



100%

RES COMMUNITIES

STEPS TOWARDS 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY AT LOCAL LEVEL IN EUROPE



MOTIVATIONS
APPROACHES
EXAMPLES





Climate Alliance



LEGAMBIENTE



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INTRODUCTION



KEYS TO SUCCESS

Enhanced in 2014, the energy and climate goals for 2030 of the European Union require the mobilization of everyone, everywhere. In a dynamic set to intensify rural territories, as well as cities, the communities have a major role to play. As the principal trustees of renewable resource deposits, they are the vanguard of the energy transition. Their strengths? Wind and water in abundance (very often), the sun of course, biomass - agricultural, forest, woodland, domestic, food processing - geothermal energy.

With the desire to make this renewable capital live, it made some decide to take or regain control of the energy issue, reduce their energy bills and those of their inhabitants. Attracted by the opportunity to revitalize local economies and rural communes (alone or in groups) they are more likely to want to become 100% RES.

But how to move from intention to action when faced with the lack of knowledge, or means, or when you feel too small to act?

It is to assist you in developing your energy policy that this guide was written. Pragmatic, practical, it brings together the return on experience from partners and communities involved in 100% RES Communities project. For three years, elected representatives from rural areas, some experienced and some less, together with experts from 10 countries in Europe, have sought the best organizational, technical and financial means to reduce consumption and produce renewable energy. If because of the administrative, cultural, economic differences within the Union, all the territories do not enjoy the same facilities, the 100% RES Communities project has defined pragmatic methods, practices and tools which will make your work easier! You will find in this guide the key steps in defining your strategy and building your action plan. This is a feasible action plan to be shared and implemented with the stakeholders.

A final note: because it is within networks that we discover new solutions, which can replenish the practices and provide a forum in which the results can be evaluated, this guide encourages you firstly to participate in professional networks, and secondly, to join the European Covenant of Mayors.



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Towards 100 % RES rural communities
IEE/11/014/SI2.616363 – 100-RES-COMMUNITIES

WHY BECOMING A 100 % RENEWABLE ENERGY REGION ?

BUILDING POLITICAL WILL

100% RES communities integrate the issue of energy within a political, strategic and systemic commitment in favour of local development, and thus tackle jointly economic, social, environmental and democratic challenges. They take on their responsibility on the issue of energy with respect to general interest and public service.



Jacky Aignel,
president of Le Mené (France)

Be actors of our own life and development

Le Mené (West France, 6500 habitants) has many challenges to tackle: climate is harsh, soils are barely productive, people are old. However, they proved that in the face of adversity people manage to rally. Interview of Jacky Aignel, President of Le Mené, and former president of Rurener network.
With renewable energies, we get wealth under the feet and above

the head: we have to tap it. Our will is to head towards autonomy. By developing several additional projects, we could manage it mid-term. Everybody gets involved: towns for the wood heating plants, farmers gathered in cooperatives for the oil mill and the collective biogas unit, craftsmen for the zero energy houses, citizens in the civic wind mills...
And people understand the regional approach that we want to set up. We are all consumers, but we also need to be actors, actors of our own life and development.

Keep money home instead of throwing it through the window

Engaging in the energy transition allows for reducing the energy bills and creating value within territories. The return in renewable energy investments and efficiency measures is often quick and high! In five years, in Waldviertler Kernland region (13 neighbouring villages in Austria - 13 500 inhabitants), thanks to investments, 8 million from the annual amount of 31 million for fossil energy imports have been saved and re-injected into the local economy.

Today, 75% of the electricity is supplied from renewable energy sources and 60% of the heat is generated from biomass district heating plants or biogas plants. With the help of national and regional funds more than 30 sustainable energy jobs have been created.



Inauguration of the citizen wind park called Les Landes du Mené (France)

Coal to renewable, changing era and tackling new job opportunities

A town in northern France traumatized by the closure of coal mines in 1970, in the context of a loss in the region of 220,000 direct employees in 20 years, Loos-en-Gohelle, 7000 inhabitants, has joined the network of French positive energy territories (TEPOS). With 350 direct and indirect jobs created around the eco-activities and renewable energy in 10 years, Loos-en-Gohelle relishes its resilience. Interview with Jean François Caron, its mayor since 2001.



