

Europe



Intelligent Energy

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2010



**Call identifier:
CIP-IEE-2010**

**CLOSING DATE:
Thursday 24 June 2010, 17:00 (Brussels local time)**

Electronic submission only.

**For further information:
<http://ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy>**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2010 FOR ACTIONS UNDER THE PROGRAMME “INTELLIGENT ENERGY – EUROPE”

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1. THE INTELLIGENT ENERGY – EUROPE PROGRAMME

The objective of the Intelligent Energy - Europe Programme is to contribute to secure, sustainable and competitively priced energy for Europe, by providing for action¹:

- to foster energy efficiency and the rational use of energy resources;
- to promote new and renewable energy sources and to support energy diversification;
- to promote energy efficiency and the use of new and renewable energy sources in transport.

The Programme in particular contributes to the Energy Policy for Europe², including the EU action plan for energy-efficiency³ and the Directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources⁴.

Intelligent Energy – Europe builds on the experience gained from its predecessor, the first Intelligent Energy - Europe (2003-2006) Programme⁵. This Programme has become the main EU instrument to tackle non-technological barriers to the spread of efficient use of energy and greater use of new and renewable energy sources. From 2007, Intelligent Energy – Europe has been included in the overall Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)⁶ in order to contribute to achieving the objectives of EU energy policy and to implementing the Lisbon Agenda.

The Programme is managed by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI, formerly known as Intelligent Energy Executive Agency) under powers delegated by the European Commission.

In operational terms the Intelligent Energy - Europe Programme aims to⁷:

- a) provide the elements necessary for the improvement of sustainability, the development of the potential of cities and regions, as well as for the preparation of the legislative measures needed to attain the related strategic objectives; develop the means and instruments to follow up, monitor and evaluate the impact of the measures adopted by the EU and its Member States in the fields addressed by the Programme;
- b) boost investment across Member States in new and best performing technologies in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and energy diversification, including in transport, by bridging the gap between the successful demonstration of innovative technologies and their effective, broad market uptake in order to attain leverage of public and private sector investment, promote key strategic technologies, bring down costs, increase market experience and contribute to reducing the financial risks and other perceived risks and barriers that hinder this type of investment;
- c) remove the non-technological barriers to efficient and intelligent patterns of energy production and consumption by promoting institutional capacity building at, inter alia, local and regional level, by raising awareness, notably through the educational system, by encouraging exchanges of experience and know-how among the main players concerned, business and citizens in general and by stimulating the spread of best practices and best available technologies, notably by means of their promotion at EU level.

¹ Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (2007 to 2013), OJ L 310/15, 09.11.2006, , Article 37.

² An energy policy for Europe: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/energy_policy/index_en.htm

³ Action Plan for Energy Efficiency: Realising the Potential, COM(2006)545 of 19.10.2006

⁴ Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC.

⁵ Decision 1230/2003/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26.06.2003

⁶ Articles 37 to 45 of Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.2006 establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (2007 to 2013).

⁷ Articles 38 of Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.10.2006 establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (2007 to 2013).

Intelligent Energy - Europe covers action in the following fields:

Energy efficiency and rational use of resources (SAVE), including:

- improving energy efficiency and the rational use of energy, in particular in the building and industry sectors;
- supporting the preparation and application of legislative measures.

New and renewable energy resources (ALTENER), including:

- promoting new and renewable energy sources for centralised and decentralised production of electricity, heat and cooling, and biofuels, thus supporting the diversification of energy sources;
- integrating new and renewable energy sources into the local environment and the energy systems;
- supporting the preparation and application of legislative measures.

Energy in transport (STEER) to promote energy efficiency and the use of new and renewable energies sources in transport, including

- supporting initiatives relating to all energy aspects of transport and the diversification of fuels;
- promoting renewable fuels and energy efficiency in transport;
- supporting the preparation and application of legislative measures.

Integrated initiatives combining several of the aforementioned fields or relating to certain EU priorities. They may include actions integrating energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in several sectors of the economy and/or combining various instruments, tools and actors within the same action or project.

