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1 Executive Summary

The Covenant of Mayors (CoM) is an ambitious initiative through which cities and towns committing to go beyond the EU's climate and energy objectives are supported in their actions by a vast multitude of actors. However, lack of knowledge and staff with necessary skills and funding prevents LGs from realizing the actions agreed in the Plan and from facilitating private companies and citizens to participate in its implementation.

To overcome these barriers, Supporting Structures of CoM (C&S), which include Provinces and Regions as Territorial Coordinators, local, regional and national energy agencies, networks of local and regional authorities and associated partners, play a pivotal role in providing municipalities with the financial, technical and strategic support to fulfil their commitments. Nevertheless, C&S often do not have adequate means or the internal structure to be effective in this task.

The **MAYORS in ACTION** project starts from the consideration that C&S are very much necessary for a successful development of the CoM initiative and that they need to improve their capacities and prepare instruments for consolidating their role of efficient and effective support to small towns in the concrete realization phase. New signatories of CoM now pledge to reduce CO₂ emissions by at least 40% by 2030 and to adopt an integrated approach to tackling mitigation and adaptation to climate change. This is a demanding goal which requires total engagement of all stakeholders included in any segment of the process and therefore the role of the SS is ever more important in the implementation of the EU energy policy.

In order for the C&S to be able to provide the necessary support, it is extremely important for them to understand the functioning of cities, their obligations within the frame of legislature as well as responsibility to the citizens. This is also the framework where the C&S need to seek out models and suggest to cities the acceptable solutions for the implementation of their SEAPs.

Guidelines for Coaching activities is primarily intended for the C&S as aid in providing help to local self-governments in fulfilling their Covenant of Mayors obligations.

The guidelines provide answers to the question *“How to provide support for the C&S through the form of coaching schemes aimed at local governments?”* with the aim to assisting the C&S through the process of active envisioning support for local governments in order to meet the commitments from the Covenant of Mayors initiative. The guidelines cover two important areas that need to be considered: the needs of local governments in the implementation of energy policy and fulfilment of the Covenant of Mayors obligations and the methods and tools that are applicable and efficient in providing the necessary aid.

1.1 Resumen ejecutivo

El Pacto de los Alcaldes es una ambiciosa iniciativa a través de la cual los pueblos y ciudades comprometidos a ir más allá de los objetivos en materia de energía y clima de la UE reciben apoyo por sus acciones de parte de una multitud de actores. Sin embargo, la falta de conocimientos y de personal con las habilidades y la financiación necesarias impide a los gobiernos locales llevar a cabo las acciones acordadas en el Plan y facilitar a las empresas privadas y a los ciudadanos la participación en su implementación.

Para superar estos inconvenientes, las estructuras de apoyo del Pacto de los Alcaldes (coordinadores y promotores), entre las cuales se incluyen provincias y regiones como Coordinadores Territoriales, agencias regionales y nacionales de energía, redes de autoridades locales y regionales, y miembros asociados desempeñan un papel fundamental a la hora de proporcionar a los municipios el apoyo financiero, técnico y estratégico para que puedan cumplir sus compromisos. Aun así, los coordinadores y promotores carecen a menudo de la estructura interna o los medios adecuados para ser efectivos en esta tarea.

El proyecto **MAYORS in ACTION** (Alcaldes en Acción) empieza a partir de la consideración que los coordinadores y promotores son muy necesarios, para que la iniciativa Pacto de los Alcaldes se desarrolle satisfactoriamente, y tienen que mejorar sus capacidades y preparar instrumentos para consolidar su papel de apoyo eficaz y real a los municipios pequeños en la fase concreta de la realización. Los nuevos firmantes del Pacto de los Alcaldes se comprometen ahora a reducir las emisiones de CO₂ en por lo menos un 40% hacia el 2030 y a adoptar una estrategia integrada para afrontar la atenuación del cambio climático y la adaptación al mismo. Se trata de un objetivo exigente que requiere el compromiso total de todos los participantes incluidos en cualquier segmento del proceso y, por lo tanto, el papel de las estructuras de apoyo es aún más importante en la implementación de la política energética de la UE.

Para que los coordinadores y promotores puedan proporcionar el apoyo necesario, es muy importante que entiendan el funcionamiento de las ciudades, sus obligaciones en el marco de su mandato, así como su responsabilidad hacia los ciudadanos. Y es también en este marco que los coordinadores y promotores tienen que buscar modelos y sugerir a las ciudades las soluciones aceptables para la implementación de sus PAES.

