

# Covenant Coordinators:

## Crucial contributors to the Covenant of Mayors success

**Covenant Coordinators** are public administrations or authorities which provide strategic guidance, technical and financial support to Covenant of Mayors (CoM) signatories and municipalities willing to sign up to it.

The data presented here is representative of the responses of a survey launched in June 2016, involving the 162 Covenant Coordinators which had joined the CoM before June 2015 (at least one year of activity)<sup>1</sup>.

This report provides an overview of the activities performed by Covenant Coordinators in the framework of the partnership agreement they have signed with the European Commission. As of October 2016, in light of the new Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, a new process has been implemented, which involves the signing of a Commitment Statement.

### What can be drawn from the survey?

The Covenant of Mayors can be heralded as a ground-breaking movement, because not only has it fostered the emergence of wide-ranging cooperation platforms at local, regional and European levels, but also because of the substantial boost it has given to multi-level governance in Europe and beyond.

Provinces, regions and other Covenant Coordinators are key to the success of the initiative, notably in terms of:

- the promotion they do of the Covenant in their territory
- increasing the CoM Office capacities by providing decentralised support on the ground and ensuring tailored interaction with thousands of signatories.
- the support provided to signatories including technical assistance, for example, through the organisation of dedicated workshops, or the development of SEAP/SECAP related tools and methodologies.

Signatories' access to funding sources is also facilitated by Coordinators. Provinces and regions often earmark funds to implement energy efficiency projects in signatory municipalities, or they bundle small projects to help municipalities reach the threshold required by investors. Regions often act as Managing Authorities of EU Structural Funds and can thus decide to allocate EU funding to Covenant-related activities.

Likewise, Coordinators are the relevant interface to relay Covenant Signatories' funding and legislative priorities to the European Institutions, thus influencing policy development from the bottom-up. Coordinators are often asked to comment on the barriers and needs to the European Commission (through the periodic survey among others) which helps shape the future of the initiative.

**More info:** [http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/about/covenant-coordinators\\_en.html](http://www.covenantofmayors.eu/about/covenant-coordinators_en.html)

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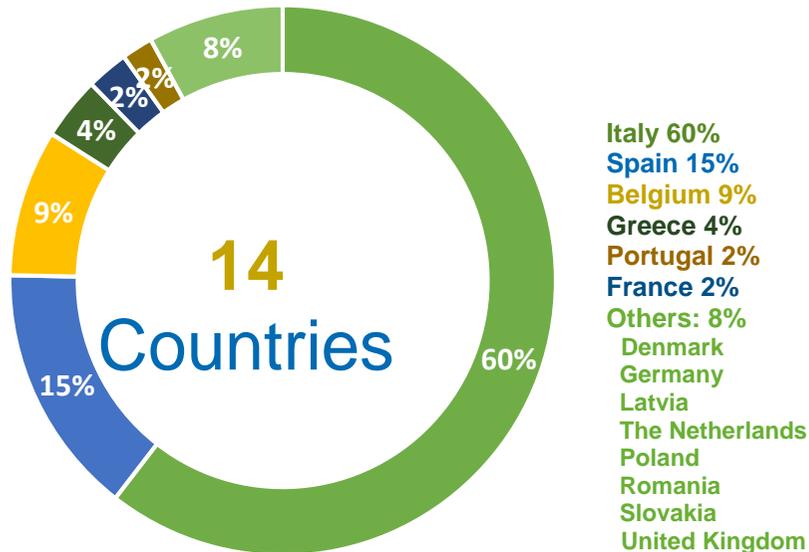
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<sup>1</sup> As of December 2016, 172 Coordinators from 15 countries are participating in the Covenant, 7 of which are Covenant National Coordinators, while the other 165 are Covenant Territorial Coordinators. Covenant of Mayors Office, December 2016

## Key numbers

**162** Covenant Coordinators

**5%** increase since the 2014 report

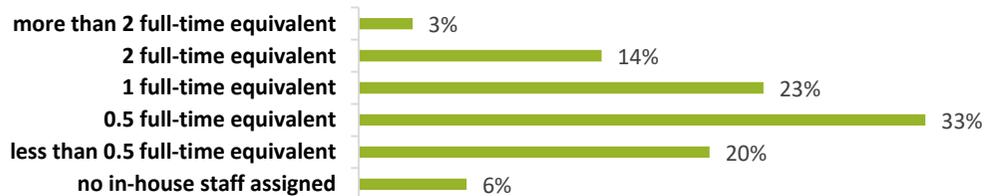


## Human resources

### Internal team



**94%** of respondents allocate members of their internal team to Covenant of Mayors activities. Below you can see the number of staff applied by Coordinators, categorised as a percentage.



