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Local leadership in sustainable energy

IEE European Projects Update

Hello!



Welcome to the joint newsletter of LEAP, CASCADE, CONURBANT, Covenant capaCITY and ERENET – five European projects all part of the Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) programme.



These five projects focus on the key role of local authorities in meeting the European Union's challenging energy and climate targets for 2020 through the delivery of effective **local energy leadership**. The partners are working to develop and deliver quality Local Action Plans. Furthermore, they support the [Covenant of Mayors](#), a high level initiative, through real, manageable and supported actions at a local level.



The projects bridge the gap between essential bottom-up localised action, and the European energy agenda by embedding sustainable energy policy into the operations of municipalities. The focus is on generating the necessary political will, vision and ambition as well as the administrative capacity for local authorities to act as effective energy leaders.



This newsletter outlines the objectives of each project and the innovative approaches being taken to promote the exchange of knowledge and best practice to improve the capacity of urban areas and cities to embed sustainable energy solutions. The lead partners are exchanging ideas and sharing solutions as well as opening up their seminars and visits to the other projects.

The projects comprise over 60 European local authorities from 21 countries, and represent a comprehensive range of the local authority energy, socio-economic, environmental and political challenges across Europe.

Building local energy leadership

While each project has different aims and outputs, there are certain activities common to all projects in building capacity and sharing learning. Some of these are described below:

- **‘Peer-to-peer’** learning involves groups of different cities working on similar issues evaluating each others’ local energy policies, programmes and practices and giving recommendations on possible areas of improvement. Those making the evaluation are called peers because they come from backgrounds similar to colleagues whose work is reviewed. A key strength of the process is that – as peers – they can readily understand the goals of the practitioners whom they visit, the pressures on them, and the complexity of their environment. Partners will produce a joint report and guidelines on peer-to-peer working as an output of this joint initiative.
- **Mentoring** involves an ‘experienced’ municipality taking the role of the mentor for a ‘less experienced’ municipality. Some mentoring relationships benefit from the familiarity of shared concerns; others benefit from differences in perspective and others from the combined achievement of developing new, innovative solutions to problems. The mentor's role is to support, develop, stimulate and challenge.
- **Work shadowing** is a training technique which involves municipal staff spending a period of time with staff in a ‘more experienced’ municipality, observing what he or she does in her/his professional role. Each work shadowing placement facilitates a transfer of knowledge and expertise, and provides an opportunity to see firsthand ‘how things are done’ elsewhere and to provide inspiration and new ideas on ways of working.
- **Training:** All of the partners host a number of training activities, including webinars (web based seminars), workshops, study visits and conferences. Covenant capaCITY also run a ‘train the trainer’ programme, whereby they train professionals working for local authorities, energy agencies or government associations and networks on how to train municipal staff on developing their municipality's Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP).



In the spotlight....



All of the projects are engaged in a wide range of activities. Below we give a brief overview of each project, but you can click on 'read more' to find out a bit more on a specific part of their work.



Over the course of three years, led by [EUROCITIES](#), **CASCADE** will inspire improvements in the implementation of sustainable energy policies through three 'cascading' levels of high quality networking and mutual learning activities around renewable energy. Find out more about CASCADE's six recent peer learning visits:

[Read More](#)



Led by the [Municipality of Vicenza](#), the **CONURBANT** project aims to help medium-large cities, and the smaller towns in their urban area, deliver on the Covenant of Mayors through capacity building, using peer-to-peer support and training between less and more experienced Municipalities. Find out more about CONURBANT's exchange between 'experienced' and 'learning' partners:

[Read More](#)



Led by [ICLEI](#), **Covenant capaCITY** focuses on helping local governments advance Local Climate and Energy Action Plans from planning to action to monitoring. The main project aim is to assist Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) development in Europe, offering guidance, tools and training opportunities. An online training programme is offered to all local governments across Europe useful for newly elected political leaders and municipal staff.

Find out more about Covenant capaCITY's recent Energy Action Planning conference:

[Read More](#)



Led by the [Decision Support Systems Laboratory of the National Technical University of Athens \(NTUA\)](#), **eReNet** focuses on rural communities and the particular barriers that hinder their development efforts. **eReNet** aims to add value to local energy actions in rural communities through creating an intelligent and integrated 'Rural Web Energy Learning Network for Action' that facilitates knowledge transfer from more experienced to less experienced communities.

Find out more about eReNet's activities and publicly available web tools for the SEAPs' development:

[Read More](#)



Led by the [Town and Country Planning Association \(TCPA\)](#), **LEAP** aims to increase the ability of EU local authorities to pioneer and promote the use of sustainable energy measures and the move towards a low-carbon local economy. Find out more about the Hannover Training Week held as part of LEAP:

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<http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/>

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