Actions supported in the framework of the IEE programme have a significant impact at European level, a high profile and the broadest possible relevance to European citizens and policies. In this context, preference is given to proposals of outstanding quality that present cost-effective arrangements and a significant dimension.

In general, activities subject to call for proposals can take the form of:

- projects;
- or the establishment of new local and regional energy management agencies;

The above fields, objectives, and instruments are valid for the whole Programme duration, i.e. from 2007 to 2013. However each annual work programme sets a number of more specific, action-related objectives. Those relative to the call for proposals 2010 have been set in the annual work programme 2010, adopted by the European Commission on 23 March 2010⁸. They are summarised hereafter.

In particular, the establishment of new local and regional energy management agencies is not open for this year's call. Grants will only be awarded to projects. It is expected that this call for proposals will result in about 50 projects being supported.

For the priorities and types of action for this Call 2010, see chapter 10.

For further details on the priorities, please consult the annual Work Programme 2010 available on the programme website together with all relevant Call documents.

⁸ C(2010)1716

2. BUDGET, FUNDING RATES AND ELIGIBILITY OF COSTS

The indicative total amount available for this call is about **EUR 56 million**. The European Commission, through the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI), plans to grant funds which are complementary to contributions made by the beneficiary, the national, regional or local authorities and/or other bodies. The sources of co-funding must be transparent and stated in such a way that they are clearly identifiable and accountable.

Accordingly, the amount granted will be **up to 75% of the total eligible costs**.

The EU contribution to reimburse eligible costs must not give rise to a profit. Contributions in kind are not eligible costs. One action may give rise to the award of only one grant from the EU budget to any one beneficiary. Action which receives financial support for the same purpose from other EU financial instruments will not receive funding from the IEE Programme.

Eligible costs can be incurred only after signature of the grant agreement by all the parties, save in exceptional cases, and under no circumstances before submission of the application for a grant.

The maximum duration of a project is 3 years.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility criteria will be checked by the EACI on receipt of the proposals. Failure to comply with these criteria will result in the proposal not being evaluated further.

3.1. Which organisations and countries are eligible?

All applicants must be legal entities, whether public or private, established in the territory of the EU Member States, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Croatia.

A grant agreement with legal entities established in other countries will only be signed under the condition that the country has undertaken the necessary steps to join the IEE programme. Up-to-date information on which countries are part of the programme is available on the programme web site (see chapter 8).

The IEE programme is also open to the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC). It is also open to international organisations – subject to the conditions set out above. They may, if necessary, receive funding. If one of the participants is the JRC or an international organisation, it is deemed to be established in a Member State or associated country other than any Member State or associated country in which another participant in the same action is established.

Local and regional energy agencies which were established with and are still beneficiaries of EU contributions from the IEE Programme are eligible to participate in IEE projects if they provide evidence that their resources are sufficient to cover the additional activities and that the latter do not overlap with the work programme of their existing IEE grant agreement or if the submission deadline for the call for proposals lies at least 24 months after the starting date of their activities, as specified in the relevant grant agreement.

Applicants that do not have legal personality may apply for grants provided that the representatives of these applicants prove that they have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on behalf of the applicant and provided that they offer financial guarantees equivalent to those provided by legal entities.

“Legal entity” means any entity created under the national law of its place of establishment, EU law or international law, which has legal personality and which, acting under its own name, may exercise rights and be subject to obligations.

“International organisations” means legal entities arising from an association of States, other than the EU, established on the basis of a treaty or similar act, having common institutions and an international legal personality distinct from that of its Member States.

Natural persons are not eligible.

3.2. How many applicants are required?

Applications must be submitted by a team of at least three independent⁹ legal entities, each established in a different eligible country (see section 3.1).

3.3. Themes and funding priorities

All priorities mentioned in **chapter 10** are open for submission of proposals.

