



Energy Transition: local players a driving force for growth

Brussels, 8 October 2014. EU decision-makers and energy specialists came together this afternoon in Brussels on the occasion of the event “Energy Transition – Engine of Growth in Europe’s Regions?”. Co-organised by three key players in the field (GIZ, CEDEC and Energy Cities), as part of the OPEN DAYS 2014, the event aimed to raise awareness on the importance of local players in developing and implementing new energy strategies based on the transition towards a sustainable energy era.

Through four case studies, participants learned about how cities and companies from all over Europe are addressing current energy challenges and are seizing the opportunities that the energy transition brings.

In this vein, **Gert de Block**, Secretary General of CEDEC, explained *“the examples discussed show that local integrated utilities can contribute to the transition towards a sustainable energy generation and distribution with innovative solutions. Due to their local character, they can make use of synergies and contribute to value creation in cities and regions. These can then benefit their shareholders, the European citizens.”*

The panellists also raised key points on the topic and urged for wider involvement. *“Adequate legislative and financial frameworks supported by the EU and national institutions would make our journey easier and faster,”* said **Bo Frank**, Mayor of Växjö and Vice-President of Energy Cities. He presented the successful case of Växjö (Sweden), a city *“determined to become fossil-fuel free by 2030”* and where *“the energy transition has provided a major boost to the local economy, mobilising all stakeholders and getting citizens inspired”*.

The event made clear that the energy transition at local and regional level is a reality and can have a positive impact not only on the environment but also on citizens’ lives. *“Our experience has shown that the ongoing energy system transformation can be a driver of employment, innovation and growth, especially for the regions. Cooperation between regions and across national borders is a key to success. Not only because everybody must do their bit, but also because there is so much that we can learn from one another,”* said **Tanja Gönner**, Chair of the GIZ Management Board.

Background information

CEDEC

CEDEC represents the interests of more than 1500 local and regional energy companies from ten European countries, with a turnover of more than 120 billion Euros, serving 85 million electricity and gas customers & connections, with more than 350.000 employees.

These predominantly medium-sized local and regional energy companies have developed activities as electricity and heat generators, electricity and gas distribution grid & metering operators and energy (services) suppliers.

The wide range of services provided by local utility companies is reliable, sustainable and close to the consumer. Through their high investments, they make a significant contribution to local and regional economic development.

<http://www.cedec.com/>

On Twitter: @CEDEC_EU

GIZ

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a German federal enterprise with operations around the globe. It supports the German Government in the fields of international cooperation for sustainable development and international education. GIZ also operates on behalf of public and private sector clients in Germany and abroad such as European Union Institutions, the United Nations and the World Bank.

GIZ supports people and societies in shaping their own futures and improving their living condition, operating in more than 130 countries worldwide and in many fields: climate change mitigation, environmental protection and resource conservation; economic development and employment promotion; governance and democracy; food security, health and basic education.

www.giz.de/en/

On Twitter: @giz_gmbh

Energy Cities

Energy Cities with over 1000 local authorities from 30 countries aims to accelerate the energy transition at the local level. This European network notably provides its members with guidance for building their energy transition strategy, offers them information on financial and technical assistance opportunities and gives them access to a myriad of good practices and innovative working methods.

www.energy-cities.eu

On Twitter: @energycities