

A STRONGER AND COMPETITIVE EUROPE IS A GREENER EUROPE: CITIES AND REGIONS LEADING THE WAY

13 October 2026 – 09:30-11:00 JDE 63, European Committee of the Regions, Brussels

Interpretation in EN, IT

Recent geopolitical developments have increased the urgency for Europe to strengthen its strategic autonomy, based on competitiveness and shared prosperity.

This challenge depends on Europe's ability to transform its economic model into one that is sustainable in the long term, ensuring citizens' well-being within planetary boundaries. Cities and regions are already driving this transition through investments in renewable energy, climate adaptation and circular economy solutions that enhance resilience, energy security and innovation. This session will explore how sustainability and competitiveness can reinforce one another across Europe.

The session will also feature a forthcoming report *Competitive by Nature* by the European Environment Agency. The report includes six no-regret options that hold potential for Europe's long-term competitiveness across a range of potential future conditions.

Timing	Item
09:30	Intro and housekeeping rules • Giustino PICCOLO, European Committee of the Regions
09:35	First conversation SETTING THE CONTEXT Presentation: Henrik LARSEN, European Environment Agency Guest speakers: • Martin PORTER, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership Moderator: Vadim KONONENKO, European Environment Agency
10:15	Second conversation WHAT CITIES CAN DO Guest speakers: • Vlasta KRMELJ (SI/EPP), Mayor of Selnica ob Dravi and member of the European Committee of the Regions • Elina RANTANEN, Deputy Mayor of Turku (FI) • Kieran MCCARTHY (IE/EA), City of Cork and member of the European Committee of the Regions Moderator: Mark HIDSON, ICLEI Europe
10:55	Closing • Giustino PICCOLO, European Committee of the Regions

Interaction with the audience throughout the event via [Slido](#) code:2346438