Exceptionally, and if properly justified, proposals that meet the eligibility criteria but do not directly respond to the priorities defined in the Call may also be considered.

3.4. Submission

Proposals must be submitted by the closing date and time (see chapter 7), using the online application system and the templates provided therein and must be complete.

3.5. Grounds for exclusion

Applications will not be considered for a grant if the applicants are in any of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the European Union's financial interests;
- f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1) of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union¹⁰;
- g) they are faced with a conflict of interest;
- h) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the procedure or fail to supply this information.

The cases referred to in point 3.5 (e) cover:

- cases of fraud as referred to in Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Union's financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995¹¹;
- cases of corruption as referred to in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption

⁹ Definition of independent: In case of two undertakings A and B; A may control not more than 50% of B, and vice versa; A and B may be controlled not more than 50% by a third undertaking C.

¹⁰ Council Regulation (EC, EURATOM) n.1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 357,31.12.2002) as amended by Council Regulation (EC, EURATOM) 1995/2006 of 13 December 2006 (OJ L 390/2006 of 30 December 2006).

¹¹ OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

involving officials of the European Union or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997¹²;

- cases of involvement in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Joint Action 98/733/JHA of the Council¹³;
- cases of money laundering as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC¹⁴.

Applicants shall supply evidence that they exist as legal entities and that they are not in one of the above-listed situations. For that purpose, applicants shall submit a declaration on their honour as part of the application forms.

3.6. Administrative and financial penalties

Candidates who have made false declarations, have submitted substantial errors, irregularities or fraud, may be subject to financial penalties representing 2% to 10% of the total estimated value of the contract being awarded. Contractors who have been found in serious breach of their contractual obligations may be subject to financial penalties representing 2% to 10% of the total value of the contract in question. The rate may be increased to 4% to 20% in the event of a repeat infringement within five years of the date on which the infringement is established as confirmed following and adversarial procedure with the contractor.

Without prejudice to the application of penalties laid down in the contract, candidates and contractors who have made false declarations, have made substantial errors or committed irregularities or fraud, or have been found in serious breach of their contractual obligations may also be excluded from all contracts and grants financed by the EU budget for a maximum of five years from the date on which the infringement is established as confirmed following and adversarial procedure with the contractor. That period may be extended to ten years in the event of a repeated offence within five years of the date referred to in the first subparagraph.

The Commission uses an internal information tool (Early Warning System (EWS) to flag identified risks related to beneficiaries of centrally managed contracts and grants with a view to protecting the EU's financial interests.

Furthermore, the Commission manages a Central Exclusion Database (CED) which registers all the entities that may be excluded from participation to any grant or procurement procedure allocating EU Funds, in accordance with the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget of the European Union. This Central Exclusion Database is accessible by all authorities entitled to allocate EU Funds.

Grant applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- the Commission Decision of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (EWS) for the use of authorising officers of the Commission and the executive agencies (OJ, L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 125), or
- the Commission Regulation of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database – CED (OJ L 344, 20.12.2008, p. 12),

their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form, registration number and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the EWS only or both in the EWS and CED by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, and communicated to the persons and entities listed in the above-mentioned Decision and Regulation, in relation to the award or the execution of a procurement contract or a grant agreement or decision.

¹² OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

¹³ OJ C 351, 29.12.1998, p.1. Joint action of 21 December 1998 on making it a criminal offence to participate in a criminal organisation in the Member States of the European Union.

¹⁴ OJ L 166, 28.6.1991, p. 77. Directive of 10 June 1991, as amended by Directive 2001/97/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 December 2001 (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 76).

EWS and the CED are managed by the Accounting Officer of the Commission to whom legal entities may exercise their rights as laid down in the Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001).

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

The applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the period during which the action is being carried out and to participate in its funding. The applicants must have the professional skills and qualifications required to complete the proposed action.

The selection criteria will be assessed as a first step by the evaluation committee. Failure to comply with these criteria will result in the proposal not being evaluated further. Applicants may be asked to provide additional proof or to clarify the supporting documents related to the selection criteria within a specific time limit.