Jean-François Caron, mayor of Loos-en-Gohelle (France)

What are you expecting from the TEPOS network?

We see this network as a clearinghouse that focuses on the “stem” cells of change, that is to say, methods, practices that allow cities and territories to take or regain control of their energy policy. We hope to find accomplices in innovation and in our disobedience to established patterns.

Disobedience to established patterns: what do you mean by that?

An example: I have since the years 2000, acknowledged my aversion to electric heating, this French calamity. So, the project leaders, donors who wanted to build in the “commune” presented projects motivated by capital costs, operation, climate footprint, choice of materials. Legally, I could not prohibit the electric heater but I was able to share my concern not to add fuel poverty to economic insecurity, given the high cost of energy in France.

The “sustainable” job creation is the focus of your

action. Miners moving to high value added jobs. Has this evolution triggered mistrust on the part of the inhabitants?

When there is consistency, there is no mistrust. In Loos-en-Gohelle our research over 20 years has been exemplary. We wanted to be the engine of a sustainable economic “renaissance” while claiming our right to error. For if we have the duty to act, we also have the right not to achieve everything, all at once!

These successes, what are they precisely?

We have a research and development centre on eco-materials and renewable energy, which is a national reference. We also welcome design offices, businesses, artisans who are at the forefront of environmental excellence. This consistency has united around us many technical and financial partners, state, region, Europe, while enhancing the attractiveness of our territory.

Tackling fuel poverty now and for the future

A recent study, conducted in 5 countries, estimates that the number of households suffering from fuel poverty in Europe could double in the short term. Energy saving measures in housing, sustainable urban planning and new mobility solutions are key levers to prevent strong social impacts.

JOIN THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT OF 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY REGIONS

To propel the efforts of front-running communities, the "100% RES Communities" campaign provides a European unified definition and online map of 100% RES communities, which are based on an elaborate criteria system. Seemingly scattered local actions are bundled and given political weight to a 100% renewable energy movement in Europe.

An European definition and label for 100% RES Communities

The 100% RES community definition has been established by projects partners for pioneer communities to value their efforts and their engagement towards 100% RES in a very simple way. It has been specified around twenty criteria to be implemented gradually, divided along four axes:

The region:

- sets the objective of meeting its energy needs from local renewables (political level),
- draws up an action plan and specific measures (strategic level),
- addresses energy by taking an integrated approach to local development (systemic approach level),
- implements specific projects (implementation level).



100 % renewable energy regions, annual congress, Kassel, 2014 (Germany)

A broad agreement

A 100% RES community is willing and able to cover its energy demand entirely (and even more) by renewable energy sources with respect to electricity, heating & mobility. The community addresses energy saving and energy efficiency in a holistic and sustainable way. The community fosters a development approach aiming at maximising regional value creation.



Solar farm, Osnabrück (Germany)

The 100% RES approach creates links between urban and rural areas with advantages for both sides. Surrounding rural areas with their abundant natural resources could produce more energy than needed and benefit from the revenue of exported surplus energy. Densely populated, cities usually cannot fully meet their energy needs with renewable energy because of lack of space. However, they possess the know-how and the capacity to invest in energy efficiency and energy savings, climate-friendly mobility and PV on roof units, for example. In Germany, more and more cities are seeking close cooperation with their rural neighbours, as did the

Reinforcing cohesion and solidarities between cities and countryside

City and the District of Osnabrück, the District of Steinfurt and the City of Rheine. Both participate in the German project "100% Climate Protection Master Plan". It aims to show how cities, in cooperation with surrounding areas, can successfully lower their carbon emissions by 95 % and their energy consumption by 50 % by the year 2050, compared to 1990.