La Guía de actividades de apoyo se ha previsto principalmente como una ayuda para que los coordinadores y promotores puedan facilitar a las autonomías locales el cumplimiento de sus obligaciones del Pacto de los Alcaldes.

Estas guías proporcionan respuestas a la pregunta *“¿Cómo dar apoyo a los coordinadores y promotores a través de esquemas de ayuda destinados a los gobiernos locales?”* con la intención de ayudar a los coordinadores y promotores durante el proceso de apoyo activo planificado a los gobiernos locales para satisfacer

los compromisos de la iniciativa Pacto de los Alcaldes. Las guías incluyen dos ámbitos importantes que hay que tener en cuenta: las necesidades de los gobiernos locales en la implementación de la política energética y el cumplimiento de las obligaciones del Pacto de los Alcaldes, y los métodos y herramientas aplicables y eficientes para proporcionar la ayuda necesaria.

2 Municipality needs through the process of energy policy implementation

Local policies related to energy efficiency, implemented at the scale of a municipality, city or metropolitan region, can improve community self-reliance, save consumers and citizens money, create local “main street” jobs, catalyse local economic investment and protect the environment. The responsibilities of local governments are to give them large influence over energy use in their communities through land use and zoning, building requirements, property taxes and transfers, transportation investment decisions, economic and workforce development, and, in many cases, the provision of services such as water and electricity. Additionally, local governments can lead by example through improving the energy efficiency of their own facilities and operations.

A Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) is the key document that shows how the Covenant signatory will reach its CO₂ reduction target by 2020 and therefore refer to the initial targets for Covenant Signatories. Local authorities who have signed the Covenant of Mayors recently have committed to submit a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) that also allow for actions focusing on increasing the resilience in the signatory city with adaptation actions.

Both action plans define the activities and measures set up to achieve the targets, together with time frames and assigned responsibilities. Covenant signatories can choose the format of their Sustainable Energy Action Plan themselves (especially if they have already done an action plan in the past). However, signatories need to make sure that their action plan is in line with the general principles specified and detailed in the SEAP guidebook available in Covenant of Mayors Library.

SEAP/SECAP is a key document for implementing goals and vision of city’s energy policy. The implementation of the SEAP/SECAP depends on technical and financial resources of cities, organization of city administration and a set of legal and other acts that regulate the implementation of specific activities. The ability of cities to realize energy projects is based on the knowledge and experience of employees in the city administration.

In order for the Supporting Structures to successfully provide aid to cities in SEAP/SECAP implementation, it is of crucial importance that they master the knowledge needed to fulfil the obligations from the Covenant of Mayors, but also they need to be acquainted with the organization and functioning of the city, the legal and economic frames to respect in SEAP/SECAP implementation who are key stakeholders in the processes of measure implementation as well as other elements that affect the implementation processes.

The areas and topics that C&S must look into in order to identify the need of cities and effectively provide assistance are as follows:

1. research of the city needs,
2. process of accessing and fulfilling the obligations from CoM initiative,
3. internal organization,
4. development of the SEAP,
5. financing of measures,
6. implementation of measures,
7. monitoring of the SEAP/SECAP implementation,
8. organization of the Energy Days.

The Covenant of Mayors Office (CoMO) provides technical guidance in order to help navigate Signatories through the different actions to undertake at each stage of the CoM initiative.

2.1 Analysis of the municipality needs

In aim to identify the municipality needs in implementation of energy policy, the first step is to understand city administration organization and work processes, as well as to identify their potential and barriers. Different methods could be used to find out what are the local government needs, such as:

- **Holding workshops with local government representatives.** Workshops emphasizing interaction and exchange of information among a local government representatives and C&S. It should be small number of participants or working in groups;
- **Development of the SWOT analysis with the help of relevant stakeholders.** A SWOT analysis is a structured planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats involved in a city's energy policy as a whole or in a specific sector or a measure;
- **Implementation of survey in order to identify city needs and possibilities.** A survey is a method of data collection (e.g., a questionnaire) that can be analysed statistically. A survey may focus on different types of topics, opinions, behaviour or factual information etc. It could be published online with aim to involve much more relevant employees from different department;
- **Meetings with people responsible for a specific area.** Through directly conversation with the responsible persons, the C&S can develop a quality partnership with the city and identify the area where it is necessary to provide help, to determine which methods and tools are acceptable and effective for this purpose.

