

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 6th October 2011

Significant progress as regards the ERDF financial regulations for 2014-2020

Energy Cities sees good opportunities for encouraging cities to further commit themselves to the Covenant of Mayors

On 6th October, the European Commission published its financial regulation proposals for the 2014-2020 period. This document is of prime importance as it defines what European funds should be used for and how they should be spent.

KEY POINTS IN A NUTSHELL:

- **An urban policy** is acknowledged and endowed with significant financial resources for the very first time.
- **Energy efficiency** and renewable energy, two areas that were neglected during the previous 2007-2013 period, will constitute one of the 11 investment priorities.
- **The Commission's proposals can still be improved**, for instance, by conditioning EU-funding eligibility to the existence of a local Sustainable Energy Action Plan geared towards the "3x20" objectives.

Amongst the 11 investment priorities defined, one aims to support the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors, including energy efficiency in public infrastructures and the housing sector. At least 5% of the ERDF resources are to be allocated to integrated actions for sustainable urban development.

Some significant changes that echo Energy Cities' own proposals are worth highlighting:

- **Urban policies are now acknowledged and endowed with significant financial resources.**
- **Energy efficiency and renewable energy constitute one of the 11 investment priorities**, whereas this subject was neglected during the 2007-2013 period. At least 20% of the budgets are to be earmarked for such actions, notably in former EU-15 Member States.
- **Contracts will be placed directly with cities.** This is another major breakthrough that should encourage cities to further commit themselves to the Covenant of Mayors.

Energy Cities knows that such orientations have been made possible thanks to the commitment of cities, in particular, to the Covenant of Mayors. Increased pressure is necessary to confirm these proposals, which are now in the hands of Member States and the European Parliament. They can be further improved, for example by conditioning EU-funding eligibility to the existence of a local Sustainable Energy Action Plan geared to the "3x20" objectives. Energy Cities will shortly be publishing a detailed opinion paper on this Communication.

Energy Cities invites all the cities who have signed the Covenant of Mayors to show their determination at the 3rd Covenant of Mayors' Ceremony to be held on 29 November 2011 at the European Parliament in Brussels.

Energy Cities' proposals for the Multi-annual Financial Framework (August 2011) are to be found here:

http://www.energy-cities.eu/IMG/pdf/FUTURE_EU_BUDGET_Energy_Cities_FINAL-2.pdf

For further information on the ERDF financial regulations for 2014-2020:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2014/proposals/regulation/erdf/erdf_proposal_en.pdf

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