

E-Newsletter



MAYORS in ACTION empowers Coordinators and Supporters (C&S) of the Covenant of Mayors in effectively assisting their municipalities in implementing and monitoring their SEAPs. Through tutoring and coaching schemes, MAYORS in ACTION will allow C&S municipalities to go further, enabling them to implement actions by employing existing tools and experiences in different environments, and helping them to support one another towards a common goal. MAYORS in ACTION is a three-year project, running until February 2017, and is co-funded by Intelligent Energy Europe.

www.mayorsinaction.eu

News

Landmark Paris Agreement sets ambitious climate target



The unanimously approved Paris Agreement, which was achieved at COP 21 in December, strives to limit global warming, with the intent to pursue a target of a maximum of a 1.5-degree increase. Through this Agreement, local and subnational governments are recognised as essential actors in fast tracking transformative action in the urban world.

The Paris Agreement states that nations will review, every five years, their commitments to keep greenhouse gas emissions trajectories well below 2 degrees Celsius. This process of accountability will safeguard, in particular, the most vulnerable populations and small island nations that suffer from the impacts of climate change they have not caused.

Through this Agreement, nations have yet to provide an ambitious response to end a fossil-dependent era, despite the unstoppable transformation into an urban development model based on 100 percent renewables. It is hoped that national governments will signal to the business sector that the era of fossil fuels is coming to a close. Mayors in Action was present at COP 21, hosting an information stand inside the [TAP Pavilion](#) in partnership with the [CO-POWER](#) and [50,000&1 SEAPs](#) projects. At the stand experts discussed and exchanged with visitors on sustainable energy action planning and implementation.

Tools and solutions handbook provides practical advice on implementing SEAPs



Combining the best resources from the [Toolbox of Methodologies on Climate and Energy](#) with the experiences of the partners of the Mayors in Action consortium, the [Handbook for Covenant Supporters and Coordinators \(C&S\)](#) provides step by step guidance, useful tools, and good practices on implementing sustainable energy actions and measures.

This detailed compendium outlines how to set objectives, gain stakeholder involvement, and finance selected actions, all while offering examples of best practice in the fields of rolling out information campaigns, stimulating energy retrofitting in residential buildings, bolstering Renewable Energy, and fostering integrated energy actions, among others.

The annexes to the Handbook provide relevant case studies, giving an in-depth look at how actions have been implemented across Europe.

>To download the handbook, click [here](#).

City leaders debate the case for investing in the Energy Union



The EU's Energy Union aims to make a single energy market in Europe a reality, ensuring a secure supply of sustainably sourced energy for all Europeans. As the transition will occur at the local level, city and regional governments are the primary actors in achieving the EU's sustainable energy goals. Local and regional governments, however, are often stymied in their attempts to enact ambitious climate and energy policies by a lack of funding and by unclear legal rules.

A debate held in the context of the European Union's [Open Days for Regions and Cities](#) in Brussels (Belgium) on 14 October saw local-level leaders discuss the financial ramifications of moving to a single energy market in Europe, as well as look at how local and regional governments can use sustainable energy to create projects that yield a return on investment. Participants debated how Structural and Cohesion Funds can be coupled with innovative financing models to ensure that sufficient capital is raised to implement renewable energy projects. Employment opportunities stemming from the local level implementation of the Energy Union was also hotly discussed.

Eugenio Leanza of the European Investment Bank said: "Planning for sustainability and resilience is an exercise that needs to be reviewed in consideration of the evolving situation of the economy and has to be realised by all stakeholders in a cooperative way [...] The EIB is reflecting on the utilisation of new financial instruments to improve the performance of European cities, while reinforcing the resilience of their job markets." The session was jointly organised by two EU-funded projects, [MAYORS in ACTION](#) and [50000&1 SEAPs](#), both committed to building a low-carbon energy future in Europe.

>For more information, visit the [event listing](#).

District energy through local wood chips



30 participants joined the Interleuven workshop "How to realise my SEAP" on 29 October 2015 to learn about the first Flemish district heating system to be fueled by local wood chips, as well as practices useful for smaller municipalities in the Interleuven region.