2.2 Process of accessing and fulfilling the obligations from CoM initiative

In providing effective assistance, the obligation of the Supporting Structures is to continuously monitor the EU laws and acts of European Commission in the field of energy in connection with setting short-term and long-term goals, as well as the modifications and amendments of legal acts. In keeping therewith, the Covenant of Mayors Office monitors the set of EU energy policies and progressive acts in order to fulfil its mission.

As this is a dynamic process, the C&S should be provided with current information and take steps such as:

- C&S have to communicate with the CoMO and keep up with the news as concerns accessing to the initiative and obligations assumed;
- C&S needs to familiarize with the legal procedure of the city on the acceptance of accessing to the CoM initiative, as well as with the legal procedures regarding implementation of obligations assumed from the CoM.

2.3 Internal organization

For successful implementation of the energy policy and commitments of cities from the Covenant of Mayors, it is essential to correctly set the position of "Energy Team" organized by the city with clearly defined scope of action, responsibilities and obligations. The "Energy Team" may be in the form of departments, sectors or offices depending on the size of the city. It should be composed of experts who can cover different areas essential in planning, implementation and monitoring of energy projects.

2.3.1 Energy Management System

Establishing an Energy Management System (EnMS) according to ISO 50001:2011 involves identifying and allocating rules and resources required to put the energy policy and energy objectives into practice. *"ISO 50001:2011 Energy Management Systems – Requirements with guidance for use"* is a specification created by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for an EnMS. This standard specifies the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining and improving an energy management system, with the purpose of enabling an organization to follow a systematic approach in achieving continual improvement of energy performance, including energy efficiency, energy security, energy use and consumption. The standard aims to help organizations reduce continually their energy use, and therefore their energy costs and their greenhouse gas emissions. In order to guarantee proper sharing of knowledge on EnMS implementation and good communication of the EnMS requirements, such as procedures, rules and

responsibilities, it is advisable to keep track of all relevant EnMS documentation in paper or electronic form, sharing them within the organisation.

The guidelines “How to develop a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) integrated with an Energy Management System”, developed within the framework of Energy for Mayors project (http://energyformayors.eu/images/stories/stories/SEAP/SEAP-EnMS_technical_guidelines_long_FINAL_SOGESCA.pdf), introduced the EnMS model according to EN 16001 (former standard) and ISO 50001. Together with the results of the EU project “50000&1 SEAP” (www.50001seaps.eu), they could help C&S in setting up such standard in public authorities.

In this context, Energy Information Systems are very valuable as tools for continuous monitoring of energy consumption for buildings owned by local government through Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). It is vital for Public Authorities to have a clear grasp of which measurements are actually possible and reliable for monitoring, the available meters and metering systems, and whether these metering systems are appropriate for the metering needs of the planned activities and objectives.

2.3.2 Green Office

The meaning of the “Green Office” is a set of activities and measures aimed to help to reduce energy costs, decreasing the negative impact on the environment, as well as increasing the quality of work, contributing to the protection of environment and encouraging higher performance and efficiency in daily operations. In order to achieve these, it is necessary to clearly determine the concept of the Green Office on the basis of which its implementation would be done. In preparing the concept, it is necessary to take into account of a number of elements such as:

- **Determination of the initial conditions** (opinions of employees, current practices in office operations, data on energy consumption of the building, equipment, official vehicles, etc.);
- **Determination of priority measures and activities** (change of the behaviour and attitudes of employees, set up an effective office management through processes, materials and equipment, application of effective measures in mobility, implementation of green procurement, reduction of energy consumption by implementing energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources in buildings of city administration, etc.);
- **Organizational structure** (official administration support in the form of a “Decision on the establishment of a Green Office” by the Mayor of the municipality or the Director of an institution; Appointment of people responsible for carrying out the activities of the Green Office, etc.).

Possible organizational structure scheme: Administration – responsible person – Green office team.

The task of the Green Office team would be to develop a work plan, coordinate and oversee the activities, plans and monitors costs, produce reports, inform of the results, etc;

- **Dynamics of implementation** (Gantt chart of the implementation of the entire process of Green office implementation);
- **Education and promotion**

It is recommended to develop a **strategy** for education and promotion to employees and beyond, to develop promotional materials, to involve the public and the media and to organize educational and promotional events. The goal is to point out the importance of efficient use of energy and environmental protection in the regular course of business, but also in the everyday life of citizens.

