

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary collects some of the main terms used within the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy - Europe.

Adaptation to climate change

The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects. (IPCC, 2018). More information on the [European Commission's website](#).

Associated Partners

Associated Partners are professional associations, NGOs, and similar organisations, which are in a position to provide linkages with private companies and civil society, as well as support to European Covenant signatories, notably in the form of technologies, tools, financial incentives, promotional materials, cultural and participative initiatives.

Baseline Emission Inventory

A Baseline Emission Inventory is a quantification of the amount of GHG emitted due to energy consumption in the territory of a Covenant-Europe signatory during a year of reference (base year). It allows to identify the principal sources of GHG emissions and their respective reduction potentials.

Climate Neutrality

Climate Neutrality term refers to a state in which human activities result in no net effect on the climate system. Achieving such a state would require balancing of residual emissions with emission (carbon dioxide) removal as well as accounting for regional or local biogeophysical effects of human activities that, for example, affect surface albedo or local climate. (IPCC, 2018)

As part of the EU Green Deal, the Commission set out its [vision](#) for a climate-neutral EU in November 2018, looking at all the key sectors and exploring pathways for the transition. More information on the [European Commission's website](#).

Climate Pact

The European Climate Pact is an EU-wide initiative inviting people, communities and organisations to participate in climate action and build a greener Europe. More information on the [European Climate Pact website](#).

The Covenant of Mayors – Europe, together with the European Climate Pact, supports the development of local climate pacts. When joining the Covenant of Mayors – Europe, local and regional leaders *“aim to develop a local climate pact with all the players who will help [them] reach [their ambitions].”* (Extract of the [Covenant-Europe Commitment Document](#))

Covenant Board

The Covenant of Mayors - Europe Board is composed of 11 mayors or local elected representatives. It represents the Covenant - Europe Community, and politically steers the Covenant - Europe movement. In particular, the Board discusses the strategic orientations of the initiative, ensures it best fits cities' needs and expectations, as well as fosters the dialogue with EU institutions. More information and the list of Board members are available [here](#).

Covenant Coordinators

Covenant Coordinators are national, regional or sub-regional public authorities providing strategic guidance, financial and technical support to municipalities signing up to the Covenant of Mayors – Europe initiative. Covenant Coordinators include provinces, regions, public groupings of municipalities and national public bodies as national energy agencies or ministries. See the list of [Covenant Coordinators](#).

Covenant of Mayors - Europe Office

The Covenant of Mayors - Europe Office (CoMO), established and funded by the European Commission, is responsible for the coordination and management of the initiative. It provides signatories with administrative support and technical guidance, facilitates networking between Covenant stakeholders and ensures the promotion of their activities. The CoMO is managed by a consortium led by Energy Cities and Climate Alliance and composed of FEDARENE, CEMR, Eurocities, ICLEI Europe and Akaryon.

Covenant Signatories

Covenant Signatories are municipalities, local authorities and their groupings joining the Covenant of Mayors - Europe initiative to boost their climate and energy actions. See the [list of Covenant signatories](#).

Covenant Supporters

Covenant Supporters are sectoral agencies and European, national and regional networks and associations of local authorities which leverage their communication and networking activities to promote the Covenant of Mayors - Europe initiative and support the commitments of its signatories. See the [list of Covenant Supporters](#).

Effort Sharing Decision and Effort Sharing Regulation

The Effort Sharing legislation establishes binding annual greenhouse gas emission targets for EU Member States. These targets concern emissions from most sectors not included in the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), such as transport, buildings, agriculture and waste.

To achieve the goal of climate-neutrality by 2050 and at least 55% net reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, the European Commission is proposing to revise Effort-sharing Regulation with new national targets in 2022.

Energy Poverty

Energy Poverty is defined as a situation where a household or an individual is unable to afford basic energy services (heating, cooling, lighting, mobility and power) to guarantee a decent standard of living due to a combination of low income, high energy expenditure and low energy efficiency of their homes (European Commission, Citizens' Energy Forum 2016). In practical terms, this means that vulnerable citizens either do not have access to energy services or making use of these energy services undermines their possibility to access other basic services. With nearly 34 million Europeans unable to afford to keep their homes adequately warm in 2018, energy poverty is a major challenge for the EU. More information: [Energy Poverty in the framework of the Covenant of Mayors – Europe](#) | [Energy Poverty in the EU](#).

Joint Research Centre

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) is the scientific and technical arm of the European Commission. It is responsible for providing the technical and scientific support to the initiative. It works in close co-operation with the Covenant of Mayors – Europe Office to provide signatories with clear technical guidelines and templates in order to assist delivery of their Covenant of Mayors - Europe commitments as well as to monitor implementation and results. More information on the official [website of the JRC](#).

Just Transition

Just Transition is a concept that considers the social and distributive effects of climate action (both mitigation and adaptation) on the population (EEA, 2019). It has recently emerged as a fundamental principle for driving the energy transition and climate action in a fair manner. It is recognised as a key dimension of the European Green Deal, to measure the potential impact of climate change on most vulnerable communities and sectors, and take action to ensure 'no one is left behind' on the path to climate-neutrality.

Local Energy Day

Local Energy Days are events organised by Covenant signatories and coordinators as part of their official commitments, with the aim of raising public awareness of the opportunities offered by a more intelligent use of energy. They provide an occasion for local and regional authorities to involve stakeholders and citizens in a common dialogue related to the development and implementation of Sustainable Energy Action Plans. Usually organised for a specified period, the types of events may vary, but normally include activities such as workshops, exhibitions, guided visits and open-door days.

Mitigation to climate change

Mitigation to climate change refers to actions aimed to prevent and reduce CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere.

Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is an international treaty setting out a global framework to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. It also aims to strengthen countries' ability to deal with the impacts of climate change and support them in their efforts. The Paris Agreement is the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate change agreement, adopted at the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015. The EU and its Member States are among the close to 190 Parties to the Paris Agreement. More information [here](#).

Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

The Risk and Vulnerability Assessment is an analysis that determines the nature and extent of risks related to climate change, by analysing potential hazards and assessing vulnerability that could pose a potential threat or harm to people, property, livelihoods and the environment on which they depend (UNDRR). It allows the identification of areas of critical concern and therefore provides information for decision-making. The Risk and Vulnerability Assessment serves, along with the Baseline Emission Inventory, as the point of departure for the development of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan.

Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)

The SECAP is a key document which shows how the Covenant-Europe signatory will reach its vision and targets. This plan includes an assessment of the current situation, i.e. a Baseline Emission Inventory (BEI) for the climate mitigation part and a climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (RVA) for the adaptation part, as well as a comprehensive set of actions that signatories plan to undertake to address climate mitigation, adaptation and energy poverty.