Action for climate friendly mobility, German "100 % climate protection master plan" (Germany)

ONCE UPON A TIME... HOW IT ALL STARTED

There have always been energy pioneers who are part of the success stories of RES municipalities. Everything can start from the motivation of a visionary mayor, as in Güssing (Austria) or with an innovative territorial flagship project as in Le Mené (France). Eventually, strategic planning (optional or mandatory) can trigger the political motivation and the implementation of projects.

Güssing: a visionary mayor

In the early 1990s, the region of Güssing in the South-East of Austria was facing rather disadvantageous conditions: 50 years of being a border region along the iron curtain near the Hungarian border, lack of infrastructure for transportation, the least developed and thus having the lowest per-capita income in Austria.

The fall of the iron curtain and the accession of Austria to the European Union were the two decisive issues for the excellent development of the Güssing district (objective 1 region of the European Regional Development Fund).

In 1992, the technical engineer Mr Koch was appointed as responsible person for the waste water system and the sewage plant by mayor Vadasz. The main ideas always being behind: using local resources for energy production instead of buying fossil fuels, creating sustainable jobs, increasing in the regional added value and reducing CO₂ emissions. In 1996 the European Centre for Renewable Energy was founded in Güssing to professionally coordinate and implement all projects related to renewable energy.

During the following two decades, 3 biomass district heating plants, 2 biogas plants and many other decentralised solar energy projects were built. The degree of energy self-sufficiency amounts to 75% in 2014. 1.200 new jobs and 55 new companies have been created in the small town.



Biomass gasification plant, Güssing (Austria)



Territorial and collective biogas unit, Le Mené (France)



Citizen wind parc, Le Mené (France)

Biodiesel station, Güssing (Austria)

TEAM UP

DO NOT GO ALONE: TEAM UP AT THE RIGHT SCALE

Implementing actions is open to each rural community, but leading a comprehensive strategy is much more complicated! Option? Think and act at territorial scale. What is the “good” territorial scale? The one where things happen? Where, for cultural, or geographical reasons, the collective development project is built...?

Certainly, even if other conditions must be met as skills and resources, collective tools and services.



Cort-Brün Voige, Mayor, Aller-Leine-Valley in front of a 100 % RES “Kindergarten” (Germany)



In Aller-Leine Valley (Lower Saxony, Germany) an informal cooperation was activated outside the institutional framework. Interview with Cort-Brün Voige, Mayor of Rethem Municipality, Energy Region “Aller-Leine-Valley”:

Originally, the Aller-Leine-Valley, was created to strengthen regional marketing between eight

Cooperation beyond administrative borders

communities, unified by the beautiful river landscape of the rivers Aller and Leine. The political leaders soon realized that the natural resource potential for developing renewable energies was massive. More importantly, everyone understood that renewable energies represented a core area to maximize regional added value and the mayors agreed that we all had to act in concert to become self-sufficient in our regional energy production.

Based on the activities of our LEADER-project, we have developed a collaborative governance. The Steering Group hosts quarterly the mayors of the eight communities, and the project group “Renewable Energies” is a working platform for a broad range of stakeholders and even private persons.

The Province of Luxembourg sets up collective framework and tools

Supra-local authorities offer advice and collective tools to local communities. Supported by the University of Liège and its agency for economic development IDELUX, the Province of Luxembourg (Belgium) launches the PEPS-Lux dynamic (Province à Energie positive) to coordinate a « 100% renewable » transition.

The reach of such a challenge will require the mobilization of public actors through the provision of technical and human resources, the seeking of new financing, the association of the population and local stakeholders in the public decision-making.

Four areas of work will be coordinated by PEPS Lux.

- Technical and methodological support: to date, 14 municipalities receive support for energy and GHG diagnosis and action plans,
- Support to structuring projects such as campaigns to house renovation or renewable energy production,
- Implementation of a framework and tools to get stakeholders involved in decision making: commitment charter, Web tools, Climate Parliament,
- Implementation of “internal” actions, inside the institution, in order to be exemplary.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS

Collective tools and services offered by supra-local authorities are valuable supports, but not sufficient. You must mobilize your own resources and skills. Human resources on energy should be viewed as a productive investment, not as an expense. They allow for reducing costs through energy savings and creating value through new RES projects.

