

**GREEN PAPER on Energy Efficiency or Doing More With Less**  
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**Letter from EU Mayors to the European Commission**  
**Supported by EU networks of local authorities**

**Local authorities are ready to do more to improve energy efficiency.**  
**We offer to be partners in reaching the ambitious 20% reduction objective!**

Mr. Commissioner for Energy,

We, Mayors and Vice-Mayors of EU local authorities **welcome the European Commission initiative, in publishing a Green Paper on Energy Efficiency.** A European initiative in this field has been long awaited, as energy efficiency is a key tool in reducing energy consumption, combating fuel poverty, saving on energy expenses, contributing to better air quality and aiding climate protection. We want to help you to succeed.

Indeed, **our current development model is not viable** and parts of the world, which have been excluded from it now also claim for their share of resources. Today, energy-related tensions have their origins in obvious structural imbalances. Depletion of resources is no longer a remote threat. Moreover, climate change has recently burst into the decision-making process as a major element to be confronted; we need to both minimise and slow down its effects (mitigation) and protect ourselves from them (adaptation).

It has become obvious that we need to **develop a more sustainable energy model for the future.** We live in an extremely vulnerable world where peace, development, employment, and our quality of life are threatened. Reducing such vulnerability must be a primary objective of our society and needs to be integrated into all our policies.

Therefore, we welcome the **20% energy saving goal** by 2020 set out in the Green Paper. This should provide an incentive to sustainable innovation, growth and employment and an opportunity to involve actors at all levels of society - including local and regional authorities – to invent together the future development model for our cities and societies.

However, **the role of our local and regional authorities is seen as very limited** in the Green Paper. More generally, the importance of the **human factor and local potential** is neglected. Our place and role in the EU energy policy must be reconsidered because the implementation of energy efficiency measures – respecting the subsidiarity principle - can only be effective if local actors are fully involved. Neither technology nor legislation itself is sufficient to face such challenges:

- As Mayors and Vice-Mayors of local authorities being closest to citizens, we **can control and influence energy decisions** affecting the quality of life of all our citizens. Through an increasing awareness of climate change and the contribution of energy consumption on the one hand, and the potential to save energy and reduce public spending on the other, local and regional governments are increasingly ready to implement energy efficiency measures and many of them have already made substantial progress.
- Our local and regional authorities can **influence energy demand** through management of their own energy use and raising awareness amongst energy end-users. Furthermore, local and regional authorities have also the tool of public procurement at their disposal to promote energy efficient products and services.
- Action by local and regional authorities in the field of **transport policy** can also have a significant impact on energy use as well as on local pollution. Measures that discourage car use and encourage non-motorised or public transport are obvious examples. Through green procurement local authorities can also play an important role in the promotion and dissemination of energy efficient vehicles. If supported by a good regulatory and financial framework, municipalities can develop sustainable mobility plans and encourage a modal shift towards more sustainable transport modes.
- Our local and regional authorities throughout the EU are increasingly aware of the issue of **climate change.** They realise that this problem can have a direct impact on them (extreme weather events, floods, changes in local ecosystems, impact on tourism etc.). Local actions can contribute to mitigate the effects of climate

change at the local *and* global level. Many initiatives to fight climate change relate to the improvement of energy efficiency.

•Our municipalities also take important decisions influencing **the energy supply** side. Decisions on the energy mix in favour of more efficient systems and **renewable energy** can **promote local energy production**, develop export possibilities e.g. for green electricity and reduce dependency on energy resources from other parts of the world. CHP district heating systems provide a good example. Locally produced energy will also provide positive social and regional effects, namely local employment and growth.

In this respect, we would like to stress the following suggestions in preparing the future Action Plan for Energy Efficiency that should be proposed early in 2006:

1. Recognise the important role of local authorities in achieving the energy efficiency objectives – through a concrete series of propositions.
2. Recognise the specific energy conditions in New Member States and candidate countries, notably through an increased use of Structural Funds for energy efficiency – including the energy retrofitting of social housing.
3. Recognise the importance of the human factor in enabling us to succeed in our objectives and help us to reinforce energy teams from local to European level.
4. Take into account energy security when taking decisions.
5. Provide local authorities with appropriate financial means and provide national fiscal incentives for energy saving investments, which are generally small scale.
6. Propose adequate policies and measures to meet the objectives set; by providing local authorities with suitable legal frameworks for mobility management, urban planning and energy services, and technologies adapted for use in vehicles, buildings and building equipment, etc.
7. Integrate Intelligent Energy in the Lisbon Agenda and in Sectoral Policies of the European Union in order to overcome the schizophrenia of discussions and politics (economic on one hand, environmental on the other).
8. Standardise proven measures and practices like energy labelling ABCDEFG on as many products and commodities as possible.
9. Foster networking between local authorities in order to promote good practice.

More precise proposals will be made to translate the above priorities into practical action.

We thank you indeed Mr. Commissioner for the attention you pay to our inputs into the process of creating a more energy efficient Europe. We take this opportunity to assure you of our commitment to support you and the Commission's initiatives in this direction.

Yours sincerely,

Signed by Mayors and Vice-Mayors (see the list)

Supported by:

- CEMR
- EnergieCités
- Climate Alliance
- Eurocities