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CoM East Newsletter 1st issue

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COVENANT OF MAYORS EAST LAUNCHING EVENT

Covenant of Mayors East launching event was successfully held in the city of Yerevan, Republic of Armenia, in the framework of 2-day High-level Conference: **Fostering Sustainable Development in Eastern Partnership Countries**. The event was officially inaugurated by high-level representatives from the European Commission, the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP) and the local government of the host city Yerevan on October 26 – 27, 2016. The event was attended by over 350 senior city officials, experts, mayors of the Covenant signatory cities and representatives of business communities.

Realising the capacities of local authorities

The welcome addressers emphasised the importance of local government and the value of the European Commission in supporting regional and local authorities of the Eastern Partnership countries, as well as in fostering regional cooperation and sharing experience among municipalities throughout the Eastern Partnership region. In particular, speakers praised local authorities' role in promoting decentralisation, institutional and legal reform and local sustainable development.



High-level Conference Fostering Sustainable Development in Eastern Partnership Countries

Efficient and effective local administrations play an important role in implementing real changes on the ground, making economies more resilient and improving the living conditions of citizens. The EU will continue to support Eastern Partnership countries in their efforts to strengthen local authorities' capacities in order to foster local sustainable development and economic growth, including the creation of new job opportunities at the local level.

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– Mr Lawrence Meredith, Director for Neighbourhood East, DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission.



The European Union realises that capacity of local authorities to be an effective development player also depends on the existence of an effective system of relations with other levels of governance and conducive national frameworks. Nonetheless, the local authorities are seen as important agents, who should have their own development agendas coherent with the national policies.

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– Mr Piotr Antoni Świtalski, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Head of EU Delegation to the Republic of Armenia.





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Press conference for national and international media



The working moments of the press conference

The press conference for the journalists from Armenia and other EaP countries was held on the 26th of October in the Marriott Hotel in Yerevan. The speakers at the press conference were: Mr Petr Osvald, Councillor of Plzen, Czech Republic, Member of the European Committee of the Regions and of CORLEAP, Mr Lawrence Meredith, Director for Neighbourhood East, DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission, Mr Davit Lokyan, Minister of Territorial Administration and Development of the Republic of Armenia, and Mr Piotr Antoni Świtalski, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Head of EU Delegation to the Republic of Armenia. The event gained a high interest from local and international media and was widely highlighted in Armenian and the Eastern Partnership countries' news.



The speakers of the press conference



The working moments of the press conference

NEW EUROPEAN UNION INITIATIVES

During the Conference, the European Commission launched two important initiatives in support to local authorities in the EaP countries: the new EU Mayors for Economic Growth (M4EG) initiative and the 2nd phase of the Covenant of Mayors East (CoM East) project, targeting the business sector and energy efficiency respectively.

COVENANT OF MAYORS EAST (COM EAST)

The project aims at introducing the EU climate and energy initiative to the EaP countries. In particular, CoM East supports local authorities in implementing sustainable energy policies, reducing their dependency on fossil fuels, improving the security of energy supply, and facilitates their contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation through the development and implementation of their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans.

MAYORS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH (M4EG)

The initiative aims at strengthening local authorities' capacity to implement smart local economic development through enhanced local governance, better planning and more efficient municipal management. The joining cities should develop and implement local sustainable economic development plans with technical assistance and scientific support from the EU.



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Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy CoM East

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SIGNING TO THE NEW COVENANT



The new Covenant's Signatories with recently received plaques

The EaP Signatories of the new Covenant of Mayors commit to:

- Reducing CO₂ (and possibly other greenhouse gas) emissions by at least 30% by 2030, namely through improved energy efficiency and greater use of renewable energy sources;
- Increasing its resilience by adapting to the impacts of climate change.

During the Conference, the European Commission hosted an official **signing ceremony** where the new Covenant of Mayors East was joined by 19 new cities in the region.



4 NEW SIGNATORIES



6 NEW SIGNATORIES



9 NEW SIGNATORIES

COVENANT OF MAYORS GOING EAST

The second day (October 27, 2016) of the Conference was entirely dedicated to **Covenant of Mayors East**.

The 2nd phase of the project will focus in particular on the implementation of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans and will assist in enhancing sustainability of the Covenant of Mayors initiative in the EaP countries.

During the various panels, participants shared experiences and success stories focusing especially on promoting energy efficiency and innovative sustainable energy solutions in the fields of urban transport, thermal rehabilitation of buildings, street lighting and district heating within the **Covenant of Mayors Demonstration Projects (CoM-DeP)**.



The discussion panel on energy efficiency and innovative sustainable energy solutions

To learn more about CoM-DeP, please visit:

<http://com-dep.enefcities.org.ua>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBdDSw8_AhA





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Media briefing

At the **media briefing** on the new Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in the EaP region, the media representatives from Armenia and other EaP countries learned about the new Covenant's aims and objectives. In particular, in the areas of energy efficiency and energy saving, climate change adaptation and Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan development.



Media briefing on the new Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in the EaP region



Ms Viola Calabrese, DG NEAR Programme Manager, and Mr Mathieu Bousquet, Head of Unit Georgia, Moldova & Neighbourhood Cross-Border Cooperation DG NEAR

New Call for Proposals

The Conference concluded with the DG NEAR and CoM East team presenting the upcoming 2017 Call for Proposals. The speakers clarified that a strict selection will be applied in order to support only those projects that could serve as models for other cities in the future. DG NEAR and CoM East team also encouraged cities to form partnerships and develop stronger and more innovative project ideas to better attract IFIs investments.



Conference's working moments

For more photographs from the event, please visit:



The Project is implemented by the Energy Cities-led Consortium:

