



To: President Ursula von der Leyen
Executive Vice-President Teresa Ribera
Executive Vice-President Raffaele Fitto
Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra

Subject: Matching climate resilience responsibilities with the means to act

20.10.2026

Dear President,
Dear Executive Vice-Presidents,
Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Local Alliance, the informal coalition of European networks representing local and regional governments (ACR+, CEMR, Climate Alliance, Energy Cities, Eurocities, FEDARENE, ICLEI Europe and POLIS), we call on the Commission to ensure that the forthcoming European Climate Resilience Framework **recognises the essential role of towns, cities and regions in adaptation policies, and strengthens their ability to act.**

The European Committee of the Regions has [highlighted](#) that **up to 90% of climate change adaptation measures are undertaken by local and regional governments.** Our members are on the front line of Europe's climate and environmental challenges: protecting residents from extreme heat, managing flood risks, restoring ecosystems and maintaining essential services. Yet, towns, cities and regions often carry these responsibilities with limited staff, fragmented information, uncertain funding and insufficient coordination with national and European levels. This gap between political ambition and local delivery capacity must be addressed in the upcoming European Climate Resilience Framework. Local governments must be recognised as strategic partners in planning and delivering Europe's climate, resilience and environmental objectives, not simply as implementers. **In this regard, we would welcome the following mutually reinforcing elements in the legislation:**

The framework should help Member States, together with local and regional governments and other relevant bodies, to align their resilience actions based on a common baseline, clarify responsibilities, risk ownership and strengthen cooperation in managing climate risks, building on existing competences and respecting national constitutional arrangements. Clearer arrangements would facilitate effective action where responsibilities overlap. **Moreover, risk ownership should be matched by the decision-making powers and resources for the local and regional level that are needed to act, avoiding the transfer of responsibilities without adequate means.**



Cities and regions should have a meaningful role in identifying risks, determining how responsibilities are shared, and shaping the policies and investments affecting their territories. They have a solid knowledge of local contexts, and many have already developed local or regional adaptation plans, which can inform policies and support effective implementation.

A shared understanding of future climate risks and structured cooperation across all levels of government would help align adaptation efforts. A shared common baseline, supported by accessible and territorially relevant information, would help all governance levels consider future climate conditions in their planning and investment decisions. Permanent [multilevel governance mechanisms](#) could then bring national, regional and local governments together to agree on priorities, coordinate implementation and review progress.

An explicit provision in the Resilience Framework for implementation support to local and regional level is essential to translate these responsibilities into effective action. Existing EU legislation, including the Energy Efficiency, Energy Performance of Buildings Directives, or the Ten-T Regulation, offers useful precedents for supporting local and regional governments through technical assistance, training and adequate resources. Drawing on these approaches, the Resilience Framework should require Member States to equip cities and regions with sustained technical assistance, capacity-building and adequate funding across the full range of adaptation responsibilities. **The Framework should make sure that support reaches cities and regions** of all sizes that are eager and set to take or are already taking action.

The next EU budget should support the implementation of the framework by giving local and regional governments the means to fund agreed adaptation priorities. Future National and Regional Partnership Plans must offer an opportunity to connect national investment decisions with existing local and regional adaptation plans.

The framework should bring these elements together into a coherent approach that connects climate risk assessments with adaptation planning and investment across all levels of government. Its success should be measured by how effectively all levels of government work together to protect communities, strengthen essential services and prepare for future climate risks.

As the Local Alliance, we stand ready to support the Commission in developing this approach, drawing on our members' experience to identify workable solutions and ensure that the framework responds to the needs of Europe's towns, cities and regions.

Yours sincerely,