The implementation of such activities and the implementation of a Green Office is a permanent strategy which continuously raises the level of awareness of employees and the general public, introduces the measures of energy efficiency in daily business activities and creates environmentally conscious organizations and environmentally friendly and energy-efficient working environment.

2.4 SECAP development

2.4.1 Methodology

A Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) is the key document in which each Covenant signatory outlines how it intends to reach its CO₂ reduction target by 2030. It defines the activities and measures set up to achieve the targets, together with time frames and assigned responsibilities. Covenant Signatories are free to choose the format of their SECAP, as long as it is in line with the general principles set out in the Covenant of Mayors Office guidelines.

The procedure of preparation, development, implementation and monitoring of the SECAP can basically be divided into 6 main steps:

- preparatory actions for the initiation of the Procedure (political will, coordination, professional resources, participants, etc.),
- development of the SECAP,
- formal acceptance of the Action Plan,
- implementation of identified measures and activities according to the Plan of Priority Measures and Activities,
- monitoring and control of identified measures according to the Plan of Priority Measures and Activities.

The basic activity of the preparatory stage of the implementation procedure is the achievement of the political will for its initiation and realisation. Accession to the Covenant of Mayors shows a positive attitude of the entire city government towards the sustainable energy development of the city, but it is only the first step in the right direction. It is important for other steps to follow, the most important being the provision of human potential and necessary financial funds the return of which would be realised mostly through energy savings. When preparing a SECAP, special attention should be paid for the ultimate goal to be derived from real data and planning measures that can be implemented.

The CoMO website boasts great examples of the produced SECAPs which can serve as examples for the production of new plans or for the revision of an already existing SECAP.

2.4.2 Baseline Emission Inventory

The first activity in the development of the SECAP is the determination of the implementation time frame, i.e. choosing a reference year for which Reference Inventory of CO₂ emission will be created. The implementation time frame of the SECAP is the period between the chosen reference year till 2030. The recommendation is to choose as the reference year the earliest year for which the necessary data is available (1990 is the basic year).

In order to set realistic targets of energy consumption and CO₂ emissions reduction, it is important to collect quality data on the energy situation for the reference year, the first step being a defined classification of the sector of energy consumption. As an important precondition for a successful analysis of energy consumption of different sectors are quality results and its results are entry results for the creation of Reference Inventory of CO₂ emissions, **a systematic collection and processing of the collected data** is one of the most important activity and in the same time very demanding task in the creation of the SEAP. The data collection process should involve all stakeholders that possess authentic data on energy consumption in the city as well as statistical data required by the calculation of CO₂ emissions (i.e. traffic sector). Depending on the reliability, the collected data are divided into three categories:

- **Completely reliable data** – data obtained collecting invoices for facilities of individual sub-categories or equal data collected from minimally 2 different sources which concur with the accuracy of more than 90%,
- **Reliable data** – data derived on the basis of representative sample received by collecting invoices (a sample includes the minimum of 70% of the total number of the entire category),
- **Estimated data** – in the absence of the necessary data they are estimated on the basis of different experience methods and/or calculated from the existing data.

The next important activity within the SECAP is the production of the Reference Inventory of CO₂ emissions. The mostly is used IPCC protocol (a protocol of the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*) for the determination of the emission of pollutants into the atmosphere. Detailed description of the methodology, determining specific emission factors for thermal energy and burning out of fuel and detailed description of the IPCC methodology could be find on the link http://www.ipcc-nggip.iges.or.jp/public/2006gl/pdf/0_Overview/V0_1_Overview.pdf.

CO₂ emissions in the Building Sector include emissions from the consumption of electrical and thermal energy, and the emissions from fuel combustion. The emissions from the fuel combustion could be calculated through standard emission factors, whereas specific emission factors were defined for the calculation of emissions from electrical and thermal energy consumption. The programme package COPERT III, developed by EEA (European Environmental Agency) within the EMEP/CORINAIR methodology could be used to calculate the emissions of fuel combustion and evaporation from the Traffic Sector. The emissions of the two direct greenhouse gases (methane, CH₄ and nitrogen oxide, N₂O) could be calculated for the sectors in which they occur in fuel combustion.

2.4.3 Selection of measures

On the basis of the CO₂ emissions data for different sectors and sub-sectors of energy consumption of the city, analysis of the energy situation for referent year, energy balances for previous years, estimated energy consumption in the time period till 2030, as well as numerous other relevant factors measures and activities for the implementation should be identified.

