Coordinators: Crucial contributors to the Covenant of Mayors success

Report on the activities of Covenant Coordinators
2011 – 2012

Covenant Coordinators are those public administrations which provide strategic guidance, financial and technical support to municipalities signing up to the Covenant of Mayors but lacking necessary skills and/or resources to fulfil their commitments.

One of the commitments in the agreement signed between Covenant Coordinators and the European Commission is to "report regularly to DG ENER of the European Union Commission on the results obtained" in their geographical area.

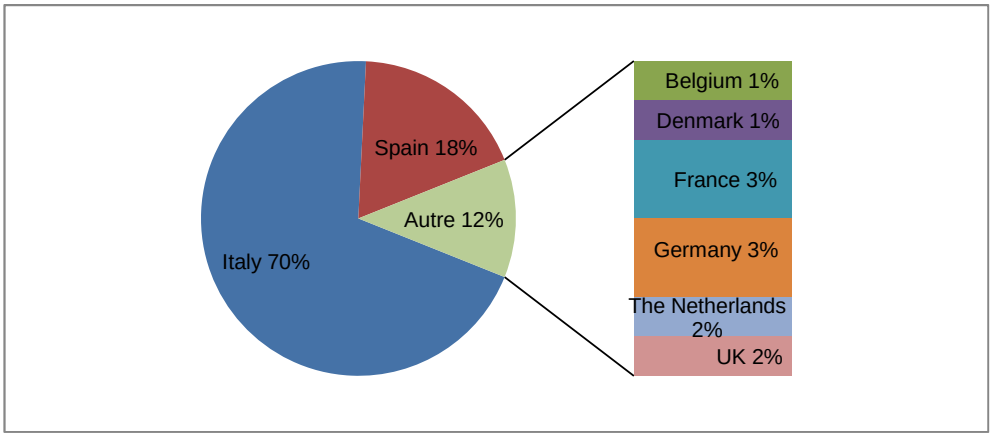
This reporting exercise was launched in the spring 2012 and targeted the 81 Covenant Coordinators which signed the Covenant of Mayors before May 2011.[1] In total, **67 responses** to the questionnaire developed by the Covenant of Mayors Office were received (i.e. **participation rate of 83%)**.[2]

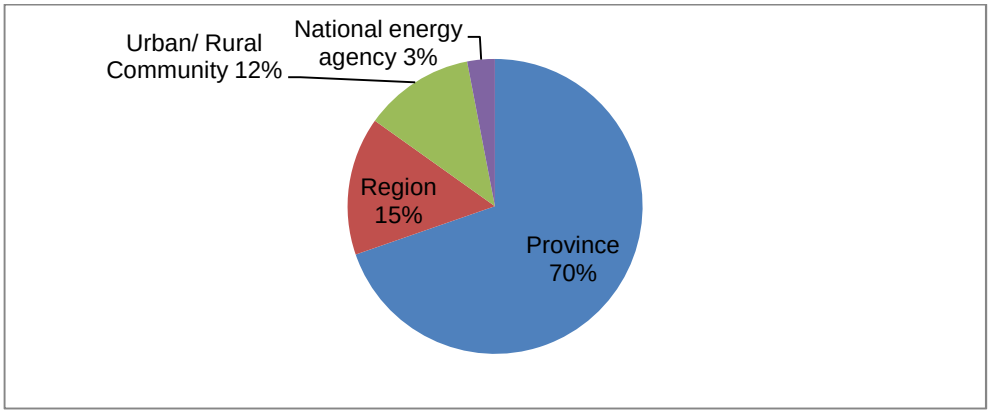
This report provides an overview of the activities performed by Covenant Coordinators in the framework of the contract they have signed with the European Commission. The first section outlines the main results of the questionnaire. The second focuses on the key messages derived from the survey.

[1] As of December 2012, 111 Coordinators are participating in the Covenant.
[2] Covenant Coordinators having failed to report on their activities have been temporarily unpublished from the Covenant website.

