in Europe (2013-2020);
25. Recalls that in order to meet the obligations resulting from the Paris Agreement, not only must emissions be reduced, but the CO₂ absorption capacity of soil must be increased, so that a net removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere can be achieved in the second half of the century;
26. Calls for increased protection for existing and newly established urban forests in the EU regions, given their bearing on the leisure time of local populations and in some areas on the provision and conservation of drinking water sources; believes that the municipalities should provide all the support necessary to maintain these ecosystems and their services and prevent any activities that would lead to their deterioration;
27. Maintains that increasing the resilience of society and the areas in which people live in order to address the inevitable effects of climate change calls for a number of measures, including more efficient and rational water use (adaptation measures relating to water should be given priority, in the same way as the mitigation measures that are already being taken with regard to carbon) and action in coastal areas; developing strategies based on green urban planning, with a particular focus on flood defences; mobilising know-how and resources for the adaptation of crops and forest management to address

the problems of drought and fires; and increasing connectivity among ecosystems to encourage species to migrate;

28. Recognises the need for adaptation measures to achieve coordination and coherence at all levels of planning and management, and that it is important to ensure joint approaches and full coherence between national adaptation strategies and local risk management plans;
29. Points out that the vulnerability of individuals to the effects of climate change, and especially to so-called extreme phenomena, is to a large extent determined by their ability to access basic resources such as energy and water; calls on public authorities, with that in mind, to guarantee access to those two basic resources;
30. Notes that only fifteen Member States have adopted an action plan and an adaptation strategy, with few concrete measures on the ground; stresses the need to monitor and evaluate all adaptation strategies and action plans on risk prevention, and flood and water management;
31. Recognises that efficient resource management is fundamental for mitigation and adaptation purposes, in order to identify joint priorities; calls for integrated local strategies to ensure the more efficient use of resources, and to build resiliency and adapt to the impact of climate change in the areas most affected;
32. Is of the opinion that local and regional authorities should take integrated and long-term action on climate change mitigation and adaptation at local level;
33. Considers that local and subnational authorities should be able to clearly define their mitigation and adaptation commitments, as nations have done through the NDCs, so as to provide solid and transparent contributions, starting from robust monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) processes, through initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy; calls for the creation of a system of locally determined contributions, to be implemented in direct connection and complementarity with the NDCs; considers that these contributions, whether national, subnational, regional or local, should adhere to common modalities, procedures and guidelines as appropriate, to ensure the transparency of action and support;
34. Recalls that at least 20 % of the EU budget for 2014-2020 (approximately EUR 212 billion) should be spent on climate-related action; notes that in special report No 31/2016, the European Court of Auditors considers that there is a serious risk of falling short of meeting the 20 % target if no additional efforts to tackle climate change are made, while recognising that the adoption of the target has led to more and better focused climate action funding under some of the European Structural and Investment Funds namely the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund, but that in other areas, such as the European Social Fund, agriculture, rural development and fisheries, it is largely business as usual (which is to say that there has been no significant shift towards climate action);
35. Welcomes the inclusion of thematic objectives TO4, TO5 and TO6 among the criteria for allocating cohesion funding; recalls that, according to the European Court of Auditors, the commitment to ensuring that at least 20 % of the Multiannual Financial

Framework is spent on climate measures in the period 2014-2020 may not be achieved if no additional measures are taken;

