Preface

We, Mayors and Deputy Mayors and City Leaders of Glasgow (United Kingdom), Granada (Spain), Groningen (Netherlands), Umeå (Sweden) and Valladolid (Spain), are delighted to introduce the results of this OECD report.

The COVID-19 unprecedented crisis highlighted the unsustainable nature of certain environmental and social trends. The pandemic has led to a drastic reduction in the use of fossil fuels and could lead to an 8% drop in carbon dioxide emissions globally in 2020, the lowest in decades, although temporary. Going back to "business as usual" is no longer an option but a *new normal* can be built, through bold political decisions. It is time to reconsider the way we work, move, produce and consume towards a green recovery, one that provides economic growth and social inclusion, while tackling climate change. This is especially true for urban areas, where most of the world population live and work, which account for up to 70% of greenhouse gas emissions, two-thirds of total energy demand and 50% of waste generation. If we want radical change, we should reflect on the limitations of our current linear economy, which takes and wastes resources and pursues economic growth at the expense of environmental quality. A circular economy creates value while reducing the environmental impact of the use of resources and waste disposal.

Cities and regions, sharing challenges and objectives towards greener, more inclusive and sustainable societies for all, have a key role to play in the transition to a carbon-neutral and circular economy. They hold core competencies for most policy areas underlying the circular economy such as solid waste, water, the built environment, land use or climate change. Being closer to citizens and businesses and more agile towards innovation and experimentation, local and regional governments can act as promoters, facilitators and enablers of the circular economy.

The report shows that progress has been made towards the circular economy. Cities and regions are increasingly setting long-term goals, fostering collaborations with the business sector and knowledge institutions, raising awareness on circular related practices, such as reusing, repurposing and sharing. However, much needs to be done in terms of upscaling practices and accelerating the implementation. This report provides a compendium and analysis of circular economy good practices, obstacles and opportunities. Its 3Ps analytical framework (*people, policies and places*) seeks to foster the transition towards the circular economy in cities and regions, building on policy recommendations and a scoreboard to self-assess the existence and level of implementation of enabling governance conditions.

While we are aware that this is only a first step on the road to the circular economy, we are particularly proud of the inclusive approach inherent to the development of this report and underlying recommendations and call for a massive and widespread use of them.

Susan Aitken Leader of the Council City of Glasgow

(United Kingdom)

Sir Sand Tilkon



Luis Salvador Mayor City of Granada (Spain)



Glimina Chakor Deputy Mayor City of Groningen (Netherlands)

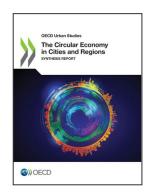


Hans Lindberg
Hans Lindberg
Mayor
City of Umeå
(Sweden)



Oscar Puente Mayor City of Valladolid (Spain)





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