National Energy Strategy, General Urban-Planning Scheme of the City, Energy Strategy of the City as well as other relevant document on national, regional and city level are legislative framework which determine what measures and activities are acceptable. Besides, **technical, technological and financial conditions for implementation** should be taken into consideration what measures and activities are reasonable as well as advantages and barriers in whole process (planning, implementation, exploitation).

Finally, the list of **priority measures** should be set up with measures and activities that are support sustainable development of the city and that are acceptable for the city government and citizens in generally.

2.4.4 Planning the implementation of measures

For the identified measures and activities, the implementation of which can result in a significant reduction of CO₂ emissions until 2030, along with the satisfactory economy-energy parameters in the SECAP, the following should be determined:

- potential of energy savings by 2030,

- time frame and implementation dynamics,
- financing possibilities,
- estimations of implementation investment expenses,
- potential of CO₂ emissions reduction by 2030.

2.4.5 Procedures for accepting the SECAP

Accepting the SECAP as an official implementation document is the key element for its effectiveness and, in the end, the realisation of the foreseen target of CO₂ emission reduction by 2030. For that reason, it is important that the leading people from the local government are actively involved in the procedure of development, implementation and monitoring.

After approval on city level, the SECAP have to be submitted in the online template by Signatories. After clarifications, the SECAP should be accepted by CoMO.

2.5 Financing of measures

A successful implementation of SEAP/SECAP requires a considerable financial expenditure, so it is important to **identify all available sources of financing**.

It is basic condition that financing resources have to be acceptable for the city in accordance with legal framework for the city budget.

Decisions need to be in accordance with the rules of financing in the local administration/government. The SEAP/SECAP must define key financial resources which will finance activities.

The selection of priority measures should be based on estimates of the economic attractiveness of the project by reviewing its key performance indicators such as:

- **Financial risks:** focus on the evaluation of the financial risk of the project itself, like a bank would do while examining it,
- **Technical expertise:** level of technical knowledge, i.e. engineering skills (e.g. ESCo's or local energy agencies) is crucial for the successful implementation of the project,
- **Mature technologies:** a general requirement would be to use proven technologies, adapted to climate, which would allow the project to achieve an internal rate of return greater than 10%.

The Supporting Structures should provide local self-governments with an insight into various financing options for energy projects that are available on the market and at the same time recognize the models and sources of financing acceptable to the local government. It should consider the different funding options such as:

- the resources of local authorities and revolving funds,

- public-private partnerships,
- ESCo,
- national funds and programmes,
- European funds and programmes.

The latest information regarding funding opportunities for European cities can be found on the website of the Covenant of Mayors.

2.6 SEAP/SECAP measures implementation

With the acceptance of the SEAP/SECAP as a document of the city, its implementation officially starts. This is a very complicated step, dependent on numerous economic, social and technical factors, the successful realization of which will require extremely good organization, coordination and cooperation of numerous stakeholders. Some of activities which should be taken follow:

- preparation of technical documentation,
- definition of financial sources in order to implement measures,
- determination of the annual city budget (selection of measures for implementation),
- implementation of public procurement process in accordance with the law,
- realization of measures,
- monitoring results of the implemented measures.

Fact sheets and business plans for each or group measures could be very helpful in the process of implementation, in particular for planning city budget and finding financial sources (template for fact sheets and business plans have been developed and it is available at Mayors in Action website, www.mayorsinaction.eu).

2.7 SEAP/SECAP implementation monitoring

Indeed, the Covenant provides Signatories with a harmonised data compilation and reporting framework, and assists them to follow a systemic energy planning and monitoring at the local level.

Developed together with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), based on the experience of practicing Municipalities and Regions with the intention to align with most common local methodologies, the "*Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) and Monitoring templates*" constitute the standard reporting framework for Covenant Signatories. The SEAP/SECAP template forms the skeleton of the individual Plans. It allows Signatories to collect and analyse data in a structured and systematic manner and serves as a basis for good energy management. The Monitoring template focuses on tracking progress in SEAP/SECAP implementation.

Continuous collection of the data about the implementation of measures taken by all stakeholders is the key for a successful monitoring of the SEAP/SECAP realization as well as passing decisions on the necessary Plan revision.

