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CORDIS Results Pack on

local clean energy transition

A thematic collection of innovative EU-funded research results

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Local authorities leading the way towards decarbonising Europe

Research and Innovation

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Editorial

With 75 % of EU citizens living in cities, urban initiatives play a pivotal role in achieving the European Green Deal's goal of climate neutrality by 2050. The 14 projects in this Results Pack support regions, cities and municipalities across Europe to develop and realise their clean energy transition goals.

At a global level, cities consume over 65 % of the world's energy and account for more than 70 % of global CO_2 emissions. Helping cities reduce reliance on fossil fuels and become more energy efficient will curb harmful emissions and lead to cleaner air, safer transport and less congestion and noise for their citizens. With the energy price crisis – following the invasion of Russia in Ukraine – implementing more ambitious clean energy and energy efficiency goals is more important than ever.

The European Commission has put forward the REPowerEU plan to achieve further energy savings, diversification of energy supplies, and accelerated roll-out of renewable energy to replace fossil fuels in homes, industry and power generation. In this context, cities and regions can be pioneers in accelerating the clean energy transition by rolling out energy efficiency and renewable energy measures, mainstreaming clean energy policies into their planning mechanisms and attracting investments that will support them in implementing their plans.

As the level of governance that is closest to citizens, municipalities and local authorities play a pivotal role in the clean energy transition. For the move to a more carbon neutral society to be sustainable and inclusive, local actors must have the knowledge and resources to reduce emissions and implement sustainable solutions.

Initiatives and funding support for cities

Several initiatives and funding opportunities exist at the European level to help cities achieve their clean energy transition goals and provide more sustainable services for their citizens.

The Horizon 2020 Energy Efficiency programme (2014-2020) and its successor, the LIFE Clean Energy Transition programme (2021-2027), provide funding for a wide range of activities towards an energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and resilient economy. Many of those actions target the local and regional levels across the European Union, working on long-term energy planning, deep capacity building, support to the EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, mobilising investment, alleviating energy poverty, changing markets and regulations, and much more.

The European Commission's Cities Mission is working with local and regional authorities, citizens, businesses and investors to deliver 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030. Several calls from the Horizon Europe programme support this important goal. These cities will act as experimentation and innovation hubs to inspire and enable all European cities to follow suit by 2050.

The projects in this Results Pack highlight activities that support cities with shorter-term implementation as well as long-term goals and ambitions for their clean energy transition. The aim is to accelerate adoption of energy efficiency measures, deployment of clean energy solutions and overall reduction of the CO_2 emissions at the local level.

Fourteen projects targeting the local level

In cities, buildings are among the largest emitters of CO_2. The RenoBooster and PadovaFIT Expanded projects developed a one-stop shop for the refurbishment of private residential buildings in Vienna, Austria, and Padua, Italy, respectively. Also focusing on renovation of buildings, BUILD UPON2 developed an impact framework that paves the way towards a harmonised monitoring of local and national retrofitting activities.

Old heating and cooling systems in buildings are also a major climate change culprit. The DecarbCityPipes 2050 project provides seven cities with the skills and knowledge needed to decarbonise heating and cooling in buildings by 2050. PRODESA helped municipalities in Athens, Greece, undertake energy efficiency improvements in public buildings, while SURE2050 put forward a real estate management strategy to make public buildings in Flanders, Belgium, more climate neutral.

Through round-tables, meetings and workshops, C-Track 50 mobilised and supported public authorities at the local and regional levels, enabling them to develop, fund and implement new or improved Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs), while CEESEU brings together 11 partners from 10 Central and Eastern European countries to build the capacity of public administrations to develop SECAPs.

IMPLEMENT introduced the European Energy Award (eea) quality management and certification system in four partner countries to improve their energy and climate policy measures. In a similar vein, CoME EASY linked and synthesised the many available instruments and tools supporting local authorities, in particular the Covenant of Mayors and the eea.

To help European municipal energy innovators take the first steps in the green transition, mPOWER and MULTIPLY developed peer-to-peer learning programmes, with the latter encouraging local authorities to take up integrated urban planning measures at district level.

Mobilisation of private sources is crucial for putting all of Europe on the path to energy transition. EUCF helps municipalities and local authorities mobilise funding to realise their ambitious energy and climate plans while ManagEnergy aimed to make local and regional energy agencies leaders in the energy transition and to increase sustainable energy investments in Europe.

Vienna thrusts building renovation to centre stage

An EU initiative offers integrated services to strengthen the renovation rate in Vienna, a city hosting an impressive number of century-old buildings needing costly renovation.

Cities are growing. Around 2.5 billion more people will be living in cities by 2050. According to estimates, cities are also responsible for 75 % of global CO_2 emissions, with transport and buildings being among the largest contributors.

Vienna has long been working on sustainable urban development. In 2014, Vienna's city council adopted the Smart City Wien Framework Strategy, a comprehensive blueprint for developing effective responses to climate change, including radical resource preservation, productive use of new technologies and improvements in quality of life.

The strategy was updated in 2019 to incorporate the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to reflect the increased urgency of addressing climate change. As part of this strategy, the city has committed itself to reducing the energy consumption and water heating of the Viennese buildings by 1 % per person and year.

"With a large share of municipal, communal and private multi-storey buildings in need of renovation, as well as the highest share of buildings built before 1919, Vienna's building stock differs significantly from those in other Austrian provinces," notes Bojan Schnabl, coordinator of the EU-funded RenoBooster project.

Accelerating energy renovation in buildings

"RenoBooster is mustering a tailored and timely response to boost the renovation rate in Vienna. Pooling institutional, technical and social expertise led by the City of Vienna, the project offers a variety of targeted services inspired by already existing one-stop shops in EU Member States," adds Schnabl.

One-stop shops are a collective term for services offering integrated renovation solutions to facilitate the renovation process for homeowners. One such initiative that kicked off in 2020 is Save the Homes.

"RenoBooster's single service point for the refurbishment of private residential buildings – Smart Renovation Hub – aims to facilitate access to information on housing renovation and refurbishment and is continuously expanding its services range towards this purpose," remarks Schnabl.

RenoBooster's single service point for the refurbishment of private residential buildings – Smart Renovation Hub – aims to facilitate access to information on housing renovation and refurbishment and is continuously expanding its services range towards this purpose.

RenoBooster brings together all key stakeholders and combines all necessary services – from consulting and banking to the technical and legal framework. It allows testing and development of targeted packages involving new technologies, ecological and economical solutions.