## External expertise

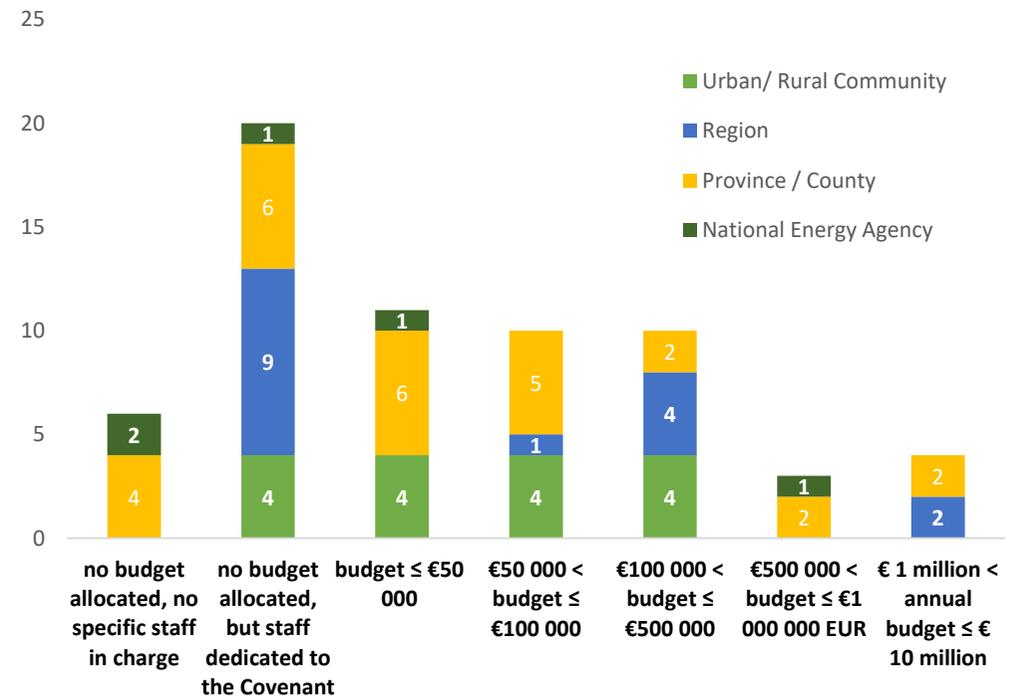
This internal team is often backed by external staff whose technical expertise is availed of. **69%** of the respondents indicated that external staff is contracted by Covenant Coordinators to develop the **BEI, the SEAP and the Monitoring Report**.

In some cases, for a single Covenant Coordinator, several organisations might have been contracted. Organisations of external expertise for technical support are generally made up of **Local and Regional Energy Agencies (LAREAs); Consultants; and Universities**.

## Financial resources

### Overall Budget

In general, the respondents indicated that financial resources are allocated to the implementation of the Covenant related objectives: **59%** of **Covenant Coordinators allocate a budget** for these purposes, while **31% allocate staff**, where there is no budget earmarked specifically for the Covenant objectives.

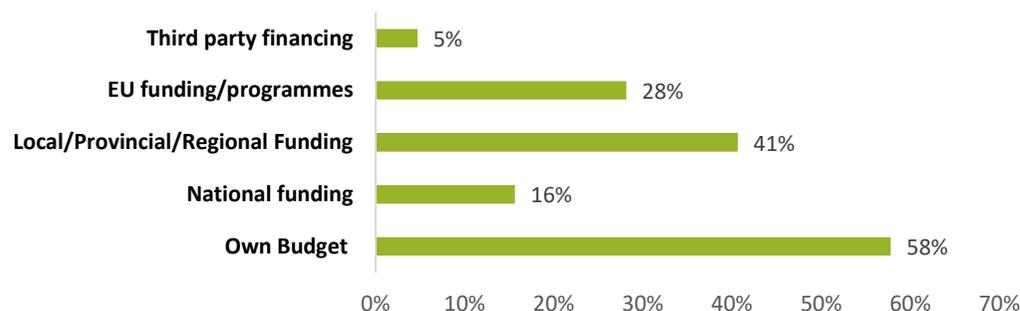


## Budget sources



The overall budget allocated by Covenant Coordinators, is sourced and defined in the categories below. In general, budgets are used for the development and implementation of SEAPs as well as promotional activities, among others.

According to the respondents, **58%** of Covent Coordinator finances were sourced from their **own budget**, while a significant **41%** from **local, provincial and regional funding**.



