

DECLARATION
“Cooperation commitment”
Aberdeen, 23 April 2015

CITY-TO-CITY COOPERATION, A KEY TOOL FOR THE ENERGY TRANSITION

Ahead of the COP21 to be held in December 2015, ENERGY CITIES’ MEMBERS COMMIT to sharing their knowledge, expertise and vision with cities around the globe.

Those 1,000 local authorities from 30 countries are ready to make peer-to-peer exchange between local leaders a driver of the energy transition. Amongst them, the signatories of the Covenant of Mayors will use the initiative as a methodological framework for cooperation.

Globalising efforts for a successful energy transition

The energy transition is a unique opportunity to develop a sustainable economic model. It is a chance for all territories to locally produce the energy and goods the community needs. Thus it should be at the core of the new Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to be agreed by the UN General Assembly in 2015. Fighting climate change and ensuring a decent life to all citizens are the two faces of the same coin. A low-energy city with a better quality of life for all gives a single answer to those two interlinked challenges. Access to secure, affordable and sustainable energy is a key challenge to be tackled mostly at local level, by cities and towns.

Favourable conditions for city-to-city cooperation

EU development policies to support cooperation

For the period 2014-2020 about 30 developing countries have chosen energy as a focal sector for their cooperation with the EU. Other countries will also receive substantial funding in the energy field even if this has not been defined as a focal sector. In total, around €3.3 billion EU funding will be dedicated to supporting sustainable energy in the EU’s partner countries around the globe, through bilateral and regional cooperation (Directorate General for Development and Cooperation - DEVCO).

Cities-to-cities exchange has a long history. Cultural cooperation is important to integrate communities in multi-cultural urban areas. The COP21 is an opportunity to focus on city-to-city cooperation for collectively building the energy transition at local level and consequently post-carbon territories.

Covenant of Mayors

Launched in 2008, the Covenant of Mayors (www.eumayors.eu) is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources on their territories. By their commitment, Covenant signatories aim to meet and exceed the European Union’s 20% CO₂-reduction objective by 2020. The Covenant in figures: 1/3 of EU population is covered, 6,250 mayors committed in 52 countries, an average commitment to a 28% CO₂-reduction by 2020.

By inviting signatories to mobilise local players and co-design strategies to implement the energy transition, the Covenant of Mayors has proven to be a powerful instrument to catalyse actions at large-scale which otherwise are happening sporadically.

A successful model such as the Covenant of Mayors, which has already been extended to the Eastern and Southern Partnership Countries of the European Union and Central Asia, could be extended to other geographical areas. Building on the existing signatories from non EU-countries, it could serve in supporting global cities initiatives, and promoting the need to plan local energy transition with all players.

Declaration adopted at Energy Cities’ General Assembly on 23 April 2015 in Aberdeen (United Kingdom).