On 17 September 2015 the district heating network, powered by wood chips from local hedges, was put into use in the municipality of Bocholt. The cooperative 'Energy Landscape' hailed the system as a win-win situation for farmers, users, and biodiversity, one which simultaneously managed to address the problems of relying on fossil fuels.

As local hedges are used to heat public buildings, the negative aspects of fossil fuels, such as fluctuating international market prices and extensive transport requirements, are avoided, while the local region benefits from increased employment and a boost in biodiversity. Moreover hedges grow back after harvesting: after around 10 years they are once again ready to harvest. To heat a school for a year requires around 190 tons of local wood chips, which amounts to the harvest from about 4 km of hedges. Considering that in the municipality of Bocholt alone there are 100 km hedges, this local energy source has significant growth potential.

>Formoreinformation,visitthe[TWECOMproject](#).

Veneto Region training looks at SEAP implementation



A training session on implementing and monitoring sustainable energy action plans (SEAPs) took place as part of the [EU Sustainable Energy Week 2015](#) in Venice (Italy), organised by the Veneto Region of Italy in collaboration SOGESCA, a partner in the [Mayors in Action project](#).

The event was designed to spread knowledge, best practices, and provide a space for networking. Issues such as SEAP development and implementation were focused on, with advice provided for those undertaking monitoring for the first time. Financing frameworks for

energy efficiency, as well as potential legal and financial barriers and how to overcome them, were also discussed.

The training was open to all interested parties, but placed a particular emphasis on Covenant Coordinators and Supporters (C&S), who were given access to tools and methodologies selected by the project.

Workshop looks at SEAP best practices and solutions in Athens



Good practices in the field of renovating public and residential buildings and replacing existing public lighting were shared at the workshop “Action planning in the implementation phase”, held as part of

the Mayors in Action project in the Greek capital of Athens.

The general concept of the workshop was to support the Coordinators and Supporters (C&S) of the Covenant of Mayors in implementing ambitious Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) measures.

Representatives of local authorities presented the ways in which they had implemented actions and discussed the barriers they faced, such as a lack of funding - a common obstacle in the implementation phase. Additionally, they indicated how they would like to be supported by C&S schemes.

Possible solutions and success stories were also presented, with an emphasis placed on repeatability. A technical coaching seminar organised by CRES had previously been held in Athens in the framework of the Mayors in Action project, looking at SEAP implementation and financial schemes.

Croatia passive housing event looks at innovative and sustainable technology



The construction of social housing in Koprivnica formed the focal point of the “8th edition of the Passive Houses in Croatia event”, held from 13 - 15 November 2015 in the City of Zagreb as part of the Mayors in Action project.

The gathering provided an opportunity for the representatives of local governments, ministries of the Republic of Croatia, the Croatian Chamber of Architects, universities, companies, the media and students to meet and exchange ideas.

The Koprivnica social housing project was constructed in line with passive house principles, using innovative and sustainable technology to achieve impressive energy efficiency standards. The techniques applied include the award winning [ECO-SANDWICH](#) concept, which re-uses construction and demolition waste to create wall-panels that provide efficient thermal insulation.

Croatian cities Zadar, Osijek, Koprivnica and Žminj took part in the event, sharing their experiences of constructing low energy and passive buildings for public purposes. The Mayors in Action project outlined the support provided to Croatian cities to help them successfully implement their Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs).

Energy Days in Chorzele well received by citizens



“Energy days in Chorzele” was organised as a two-day outdoor event aimed at bringing citizens and local stakeholders together to help reach the objectives contained

in the municipality’s Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP). During the event participants had the opportunity to learn more about ways to save energy and about the renewable energy sources available in their region. Invited companies talked about the benefits of solar thermal collectors, photovoltaic modules, wind turbines and other systems used for energy generation, with many displaying example prototypes at their stands, allowing participants to see how the installations and their different parts look and work in practice.

There were also many attractions for younger visitors, such as an art contest related to renewable energy. The winners were awarded with cups and certificates, presented by the Mayor, Mrs Beata Szczepankowska. All participants received small gifts for their efforts.

