



Press Release
For Immediate Release



Calling on local governments for
input in the current energy and
climate debate during OPEN
DAYS 2009

European Week of
Regions and Cities
Brussels 5 - 8 October 2009

Brussels, 07.10.2009: 'Global challenges, European responses' is the theme of the 7th OPEN DAYS, the annual landmark event for European regions and cities. This year the focus is on how regions and cities can effectively respond to the challenges of globalisation, climate change and the global economic crisis. This focus is spot on – with sustainable energy on centre stage, also as a necessary foundation for the European Union cohesion policy. This year's OPEN DAYS highlighted a unique opportunity for local governments to share their views, needs and challenges on energy and climate protection, with results feeding into the current energy and climate debate.

Covenant of Mayors going from strength to strength

Cities, supported by their regional authorities, are leading the way in addressing these global challenges - by setting ambitious, yet realistic targets and implementing effective actions in different sectors. In this way they actively advance the sustainable energy transition process. This means the efficient use of (increasingly scarce) resources, the switch to renewable energy solutions, and saving energy where possible. These areas of action are now increasingly the focus of local governments, citizens and businesses – also offering multiple benefits for economies and the environment.

In this context local governments are taking up their responsibilities, as municipal administrators and leaders of communities. Today already 729 cities have signed up to the Covenant of Mayors, committing to go beyond the EU objectives and reduce the CO₂ emissions in their territories by more than 20% by 2020. Inventories are being conducted to identify where carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are released, Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs) are under preparation to plan and manage the sustainable energy transition process. The Covenant of Mayors, as a movement for cities by cities, encourages Supporting Structures to provide specific assistance to communities that join. These include public administrations, but also increasingly local government networks and associations are pooling efforts, to help make significant progress in local climate and energy action.

Input into the European and international energy and climate debate

Not only did OPEN DAYS 2009 give many opportunities for networking and exchange, to representatives from local, regional and national governments, energy experts, urban planners and European networks. It also presented a call for input to local governments across Europe. The project **LG Action - 'Networking action to involve Local Governments in the EU and international energy and climate debate'**, was presented in several sessions. Co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe programme, **LG Action** mobilises communities across Europe, encouraging them to engage in local climate and energy action, and collecting their input for European Positioning. On 7 October 2009 at the OPEN DAYS tent on the Berlaymont Esplanade, local governments were called on to share their views, needs and challenges regarding energy and climate protection at the local level. This provides them with a way to directly feed into the European and international energy and climate debate – also through the Local Government Climate Roadmap process, which will culminate in a statement during the COP 15 (15th Conference of the Parties) in Copenhagen in December 2009.

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The LG Action consortium:



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