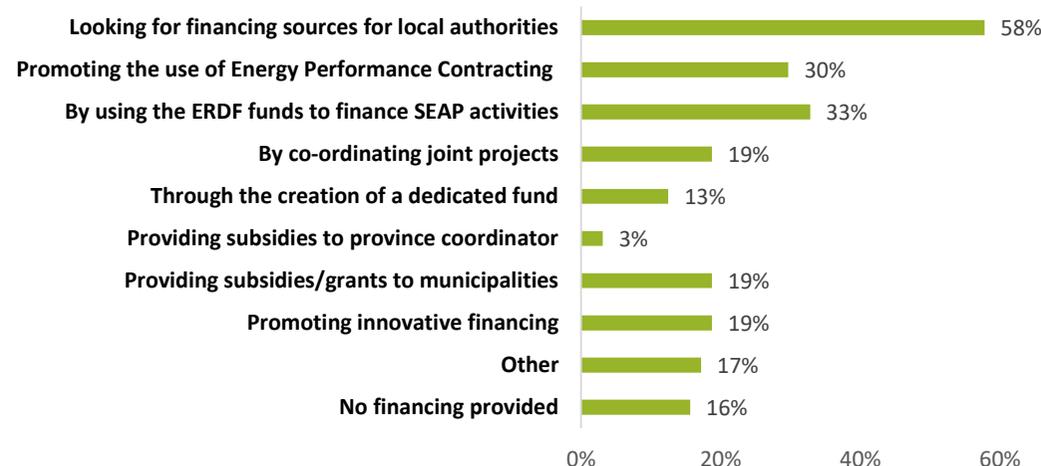
Multiple selections were allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

## Methods of financing SEAP - related projects of associated municipalities

The financing of SEAP related activities is a primary use of budget sources. As suggested by the responses, there are many ways in which a Covenant Coordinator can help to finance SEAP related projects.

Particularly, **58%** of respondents assist in **finding financing sources for local authorities** in the first place e.g. by helping them to apply for EU funds. **ERDF funds** form a crucial part of both SEAP development and implementation with **33%** of respondents indicating the funds use. Of similar importance, **30%** of respondents indicated the **promotion of energy performance contracting at municipal, provincial and regional level** or the use of other forms of third party financing. Notably, funds were acquired by **co-ordinating joint projects**, for example, by submitting an ELENA-EIB proposal which bundles small projects together; and by **promoting innovative financing** such as crowdfunding, citizen funds, and cooperatives. **19%** respondents identified the use of these selections, respectively.

## Methods of financing SEAP - related projects of associated municipalities



Multiple selections were allowed, so percentages add up to more than 100%.

## Examples

The new programming period or the for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2014 – 2020 has been launched and a number of Covenant Coordinators have been using the fund to finance specific actions related to the Covenant of Mayors and the SEAPs of their associated signatories.

For example, in July 2016, the **National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management**, in Poland, announced calls for proposals for financing projects within the scope of low emission plans which potentially includes SEAPS as well as calls specifically related to actions contained within the development of SEAPs. These include efficient heating systems, cogeneration, and energy efficient housing.

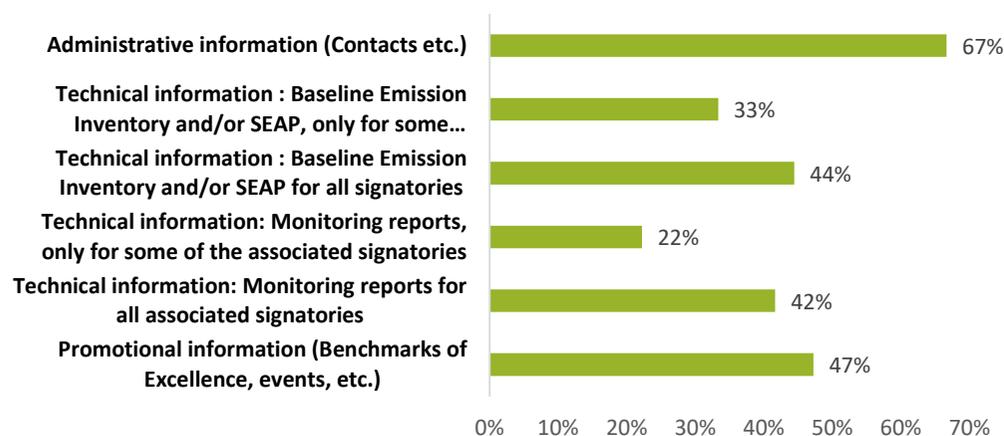
Additionally, the **Centru Regional Development Agency**, in Romania, has successfully applied for financing from the ERDF fund, under the framework of the Regional Operational Programme (ROP), Romania. This will allow them to improve energy efficiency and develop the use of RES in public infrastructure and residential buildings, as well as urban eco-mobility projects in the framework of Priority Axis (PA) 3. The funds allocated through PA 3 will also allow them to develop energy efficiency strategies, inclusive of SEAPs.