Prepare your starter and survival kit

The optimal „starter kit“ includes 3 positions: an energy technician, an energy advisor, a project manager. These three missions can be shared between the communities committed on the action plan.

First: the energy technician performs diagnostics and define actions to reduce the energy consumption in schools, kindergartens, or street lighting... The saving potential is such - at least 2 to 3% a year that it will provide free “recipes”, more precisely a reduction in operating expenses. Return on “investment” is generally less than 4 years even if it depends on the cost of energy saved and additional costs related.

Second function: the energy advisor provides neutral advice for inhabitants, independently from private companies and energy suppliers.

Third: the project manager sets to music the strategy defined by local authorities, in association with the local stakeholders.



Training on biomass issues, 100 RES communities project (France)

Its daily works is to launch studies, identify needs (training, information, technology), create the collective dynamic, develop projects, find funding, build monitoring and up scaling tools.

Why increasing energy saving in the private sector? The households represent more than half of energy consumption and emissions of greenhouse gases at European level.

Not without my energy team

The most recent success story in climate protection and sustainable energy in Austria are the Climate and Energy Model Regions (CEMR). A neighbouring group of communities constitutes a CEMR, which aims at becoming energy self-sufficient until 2030 or 2050, step-by-step.

To be labelled CEMR, the establishment of an energy team is necessary. The energy team should comprise 5 to 15 people and involve mayors, counsellors of environment and energy, representatives from the municipal administration, local entrepreneurs and interested citizens and an energy manager. A chairman should be elected from the political level, likely a mayor, technically assisted by the energy manager, the expert and the driving force. Each energy team member is responsible for a certain sector (renewable energy, energy efficiency, mobility, public relations, civic participation, involving schools with energy topics,



Mobile thermography : a innovative system well adapted to villages, Pôle Albigeois et Bastides (France)

involving local enterprises, finance, accounting). The energy manager facilitates the cooperation between all energy team members. The initiative of CEMR started in 2009 with 35 regions. In 2014, there are 112 CEMR, comprising 1.186 municipalities and 2.7 million inhabitants.

STEP BY STEP

INITIAL EVALUATION: OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

When you want to fly to Australia, you don't need to know the price of the metro ticket in Sydney! For the energy baseline assessment, you have only to get just enough information to guide the actions. Do not spend a lot of time and a lot of money at start up.

Do not drown in the numbers and just have real ambition

The development of the action plan goes through a diagnostic phase. Then, examination of all possible actions in order to select a few. This evaluation should be simple, pedagogic, and not be drowned in details as budgets are tight. An evaluation established from ratios (regional, national) is sufficient to allow stake-

holders - elected but also businesses, farmers, citizens - to become familiar with the orders of magnitude of consumption and production of energy and visualize the transition trajectory. How many wind power, solar panels, biomass plants do you need in 2020, 2050? How much energy do you have to save year by year?

Less is often more

Interview of Julien Frat, in charge of Energy and Climate in the Pôle de l'Albigeois et des Bastides.

Our elected officials did not want us to lose ourselves in too extensive, lengthy and costly diagnostics. We opted for the carbon analysis (Method Bilan carbone ADEME). Emissions of certain areas where we do not have mandate, such as waste, food, road, ... were not evaluated. Diagnosis was complemented by a short analysis of vulnerability (economic, climatic). Studies of production potential for renewable energy have just been engaged, now that the commitment towards 100% RES is decided.

The level of detail was sufficient considering that the uncertainty margins on certain data are close to 30%! In addition, our results are broadly consistent with data found in other territories, or at national level. Moreover, we proceeded to a rough evaluation based on a few key territorial figures and national ratios. Obtained at very low cost, the results were of the same order of magnitude.