36. Emphasises the lack of a reporting system on the proportion of the Structural and Cohesion Funds allocated to mitigation and adaptation measures by local authorities;
37. Calls on the Commission to place an obligation on Member States to indicate the percentage of EU funds spent at local level on reducing GHG emissions and ensuring spatial adaptation to climate change;
38. Calls on the Commission, the EIB and the Member States to strengthen the administrative capacity of regions and cities in order to enable them to take full advantage of the public and private financing opportunities available at EU level; stresses the need for improved financial assistance to help local and regional authorities implement coherent climate measures; believes that financial facilities such as the global climate funds should be directly accessible to local authorities;
39. Is aware of the problems facing municipalities and regions hitherto totally dependent in economic terms on the extraction of conventional energy sources such as coal and calls for EU funding programmes to support their structural transformation;
40. Calls on local and regional authorities to do whatever they can to set up public funds which can be used, for example, to promote the development of renewables, decentralise networks and encourage the use of consumer-generated electricity;
41. Urges public authorities to record the activities that increase vulnerability and GHG emissions and to provide tax incentives for activities that promote adaptation to climate change and the reduction of emissions;
42. Stresses the need to stimulate the energy transition and local investment in climate mitigation and adaptation measures, by streamlining regulations, reducing bureaucracy, enabling innovative solutions and encouraging partnerships with local communities and civil society, with a view to promoting climate action; calls for national initiatives to raise public awareness of the effect of climate change;
43. Stresses the significance of education in climate protection and calls for sufficient measures for municipalities and schools in order to ensure the requisite expertise;
44. Welcomes city initiatives, such as smart cities and smart grids, that seek to reduce GHG emissions and increase resource efficiency by addressing climate change, achieving green growth and promoting areas linked by public transport systems; stresses that regions have to improve green city arrangements with a view to national, urban green growth, given that cities are major contributors to GHG emissions, and that solutions such as smart grids offer the potential to deliver energy more efficiently to homes and buildings, thereby improving energy efficiency and consumption;
45. Calls on the competent authorities to steer agricultural and forestry production towards activities that serve to reduce direct and indirect GHG emissions, and to draw up plans to bring about a gradual increase in the absorption capacity of the soil;

46. Welcomes the potential economic windfalls for cities that take the lead on low-carbon infrastructure, including reduced power costs, decreased maintenance costs and reduced spending on public health, which is improved by reductions in pollutants;
47. Recalls that small-scale renewable energy projects, such as renewable energy communities and renewable self-consumer projects, can contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Paris Agreement;
48. Stresses the importance of cities taking a lead role in the fight against climate change by promoting the use of public transport, including rail transport; notes that traffic congestion is a leading source of carbon emissions; stresses that the EU has to work on the ground with cities and regions to make EU regions and cities more energy-efficient and better connected, in order to develop smarter urban transport networks for a more climate-resilient world;
49. Recalls that transport produces not only emissions with a significant impact on health, but also GHG emissions; takes the view that regions and cities have enormous potential to reduce the GHG emissions from transport by taking them into account to a greater extent in transport planning; highlights the need for funding for initiatives to facilitate local and regional low-carbon mobility;
50. Encourages local authorities to implement plans in the areas of transport and logistics in order to promote electrified public and private transport, including by setting aside certain areas for use only by bicycles and electric vehicles and by providing sufficient numbers of easily accessible recharging points;
51. Calls, in appreciation of the particular importance of the transport sector, for a number of model regions to be designated for the purpose of research into an intelligent, interconnected transport system between urban and rural areas;
52. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the Horizon 2020 Programme devotes increased attention and funding to innovation and research projects in the area of the circular economy and sustainable cities;
53. Reiterates the need for regions to implement Directive 2010/31/EU on the energy performance of buildings¹ and Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency²;
54. Calls on local authorities to conduct information campaigns, including in cooperation with representatives of catering establishments, to raise awareness about the carbon footprint of food, in order to educate people about healthy eating and encourage them to eat food that has a low impact on the climate;
55. Underlines that locally produced seasonal food can reduce the GHG emissions from transport and thus reduce the overall carbon footprint of the food; calls on the

¹ Directive 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the energy performance of buildings (OJ L 153, 18.6.2010, p. 13).

² Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC (OJ L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 1).

