



# Local Climate Pacts: the region of Flanders as an inspiration for Europe

## Flanders, Belgium

### IN A NUTSHELL

The Region of Flanders has launched a Local Energy and Climate Pact (LEKP). The Flemish Local Climate Pact focuses on four areas (greening, participatory energy, sustainable mobility and rainwater) and sets concrete objectives for its nearly 300 signatories – local authorities – to tackle the global climate challenge at the local level.



### Why a local climate pact?

In 2021, the Flanders Regional Government created the Flemish Climate Pact. The initiative currently involves 293 municipalities and is based on 4 main pillars. The Pact, which has united 98% of the municipalities in the Flemish region to fight for the climate, aims to reduce the CO2 emissions of the territory by 35% – the initial milestone – and ultimately 55%. The region is determined to achieve this goal by focusing on four key pillars of action:

- Nature-based solutions with a focus on urban greening
- Mitigation policies centred on collective residential renovations and cooperative energy projects
- Mobility and the development of sustainable solutions
- Water management including re-use and more efficient use.

With the aim of developing a more thorough guide to decarbonisation of the region, the Flemish government has developed a more concrete version of the Climate Plan, in cooperation with municipalities. This version states the specific challenges that must be tackled to adapt to and mitigate climate change. Together, the two documents set out 18 measures to be taken. These include: planting one tree per inhabitant; 50 collective renovations per 1,000 housing units, 25 of which must reduce to zero the operational use of carbon; one charging point per 100 inhabitants; and one cubic metre of water softening per inhabitant. Each signatory is allowed to choose which objectives to tackle first.

## FLANDERS

<p><b>Population:</b> 6.589 million</p>	<p><b>Area:</b> 13,521 km<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since:</b> 2022</p>	<p><b>GHG emission reduction:</b> 40% by 2030 Climate Neutrality by 2050</p>

## Building cooperation to ensure an inclusive approach

The aim of the Climate Pact is to include all actors in the process towards climate neutrality. To ensure good cooperation, the Agency of Home Affairs of the Flemish Government (Agentschap Binnenlands Bestuur), the coordinator of the Pact, works very closely with the VVSG, the association of Flemish cities and municipalities. In addition to this collaboration between regional and local authorities, every two years, the regional government also includes citizens and organisations in the dialogue. The aim is to co-design the climate objectives and specific actions with representation from all sectors of society.

One of the main tools to keep track of the objectives achieved is the “[Local Climate Pact Portal](#)”. This portal allows all signatories to track the actions taken by their peers and the advances made. As well as ensuring transparency, it also aims to promote further mobilisation.

## Diving deeper – the role of the actors involved

While all the signatories of the Flemish Climate Pact are municipalities, they vary in shape and size. The biggest is Antwerp, with 529,417 inhabitants, and the smallest is Herstappe, with 78 inhabitants. The size and the number of citizens in each municipality are the main indicators involved in funding Local Climate Pacts. In terms of funding, it is the coordinator – the Agency of Home Affairs – that allocates resources to the signatories. This covers 50% of the funding required, since the regional funding leverages the same amount to be invested by the local authorities. The VVSG, in turn, leads the dissemination of best practices amongst the municipalities through a separate network within the umbrella organisation.

To publicise the great strides the Flemish cities are making towards the achievement of climate neutrality, as well as their efforts, the VVSG has created a [database of good practices](#). On this website, users can find examples of best practice in terms of how municipalities support expert organisations. The database is also a way of sharing examples, learning from and inspiring each other.

## Results and initial lessons

In 2023, the Flemish government will launch a platform to help local authorities overcome the barriers they encounter in implementing the Climate Plan. The regional authorities will set up working groups to define the main challenges, find possible ways of solving them and provide a set of lessons learned for other local governments. The authorities will aim to identify concrete lessons learned and develop specific actions to make it easier for people, companies and organisations to integrate these changes into their lives. The Flemish government intends to use this new platform to actively support all of its stakeholders to work towards a sustainable future.

One example of the challenges faced by municipalities in Flanders is the growing volume of citizens’ requests to Energy Houses. These local ‘one-stop shops’ aim to provide assistance for people who wish to lower their energy bills by retrofitting their houses. They are responsible for receiving, processing and responding to applications and offering advice and support to the citizens. In response to this challenge, the Flemish government has expanded the budget for this service.

### KEY FIGURES

**293** municipalities involved

**50** collective renovations per **1,000** housing units

1 charging point per **10** inhabitants

1 cubic metre of water softening per inhabitant



### FINANCING THE PROJECT

- + **Flemish Agency of Home Affairs:**  
EUR 24.870 million for Local Climate Pacts 1.0  
EUR 8.750 million for Local Climate Pacts 2.0
- + **Flemish government (in 2022):**  
EUR 10 million
- + **Flemish Climate Fund (in 2022):**  
EUR 20 million  
EUR 4.25 million for collective renovations

### USEFUL LINKS

- » <https://www.vvsg.be/klimaatproject>
- » [https://www.climate-chance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/bt2022-cas-detude\\_belgique\\_flandre\\_eng.pdf](https://www.climate-chance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/bt2022-cas-detude_belgique_flandre_eng.pdf)
- » <https://lokaalbestuur.vlaanderen.be/lekp>
- » <https://www.lokaalklimaatpact.be>



### CONTACT

For more information on the project, please contact:  
Elise Steyaert, Cabinet of Flemish Deputy Prime Minister: [elise.steyaert@vlaanderen.be](mailto:elise.steyaert@vlaanderen.be)