I – Implementation of the Covenant Coordinators' commitments

1. Geographical distribution and type of structure





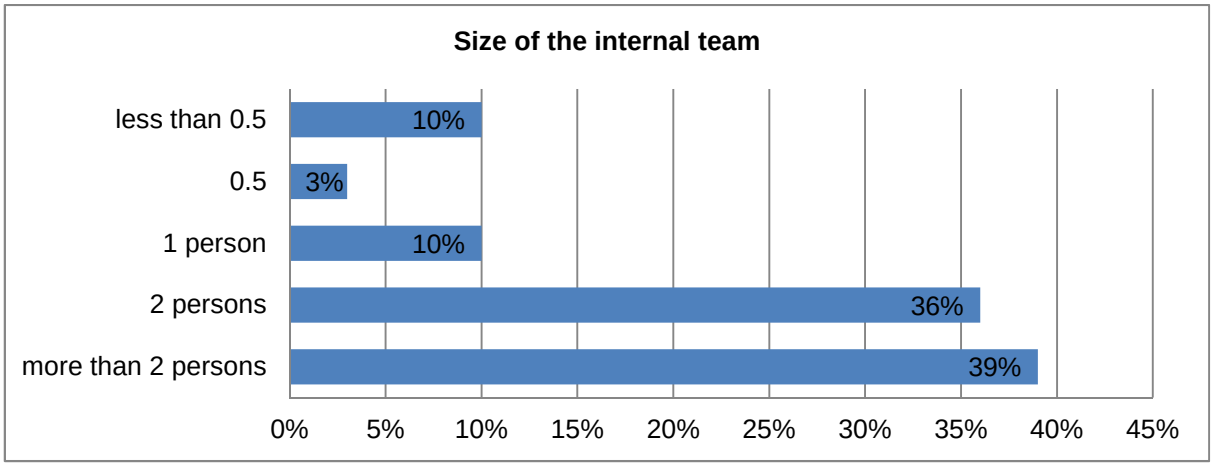
70% of Covenant Coordinators are located in Italy, 18% in Spain. This very much explains the impact (in terms of number of signatories) of the Covenant of Mayors in these two countries. By December 2012, the Covenant included 2299 signatories from Italy and 1196 from Spain, accounting for 75% of the total number.

As regards the type of Covenant Coordinators, it should be noted that while 70% are Provinces, the Covenant of Mayors Office has observed a growing interest from urban and rural groupings of local authorities. Regions also play a crucial role in the initiative.

2. Human resources

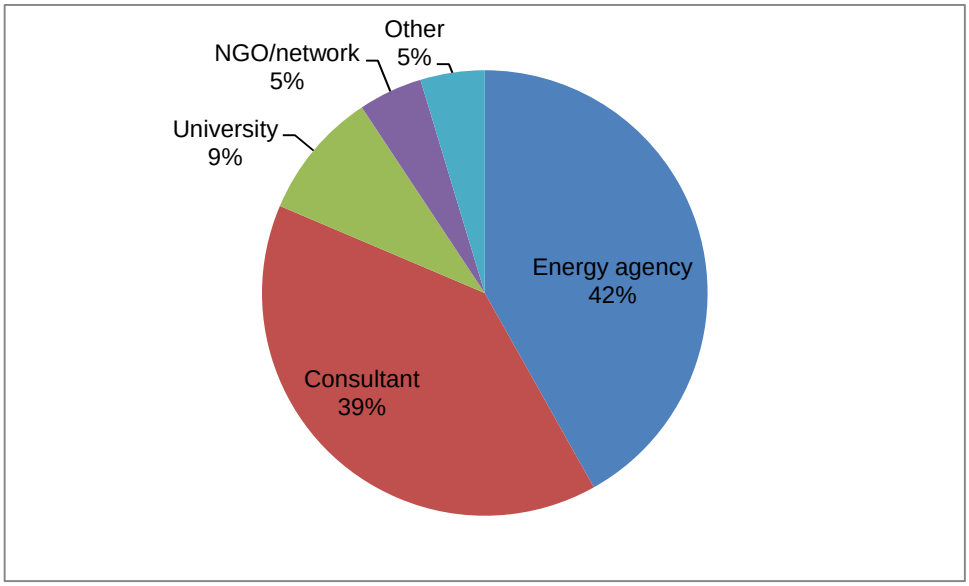
Internal team

The great majority of respondent Coordinators (75%) allocate at least two staff members to Covenant of Mayors activities or the implementation of sustainable energy policies. 37% of the total allocate over two people.



External staff contracted

In cases where **external staff** is contracted by Covenant Coordinators (60% of the cases), the below chart shows the type of organisation they work for. In some cases for a single Covenant Coordinator, several organisations might have been contracted.