A set of standardised services

"The Smart Renovation Hub has elaborated three standardised counselling services: basic (renovation counselling), advanced (site visit with a contractor), and targeted (elaboration of a funded renovation concept)," explains Schnabl.

During the first 3 years of the project, the number of counselling requests was around 80 to 100 per month, but from early 2022, it rose to 370. Topics mainly included replacement of heat exchangers (54 %), queries about funds and subsidies (19 %), thermal renovation measures (18 %) and elaboration of funded renovation concepts (5 %).

To ensure high-quality renovation, the services are complemented and supported by a quality network of service providers covering planning, financing and implementation of renovation work.

How renovation benefits homeowners and the environment

The Smart Renovation Hub offers integrated home renovation services along the whole costumer journey, especially for homeowners. So far, the services have targeted two-unit properties (52 %), condominiums (33 %) and rented multi-storey buildings (14 %).

"Over the next 5 years, the integrated services offered by the Smart Renovation Hub are expected to boost the renovation rate and quality in Vienna. Overall, they are slated to drive investments of EUR 110 million and produce 5.5 GWh per year of primary energy savings and a reduction of 1 000 tonnes of CO_2 emissions per year," Schnabl concludes.

PROJECT
RenoBooster - the Smart Renovation Hub Vienna

COORDINATED BY
Stadt Wien, Austria

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/847029

PROJECT WEBSITE
socialhousing.wien/best-practice/rehabilitation-modernisation-and-safety/renobooster

A new hub to foster energy renovation of buildings

Renovation of existing buildings is a significant milestone in our transition to an energy-efficient society. A new initiative helps coordinate house owners on the demand side and businesses, engineers and consultants on the supply side.

Cities only cover 4 % of the EU's land surface, but their carbon footprint is huge. Cooling and heating in buildings account for nearly 50 % of the EU's annual energy consumption. Reducing the energy consumption of existing buildings is thus critical to the fight against climate change.

A one-stop shop for promoting awareness, networking and demand

EU Missions aim to bring concrete solutions to urban climate change. Involving local authorities, citizens, businesses and investors, as well as regional and national authorities, they will deliver 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030.

The Municipality of Padua, lead partner of the EU-funded PadovaFIT Expanded project, was recently included amongst the 100 cities that will benefit from this R&I programme.

"With the aid of PadovaFIT Expanded, Padua has piloted a one-stop shop solution dedicated to home renovation services. This operational tool will boost the energy upgrade rate of the city's private building stock," notes project coordinator Giovanni Vicentini.

The concept builds on the successful operation of similar one-stop shops in Europe, such as HIROSS4all in Spain, motivating and supporting homeowners as well as professionals, companies and financial institutions to invest in energy efficiency. Owing to their holistic approach, one-stop shops seem to have the highest potential to bring together all players involved in the renovation sector.

Key factors leading to creation of a one-stop shop

The one-stop shop operating in Padua is part of a small group of one-stop shops driven by public authorities.

With the aid of PadovaFIT Expanded, Padua has piloted a one-stop shop solution dedicated to home renovation services. This operational tool will boost the energy upgrade rate of the city's public and private building stock.

"Municipalities could mobilise investment in the energy-efficient renovation of the building stock and define a regulatory framework to accelerate the process. However, they often lack the competence level and resources to provide renovation services to homeowners," explains Vicentini.

After the COVID-19 outbreak, the Italian government adopted a regulatory framework that favoured the refurbishment of residential buildings. Homeowners received a tax reduction equal to 110 % of the expenses incurred on specific energy redevelopment works.

Despite the success of the initiative, a large number of buildings, such as those located in the historic centre or poor neighbourhoods, did not derive any benefit. Furthermore, this financial support mechanism disrupted the local market, leading to increases in the prices of building components or consulting services.

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"This underlined the need to offer integrated and dedicated solutions to specific categories of vulnerable citizens or specific urban areas," notes Vicentini. Project partners started with a simplified model that exclusively provides information services through the Energy Saving Desk. So far, more than 15 000 citizens have directly used this service.

"In 2022, the City of Padua, supported by project partners and the expertise of the Energy Saving Desk, activated major investments in the energy renovation of more than 550 housing units for vulnerable families," remarks Vicentini. The initiative involved public-private partnerships, including technical and financial private experts in the consortium.

A paradigm shift to the energy-efficient upgrade of buildings

PadovaFIT Expanded is encouraging the replication of its model in other Italian cities. The municipality has assumed a promoter role in the activation of a national network of one-stop shops and is providing support services to other local authorities in Italy. The project has also motivated the creation and set-up of new one-stop shops in Bulgaria and Romania.

"Through PadovaFIT Expanded, we wanted to define ways to make the one-stop shop a factor that influences change in the renovation market rather than just a 'new kid on the block'," Vicentini concludes.

PROJECT
PadovaFIT Expanded - Expanding PadovaFIT! Home Solutions

COORDINATED BY
Municipality of Padua, Italy

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/847143

PROJECT WEBSITE
padovafit.eu/home.html

Building a renovation framework that puts impact first

A new framework could help policymakers at municipal, national and European levels consistently track the environmental, social and economic benefits of building renovation programmes and projects.

While Europe's buildings are unique and diverse, encompassing cultural, social and economic elements, a large proportion of them are old. More than 220 million buildings were built before 2001, and most of them are likely to still be standing in 2050.

To improve energy efficiency across the bloc and reduce associated emissions, the European Commission published the Renovation Wave strategy 'A Renovation Wave for Europe – Greening our buildings, creating jobs, improving lives'. Its aim is to double the renovation rate of existing buildings over the next decade.

Why impact is so important in the Renovation Wave

Successfully scaling renovation rates takes a concerted, coordinated effort from a host of different actors in the renovation sector, including policymakers, financiers, contractors, product suppliers, consultants and importantly, building owners.

But with a large number of renovation initiatives out there, how can actors know which suggested solutions hold the most value and in which contexts? As there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the answer lies in tracking their impact.

"Greater availability of data regarding the impacts of renovation programmes supports governments in decision-making and can help them identify best practice solutions that could be scaled and implemented across Europe. This data could also aid potential funders in selecting viable projects to invest in," notes Raquel Díez, coordinator of the EU-funded BUILD UPON2 project.

The BUILD UPON framework will serve as a tool for local actors to focus on the real impact and learning, enabling them to monitor and quantify holistically the wide benefits of energy renovation.