2.8 Organization of Energy Days

Energy Days mobilize consumers, businesses and decisions-makers to take a day to think about the future of European energy production and use. They are public events, demonstrating to a wide audience that sustainable energy technologies and patterns of behaviour are viable, cost-effective and better for the environment. Typically, Energy Days may engage a range of stakeholders, including private companies and public authorities/organisations. However, the main objective of an Energy Day is to raise awareness of the general public, both adults and children. A successful organization of energy days calls for taking into consideration the city capabilities, stakeholder engagement in aim to include wider public with minimum costs for events.

Usually organised at the local, regional or national level for a specified period, the types of activities you plan can vary, but normally would include one or more of the following:

- **Guided visits and tours** for the general public to companies, public administrations, private homes or other organizations that use renewable energy sources or implement energy efficient technologies. Note: The quality of guides is essential for the success of an event and should suit the attending audience;
- **Educational activities and programmes** assisting children to discover and learn about energy efficiency techniques and renewable energy;
- **Open door days**, during which the general public visits organisations to learn more about energy efficient and renewable energy measures on the premises;
- **Exhibitions and fairs**, where public and private organisations demonstrate and explain their energy technologies to the wider public;
- **Opening ceremonies, inaugurations, exhibition shows** aimed at the wider public and showcasing innovative renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency or alternative modes of transport.

You can find Guidelines for organisers of Energy days at the link: http://energyformayors.eu/images/stories/stories/energy_days/see_energydays_guidelines_en.pdf.

3 Tools for coaching activities

A lot of tools that can assist in the implementation of the obligations under the Covenant of Mayors are available. In this framework, it is crucial to know the existing tools, to choose and apply the one that is most effective. The coaching activities can be performed in various ways such as:

1. Communication and networking;
2. Conferences, seminars, workshops, training sessions;
3. Tutoring and peer support activities;
4. Examples of best practices and study visits;
5. Fairs, open door days and permanent exhibition;
6. Media;
7. Educational and promotional materials;
8. Monitoring of events.

Each of them is described in one of the following chapters.

3.1 Communication and networking

Good communication is an essential element in the implementation of the obligations under the Covenant of Mayors. Whether it is raising public awareness, development of strategies and programs, implementation of measures from the SEAP/SECAP or education, it is important to involve as many stakeholders in the implementation process as possible. This ensures not only the approval of the general public, but also their active involvement, which ultimately leads to a change of behaviour of citizens towards the environment. However, it is important to identify the key stakeholders in the implementation of certain activities because they are the basis of their success. Stakeholders can be part of different institutions and organizations such as:

- city administration,
- politicians/councillors (City council),
- citizen organizations (e.g. community groups),
- private-sector organizations,
- no-profit organizations (NGO),
- public utility/energy providers,
- individual members of the public,
- Energy Agencies,

- other stakeholder organizations.

Effective networking aims at linking different organizations which will share their knowledge and good practices, thanks to trust and relationship. This helps them learn, make contacts and business connections.

The networking could be between regions, cities, municipalities, energy agencies, associations, organizations, institutions, etc., on global, European, regional or local level. Also, the networking could be realized through European projects which deal with similar topics and have mutual interest to collaborate.

Also associations play an important role: Covenant of Mayors, Energy Cities, ICLEI, Eurocities, for example, are strong organisations with a great number of members, active in the fight against climate change. They provide support to their members by organizing workshops and seminars, interconnecting members to share knowledge, experiences or create partnerships. Furthermore, they use their websites to inform members of all important developments in the field of energy, environment and climate, develop educational and promotional materials, etc. On top of these, these kind of organisation help express louder common problems and barriers faced by local governments in the implementation of SEAP/SECAP, and can therefore influence the development of ad-hoc policies that will support the sustainable development of urban areas.

Covenant of Mayors Clubs are important too, because they link the Mayors of energy-conscious municipalities in a permanent network, so that they can work together and enable the realization of the objectives set by the European Union: mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change through the implementation of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans of their territories. The mutual exchange of knowledge, experiences and practices is crucial therein, because they work in similar circumstances and are faced with the same administrative, technical and financial barriers.

3.2 Conferences, seminars, workshops, training sessions, webinars

The Supporting Structures can effectively provide assistance to cities by organizing conferences, seminars, workshops, training sessions and webinars to raise the capacity of city governments.

A comprehensive assessment of the actual level of know-how and skills of the groups to be trained leads to the identification of the specific level of knowledge, skills and abilities required to reach the desired performance level. After making an analysis and defining the real needs, topics and methodological approach to the provision of additional knowledge and skills are chosen.

