



**European Committee
of the Regions**



8 September 2020

"How can local and regional authorities use the circular economy as an enabler of a sustainable recovery?"

**16th meeting of the
Technical Platform for Cooperation on the Environment**

Conference co-organised by the European Committee of the Regions and the European Commission

14.30-16.30

Online event, via *Interactio**

Background and objectives

The European Commission presented, on 11 March 2020, its New Circular Economy Action Plan (NCEAP), one of the key initiatives under the European Green Deal. As half of total greenhouse gas emissions come from resource extraction and processing, achieving the climate-neutrality target by 2050 requires indeed to transition to a fully circular economy¹.

Since the publication of the NCEAP, COVID-19 has strongly affected our economies. On the one hand, the crisis has shown that in a very limited period, our societies can adapt to new circumstances in unexpected ways. On the other hand, however, it has shown that drastic and unprepared changes come with a high economic and social price and worsen the already significant existing social inequalities.

Cities and regions have the opportunity to see this crisis as a wake-up call to transform into more sustainable living environments. In this regard, the circular economy can be seen as a tool to future-proof our societies. Indeed, transitioning to a circular economy can reduce the vulnerability of economic and social systems².

The transition to the circular economy requires multi-level governance and actors: LRAs play a key role in moving towards a circular economy. Many LRAs are pioneers in the field of circularity and they represent a reservoir of best practices. However, many still face different kind of barriers that prevent them from taking the next step towards a greener future.

In the light of the above, this meeting aims at:

- Providing a forum for policy makers and stakeholders to exchange ideas on how local and regional authorities (LRAs) can benefit from the transition to the circular economy in the post-crisis recovery context;
- Enabling the sharing of best practices;

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_20_419

² <https://www.oecd-forum.org/users/396052-oriana-romano/posts/resilient-people-and-places-why-cities-should-embrace-the-circular-economy-to-shape-our-post-covid-19-future>

- Contributing to identify the barriers local and regional levels face in transitioning to the circular economy;
- Discussing the tools and initiatives existing at EU level and aiming at offering support to LRAs in the transition to the circular economy as well as identifying the gaps.

Beside this event, with a view to channel the challenges that local and regional authorities are facing while implementing the green transition locally, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) has also launched a working group called "[Green Deal going local](#)". The Green Deal Going Local Working group aims at placing cities and regions at the core of the European Green Deal and ensure that both the EU's sustainable growth strategy and the COVID-19 recovery plan translate into direct funding for cities and regions and tangible projects for every territory. It also aims at communicating their achievements and best practices as to facilitate their replication across the European Union.



	Chair: Juan Espadas Cejas , Chair of the ENVE commission and of the Green Deal Going Local Working group of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR)
	Languages: Participants may speak in & listen to: DA, DE, EN, ES, IT, SK
14.30	Welcome speeches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Juan Espadas Cejas, Chair of the ENVE commission of the CoR ➤ Kestutis Sadauskas, Director for Circular Economy and Green Growth, DG Environment, European Commission
14.45	The circular economy as an enabler for a sustainable recovery: local and regional authorities paving the way to the circular economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pierre Condamine, Zero Waste Europe (ZWE) ➤ Tamara Vidic Perko, Project manager, Public Utility JP Voka Snaga, City of Ljubljana (Slovenia) ➤ María Pilar Gómez López, Director General for Economic Planning and Development, Regional government of Aragon (Spain), Presentation of the <i>Aragon Circular Strategy</i> ➤ Discussion
15.30	Empowering local and regional authorities to transition from linear to circular models: what is missing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Håkon Sandven Jentoft, Urban Agenda for the EU - Circular Economy, Presentation of the results of the Partnerships ➤ Tjisse Stelpstra, Rapporteur of the European Committee of the Regions on the New Circular Economy Action Plan ➤ Andrea Accorigi, DG Research & Innovation, European Commission, Presentation of R&I activities in the field of Urban circular bioeconomy and outlook on future R&I activities for LRAs ➤ Discussion
16.15	Conclusions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Juan Espadas Cejas, Chair of the ENVE commission of the CoR

*Participants will attend the meeting online, via the web conference platform *Interactio*.