To make the event even more attractive, food and arts and crafts stalls were set up and each day ended with a concert by a popular band or singer. A wide range of brochures, leaflets, and other publications were available at the event, encouraging people to save energy and to think about energy issues. Citizens reacted positively to the energy days, with many eagerly joining in discussions on different energy-related topics.

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Workshop on smart metering brings business and local governments together



The Deputy of Natural Areas and Environment from Diputació de Barcelona, Valentí Junyent, opened the workshop “[Energy smart metering devices and energy savings and efficiency in buildings](#)”, which aimed to convey the importance of

metering as an energy saving tool. The workshop, which took place on 29 October in Barcelona (Spain), outlined the support given by Diputació de Barcelona (DIBA) and presented the experiences of those that have already implemented smart meters. It also displayed the different technologies that exist on the market.

The workshop was organised by DIBA and by la Xarxa de Ciutats i pobles cap a la Sostenibilitat and was attended by around 100 people. The Technical Office of Climate Change and Sustainability of Diputació de Barcelona provides support to local governments to help them implement smart metering systems in their buildings.

Parallel to the workshop there was a network and exhibition area, where companies offering smart metering devices and technology could discuss with local governments. The workshop took place in the framework of the Mayors in Action project.

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Guest Projects



CITYnvest

Implementing a Sustainable Energy Action Plan can help make energy in cities cleaner, more sustainable, and more cost-effective. Finding the money to implement activities outlined in the plan, however, can be challenging, particularly for local governments faced with curtailed budgets.

To address this issue, the EU-funded CITYnvest project is helping local authorities to develop financing solutions, particularly for energy efficiency renovation in buildings.

CITYnvest develops guidance materials based on financing models that have been shown to work. It also applies innovative financing models in pilot projects, to see how financing can be improved.

Wide-scale training programmes are currently being carried out in Austria, Latvia, Italy, Lithuania, Belgium, Romania, Hungary, Spain, Bulgaria and Portugal, all with the aim of promoting innovative financing towards municipalities, regional authorities, and Covenant of Mayors signatories and supporters.

More information can be found on the project's website (www.citynvest.eu), which looks in depth at developing bankable projects in Europe. A dynamic tool, which will help local authorities to find the most suitable financing model for their circumstances, is being prepared and will be available soon.

[› Read more](#)



The Community-Power project (CO-POWER)

Community-owned energy projects have the potential to transform our energy system. Communities, cooperatives and local governments across Europe are creating projects where they own and are actively involved in running an energy resource. Community energy ensures that the benefits of renewable energy are fed back into local communities, bolstering the local economy and contributing to low carbon development. Existing projects - from community-owned wind turbines, to co-operatives or trusts that own shares in bigger installations - are inspiring communities across Europe.

The Community Power (CO-POWER) project, funded by Intelligent Energy Europe, aims to speed up the development of renewable energy projects by creating a favourable legislative environment. To achieve this aim, CO-POWER has built a broad, public coalition across Europe supportive of community renewable projects.

CO-POWER aims to empower local, regional and national policymakers in putting forward enabling legislative frameworks in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain, Hungary, Ireland, Scotland and Belgium, as well as providing recommendations to support community energy projects in EU legislation.

CO-POWER informs and engages citizens to create opportunities for public-private finance of community renewables projects. For more information, visit: www.communitypower.eu

[› Read more](#)

Events



[Energy Union - What Local Leadership Can Tell Us About Energy Transition](#)
June 15, 2016 - European Sustainable Energy Week - Brussels, Belgium



[2nd Open Training Session @EUSEW 2016: Energy Management for Sustainable Action Plans](#)
June 16, 2016 - European Sustainable Energy Week - Brussels, Belgium



[Workshop on Local Energy Data Collection for SEAP development](#)
June 17, 2016 - European Sustainable Energy Week - Brussels, Belgium



[New Covenant of Mayors: Comparing Experiences](#)
June 17, 2016 - European Sustainable Energy Week - Venice, Italy



[Local Renewables 2016 - Energising the smart city and region](#)
26 - 28 October 2016 - Freiburg, Germany & Basel, Switzerland



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