The advantages of such events are:

- strengthen and build capacity,
- communication directly with known energy experts,
- knowledge about replicable methodologies, tools and best practices,
- information about applicable laws and procedures as well as in the preparation,
- information about the financial models and financial opportunities,
- exchanging information and find partners.

For organization of events, should be considered:

- content and duration of the event,
- identification and invitation of potential speakers (speakers from relevant bodies, Ministries, administrations, chambers, professionals, etc.),
- production of comprehensive list of possible attendees,
- logistics (venues, technical equipment, translation, catering, transport),
- invitations and material to be distributed during the event, list of attendees,
- evaluation of the event,
- production of training material.

3.3 Tutoring and peer support activities

The main goals of tutoring and peer support activities are transfer of knowledge and experience through **direct communication between municipalities**.

Tutoring is a form of a mentorship that usually takes place between a partner who has a specific expertise (*tutor*) and a partner who has less experience in that field (*trainee*). It is a partnership between two participants.

Peer-to-peer support is knowledge-sharing approach based on the formation of supportive *working groups*. Within these working groups, participants can provide mutual review and back up the work or methods that are being assessed. A *peer* is a person with the same abilities and expertise as another in the same group.

In framework of Mayors in Action project, the *Guidelines for tutoring and peer support activities* treats this topic in detail.

3.4 Examples of best practices and study visits

Examples of best practices are useful for specific implementation of an action, with special attention to advantages and barriers. It is valuable to know real results of energy savings and costs before approaching a similar action, as well as prerequisites, enablers, risk factors, and risk mitigation techniques. Many catalogues of good practices are available, as effective and successful policy instruments which show real-world examples based on policy framework. For example, you can find them on the web pages of Covenant of Mayors, Energy Cities, ICLEI, etc.

Besides, Mayors in Action project developed the Handbook for Covenant Supporters and Coordinators (C&S). In that handbook, a compendium of tools that are being used by municipalities for implementing their Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs) has been developed. It includes a description of 15 distinct categories of tools selected by the project consortium as the most representative and useful among 45 originally identified, according to the criteria of technical and financial feasibility and potential positive effects. Best use of these tools as well as challenges and opportunities are briefly described along with selected examples.

Detailed description of these examples is provided in Annexes

http://www.mayorsinaction.eu/login/partners-section/WP2_training/2.1_training_materials_and_tools.

Supporting Structures could help cities in their best practices benchmarking. That is a quantitative measure of performance used to compare the Local Government products, services or processes to an external standard, and it is a valuable to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. In doing benchmarking it is important to provide real perspective on benchmark results - one that gives a clear sense of how it's rate, compared with both peers and top performers. Also, it gives is the data behind the best practices strong enough to inspire confidence that those practices are worth adopting.

Study visits show practical examples on site where participants can learn about technologies used, as well as get good understanding of issues and the possibility of easier and faster implementation of projects in their community.

Example of best practices and study visits are the best way to show that energy policy could be set up in practices and the goals achieved. Learning from each other, a lot of mistakes could be avoided.

3.5 Fairs, open door days and permanent exhibitions

New technologies, products and services related to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources could be present on fairs, open door days and permanent exhibition. Such events are very important for business people and professionals, but they also bring together the general public.

The organization of such events should involve as many stakeholders as possible in order to use common interests to achieve goals using existing resources. Municipalities should exploit their outdoor spaces where they can organize specialized *energy fairs*, to gather large number of citizens and provide information to raise awareness of the general public.

Open door days involve local governments, universities, schools, institutions, energy agencies, professional associations, private companies and stakeholders who have achieved good results in the implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, and are willing to share them with others.

Exhibitions allow to show products, promotional materials, etc., throughout the year (permanent exhibitions) or a defined period of time. The purpose of these exhibitions is to educate and promote, and they can be placed in public buildings (EE info galleries) or public spaces (EE city lights).

3.6 Media

The media have an important role in raising public awareness because of their power to transmit information to every home. Energy, environment and climate are current topics of interest to the public: they can be interesting to the media, to develop specific reports or follow events on these topics.

Media include *TV, radio and newspapers*, and the possible activities to be seek are:

- press conference,
- promotion activities concerning events,
- interviews for TV, radio and newspapers,
- participation in TV shows.

The *Internet* is constantly available and is increasingly used for providing and collecting information, also thanks to Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, SlideShare...). For example, if you are organizing an international conference on energy efficiency, information should be reported to the Covenant of Mayors Office and ManagEnergy in order for it to be posted on their website. In cooperation with stakeholders, their websites or social media can also be a source of information.