## Overall support to signatories



**52%** of respondents indicated that as a Coordinator they fill in the online profiles of their associated signatories on the Covenant of Mayors web based platform.

For those who do so, **67%** fill in the **administrative information** and while **44%** fill out the technical information of all their associated signatories in relation to the **Baseline Emission Inventory and/or SEAP**. Furthermore, **42%** fill out all **Monitoring Report** for its associated signatories. Notably, **47%** of respondents specified that they fill out the promotional information of their associated signatories which can include their **Benchmarks of Excellence**.



*Multiple selections were allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.*

## Technical support to signatories

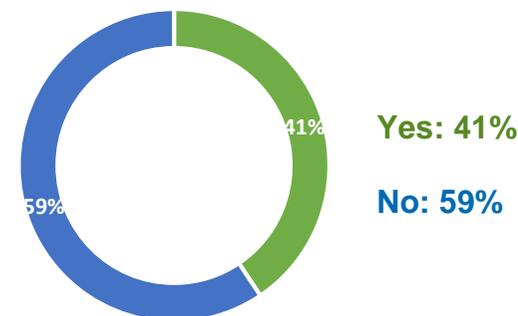


Municipalities often highlight the importance of the role of Covenant Coordinators, especially small and medium sized towns. Coordinators primarily help compensate for the lack of technical skills and provide municipalities with access to financial resources in a more straightforward approach, if they are not already directly providing financial resources themselves.

The technical support to signatories can be implemented at any stage throughout the development and implementation of a SEAP. The level of involvement by Coordinators depends primarily on the technical skills and the availability of qualified staff and resources available to be allocated to support municipalities.

## Potential Developments under the New Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

This year it was suggested that one of the possible developments of the CoM is to open the possibility for provinces and regions to upload their own **SECAP**. **41%** of respondents indicated that their organisation is interested in developing its own provincial /regional SECAP and have their efforts acknowledged under the CoM initiative.



### Examples



In terms of technical support and these potential new developments, a number of Coordinators are already working on adaptation strategies and measures. Such proactivity is very much encouraged within the Covenant as it creates an exemplary and sustainable pathway for others to follow, and in turn, reinforce the initiative as a whole.

The **Diputació de Barcelona** has developed a specific methodology to support the preparation of SECAPs as well as several tools to support emissions calculations, climate change vulnerability assessments and to help fill in the SECAP online templates. The methodology sets the minimum contents required for a SECAP and how to structure the information. The aim of the methodology is to provide all Covenant signatories in the Province of Barcelona with a common standard.

The **Province of East-Flanders** aims to be climate adapted by 2050 through a detailed plan, involving several actions: creating a robust blue-green network of water and natural elements throughout the landscape; development of forests and green natural areas; water infiltration and buffering; prevention of soil erosion; sustainable agriculture; and education & awareness.

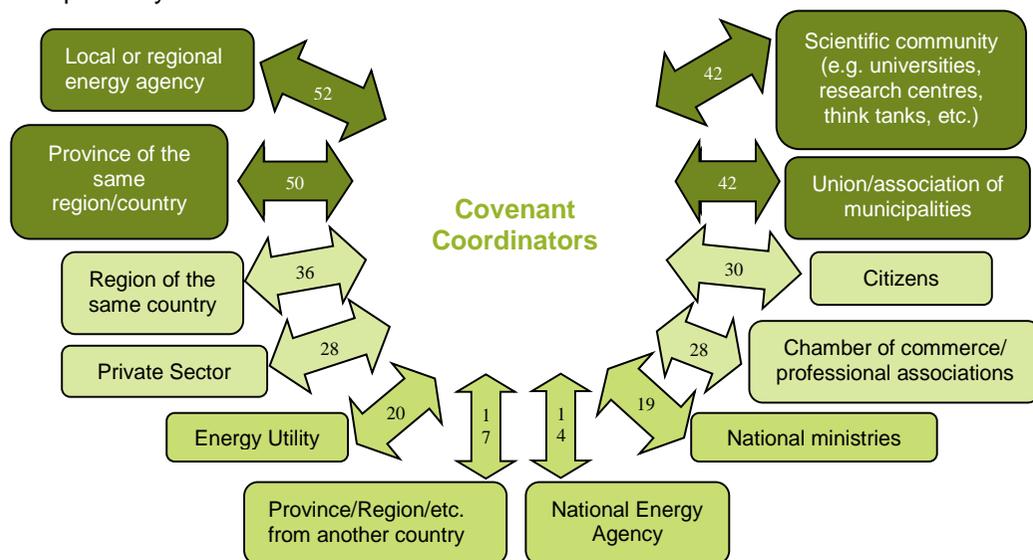
The **Province of Liege** has developed 'Climat-Energie', a climate adaptation plan that aims to reduce energy consumption of provincial infrastructure, whilst encouraging and supporting municipalities to carry out their own climate plan and vulnerability assessments.

