

Track 2 - The smart energy system transition in cities and regions

Title of the proposed paper

Leading by example: Regional governance of energy transition in Grand Lyon

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3 keywords

Governance, Covenant of Mayors, Regional authorities

Text abstract (max. 300 words)

Cities and regions are expected to make a significant contribution for European energy and climate policy targets to be achieved. A whole range of instruments at the European level aims at incentivising local and regional energy transitions. Experience has shown that governing the transition to smart energy systems in cities and regions requires comprehensive capacities and resources. Thus, European programmes attempt to build local capacities and improve the availability of resources. For instance, the Covenant of Mayors has been established as a network for local authorities from Europe and beyond willing to commit to emission reduction targets and tangible sustainable energy action plans (SEAP). Signatories not only obtain opportunities for networking with peers and for public communication of their activities, but also additional services from the Covenant's office such as advice on available funding schemes. However, many Covenant signatories, especially smaller municipalities, experience difficulties to comply with their obligations. As an attempt to provide further support and closer assistance in the implementation of signatories' SEAPs, regional authorities have taken on the role of so-called Covenant coordinators. The latter are typically advertising for Covenant membership and attending to Covenant signatories from their territory. A case study from Grand Lyon (France) shows to what extent the involvement of the regional level can stimulate, advance and steer local energy system transitions. It exemplifies strategies of local and regional actors for expanding their scope of action in terms of resources, capacities, and allocation of competences.