3.7 Educational and promotional materials

Educational and promotional materials are important tools in raising awareness and changing the behaviour of citizens towards the environment. These can be different materials, such as:

- guidelines,

- brochures and leaflets,
- videos,
- publications,
- promotional materials,
- business and post cards;
- e-newsletters (e-materials),
- gadgets.

Before developing new material, it is necessary to determine the topics and the target group, to study the available materials, and then, if necessary, to develop new ones.

3.8 Evaluation of events

In order to know whether the organization of events has been a success and managed to achieve the set objectives, it is necessary to evaluate the events. Methodological approaches to evaluation can be different depending on the importance of the event itself, but for most events, the easiest way to do that is to check the reaction of participants, thanks to **satisfaction questionnaires**. By analysing the responses of participants, it is possible to assess the success level of an event, but they can also be used to point to the need for future educations.

4 Conclusion and recommendations

The MAYORS in ACTION project starts from the consideration that C&S are very much necessary for a successful development of the CoM initiative and that they need to improve their capacities and prepare instruments for consolidating their role of efficient and effective support to small towns in the concrete realization phase.

In order for the C&S to provide the necessary support, it is crucial that they understand the **administrative structure of municipalities, their obligations under the law and their responsibility to citizens**. This is also the basic framework in which C&S must find models and propose solutions that are acceptable to cities for the implementation of their SECAPs.

At the same time, the C&S need to regularly follow the **guidelines of the EU energy policy** and be in touch with the relevant institutions and organizations that are included in the processes of implementing the set energy goals. It is especially necessary to develop a **quality cooperation with the Covenant of Mayors Office**, which provides Signatories with administrative support and technical guidance, facilitates networking between Covenant stakeholders while ensuring the promotion of their activities.

When **collecting data on energy consumption and calculating of CO₂ emissions**, it is necessary to make sure that the methodology that has been recommended by the Covenant of Mayors Office is applied, enabling the comparison of data with reference data, as well as with data of other local governments.

To assist cities in meeting the obligations under the Covenant of Mayors, **many tools have been developed and are available on the internet**. Therefore, the first step is to be aware on what is already been developed and what is applicable to our needs. It is useful to review the existing good methodologies, practices, promotional and educational materials, etc., and according to local needs and conditions, consider the possibility of replicating them.

In order to achieve the objectives of EU energy policy, **networking and development of cooperation between all stakeholders** is key. Sharing knowledge and experience allows faster and more efficient operations and achieving better results with less investments. In addition, the experiences of others can help us avoid mistakes and overcome barriers.

In order for the cities to be able to respond to challenges in the implementation of their SECAPs, **raising awareness and knowledge of the city administration and citizens** is key. Public awareness is the public's level of understanding about the importance of climate protection in cities and communities. This includes explaining issues and disseminating knowledge to citizens so that they can make their own

decisions in a correct way. Therefore, the C&S need to pay full attention to the **organization of energy days and continued educational and promotional activities**, in order to raise the knowledge of citizens and obtain the support of the general public in the implementation of the energy policy of the city.

The level of support that C&S can provide to local administration depends on their own competences and capacities. Therefore, the C&S must continuously upgrade their capacities and strengthen their own forces in order to provide the best possible support to local governments in the implementation of sustainable energy development.

5 Useful links

The websites of institutions, organizations, associations and European projects operating in the field of energy, environment and climate, feature the available user data, information, news, guides, educational and promotional materials and more.

Here are some useful links:

www.mayorsinaction.eu

www.energyformayors.eu

www.ec.europa.eu/energy

www.ec.europa.eu/jrc

www.covenantofmayors.eu

www.energy-cities.eu

www.iclei-europe.eu

www.eurocities.eu

www.climatealliance.org

www.ccre.org

www.federane.org

www.managenergy.net

CONSORTIUM:

METROPOLITAN CITY OF GENOVA (Coordinator) - www.cittametropolitana.genova.it

PROVINCE OF BARCELONA - www.diba.cat

CRES - www.cres.gr

CITY OF ZAGREB - www.zagreb.hr

PNEC - www.pnec.org.pl

VENETO Region - www.regione.veneto.it

SOGESCA - www.sogesca.it

INTERLEUVEN - www.interleuven.be

ICLEI EUROPE - www.iclei-europe.org