New renovation framework makes waves

At the end of 2021, BUILD UPON2 unveiled a 'multilevel renovation impact framework'. "The BUILD UPON framework will serve as a tool for local actors to focus on the real impact and learning, enabling them to monitor and quantify holistically the wide benefits of energy renovation," adds Díez.

"The framework paves the way towards a harmonised monitoring of local and national renovation activity, which allows assessment of the level of achievement of the objectives set in our renovation strategies and programmes."

The ultimate goal is to create ecological, social and economic added value. To this end, the framework features a unique suite of milestones and measurable progress indicators for city renovation strategies including carbon emission reductions, employment, energy poverty and improved health.

Cities can use the framework to measure carbon emission reductions and energy efficiency improvements brought about by energy renovation, while also considering the annual renovation rate and increased use of renewable energy.

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Low-income owners or renters living in poorly maintained buildings will benefit greatly: the tool will measure the extent to which renovation work can reduce energy poverty and improve indoor air quality and thermal comfort.

Ultimately, the tool will drive the creation of jobs and greater investments in city regeneration programmes.

Key insights guiding the next steps

The BUILD UPON framework was tested in pilot cities across Europe. "Most of them highlighted that the tool helped align different levels of governance; building renovation data has so far been treated separately as countries implemented their renovation strategies. This was compounded by the lack of staff capacity and training in data acquisition," explains Díez.

Throughout organised workshops and interactions with cities participating in the project, the need for a digital version of the framework was highlighted to facilitate data aggregation and analysis. Two Spanish cities, Valladolid and Zaragoza, went ahead and developed a tool called Rehaviva, which built on the principles of the BUILD UPON framework and integrated key metrics from it.

"The BUILD UPON framework is the first tool to align impact metrics for renovation in a way that can be applied consistently at regional, national and European levels. It links policies at different scales and supports the renovation wave. We're now working with partners to explore different ways that the framework can be rolled out," adds Stephen Richardson, Director of the World Green Building Council's Europe Regional Network, a community of over 20 national Green Building Councils across Europe.

PROJECT

BUILD UPON2 – Supporting public sector's capacity and leadership in decarbonising Europe's building stock, through the development of a multi-level renovation impact framework

COORDINATED BY

Green Building Council España (GBCe), Spain

FUNDED UNDER

H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET

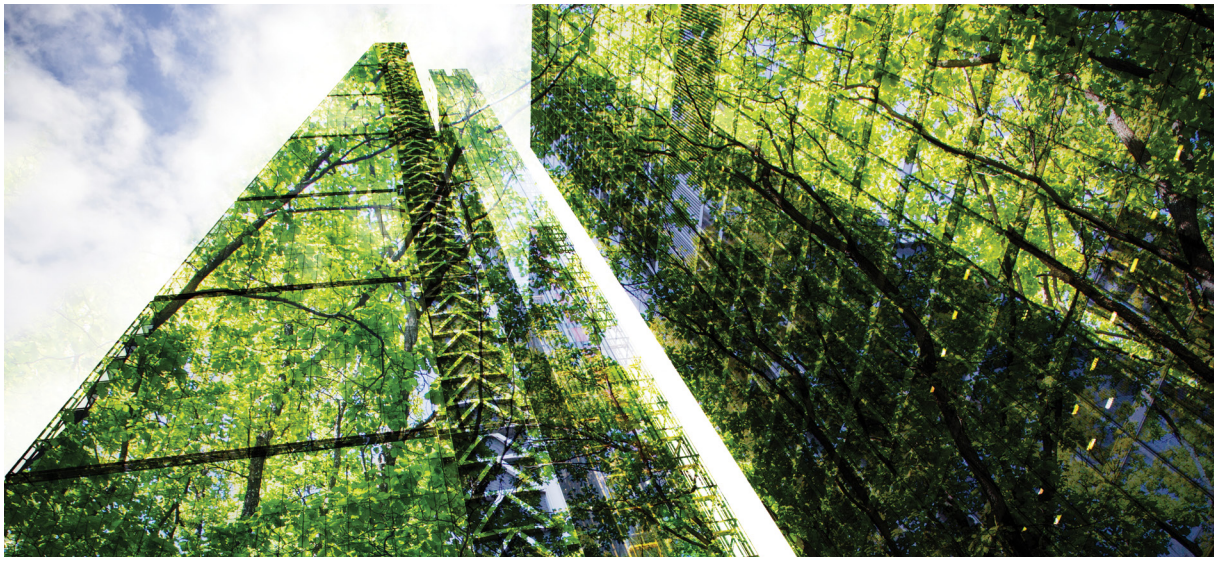
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/840926

PROJECT WEBSITE

worldgbc.org/build-upon

Cities join forces to deliver energy-efficient, renewable heating and cooling

Seven cities throughout Europe are doing their part to tackle climate change by phasing out fossil fuels from heating and cooling in buildings.



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Heating and cooling (H&C) are responsible for about half of the EU's energy consumption every year. Transitioning to energy-efficient and renewable H&C solutions is critical to bringing the EU Member States in line with their climate and energy targets.

This transition must be planned immediately, but several cities are not prepared. There are many questions local authorities need to address, from the most cost-efficient solutions to replace fossil fuels to ways of engaging with citizens.

However, they lack the resources, skills and capacity to do so. What is more, finding these answers requires the help of many different stakeholders including local utilities, energy communities and policymakers at national and EU level.

Cities around Europe unite

The EU-funded DecarbCityPipes 2050 project is providing Bilbao, Bratislava, Dublin, Munich, Rotterdam, Vienna and Winterthur with the skills and knowledge needed to decarbonise H&C in buildings by 2050. The focus is on phasing out natural gas in heating.

The seven cities differ in size, population, heat density, climate, existing infrastructure, renewable energy sources, planning abilities and spatial energy planning levels. This disparity will be reflected in several guidebooks for cities that are mostly planned for 2022. The guidance documents will share the knowledge acquired with other cities across Europe wishing to replicate the project's approach.

DecarbCityPipes 2050 is the first project that brings together participating cities to learn from each other and coordinate their work in dealing with local challenges. They will build up their skills in the use of data, planning tools and instruments, and process and transition management.

Solutions for decarbonised heat supply

The cities are assessing the existing energy demand for H&C. Next, they will estimate the future demand and potential of renewable energy to supply H&C.

With this in mind, project partners produced a report with two main objectives. The first is to help the seven cities look into the various possibilities and combinations of low-carbon H&C supply for urban areas.

The second is to identify and describe different heating solutions' technical and economic strengths and weaknesses. The report begins by exploring the ideal balance between supply cost and heat savings and then examines possible sources of heat supply that range, from individual heat sources to district heating.