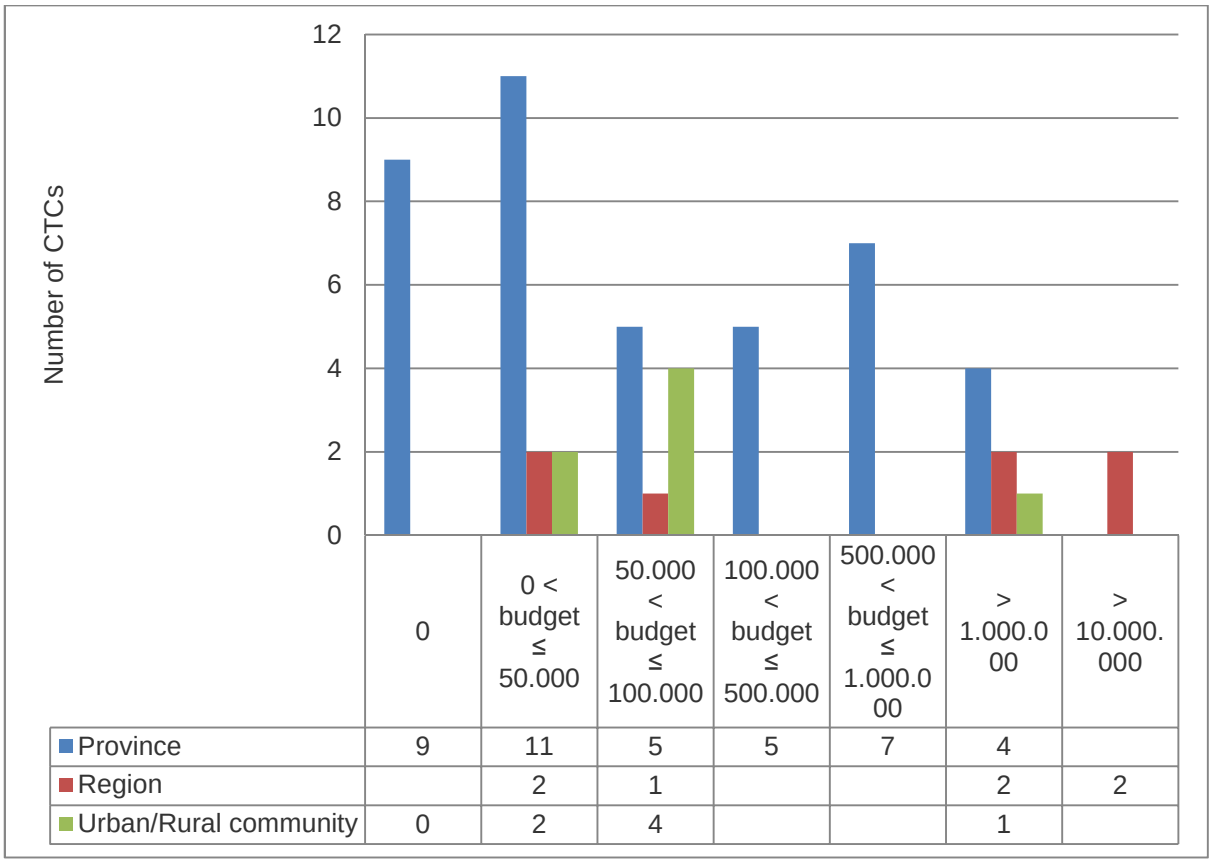


Local and Regional Energy Agencies (LAREAs) are the obvious key allies of Covenant Coordinators. 42% of Coordinators rely on an energy agency for the Covenant implementation.
Private Consultants are also very much mobilized with 39% of Coordinators using their services in the framework of the Covenant. Universities only make up 9% of the total although their potential for support is strategic.

3. Financial resources

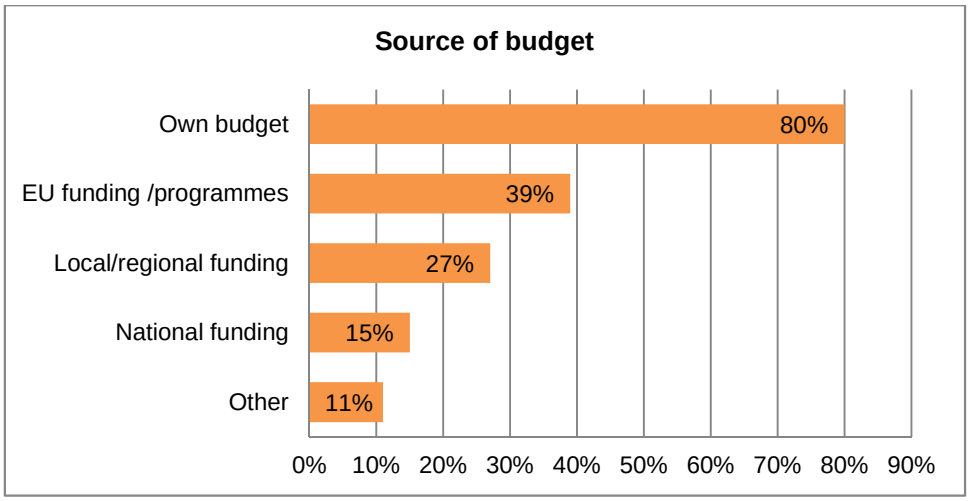
Overall budget

Overall budget (in Euros) allocated per year to the implementation of the Covenant of Mayors per type of Coordinator (e.g. development and implementation of sustainable energy measures / action plans, promotional activities...)