- Commission to increase local and regional sustainable food production;
56. Calls for the strengthening of partnerships between the EU and local and regional governments to reinforce procedures to accelerate local climate action within the framework of the circular economy, in order to reduce waste, control climate change and use resources more efficiently;
 57. Stresses that the circular economy is a tool with enormous potential for improving sustainability in cities and calls on the Commission to include cities in the circular economy strategy;
 58. Calls on the competent authorities to tackle the problem of waste with a view to bringing the circular economy to fruition and promoting modes of disposal other than incineration for waste that is not reusable or recyclable;
 59. Asks the Commission to seek ways to enhance international cooperation between regions and local level actors in order to exchange good practices and lessons learned so as to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement;
 60. Calls for national governments to help cities and regions to fulfil international commitments to supporting climate and energy initiatives at local and regional level;
 61. Calls on cities and regions to take the lead on the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy production in order to reduce GHG emissions and air pollution; notes that regions and cities can play an essential role in the decarbonisation of society and that their involvement in the creation of an energy system based on renewables should be a priority for the EU and the individual Member States;
 62. Welcomes the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's decision to draft a special report on cities and climate in 2023, a commitment which will drive increased research into the importance of cities in combating climate change; calls on the Commission to take an active part in its drawing-up and to champion a multi-level territorial vision of climate action; believes that cities should provide input into the 2018 Global Climate Report; believes that cities and regions can influence policy making following the Paris Agreement, implementing a strategic approach to tackle global warming and support mitigation and adaptation measures in urban areas, where more than half the world's population live;
 63. Recognises the special responsibility of cities to tackle climate change, since they account for 70 % of global CO₂ emissions; believes that the commitments made in the Paris City Hall Declaration in 2015 will only be met through engagement with the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and the widespread adoption of action plans by cities across the EU; calls on the Commission to help to ensure, wherever necessary, the successful integration of the Compact of Mayors and the Covenant of Mayors, which began on 22 June 2016.
 64. Notes that during COP 22 in Marrakesh, local and regional authorities developed the Marrakesh Roadmap for Action, which highlights the need for the more direct involvement of local authorities, which should be formally recognised as part of the official discussion on climate change, rather than considered as being at the same level

as other non-state actors, such as NGOs and the private sector;

65. Emphasises that the public authorities should set an example as energy consumers and calls for the Structural Funds to be focused or boosted in order to promote energy efficiency in public buildings and self-sufficiency in municipalities through regenerative energy;
66. Urges the Commission and the Member States to promote pilot schemes and models for energy self-management at local level – models that are based on distribution systems, the economic returns from which are used to finance new facilities that reduce the impact on the environment;
67. Calls on the Commission to promote the coordination and exchange of information and best practices between Member States, regions, local communities and cities;
68. Is dismayed at the European Court of Auditors' 2016 assessment that the EU's target of spending 20 % of its budget in the current programming period on climate action will not be met; acknowledges the wide range of difficulties in measuring and evaluating EU projects that seek to alleviate climate change and its impact; calls for the Commission to keep Parliament updated on progress in this important area;
69. Underlines the significance of decentralised, cooperative Citizens' Energy Projects, and calls for them to be supported under the Structural Funds and through a reduction of the administrative burden at national and regional level;
70. Recognises the importance of bottom-up approaches in securing stakeholder buy-in for alleviating climate change; acknowledges the potential of the tools established under the Common Provision Regulation¹, such as integrated territorial investments (ITIs) and community-led local developments (CLLDs), in helping to achieve EU objectives in this area; calls on the Commission to work with stakeholders at national and local level to ensure that they make proper use of the full range of tools at their disposal;
71. Reiterates its commitment to achieving the successful global rollout of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy; notes the importance of the establishment of goals that are fully measurable; notes, in addition, that a number of the action plans submitted contain commitments through to 2020 and that the cities concerned thus have additional work to do up to 2030;
72. Welcomes voluntary measures (traffic light labelling) to ensure the visibility of the climate impact and carbon footprint of food and other products, and calls for EU-wide common indicators to enable voluntary but comparative labelling, particularly in the area of regional trade.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 320).

