



Press Release

**While nations talk in Copenhagen, regions act in Ploiești**

*Prahova (RO), 4 December 2009*

The third energy audit of the MORE4NRG project was carried out this week in the region of Prahova (R). Over the last few days, experts from Valencia (E) and Lazio (I), along with AER representatives, advised county authorities on tackling climate change and meeting sustainable energy needs with the establishment of a reliable, comprehensive and dynamic energy strategy.

Sunshine and hydro-resources can provide an abundance of green energy in Prahova. The region is beginning to capture some of this potential; but it still encounters myriad difficulties when it comes to introducing renewable energy source (RES) technologies. Some successful projects – such as the PV central station in the town of Cornu and the Florești gym equipped with solar roof panels – are already in place. But there is still no coherent legal framework to promote investment in the sector of clean energy. Weak support mechanisms, long payback periods, grid connection and energy conservation problems were some of the issues analysed by the expert team.

*“A regional strategy would set out a new vision for the smarter use of energy in our region”, says **Ludmila Sfirloaga**, President of the Chamber of Regions of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE-Council of Europe), elected councillor from the Prahova county and member of the MORE4NRG Monitoring Board. “This is a challenging target but its achievement will bring wide-ranging benefits to our territory. Deploying renewable energy will help us maximise not only the environmental benefits but also the social and economic ones”.*

*“There is of course no one-size-fits-all energy strategy”, explains **Joaquin Ortola** from the Valencia Energy Agency (AVEN) and member of the expert team. “The content of each energy strategy varies according to regional particularities. That is why we came to Prahova. We would like to get better insight into its current energy situation. It is of crucial importance to understand how energy is used in the county, and to identify key regional stakeholders that are concerned with the issue of energy and who should be involved in drafting such a document. As energy is a cross-cutting issue, all kinds of actors must take part in the consultation procedure so that we make the right connections between energy and other key policy areas. We expect our peer review to catalyse regional corporate commitment to taking the strategy forward.”*

Together with members of the Ploiești energy agency (which was set up under the Intelligent Energy Europe program), MORE4NRG experts visited several regional solar power installations and small hydropower plants. They also interviewed representatives of government, academia, environmental NGOs, the chamber of commerce, energy providers and local investors.

*“We hope that our suggestions will help Prahova deliver a successful energy strategy. This document should be quickly supported by an appropriate action plan and regularly updated so that it rightly depicts fluctuating trends of the energy market”*, concludes **Giuseppa Bruschi**, department director for the region of Lazio.

The report outlining the peer review team’s conclusions should be published by the end of January 2010.

### **AER Peer reviews**

Made up of international experts from MORE4NRG member regions, the peer review team conducts a four-day visit to assess the performance of a host region’s energy policies. Through a series of field inspections and meetings with energy stakeholders from both public and private sectors, the team investigates the legal, technological, financial and environmental factors that may affect the sustainable development of the host region’s energy strategy.

*The **Assembly of European Regions (AER)** is the largest independent network of regions in wider Europe. Bringing together more than 270 regions from 33 countries and 16 interregional organisations, AER is the political voice of its members and a forum for interregional co-operation.*

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