	0	0 < budget ≤ 50.000	50.000 < budget ≤ 100.000	100.000 < budget ≤ 500.000	500.000 < budget ≤ 1.000.000	> 1.000.000	> 10.000.000
Province	9	11	5	5	7	4	
Region		2	1			2	2
Urban/Rural community	0	2	4			1	

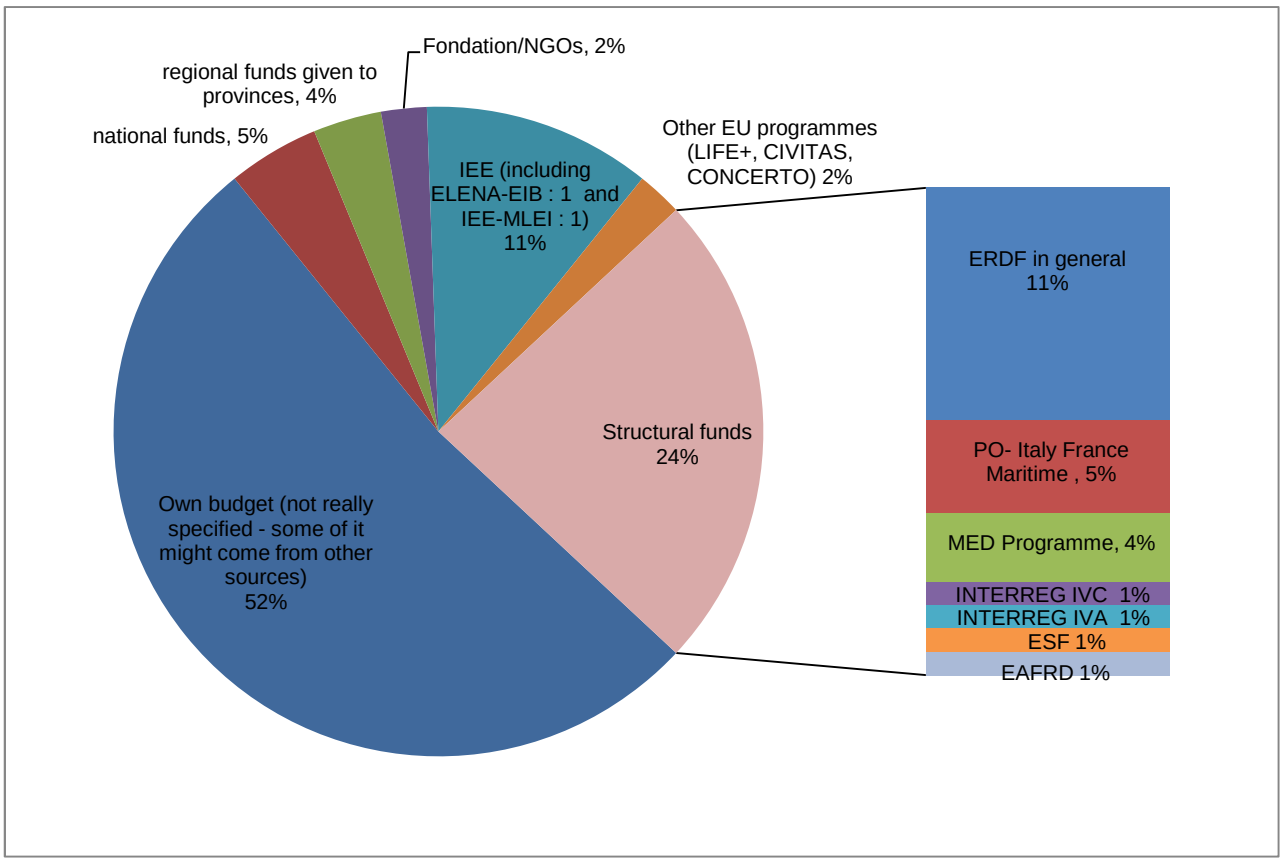
Budget sources



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

80% of respondents allocate part of their own budget to the development of the Covenant policies. 39% of the respondent Coordinators use EU funding while 15% rely on national funds.