Plans will be developed to determine where the different solutions are the most cost-effective for each district. For example, this depends on the energy infrastructures available, the types and density of buildings and the local energy resources.

The cities will cooperate with their local utilities to develop transition roadmaps for the H&C sector. The roadmaps define how to carry out these solutions, at which pace, and who to involve. To achieve this, it will be necessary to adapt and create suitable legal and financial instruments.

Towards a decarbonised H&C sector

Ending in August 2023, DecarbCityPipes 2050 aims to empower more than 220 public officers and improve over 50 policies. Ultimately, the goal is to motivate and support 80 more cities across Europe in following the 7 cities' lead.

The path towards a zero-emission energy system has been laid out. The vision of reliable, sustainable and affordable H&C is within reach. It is now up to cities to make it happen.

PROJECT
DecarbCityPipes 2050 – Transition roadmaps to energy efficient, zero-carbon urban heating and cooling

COORDINATED BY
UIV Urban Innovation Vienna GmbH, Austria

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/893509

PROJECT WEBSITE
decarbcitypipes2050.eu/

Improving energy efficiency of municipal buildings in Greece

Municipalities in Athens, Greece, undertook energy efficiency improvements in public buildings, attaining over 65 % savings in energy and costs and leveraging private financing.

In line with the European framework, the public sector should play an exemplary role in the energy transition by upgrading the energy performance of public buildings and street lighting and integrating renewable energy sources. However, due to limited resources and prioritising other needs during the economic crisis and the subsequent pandemic, energy efficiency was often a second priority for municipalities.

The mission of the EU-funded PRODESA project was to support seven municipalities in Athens, Greece, in launching showcase energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

This was achieved by creating market evidence-based examples for the early-stage Greek energy service companies (ESCOs) of leveraging private financing through energy performance contracting (EPC).

The working teams undertook capacity-building activities such as workshops and coaching to meet the specific needs of each step of project development.

PRODESA is the first such effort in Greece and aims to create a network of municipalities that will replicate the results.

"PRODESA is the first such effort in Greece and aims to create a network of municipalities that will replicate the results," says the head of the Project Management Secretariat, Eva Athanasakou. For this reason, the project consortium involved key actors such as the Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving, the European Crowdfunding Network, and entities with technical, financial and legal expertise.

Energy-efficient public infrastructure

Partners replaced existing oil- or gas-burning heating systems with heat pumps and installed rooftop photovoltaic systems for supplying electricity. This allowed them to cover a significant part of energy needs in over 90 buildings.

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They replaced current lighting with LED and integrated occupancy sensors that could be combined with communication systems. Additionally, they installed heat recovery ventilation units and undertook airtightness improvements. Alongside external insulation and glazing improvements, these changes rendered renovated buildings nearly Zero, A, or B+ energy performance class according to the national energy efficiency certification scheme.

Overall, PRODESA activities achieved primary energy savings of 65 %: 40 % thanks to the energy efficiency interventions, and approximately 50 % of the remaining load from photovoltaic electricity.

Financing scheme of energy projects

PRODESA supported the large-scale implementation of projects through EPC with ESCOs. Partners also explored crowdfunding as one of the financing mechanisms.

"Mixing public and private financing through EPC in the context of energy efficiency improvement projects had never been done before in Greece for large-scale building renovations," emphasises Athanasakou.

Moreover, the project demonstrated organisational innovation for the municipalities in Greece by producing a data-driven methodology on EPC performance and investments. The tools enabled the formulation of financing scenarios and the combination of various financing sources.

Through annual cash flow balances and indicators for both municipality and contractor/ESCO, the generated methodology and tools enabled the economic appraisal of the energy efficiency and renewable energy source options. By including the contractor's point of view, users (ie. project owners), can also assess the viability of projects for the contractor for certain scenarios and can help define a more realistic cost before tendering a project.

Towards countrywide decarbonisation

PRODESA established a network of at least 30 municipalities willing to replicate project solutions and offered capacity-building activities and coaching for developing energy efficiency project pipelines. Towards this goal, guidelines were developed on how to implement similar energy efficiency projects through EPC financing.

The PRODESA project was selected by the Covenant of Mayors as one of the important examples of financing energy efficiency projects in European municipalities. The next goal is to achieve countrywide decarbonisation of public buildings by 2050 in all municipalities in Greece.

PROJECT
PRODESA – ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT FOR SOUTH ATTICA

COORDINATED BY
Municipality of Alimos, Greece

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/754171

PROJECT WEBSITE
prodesa.eu/?lang=en

Time to take action on public building sustainability

SURE2050 put forward a real estate management strategy towards future-proofing public buildings in Flanders, Belgium.

Public buildings such as schools, hospitals, theatres, sports centres and buildings that house public services consume large amounts of energy and emit carbon dioxide. Many of these buildings have to be replaced or adapted to meet current and future needs as well as safety standards.

Decarbonisation of public sector buildings entails the reduction of emissions mainly by improving energy efficiency and using renewable sources. However, sustainable energy investments in public buildings in the short, medium, and long term are hampered by the fact that there is often insufficient long-term real estate management in the public sector. Moreover, decisions on the acquisition, holding, using, and disposing of buildings are usually made ad hoc.

Towards climate-neutral public buildings

To overcome these limitations with regard to public buildings, the EU-funded SURE2050 project proposed a real estate strategic plan for public buildings in the Flanders region in Belgium.

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The idea was to define which buildings will be used in the long term so as to invest in the right buildings and draw a renovation strategy that will render them climate neutral. It was also important to change from ad hoc decision-making on public buildings towards proactive sustainable real estate management.

The project brought together Flemish municipalities and cities and the Flemish government in a key step towards climate change. It was important for the government to take centre stage, setting an example to citizens on the significance of sustainable buildings.

Sustainable public buildings have more advantages than just lower energy and maintenance bills. "Public buildings nowadays are multifunctional, offering more than just a meeting place, and it is thus important to guarantee a healthy indoor climate," emphasises project coordinator Tina Van Lierde. "We need to move to a smaller, but more efficient and future-proof public building stock."

Methodology for sustainable public real estate management

To translate the vision of sustainable public buildings into actionable investment plans, SURE2050 developed a methodology that helped public entities set up real estate strategies. Through a series of templates and tools as well as training, the project aimed to put public real estate management into practice.

Many of the existing public buildings need an in-depth renovation to reach the climate and energy targets. This requires a huge investment, but public budgets are scarce. Nonetheless, within the existing building stock, there is also significant potential to find adequate resources and implement cost savings. Selecting the right buildings to invest in is the first step.