## Multi-level governance and cooperation with other stakeholders



The following illustration demonstrates the numerous **interactions between Coordinators and other sub-national public authorities or stakeholders**

regarding the implementation of the Covenant in their territory. Notably, **52%** of respondents emphasised cooperation with **local or regional energy agencies**, while **50%** cooperate with a **province of the same region or county**. Cooperation with the **scientific community** as well as **unions/associations of municipalities**, is also recurrent, representative of **42%** of respondents, respectively.



Multiple selections were allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

### Examples



The **Region of Murcia** created a working group for the implementation of the Covenant. This group is composed of the following competent entities in local development, energy efficiency, climate change and economic development: Department of Energy, Industrial Activity and Mining; Department of Citizen Participation, European Union and Exterior Action; a Regional Observatory of Climate Change; and Public Authorities.

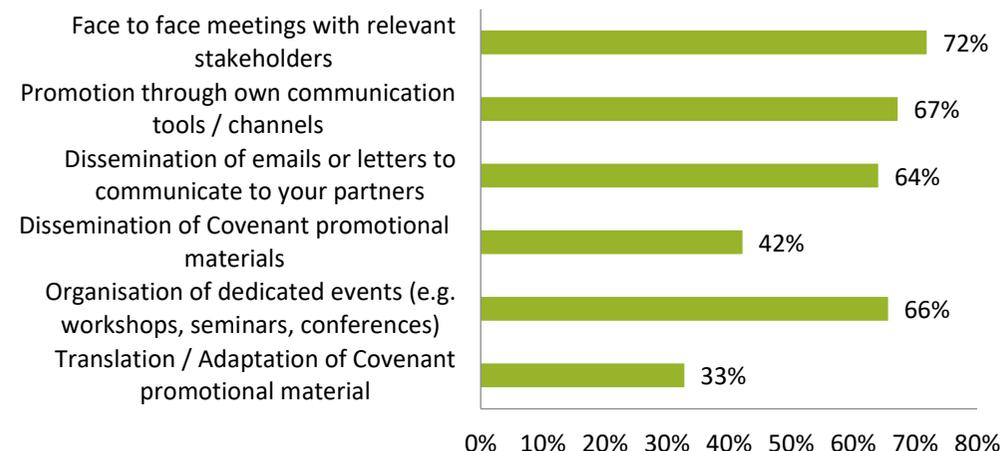
The **Città Metropolitana di Torino**, Italy, collaborated with energy data providers (energy distributors, manufacturers, etc.), as well as ESCOs and individual municipalities for the delivery of certain projects.



## Promotion of the Covenant of Mayors

Covenant Territorial Coordinators are very active in **promoting the initiative**.

More than **88%** of respondents selected 2 or more of the options below.



Multiple selection was allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

### Examples



The **Province of Luxemburg** undertook a number of promotional actions including meeting candidate municipalities (16) and explaining the benefits of joining the CoM, as well as disseminating leaflets at events and emphasising the potential for the territory to create renewable energy and energy savings. In several municipalities, conferences were given to inform citizens about the commitment of their local authorities to the CoM. In September 2016, the CTC created a new website to further promote the CoM and all the actions already taken by their associated municipalities, inviting others to join. Since they began their coordination efforts, a total of 26 municipalities officialised their CoM adhesion, and aim to get 9 more by the end of this year.

The **South Transdanubian Regional Development Agency**, Hungary, have embedded the communication of the advantages of the CoM within their conference presentations, focused on municipal energy management. During these events, they raise awareness of the SEAP and SECAP methodology, and encourage municipalities to join. Also, through a study for a proposal to the Danube Transnational Programme, they aim to better understand the obstacles municipalities face when implementing their SEAPs and continuously collect and exchange ideas with municipalities in doing so.