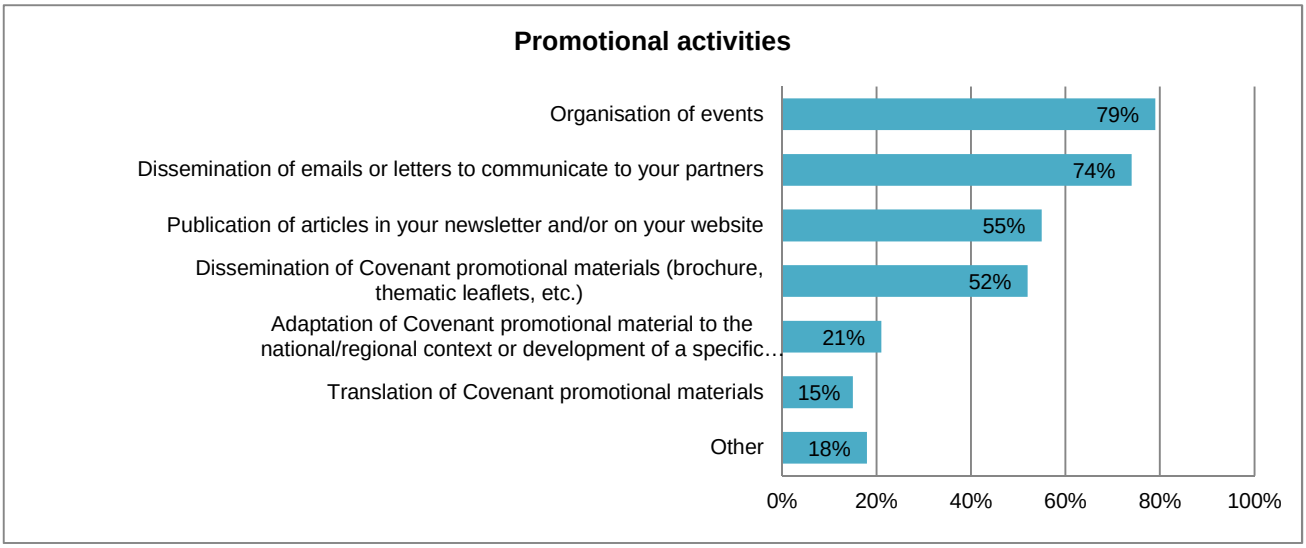
The budget allocated to Covenant-related activities by respondent Coordinators also come from various other sources. Here below are presented some more information given by the Covenant Coordinators regarding **budget sources**:



4. Promotion of the Covenant of Mayors

Coordinators commit to promoting the initiative to local authorities within their territory and are also invited to raise the awareness of other stakeholders to get them on-board.

Promotional activities



5. Overall coordination and administrative interface with the Covenant of Mayors Office

Coordinators play a crucial role in interfacing between the Covenant of Mayors and the Signatories for administrative matters such as the adhesion, SEAP submission, etc. To formalize this cooperation, 41% of the respondent Coordinators have signed an agreement with Signatories.

Agreement signed with other public authorities on the Covenant of Mayors

The below graph provides an idea of the multi-level governance dimension of the Covenant of Mayors, as it shows the numerous agreements signed between respondent Coordinators and other sub-national public authorities regarding the implementation of the Covenant in their territory.

Types of agreement signed	Number of Coordinators
Province signing an agreement to support all or some of the municipalities to develop the SEAPs	8
Province - region	8
Province - energy agency	1
Union of municipalities – province	2
Region – province (+association of municipalities)	2
Province - association of municipalities	2
Province – university	3
Province - other province	1
Province - energy utility	1
Province - chamber of commerce, professional associations…	2
Province – National Energy Agency	2

The answers reported here refer to formal agreements. The questionnaires show that there are several more informal cooperation initiatives than the official ones.
The most frequent types of agreements have been signed between provinces and municipalities and between provinces and regions.