Julien Frat, Project manager,
"Pôle Albigeois et Bastides" (France)

Simple and quick : "Go 100% RES" tool

As part of the 100% RES Communities project, Solagro and CLER have developed a simple, rapid and very inexpensive method – "Go 100% RES" tool. Usable in all European countries it produces a vision of the goals and the effort to achieve them, in all sectors and for all uses : electricity, heating and mobility. "Go 100% RES" tool provides striking graphs to visualize the distance to the target, and to assist setting up immediate and effective actions.

Agricultural, forestry activities and land use change

At the European level, agriculture is responsible for about 10% of the emissions of greenhouse gas both direct and indirect. However, the growth of the forest, and the soils generate a carbon sink of 7%. In France, because of the weighting of agriculture in GHG balance, some territories use Clim'Agri, a French tool, that gives territorial data and proposes actions in the agricultural sector.

SEAP DEVELOPMENT: MOBILISING LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

Reflection on the action plan starts once the initial evaluation is made. The development of an “action list” is a must because it allows you to see where the needs for action are, but remember there will be no projects without key stakeholders. And if the first paths selected are not necessarily the most effective, they must be also appreciated for their learning experience.

The real work begins once the first actions have been initiated. You have managed to create or strengthen a vibrant dynamic, the first visible results give credibility to your action plan, which fortunately has not produced any counterexample. It is then time to move to a long-term program to become a 100% RES community. At this stage, a detailed diagnosis, backed by a multi-criteria analysis will be valuable to screen the priority actions and their evaluation over time. Before we reach our objective, we must climb the steps, one by one, beginning with the first, that is to say, the mobilization of skills and resources.



Working seminar, Mirna Valley (Slovenia)



Energy, the last use for wood, construction is the first

In October 2006, the Association of Forest Owners of the Mirna Valley, in collaboration with Slovenski E-forum, organized a public consultation on the promotion of the use of biomass for energy purposes.

Fresh ideas on the use of biomass in Mirna Valley

All stakeholders were present: forest owners, potential users, decision makers, experts (forest managers, equipment producers) and funders. Ideas were put into municipality development plans and authorities coordinated the implementation of these plans by locating investors and developers. Municipality of Šentrupert, where technical tourism is on the rise now, is a model example for such creative ideas.

A people’s jury to enhance the SEAP in Foiano della Chiana

The Italian municipality Foiano della Chiana (10 000 inhabitants) chose to compose a popular jury for sharing the energy-environmental strategy 2014-2020. The selection of a jury of 40 people was carried out following random criteria on a sample representing the population. Some local “experts” were included. The jury has been engaged to exchange on the GHG reduction opportunities in the private and public sector and on the action plan.



Photovoltaic plant on roof of school (Italy)

AND... ACTION!

Besides the definition of a territorial strategy on energy, whose operational tool is the joint SEAP, there are two key dimensions of action: first, large-scale territorial interest projects (community wind projects, collective biogas unit, wood district heating networks...), and secondly, territorial animation, consisting in multiplying the installation of small-scale projects and implementation of scattered actions (PV on housing and farms rooftops, thermal renovation of private homes...).



Biogaz digester (France)

A biogas scheme in the Albigeois and Bastides

The Pôle de l'Albigeois et des Bastides (PAB, South West France) undertook, in 2012, a territorial biogas study in order to organize for the collection of organic substrates.

Major outputs included: promotion of collective learning opportunities for the development of biogas projects as well as identifying constraints in terms of implementation, optimization of the size (350 kWe to 1 MWe), the typology, and the better locations of units.

At the level of the territory, the mapping of deposits (type, quantity, energy potential) crossed with the mapping of potential consumers of biogas (heat, biomethane injection into the grid), has produced a well differentiated zoning:

- favourable areas for collective and territorial projects,
- favourable areas for methanisation on farms, individual or small collective,
- favourable areas for all types of projects,
- less favourable areas for methanisation.

The mobilization efforts of farmers are focused on the most favourable territories, even if projects "out of area" can be supported by public subsidies.

A replicable insulation model for schools

The development of standardized devices facilitates the financing of projects, with the guarantee of a high level of performance.

The thermal insulation model schools developed in Austria distinguishes itself from a "normal" thermal insulation through higher final energy savings and CO₂-reductions. Renewable energy installations are implemented and environmental friendly construction material is used. Social targets like higher comfort or a higher living quality are further taken into consideration. The model thermal insulation should also be replicable for other communities.



Thermal insulation, School Albrechtsberg (Austria)

11 model thermal insulations for schools were funded by the Climate and Energy Fund in Austria in 2013 amounting to € 4.4 million. Funding is limited to 50% of the total costs and is also limited to an amount of €600.000 per project.

SEAP monitoring and follow-up

For evaluation, stay pragmatic! The evaluation of the action plan of Val d'Ille region (France), which started in 2008, has slowly evolved to a 10 pages document with a single page summary table. This provides a simple way to share the progress made and still to come between elected representatives and staff. The monitoring of the action plan is investigated yearly during a special meeting of the executive. Soazig Rouillard, SEAP manager, notes: *the current synthetic form fits perfectly the needs of the working group. We only use detailed evaluation for the actions we want to examine further, carrying out the evaluation of all actions would take too long and cost too much money compared to the decisions made.*

FINANCING TERRITORIAL INTEREST PROJECTS

Increasingly, project financing relies on citizen participation funds or private foundations, including very large projects. Some “100% RES villages” lend or give direct aid to their citizens to build or renovate their homes. The motivation? Accelerate the energy transition, do not mortgage the future with houses that waste energy. Examples in the Western Isles in Scotland and in the Czech Republic.

Big lottery supports wind farms

Point and Sandwick Development Trust (PSDT), whose building has just begun in 2014, will not only be the largest community energy project in the Western Isles but also the United Kingdom. Donald John MacSween (PSDT) stated “The key thing about this development, like all the community owned wind farms, is that all the profit from the wind farm will go back into the community”. The Trust sees the community being greater than Point and Sandwick but intends supporting communities across the whole Western Isles.

For community projects the greatest challenge is the financials. The case put together by PSDT was convincing enough for the Big lottery, Growing Community Assets fund to commit £1,000,000 towards the scheme. They further secured £3,000,000 worth of equity required to allow due diligence with the Coop bank to continue, this being made up of funding from Big Lottery, Social Investment Scotland and the Scottish Government CARES Renewable Energy Investment Fund, with remaining project funds via Santander. A total of £15,000,000 has been raised by the community towards the project.

The 9 MW project, now in construction, consists of 3 Enercon turbines each 145m tall sited at Beinn



Wind turbine implementation, PSDT project (Scotland)

Ghrideag on the Isle of Lewis. It is anticipated that income generated should exceed £1,000,000 per year or twenty five million pounds over the lifetime of the project and the economic impact from reinvesting the income will create or sustain up to 100 permanent, full-time jobs.

Jindřichovice pod Smrkem village: a financial boost to inhabitants

In the Czech Republic, on the Polish border, Jindřichovice pod Smrkem (624 inhabitants) was the first village to adopt a self-sufficiency strategy based on RES (in 2000). Now, the village has a wind power plant (2x 600 kW), photovoltaics (131 kW), a biomass heating plant for five public buildings (350 kW), 34 m² of solar thermal installations.

Jindřichovice is trying to attract prospective newcomers who are looking for a good living environment. Since 2008, ten low-energy houses with heat pumps (58 kW) have been built, either with solar thermal installation or green roof. An Environmental Information Centre located near the wind farm offers guided tours for individuals and groups, including programs for schools. Municipal loans and subsidies (3600 EUR/year) have been provided to private RES installations for the last 10 years.



Information center, just under wind turbines (Czech Republic)

STAY IN THE GAME

REACH THE EUROPEAN LEVEL, JOIN THE COVENANT OF MAYORS!

The Covenant of Mayors is the mainstream European movement involving local and regional authorities, voluntarily committing to increasing energy efficiency and using of renewable energy sources on their territories. Covenant signatories aim at meeting and exceeding the European Union 20% CO₂ reduction objective by 2020.

The Covenant of Mayors becomes accessible to rural communities

Initiated by large cities, promoted by their mayors, the Covenant of Mayors movement was not very suitable for rural municipalities wishing to meet the challenge of climate change. Consequently, the Covenant of Mayors office introduced in 2012 the option of a joint SEAP for small-sized municipalities. As shown, a ground investigation in rural communities conducted as part of the 100% RES communities project, the joint SEAP "option" is the only-way to address these difficulties collectively.

The conditions are: neighbouring local authorities gather in a territory, consistent, i.e. ensuring territorial

continuity, with a few thousand inhabitants, organized around a democratic and representative governance, the mayors must focus on one joint SEAP. A joint SEAP refers to a plan that is carried out collectively. The group engages in building a common vision, preparing an emission inventory and defining a set of actions to be implemented and monitored both individually and jointly in the concerned territory. This approach is more effective through sharing and pooling of skills and resources, and the economies of scale it allows.



Italy: an unexpected success!

As of August 2014, from Merano to Lampedusa, more than half of the 5,400 European Municipalities participating to the Covenant were Italian. These numbers have been reached due to the extraordinary involvement of supra-municipal governments and of numerous initiatives and campaigns similar to the Covenant of Mayors.



Signing of the Covenant of Mayors

There is always a way to join the Covenant of Mayors!

Several Romanian communities expressed their wish to sign the Covenant of Mayors, with the support of Bacau County Council, as Territorial Coordinator. Bacau County Council collaborated with "Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bacau and helped the communities to realize the BEI, offering the technical support, databases and the required expertise. If defining the actions in the SEAP has been mainly the responsibility of the local communities, depending on their necessities and in accordance with the development plans, the identification of financing sources has been

done with the support from Bacau County Council. Other case: The Pôle de l'Albigeois et des Bastides gathers 5 rural associations of communes, around one joint SEAP. The governance of this vast territory which has 57 000 habitants is recognized by the Covenant of Mayor office as a single coherent entity, with ability to achieve a collective commitment on CO₂ reduction. In line with this membership as "group of signatories", the region is developing an action plan to be submitted for approval to the European Covenant of Mayors. This program will bring together actions with a territorial scope and more specific actions, relating to each association of communes, and according to its own potential. It will obviously be co-built with and for the associations of communes, each engaging by a resolution in the implementation of this action plan.

NETWORKS AND TOOLS

Rural communities can feed on experiences, tools, methods and technical solutions in the field of energy efficiency in buildings and transport adapted to their constraints and specificities.

Within a network they can exchange on the operations, successes, failures and results.

Several tools help municipalities to exchange. Twinning operations help them to have special relationship with one territory they choose and who faced or solved the same questions before. Study tours organized inside the network also help them to understand other territories and what they are implementing.

Continuous training of elected officials and technicians is absolutely necessary. Curiosity is not a bad thing, quite the contrary.



Czech delegation on study tour in Austria.



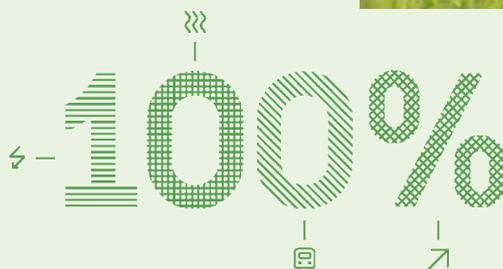
Hungarian visitors to Scotland.



The 100% RES Communities project team during a meeting in Rome.

EUROPEAN NETWORKS

- The Covenant of Mayors 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.
<http://www.covenantofmayors.eu>
- 100% RES Communities movement aims at promoting regional approaches towards 100% renewable energy as the new normal.
<http://www.100-res-communities.eu>
- The RES Champions League is a positive renewable energy competition between European local authorities
<http://www.res-league.eu/>
- Rurener is the network of small rural communities for energy neutrality
<http://fr.rurener.eu/>



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