4.1. Financial capacity of applicants

Applicants must show that they have the financial capacity and operational capability to complete the action to be supported. Unless they are a public body or an international organisation, they must complete a ‘Simplified Financial Statement’ Form and provide their annual financial statements comprised of the balance sheet, the profit and loss statement and any annexes to those for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed (details available with the Guide for Proposers and Application Forms).

On the basis of these documents the EACI performs a financial viability check, upon which the EACI might ask for a financial guarantee in line with Article 182(1) of the rules implementing the Financial Regulation.

In accordance with Article 173(4) of the rules implementing the Financial Regulation, if the application concerns grants for action which exceed €500 000, an audit report produced by an approved external auditor must be submitted. That report must certify the accounts for the last financial year available. In the case of agreements with a number of beneficiaries this threshold will apply to each individual beneficiary.

4.2. Technical capacity of applicants

Applicants must have the technical capacity and operational capability to complete the action to be supported and should provide supporting documents. Guidance on the supporting documents required (e.g. CVs of those responsible for carrying out the action, description of projects and activities undertaken in the last three years, etc.) can be found in the Guide for Proposers.

5. AWARD CRITERIA

The Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation will base its selection of actions and the rate of EU co-financing on the written presentation. The actions will be evaluated against five award criteria which will carry equal weighting within the overall assessment. Within the general conclusions, the evaluation will provide a qualitative judgment on the overall value for money, comparing the outcomes based on the five award criteria with the costs and efforts involved.

If a proposal is to be classified as worth funding, the grand total of the marks for all the award criteria should be equal to or greater than 70% of the maximum total score. In addition, a mark of over 50% will be required for each criterion. Proposals that pass these thresholds will be considered for funding. At the end of the evaluation, proposals will be ranked on the basis of the evaluation results.

Funding decisions will be made on the basis of this ranking and within the limits of the available budget. Proposals with an identical score next to the cut-off limit of the available budget will be sub-ranked,

taking into account the indicative distribution of the 2010 budget by field, as indicated in the Work Programme 2010. A limited number of proposals may be placed on a reserve list, following the sub-ranking.

The following five criteria apply to project proposals:

- 1. Relevance of the proposed action (score 0-10), including:**
 - extent to which the proposed action is consistent with the IEE Call priorities and builds on previous action(s);
 - extent to which the proposed action responds to important market needs and barriers;
 - extent to which the proposed action contributes to implementation and further development of relevant EU policies including priorities, targets, action plans and legislation.
- 2. Quality of implementation methodology (score 0-10), including:**
 - suitability of the proposed approach and extent to which the proposed action engages the target groups and stakeholders (e.g. market actors, decision makers etc.)
 - clarity of the work packages, project planning and suitability of performance monitoring;
 - quality of communication plan for the uptake of solution(s) by market actors / decision makers / other stakeholders.
- 3. Ambition and credibility of the impacts of the proposed action (score 0-10), including:**
 - services / outcomes produced by the action (deliverables, hours of training, etc.);
 - impact within the project lifetime assessed with specific, measurable, accepted, realistic and time-dependent (SMART) indicators;
 - impact and sustainability beyond the project lifetime, estimated according to credible baseline.
- 4. EU added value (score 0-10), including:**
 - evidence that collaboration / team working across national borders will lead to greater benefits than separate actions at national / local level in the same countries;
 - appropriate geographical focus of the proposed action including learning and exchanges among stakeholders;
 - transferability of the solutions offered by the proposed action.
- 5. Resources allocated to the proposed action (score 0-10), including:**
 - management and composition of the team, balance of skills, experiences, and responsibilities;
 - appropriate levels of hours per partner and per work package;
 - justification of costs (sub-contracts, travel costs, and other specific costs) and co-financing.

6. GENERAL CONDITIONS FOR AWARDING GRANTS

The general conditions for awarding grants, particularly the definition of the eligible costs and the methods of payment, are set out in the draft grant agreement, available on the website of the IEE programme (see chapter 8). The budget for the action attached to the application must have revenue and expenditure in balance and show clearly the costs which are eligible for financing from the EU budget.

Depending on the size and other risk factors of the action, the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation might request a financial guarantee of the beneficiary for pre-financing.

If the successful applicant is an international organisation, the model Contribution Agreement with an international organisation or any other contract template agreed between the international organisation concerned and the Contracting Authority will be used instead of a text based on the draft grant agreement.

7. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted using the **on-line submission system** and **application forms** indicated on the IEE programme website (see chapter 8).

Applications which fail to comply with this formal requirement will not be evaluated further. In particular, proposals arriving at the EACI by any other means will be regarded as "not submitted" and will not be evaluated.

The closing date for submission is 24 June 2010, 17:00 (Brussels local time).

Applications submitted after the closing date and time will NOT be taken into consideration.

Proposers are strongly advised to start their submission process well in time and not to leave it to the last hour in order to avoid the risk of a failed submission.

Should changes occur regarding formal requirements for submission of applications, they will be highlighted on the website of the programme. Applicants are therefore advised to check this website prior to submitting their application.

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Applicants should consult the website of the programme at: <http://ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy>

The IEE website contains all information and forms in relation to this call for proposals, such as the IEE annual work programme 2010, guides for applicants, application forms, and information about projects supported by the programme. Furthermore the website informs about information days which will be held during the duration of the call for proposals.

Any questions regarding this call for proposals should be sent to the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (stating, if applicable, the technical field, as indicated in chapter 10) using the online enquiry form available on http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/contact/enquiries_en.htm.

9. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Closing date for submission of applications:	24 June 2010, 17:00 Brussels local time
Estimated date of completion of the evaluation:	December 2010
Estimated date for the notification of applicants:	from mid December 2010 onwards
Estimated date for signature of contracts	from April 2011 onwards

10. PRIORITIES AND TYPES OF ACTION FOR 2010

The 2010 priorities are summarised below. For all priorities, the Work Programme 2010 defines performance indicators, which applicants need to consider in their proposals. In addition the Work Programme 2010 provides background information for the priorities.

10.1. Energy efficiency and rational use of resources (SAVE)

Energy-efficient buildings:

- Actions to improve the operational efficiency of non-residential buildings. This could include low-or-no-cost measures, effective commissioning or better operation and maintenance.
- Alternatively, actions to improve energy management in multi-residential buildings will also be considered (e.g. co-ownership properties, managed housing stock).

Priority will be given to actions demonstrating active engagement of market multipliers (e.g. associations, federations) and high impact.

Consumer behaviour:

- Actions helping consumers choose the most energy efficient products among those covered under the Eco-design Directive (e.g. household appliances, windows, lighting etc.)
- Actions directly raising awareness among various groups of individual consumers for issues covered for instance by the Energy Services Directive (e.g. advanced metering and informative billing) or the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.

This includes large-scale awareness campaigns, market surveillance activities, and actions publicising the "top runners" in various product groups, campaigns tailored for specific social groups, etc.

Campaigns should be built on the needs and desires of consumers and include a careful evaluation phase (social marketing approach). They should be jointly supported by consumer organisations and environmental NGOs, industry, retailers and competent regulatory authorities whilst being independent of special interests, whether private or national.

10.2. New and renewable energy sources (ALTENER)

RES electricity:

- Actions supporting the integration of renewable electricity (including CHP) into the market and the grid, in particular by bringing forward solutions to streamline and integrate authorisation and grid connection procedures (including grid extension and reinforcement).
- Actions that would facilitate improved authorisation procedures, like forward-looking and integrated planning as well as moderation of competing stakeholder interests and concerns such as environmental impacts.
- Strategic actions to analyse and monitor policies, markets, costs and benefits of renewable electricity, possibly extended to other renewable energy sectors where appropriate and necessary.

RES in buildings:

- Actions which accelerate the deployment of biomass, geothermal, and/or solar (thermal or PV) systems for heating, cooling and electricity in energy efficient buildings, including:

- the use of renewable energy building codes or ordinances, conditions for grid access, measurement and payment, training the personnel of local / regional authorities;
- the provision to all relevant actors of information on support measures and on the benefits, costs, and efficiency of RES systems and equipment.

The focus should be on the installation of many individual RES systems in groups of buildings to facilitate economies of scale or on using centralised RES solutions in district heating / cooling systems.

Actions should preferably be led by public authorities (planners and energy specialists working together), or by organisations from the building sector, such as construction companies, architects, developers, housing associations, or energy service companies aiming to invest in RES systems.

Bioenergy:

- Actions bringing untapped bio-resources onto the energy market. Such actions include:
 - supporting the implementation of local/regional bioenergy plans;
 - stimulating investments & business agreements in sustainable bioenergy supply chains (including solid biomass, biogas and liquid biofuels);
 - supporting strategic initiatives to promote quality, standards & sustainability schemes for bioenergy products, or
 - encouraging biogas injection into gas grids or use as transport fuel – including streamlining procedures for grid connection and quality monitoring.

10.3. Energy in transport (STEER)

Energy-efficient transport:

- Actions to increase the energy efficiency of freight distribution, for example by developing coordination, management and information schemes in actions coordinated between administrators and stakeholders, such as fleet operators, distributors, retailers and customers.
- Actions to support the development of energy-efficient driving schemes and their broad implementation, aiming at all categories of drivers.
- Actions to promote, based upon common approaches, the auditing and certification of integrated urban mobility policies and plans, including Europe-wide information exchange to share experiences and best practices.
- Actions to promote safe walking and safe cycling, for example by integrated planning approaches and awareness raising campaigns for sustainable mobility behaviour.

Capacity-building and learning on energy aspects of transport:

- Actions to promote mutual learning of practitioners, employees of regulating and administrative bodies or experts through staff exchanges (e.g. “shadowing” an experienced colleague, on-the-job training or internships).
- Actions supporting teaching at academic level through networking of educational institutions, staff exchanges, joint seminars, joint site visits, and the development of joint teaching and information material.

- Actions supporting training and capacity-building for staff of existing local and regional agencies, using existing training material.
- Initiatives to encourage existing local and regional agencies to offer new services related to energy aspects of transport, aiming at a long-term structural integration of such services into the activities of the agencies involved.

10.4. Integrated initiatives

Local energy leadership:

- Large-scale networking and capacity building activities, developed and implemented by the international and national networks of local authorities including the Covenant of Mayors' Supporting Structures, in co-operation with local municipal experts, aimed to improve the practical implementation of sustainable energy policies at local level, based on stakeholders participation.
- Actions targeting direct exchange of experience and meaningful capacity building between experienced local authorities and 'learning' local authorities demonstrating the institutionalisation of sustainable energy policies into their operations.

As a result, effective development and implementation of sustainable energy action plans must be ensured in 'learning' local authorities during the project's lifetime. Particular emphasis is given to maintain the good geographical balance, i.e. between 'old' and 'new' EU Member states. This action is targeting individual local authorities getting together, rather than large scale networking actions managed and implemented by networks.

Strengthening capacities for financing of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in housing:

- Development and implementation of tailor made financial schemes, preferably revolving funds such as recently set up in Estonia, aimed to improve the energy performance of buildings and to facilitate the achievement of the 4% ERDF allocation objective for the housing sector. As further element those actions could also include transfers of best practice, exchanges of staff and other technical assistance of practical nature.

Actions must be led by authorities committed to set up and/or run the financial schemes. Priority is given to actions led by regional or national public authorities with management competences on the ERDF implementation. Active engagement of financial institutions and local authorities is seen as a key issue. Particular attention should be given to innovative financial mechanisms, i.e. combining subsidy and loan components.