The scope of Sustainable Public Real Estate Management (SPREM) goes well beyond energy efficiency in buildings. It covers a variety of other aspects, such as local renewable energy, climate adaptation, mobility, circularity, multi-functional and multi-user facilities and citizen participation.

Challenges and the way forward

The consortium faced various challenges, including the lack of internal resources in municipalities (people and budget) and time constraints of the participants to work on sustainable public real estate management. A major bottleneck in the realisation of the project's objectives was the limited financing opportunities and investments of municipalities.

Public buildings nowadays are multifunctional, offering more than just a meeting place, and it is thus important to guarantee a healthy indoor climate.

Nonetheless, SURE2050 became a valuable concept for public entities and triggered awareness of the challenges, as well as the path forward. Participants understood the need and added value of SPREM. This was also acknowledged at political level, where the project was able to convince that a real estate strategy is a prerequisite to reach the sustainability and energy targets for the public building portfolio.

Following SURE2050, there is now an obligation to have a real estate strategy by the end of 2023 at the Flemish regional level. For the municipalities, it is part of the local energy and climate pact, which was signed by the majority of municipalities.

PROJECT
SURE2050 - SUstainable Real Estate 2050

COORDINATED BY
VEB, Belgium

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/844902

PROJECT WEBSITE
sure2050.be/

Mobilising public authorities' effective long-term energy policymaking

Public authorities across Europe are accelerating toward carbon neutrality by 2050, developing and achieving funding for close to 100 energy and climate policy plans.

Following the European Commission's unveiling of the European Green Deal in 2019 with its bold plan to make the bloc the first climate neutral continent by 2050, the European Climate Law was adopted in 2021. This makes reducing emissions by 55 % by 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050 a legally binding target.

The challenges to achieving this are significant and meeting them will require cooperation throughout the levels of governance in each country and on a European level. Further, there is no one-size-fits-all strategy.

The ambitious EU-funded C-Track 50 project mobilised and supported public authorities at the local and regional levels, enabling them to develop, fund and implement new or improved sustainable energy and climate policy plans.

Multilevel governance cooperation aligned with national strategic policy priorities

Local and regional authorities have a critical role to play in achieving carbon neutrality. Alignment with national priorities and cooperation over multiple levels of governance will bolster impact. C-Track 50 held a series of round-tables, meetings, workshops and a conference to bring stakeholders together and foster team building and alignment of priorities and policies.

Participation in these events far exceeded targets, in many cases more than double that foreseen, showing the overwhelming enthusiasm and readiness of stakeholders to exploit all available opportunities to progress.

To support public authorities in fostering multilevel governance of energy and climate plans, C-Track 50 has produced a *Guidebook for Achieving Carbon Neutrality by 2050*, available in 11 EU languages and included on the EU Covenant of Mayors website.

"The guidebook describes the key steps in the planning process, considerations at each step, and best practices to inspire cities and regions," adds Alexandra Papadopoulou of the Decision Support Systems Laboratory of the National Technical University of Athens and project coordinator.

From energy and climate policy action plans to funding

C-Track 50 organised numerous capacity-building activities. The workshops and EU conference were record breakers, with double or more of the participation numbers targeted.

Overall, the project increased the skills, capabilities and competencies on energy issues of more than 1 200 stakeholders from 235 local and regional authorities. These individuals are now ambassadors and instruments of change, better prepared to lead the way to climate neutrality by 2050.

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A total of 118 long-term local and regional energy and climate plans were developed in the context of the project. Of the 107 local plans, 44 had already been approved by municipal council decision by project completion. In addition, 89 funding proposals covering 117 municipalities were supported, with an overall investment of more than EUR 450 million.

Working together for a better future

Local authorities have clearly understood the vital role they have to play in long-term energy and climate planning.

Papadopoulou summarises: "Local authorities have clearly understood the vital role they have to play in long-term energy and climate planning. They did not hesitate to adopt these plans, even in countries with no governmental commitment to carbon neutrality yet. With technical support and close collaboration with regional authorities, they will be game changers in the coming decades."

C-Track 50's astounding success at mobilising and engaging public authorities across multiple levels of governance to participate, develop plans and attract funding has significantly strengthened Europe's ability to reach climate neutrality by 2050.

PROJECT
C-Track 50 – Putting regions on track for carbon neutrality by 2050

COORDINATED BY
National Technical University of Athens, Greece

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/784974

PROJECT WEBSITE
c-track50.eu/

Empowering central and eastern Europe to meet energy and climate commitments

Improving public administrations' capacity and skills is key to transitioning to a low-carbon economy and adapting to climate change in central and eastern Europe.

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Central and eastern Europe (CEE) countries have lagged behind in meeting the EU's climate goals compared with western Europe. A major reason is a slow development of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) by CEE municipalities.

A SECAP provides a comprehensive overview of a municipality's energy situation and greenhouse gas emissions, defines concrete actions to reduce emissions, identifies energy efficiency measures, adopts renewable energy targets and presents actions to adapt to climate change.

Capacity building at local level is key

The development of SECAPs in CEE countries has been sluggish because many municipalities lack awareness of and experience in sustainable energy planning. They need specific expertise, capacity and access to resources. There is also the need for outreach strategies or procedural changes to better deal with the CEE's unique circumstances, mainly due to history and geography.

To address these issues, the EU-funded CEESEU project brings together 11 partners from Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Romania and Slovenia to build the capacity of public administrations to develop SECAPs. The overall aim is to promote increased energy efficiency, sustainable energy, reduced carbon emissions and improved climate change adaptability.

Getting everyone involved in climate change mitigation and adaptation

Project partners are designing materials and tools to train local public administrators in developing and implementing SECAPs. The resources will take into account CEE communities' particular circumstances.

Municipalities will be shown how to engage with various stakeholders and interact with all levels of government in developing SECAPs, and will receive guidance on how to finance and implement SECAP actions. The CEESEU network will enable increased communication and collaboration between public administrators in CEE and the rest of the EU.

Taking energy and climate obligations to the next level

CEESEU is supporting the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) and other EU actors on how to better reach and serve the needs of CEE municipalities in developing and implementing SECAPs. CoM is one of the most significant urban development organisations in the world.

To date, more than 11 000 local and regional authorities across 55 countries have voluntarily committed to implementing EU climate and energy objectives.

They must develop a SECAP within the first 2 years of joining CoM. Signatories are strongly encouraged to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 55 % by 2030. In the long term, they commit to climate neutrality by 2050, with a minimum GHG reduction target of 80 %.

Ending in October 2023, CEESEU intends to make several major impacts. About 650 GWh of energy savings are foreseen. The capacity and skills of over 645 public administrators in CEE municipalities are expected to improve.

The project will better align national and regional development plans with SECAPs in the 10 CEESEU countries and improve national and regional sustainable energy and energy efficiency policies. Finally, it will attract over EUR 25 million of sustainable energy and climate change adaptation investments.

PROJECT
CEESEU - Central and Eastern European Sustainable Energy Union

COORDINATED BY
University of Tartu, Estonia

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/892270

PROJECT WEBSITE
ceesen.org/en/about-ceeseu/

Designing, harmonising and implementing energy strategies at the local level

An EU-funded project has contributed to the implementation of the European Energy Award (eea) in four partner countries. The eea is a quality management and certification system that helps to streamline energy and climate plans and policies at local level.

The EU has set ambitious climate and energy targets, for which cities and municipalities have to play their role and develop, finance and implement plans for climate and energy. However, they often lack harmonised, interdepartmental cooperation and long-term structures, which stands in the way of successfully implementing their plans and ultimately reaching their goals.

This is where the EU-funded IMPLEMENT project stepped in.

"IMPLEMENT's objective was to set up the necessary structures for a long-term roll-out of the quality management and certification programme European Energy Award (eea) in the partner countries, Belgium, Greece, Croatia and Poland," explains project coordinator Koen Reynaerts.

IMPLEMENT's objective was to set up the necessary structures for a long-term roll-out of the quality management and certification programme European Energy Award in the partner countries, Belgium, Greece, Croatia and Poland.

During the project, the aim was for 30 pilot municipalities to further develop and implement their climate and energy strategies by using the eea-standardised catalogue of measures.

Promoting climate protection at the local level

The eea supports local authorities in implementing multidisciplinary design approaches and effective energy and climate policy measures. It provides tested and proven energy and climate protection measures that municipalities can implement.

"In IMPLEMENT, the eea process has proved its added value to improve local energy and climate policies as well as for local authorities to orient their work target and become impact-driven while increasing their efficiency and effectiveness," says Reynaerts.

In addition to setting up interdepartmental teams within the municipality's administrations and the development of energy and climate plans that focus on actions where local administrations have maximum impact, the eea provided great added value in the qualitative implementation of the action plans.

The roll-out of the eea

"The pilot municipalities have experienced within the eea process the importance of the quantification of actions and identification of indicators with concrete targets and reduction paths, and setting up monitoring and data sets for this," highlights Reynaerts.

This approach enables local governments to maximise the potential of their action plans and significantly increase the

quality of implementation. The award provides the necessary framework to structurally embed working methodology that includes quantified targets and reduction paths based on indicators in the internal functioning of cities and towns.

Discussing key results, Reynaerts confirms the work of the project has led to 30 ratified municipal climate action plans and 15 eea certifications as well as 14 national (lower) eea certifications. Regarding the latter, these are certifications that eea secretariats, at the national level, can agree on an awarding at a level below the international eea threshold.

"This is to acknowledge above average efforts of municipalities and encourage reaching the international awarding level," explains Reynaerts.

In 2021, the energy savings triggered by the project within its duration were 624 GWh/year. Renewable energy production triggered by IMPLEMENT was 359 GWh/year, and CO_2 reduction reached 502.711 tCO_2eq/year.

Building municipalities' capacity for a long-term impact

"In terms of multiplier effect and long-term impact, the project has set up the required structures (regional/national eea offices) and trained staff (eea advisors, eea auditors, municipal staff), which will continue to function and contribute to the long-term impact of the project beyond the project's duration," notes Reynaerts.

Specifically, it has established five regional/national eea offices which have been trained in their role and have gained experience in managing national eea programmes. What's more, 5 national steering committees have been set up with in total more than 50 members, consisting of representatives from relevant, competent authorities and stakeholders.

"Also, 234 energy-team members in participating municipalities have been active and supported by eea advisors and made acquainted with the eea process, principles and philosophy, resulting in increased municipality capacity," concludes Reynaerts.

PROJECT
IMPLEMENT – Improving Local Energy and climate policy through quality management and certification

COORDINATED BY
Bond Beter Leefmilieu, Belgium

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/754104

PROJECT WEBSITE
european-energy-award.org/eu-project-implement

Synchronising local energy and climate initiatives to increase global impact

Linking the procedures and tools of the EU's strong yet disparate clean energy and climate change mitigation initiatives puts municipalities on the fast track to success.

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Municipalities across Europe are enthusiastic about developing energy and climate initiatives that support their clean', decarbonisation plans, but they are struggling to effectively implement them. Many instruments supporting local authorities have been developed over the past couple of decades, but currently the results, data and reports are often not transferrable or linked.

The EU-funded CoME EASY project has systematically linked and synthesised such procedures and tools. Together with new comprehensive user-friendly ICT tools, municipalities will be better assisted to develop, monitor and achieve their energy and climate goals.

The European Energy Award, the Covenant of Mayors and more

The European Energy Award (eea) is a quality management and awarding system. In existence for over 25 years, the eea is now implemented in more than 1 700 cities and towns,

representing 65 million inhabitants in 15 countries. The eea Energy Management Tool and its standard measures are used for determining awards. Thanks to CoME EASY, it now provides support for International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 50001 and 14001 reporting standards.

The Covenant of Mayors (CoM) is the world's largest movement for local climate and energy actions. Launched by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy in 2008, CoM now includes more than 9 000 local and regional authorities across 57 countries.

CoME EASY has harmonised these two important instruments. "The eea signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CoM in 2019, recognising the eea's excellence as an implementation tool for the CoM," notes Chiara Tavella of SPES Consulting and CoME EASY project coordinator.

An open ICT tools package for municipal energy and climate initiatives

CoME EASY's new tools comprise calculators to determine emission and consumption inventories and mitigation actions' impacts; reporting facilitators; benchmarking tools; guidelines for stakeholders' engagement; and training materials.

Tavella adds: "All these methodologies are aimed at improving the quality of life of EU citizens and require their engagement. The guideline for stakeholders' and citizens' engagement can be used by city planners to accomplish this challenging task."

The CoME EASY platform is hosted on the eea online platform to ensure it will be updated after the project end. It is linked to eea's Energy Management Tool, and access is freely available upon request.