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	21.11.2017
Result of final vote	+: 59 -: 0 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Margrete Auken, Pilar Ayuso, Zoltán Balczó, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Lynn Boylan, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Alberto Cirio, Birgit Collin-Langen, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Mark Demesmaeker, Bas Eickhout, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Arne Gericke, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Jean-François Jalkh, Benedek Jávor, Josu Juaristi Abaunz, Kateřina Konečná, Urszula Krupa, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Valentinas Mazuronis, Joëlle Mélin, Susanne Melior, Rory Palmer, Gilles Pargneaux, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, Pavel Poc, Frédérique Ries, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Davor Škrlec, Renate Sommer, Ivica Tolić, Nils Torvalds, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Damiano Zoffoli
Substitutes present for the final vote	Jørn Dohrmann, Herbert Dorfmann, Eleonora Evi, Martin Häusling, Rupert Matthews, Stanislav Polčák, Christel Schaldemose, Bart Staes, Dubravka Šuica, Carlos Zorrinho
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Maria Noichl

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

59	+
ALDE	Catherine Bearder, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Valentinas Mazuronis, Frédérique Ries, Nils Torvalds
ECR	Mark Demesmaeker, Jørn Dohrmann, Arne Gericke, Julie Girling, Urszula Krupa, Rupert Matthews, Bolesław G. Piecha
EFDD	Eleonora Evi, Piernicola Pedicini
GUE/NGL	Lynn Boylan, Josu Juaristi Abaunz, Kateřina Konečná
NI	Zoltán Balczó
PPE	Pilar Ayuso, Ivo Belet, Alberto Cirio, Birgit Collin-Langen, Angélique Delahaye, Herbert Dorfmann, Francesc Gambús, Elisabetta Gardini, Jens Gieseke, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Stanislav Polčák, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Renate Sommer, Dubravka Šuica, Ivica Tolić, Adina-Ioana Vălean
S&D	Simona Bonafè, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nessa Childers, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Susanne Melior, Maria Noichl, Rory Palmer, Gilles Pargneaux, Pavel Poc, Christel Schaldemose, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Damiano Zoffoli, Carlos Zorrinho
VERTS/ALE	Margrete Auken, Bas Eickhout, Martin Häusling, Benedek Jávor, Davor Škrlec, Bart Staes

0	-

2	0
ENF	Jean-François Jalkh, Joëlle Mélin

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

Date adopted	20.2.2018
Result of final vote	+: 33 -: 4 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Mercedes Bresso, Steeve Briois, Andrea Cozzolino, Raymond Finch, John Flack, Iratxe García Pérez, Michela Giuffrida, Krzysztof Hetman, Ivan Jakovčić, Constanze Krehl, Sławomir Kłosowski, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Martina Michels, Iskra Mihaylova, Andrey Novakov, Paul Nuttall, Mirosław Piotrowski, Stanislav Polčák, Liliana Rodrigues, Fernando Ruas, Monika Smolková, Ruža Tomašić, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Ángela Vallina, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Kerstin Westphal, Joachim Zeller
Substitutes present for the final vote	Daniel Buda, Andor Deli, Ivana Maletić, Urmas Paet, Tonino Picula, Georgi Pirinski, Bronis Ropè, Milan Zver
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Eleonora Evi, Anna Hedh, Bogdan Brunon Wenta

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

33	+
ALDE	Ivan Jakovčić, Iskra Mihaylova, Urmas Paet
ECR	John Flack, Mirosław Piotrowski, Ruža Tomašić
EFDD	Eleonora Evi
GUE/NGL	Martina Michels, Ángela Vallina
PPE	Daniel Buda, Andor Deli, Krzysztof Hetman, Ivana Maletić, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Andrey Novakov, Stanislav Polčák, Fernando Ruas, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Milan Zver
S&D	Mercedes Bresso, Andrea Cozzolino, Iratxe García Pérez, Michela Giuffrida, Anna Hedh, Constanze Krehl, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Tonino Picula, Georgi Pirinski, Liliana Rodrigues, Monika Smolková, Kerstin Westphal
VERTS/ALE	Bronis Ropë

4	-
EFDD	Raymond Finch, Paul Nuttall
ENF	Steeve Briois
PPE	Joachim Zeller

1	0
ECR	Sławomir Kłosowski

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention