

Open Days 2011

Local Intermediate Authorities acting for innovation and energy efficiency

In a strategic moment for the future cohesion policy, just one week after the publication by the European Commission of its proposals for the cohesion policy 2014-20 and in the middle of the budget debate about the forthcoming Multi-annual Financial Framework, the ninth edition of the Open Days 2011 took place from 10th to 13th October 2011.

Like the previous editions, Open Days 2011, titled « **Investing in Europe's future: Regions and cities delivering smart, sustainable and inclusive growth** », allowed local and regional authorities to exchange their experiences, practices and opinions about the European policies and strategies that are part of their agendas, and namely about the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy, that, in this moment, is at the core of the most relevant strategies of regional and local development and to express their earliest opinions and impressions about the EC cohesion regulations.

In this context, the Regional Partnership “**Local intermediate authorities: Acting for Europe 2020**”, promoted by CEPLI, organized the debate “**Unlocking Innovation and Efficiency at Local Level**”, that took place on the 12th October. The debate consisted of two panels involving the political representatives of Local Intermediate Authorities (LIAs) from six European Countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Romania and Spain.

The first panel, entitled “**Digital Europe and Innovation - the role of Local Intermediate Authorities in Europe 2020 strategy**”, deepened the issues of innovation and digitalization in LIAs' policies with Mrs Guinka TCHAVDAROVA, Executive Director of NAMRB (BG), Mr Laureano LEON, President of Diputación of Cáceres (ES), Mr Hervé RASCLARD, First Vice-President of Drôme County Council (FR), Mr Jean TOUZEAU, Vice-president of Gironde County Council (FR) and Mr Alain TRUSSART, Provincial Deputy of the Province of Walloon Brabant (BE). All the speakers described relevant projects realized through EU funding and the strategies implemented to provide access to ICT for their citizens as well as actions and innovation targeted at providing of better services for citizens. The debate showed how these experiences have a substantial positive impact on the territories, especially in terms of job creation, economic growth and synergies between public and private sector, stakeholders and citizens.

The second panel, entitled “**Energy efficiency at local level for the benefit of Europe 2020 goals**”, dealt with actions implemented at local

level towards energy efficiency, their contribution in reaching the 20-20-20 goals, and their positive effects in terms of development of local enterprises and creation of job opportunities for young people to curb the impact of the economic crisis. The debate saw participation of Mr Giovanni AVANTI, President of the Province of Palermo (IT), Mr Piero LACORAZZA, President of the Province of Potenza (IT), Mr Mircea COSMA, President of Prahova County Council (RO), Mr Paolo Dalla Vecchia, Councillor of the Province of Venezia (IT), Mr Georges PIRE, Provincial Deputy of the Province of Liège (BE), Mr Valentín CORTÉS, President of Diputación of Badajoz (ES). Presenting the most relevant projects to enhance the energy efficiency in public buildings, especially offices and schools, the awareness raising campaigns lead on sustainable growth, and the initiatives for a smart and green mobility, all the participants outlined the benefits of these actions for the economic and social cohesion of their territories. The panel discussion confirmed that green economy is becoming more and more an investment priority for European public administrations, as it represents not only an instrument to safeguard the environment, but proved its high efficiency to re-launch the economic system.

The conference was closed with the remarks of Mr Claudy Lebreton, Secretary General of CEPLI, who pointed out the importance of LIAs as the level of government closest to citizens, having the size and the competencies to fight the effects of the global economic, social and political crisis. The decentralization process, that in Mr Lebreton's view represents one of the biggest revolutions of the past century, has a key role to guarantee not only the efficiency of public administration, but also the success of the European strategies set up to boost economic development and to fight against social exclusion.

Please see the photos from this event [here](#).

The local events related to the Open Days are to take place in our territories in October, November and December 2011. To learn more about this see: [here](#).