6. Support to signatories

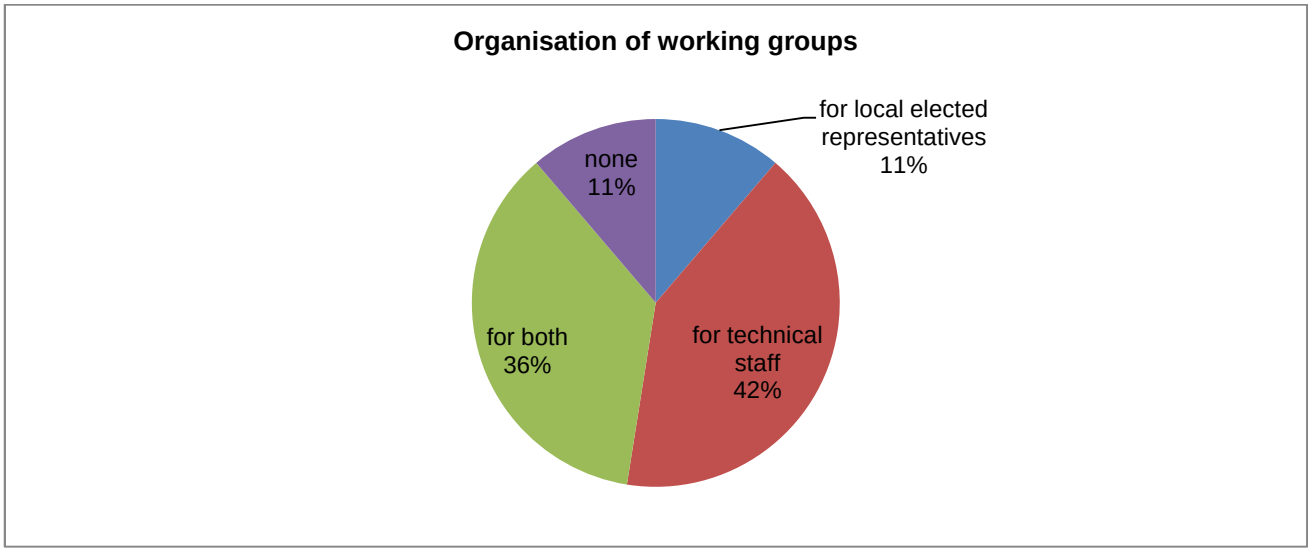
47% of the respondent Covenant Coordinators complete their signatories' profiles.
In cases where the Coordinator manages the profiles of its associated signatories, the types of tasks performed by the coordinator are listed below.

Administrative information (Contact details..)	28	90%
Technical information (SEAP template)	18	58%
Promotional information (Benchmarks of Excellence, Energy Days)	10	32%

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

It is interesting to notice that 58% of respondents are in charge of submitting the SEAP templates of their associated Signatories on the Extranet.

To support Signatories in their commitments, 71% Coordinators organise working groups to build local capacities and foster exchanges of experience.



7. Baseline Emission Inventory (BEI) and Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP)

Coordinators have a crucial role to play in helping Signatories developing their SEAPs by providing methodological and technical support.

According to **64%** of respondent Coordinators, associated Signatories all use the same tool when developing **their Baseline Emission Inventory** (BEI).
According to **68%** of respondent Coordinators, associated Signatories all use the same tool/methodology when developing their **Sustainable Energy Action Plan** (SEAP).

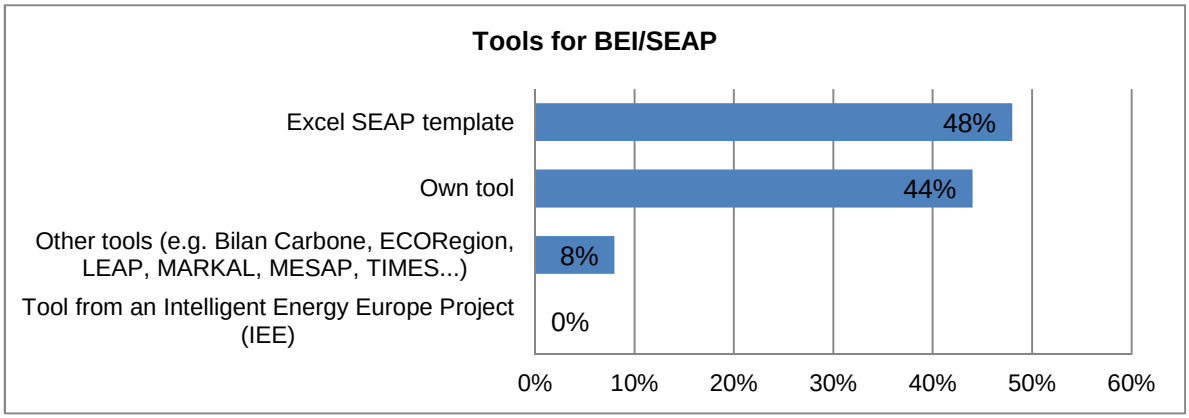
The use of a similar methodology by Signatories supported by the same Coordinator has brought the European Commission to suggest the "**grouped SEAP analysis**" approach. Using this method, the Joint Research Centre only analyses a representative sample of SEAPs from municipalities supported by the same Coordinator and entrusts the latter with the responsibility of communicating one single feedback report to the larger group of municipalities having submitted their SEAP.

Human resources mobilised to assist the signatories in developing their BEIs / SEAPs

In-house staff	62%
Contracting of an Energy Agency	24%
Contracting of external consultants	50%
None	6%
Other	17%

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

Tools used by signatories when developing their BEI/SEAP



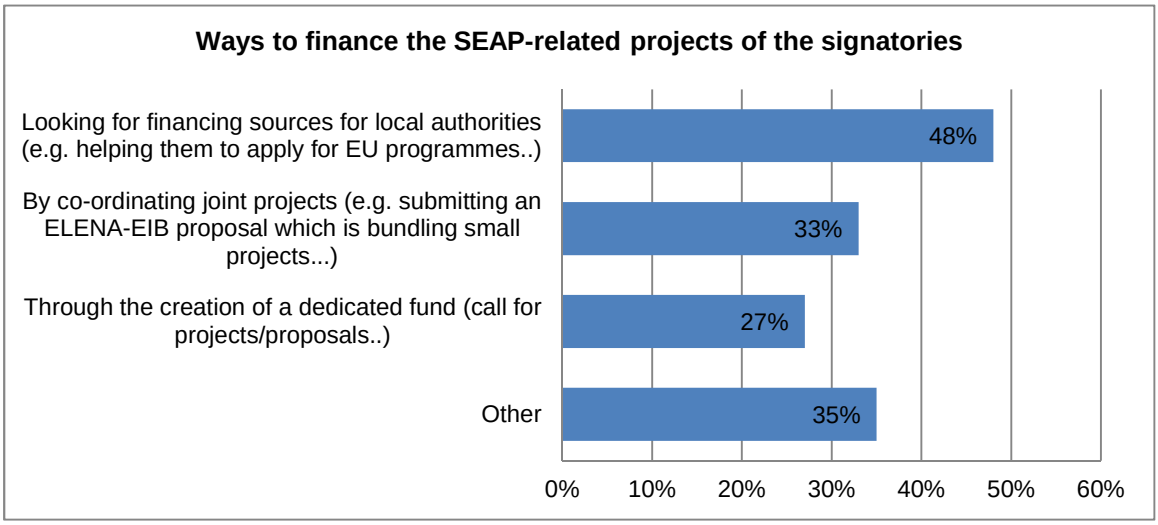
48% of respondent Coordinators use the Covenant of Mayors methodology while 44% have developed their own tool.
The other tools mentioned are:

- ECORegion
- R3 EcoGIS
- Bilan Carbone

SEAP implementation

Financial support for the implementation of SEAPs is paramount and Covenant Coordinators use it in different ways:

Ways to finance the SEAP-related projects of the signatories



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SEAP monitoring

The Joint Research Centre together with the Covenant of Mayors Office and the group of practitioners (experts from public authorities involved as Covenant Signatories and Coordinators) are currently developing the guidelines that will be used to monitor the SEAP implementation process. In parallel to this process, **20% of the coordinators have taken the initiative to develop their own monitoring system.**

8. Use of the support provided by the Covenant of Mayors Office

Attendance of Coordinator to the events organised by the Covenant of Mayors Office (CoMO)

Annual Ceremony (2010 and/or 2011)	45%
Thematic Workshops organised in Brussels (during EUSEW, Open Days, ...)	33%
Online Webinars (EIB, IEE-MLEI, EEE-F)...	29%
Not yet but planning to attend one in the future	32%
Other	5%

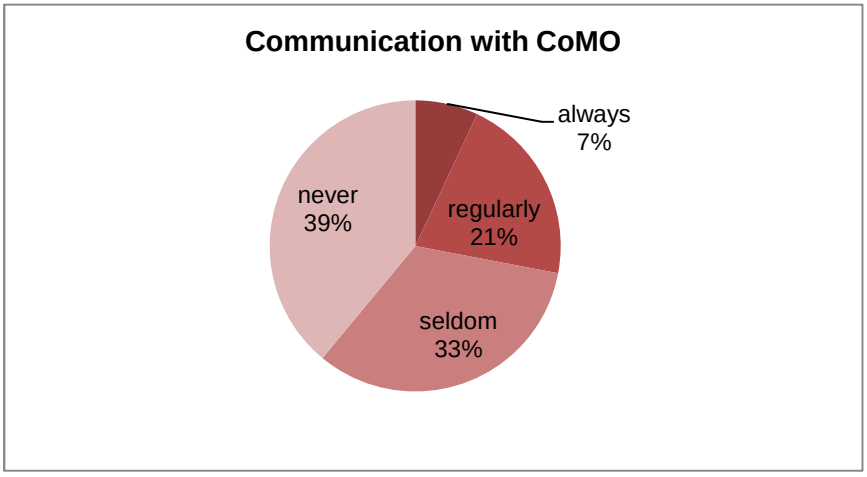
Multiple selection was allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

The annual Ceremony is the event most frequently attended.

Communication with the Covenant of Mayors Office

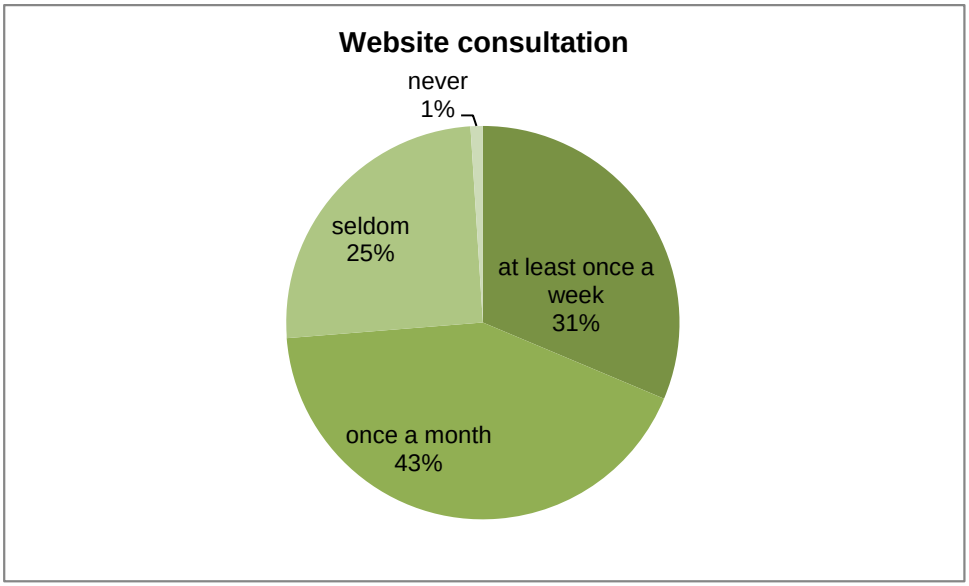
Covenant Coordinators regularly send information to the Covenant of Mayors Office for the promotion of the Covenant-related activities taking place on their territory.

39% of the respondent Coordinators fail to communicate with the CoMO on their actions, wasting opportunities for exchanging good practices and getting large-scale visibility through the various Covenant of Mayors online and printed platforms (news portal, interviews, case studies, publications, etc.).



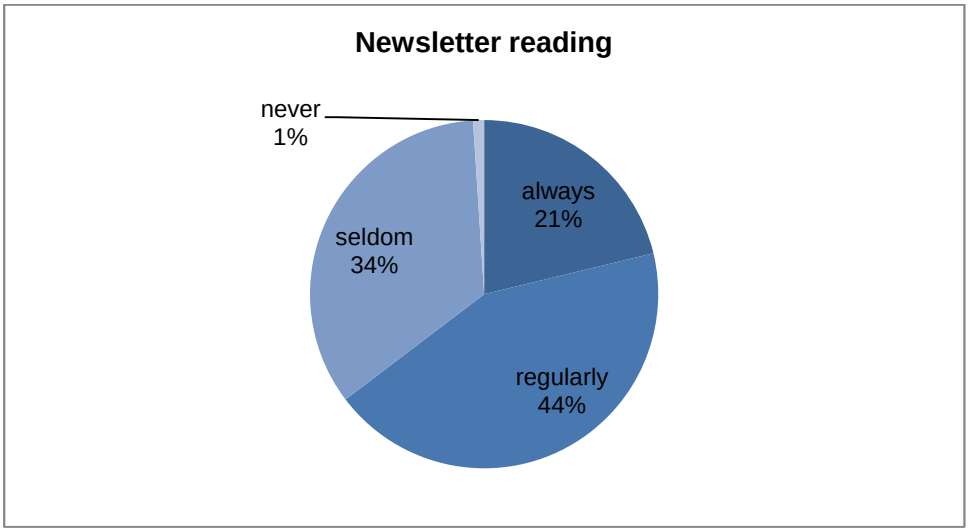
Regular consultation of the Covenant website

The majority of respondents (73%) consult the Covenant webpage at least once per month.



Regular reading of the Covenant of Mayors monthly newsletter

64% of the respondent Coordinators read the Covenant monthly newsletter at least regularly.



II – What can be drawn from this survey?

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

Provinces, regions and other Covenant Coordinators are key to the success of the initiative, notably thanks to the promotion they make in their territory, increasing the Covenant of Mayors Office capacities by providing decentralised support on the ground and ensuring tailored interaction with thousands of signatories. The support provided to

signatories includes technical assistance for example through the organisation of dedicated workshops or the development of SEAP-related tools and methodologies.

In addition, Covenant Coordinators play the crucial role of mobilising other stakeholders - such as energy agencies, private companies and universities - which can bring customized expertise to local authorities.

Signatories' access to funding sources is also facilitated by Coordinators which often act as structural funds managing authorities 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.