Harmonised energy and climate initiatives amplify impact

Tavella summarises: "CoME EASY has successfully aligned the eea with CoM, the international energy management system standard ISO 50001 and other initiatives thanks to standardised information that can be easily exported to multiple IT programmes."

The project was awarded as the best methodology for sustainable policies monitoring by FORUM PA 2021. FORUM PA is Italy's most important event dedicated to innovation for public administration, organised in association with the INTERLINK project.

CoME EASY has successfully aligned the European Energy Award with the Covenant of Mayors, the international energy management system standard ISO 50001 and other initiatives.

The alignment is bringing energy and climate initiatives together and builds local momentum. More than 180 municipalities were supported in the roll-out. The small town of Montaione in Italy, for example, is an eea Gold municipality that used tools to develop a social, environmental and climate assessment procedure that fulfils ISO 50001 and 14001 audits. It was awarded as the best plan for small municipalities by CoM in 2020.

Now that mutual recognition among initiatives has been achieved, the eea and CoM are working towards automatic exchange of data. Thanks to CoME EASY, municipalities can get on the fast track without getting side tracked on their road to effective climate policies for 2030 and 2050.

PROJECT
CoME EASY - SYncronising EEA to CoM and other EU initiatives (SCIS-EIP, CEN-ISO,S3...) about energy and climate policies to accompany more and more tuned municipalities in their 2030 performance

COORDINATED BY
SPES Consulting SRL, Italy

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/785033

PROJECT WEBSITE
european-energy-award.org/eu-project-come-easy

Municipalities team up to amplify energy transition successes

A peer-to-peer learning programme targeting municipal authorities shared best practices, inspired new actions and showed the way to a democratic green energy transition.

Many European cities are municipal energy innovators, blazing a trail towards a green energy transition. Others are eager to get on board but uncertain of where to begin and how to proceed.

The EU-funded mPOWER project, with its seven partners from Croatia, France, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom, brought these two groups together in a peer-to-peer learning programme to ignite municipal action that will fuel just, clean and democratic energy transitions.

Municipal energy innovation via knowledge sharing and collaboration

The response to mPOWER's recruitment campaign was overwhelming. According to Rowan Mataram, Sustainable Cities Strategy and Process lead at Platform London and mPOWER coordinator, "the project exceeded its participation goal by 46 %, enabling 175 relationships with individual municipal actors."

Three different peer-to-peer learning support streams were implemented: mPOWER Digital, mPOWER Exchange and mPOWER Activate. Their required levels of commitment and participation varied to accommodate varying levels of availability, experience and engagement.

mPOWER Digital offered an online course focused on various energy system themes, with weekly webinars at which invited guest presentations on special topics were followed by interactive discussions.

© Viacheslav Lopatin, Shutterstock

"We were also successful in using the course to make the case for democratic public ownership," adds Helen Traill, research associate in Urban Transitions under Andrew Cumbers, project principal investigator, at the University of Glasgow.

mPOWER Exchange enabled participants to visit other local authorities, spending in-person time discussing ideas for developing new energy projects. Participants in mPOWER Exchange also had the opportunity to participate in mPOWER Activate, putting knowledge into practice through collaborative projects.

Barriers to municipal energy initiatives

mPOWER identified a variety of impediments to municipal energy transitions. Lacking access to capital with favourable terms was perhaps the most important. Lacking access to data was also critical, as most data is owned by private companies and is not available to municipalities. However, struggles with citizen involvement and devolution of power were also prominent.

These challenges made the existing level of commitment and action at the municipal level in Europe so impressive. More than 90 % of the municipalities in mPOWER's survey (85 municipalities in countries all over Europe) were engaged in energy generation.

Leaving a legacy for the future

"We discovered a variety of exciting and context-specific actions taken by municipalities across Europe. Whilst no single project can be replicated in full elsewhere, other cities can draw inspiration from these experiences to create solutions suitable to their conditions," notes Mataram.

For example, the Plymouth City Council and Nottingham City Council, pioneers in work on fuel poverty and retrofits in the United Kingdom, overcame the challenges, ensuring the most vulnerable can access retrofit programmes.

The solutions have been categorised into specific energy themes and incorporated into best practice guides with numerous examples. You can listen to episodes of the project's inspiring City Stories podcast for 5 years after the project end as well.

mPOWER succeeded in its goals of building energy transition capacity among municipal participants. "Among the most exciting outcomes was feedback demonstrating how vital the peer learning programmes were to inspiring municipalities to use the energy transition as a way to deepen democratic processes, increase standards of living and reduce energy poverty," adds Traill.

Collaboration and learning are vital for the energy transition of municipalities to not only succeed, but foster more democratic practices.

Mataram and Traill summarise: "Collaboration and learning are vital for the energy transition of municipalities to not only succeed, but foster more democratic practices."

mPOWER has laid the groundwork for a just energy transition with increasing municipal ownership and democratic control at a local level.

PROJECT
mPOWER – Municipal Action, Public Engagement and Routes Towards Energy Transition

COORDINATED BY
University of Glasgow, the United Kingdom

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/785171

PROJECT WEBSITE
municipalpower.org/

Inspiring and activating European cities in the energy transition

An EU-funded project is building and promoting capacity on integrated urban planning. It features best-practice examples in the fields of transport, energy and land use.

With its holistic view, urban planning can help balance different interests and develop coherent mitigation strategies that address important challenges faced by today's cities simultaneously.

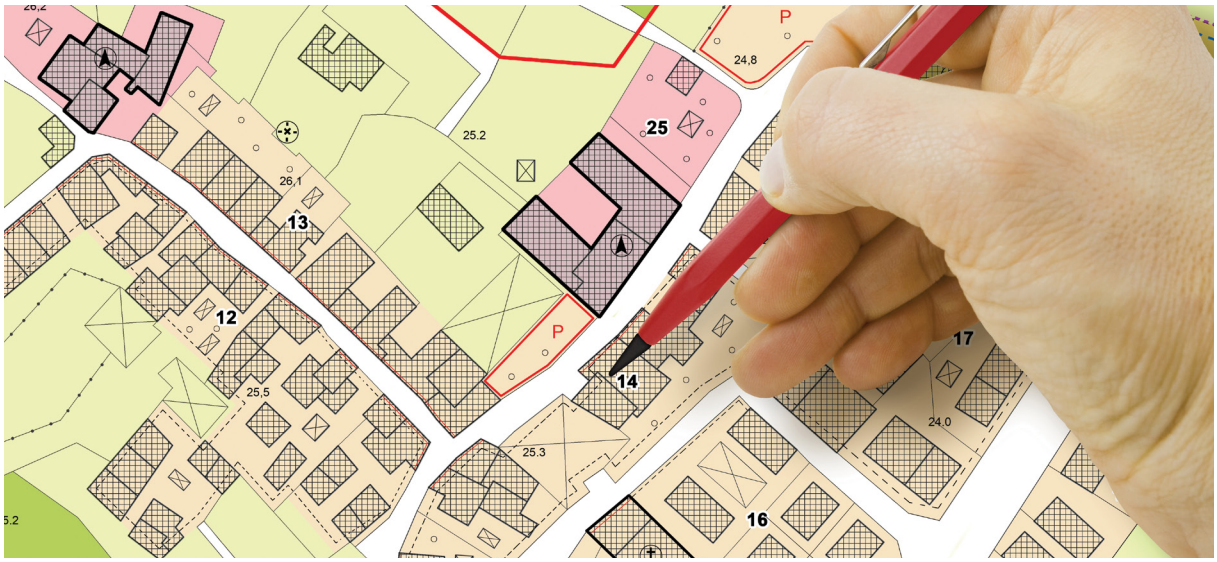
Responsible for high levels of energy consumption and share of global CO_2 emissions, municipalities, especially cities, are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. At the same time, they have a key role to play in combating it, particularly through the energy transition. This is because they are the closest to citizens, and they have the tools and capacities to act.

The energy transition, however, is a complicated process, one that calls for integrated solutions that can combine elements of sustainable transport, energy and land-use planning.

Urban planning can help in this regard. "With its holistic view, urban planning can help balance different interests and develop coherent mitigation strategies that address important challenges faced by today's cities simultaneously," notes Rupert Wronski, project coordinator of the EU funded MULTIPLY project.

In this context, MULTIPLY set out to encourage local authorities to adopt integrated urban planning measures at district level by engaging them in a dedicated peer-to-peer learning programme.

"By integrated urban planning, we mean a cross-sectoral approach within the municipal administrations to tackle complex challenges in the field of CO_2 reductions, for instance in the heating, mobility or electricity sector combined," adds Wronski.



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Peer-to-peer learning for integrated urban planning

To achieve this, MULTIPLY engaged municipalities through national competitions aimed at selecting cities to take part in the exchange programme. "We set out with a competition phase where municipalities in the six project countries – Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Poland and Sweden – could apply to become part of the project," Wronski explains.

Equipped with an internally developed criteria catalogue, MULTIPLY was in search of both municipalities that could be seen as forerunners in the field of integrated urban planning and those that were eager to learn from the forerunners, known as committed cities.

"After an internal evaluation, three forerunners and four committed cities, with selected districts, were chosen in each country. They entered an intense peer-learning programme where they learned from each other in different fields. This included planners, political decision-makers and communication experts," outlines Wronski. Each project partner ran a series of at least seven workshops.

"The safe environment we provided allowed municipal staff to raise questions, voice their concerns and learn from other cities that have experienced similar challenges and found good solutions," confirms Wronski.

Concerted actions for climate-friendly urban development

With its approach, MULTIPLY helped broaden the scope within different municipal administrations. "It nudged the participants to think beyond their pure sectoral approach, and in this way helped avoid silo mentality," adds Wronski.

MULTIPLY also created stable interpersonal networks, both nationally among those that participated in the national peer learning programmes, as well as internationally among all the project municipalities that participated in a European exchange event.

"What's more, the project helped to formulate CO_2 reduction goals for the participating committed municipalities, i.e. mostly for specific districts, by way of a new innovative tool – the so-called Energy Plans," reports Wronski.

With the developed Energy Plans, the project managed to set out long-term strategies for climate-friendly urban development. "Some of these plans have already been adopted by the participating municipalities and will therefore directly contribute to saving CO_2," concludes Wronski.

Based on the Energy Plans, the project will trigger energy savings of up to 4 000 GWh annually from 2030 onwards (-33 % compared to 2019), resulting in CO_2 reductions of roughly 2.5 million tonnes per year (-55 % compared to 2019).

The project helps to incentivise additional renewable generation capacity of more than 695 GWh until 2030, an important step towards meeting the EU's energy targets.

PROJECT
MULTIPLY - Municipal peer-to-peer learning in integrating transport, land-use planning and energy policy at district level

COORDINATED BY
Environmental Action Germany (DUH), Germany

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/785088

PROJECT WEBSITE
citiesmultiply.eu/en/

Putting cities at the heart of energy transition

Preparing cities and communities for a climate-neutral economy by 2050 requires redirecting and mobilising investment so that they can lift their sustainable energy project ideas off the ground.

© Jacek Dylag via Unsplash

Europe aims to be the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 by becoming a modern, resource-efficient economy. The European Green Deal is the centrepiece of the EU's climate strategy, which will mobilise at least EUR 1 trillion for sustainable investment over the next decade.

Other European initiatives such as the NextGenerationEU also invest in environmentally friendly technologies, helping the EU emerge stronger and more resilient from the pandemic crisis.

The sum of the publicly available funds from the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021–2027 and NextGenerationEU's key instrument, namely the Recovery and Resilience Facility, might not be sufficient to put the whole of Europe on the path to energy transition. Mobilisation of private sources is crucial to make this happen.

Placing energy transition in local hands

"While financial resources are being mobilised to support energy efficiency projects, they often fail to reach smaller-scale projects; many small and medium municipalities still encounter structural difficulties in scaling up (or even attracting) investments to contribute to the energy transition," notes Francisco Gonçalves, coordinator of the EU-funded EUCF initiative.

The EUCF facilitates municipalities and local authorities in realising their ambitious energy and climate plans. "We empower local leaders to develop investment concepts – documents that translate project ideas into financial language to ultimately mobilise finance to realise them," adds Gonçalves.

Calls for applications

The EUCF, which kicked off in August 2019, is now ending its first phase involving the design, planning and management of calls for applications. Through its four calls, it encouraged local authorities across Europe to identify their sustainable energy projects and pave the way for their financing and implementation.

To realise the calls for applications, project partners conducted a lot of preliminary work: developing the investment concept templates and all required documentation, the online platform and the set-up of evaluation teams. Each call has been organised in parallel in three regions (southern, central-eastern and northern-western European regions), targeting 31 countries (the EU-27, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Until now, the EUCF has received more than 600 applications. Most of the applications were from southern Europe (41 %), followed by central and eastern Europe (35 %). In total, 165 investment concepts are under evaluation.

The journey ahead

"We aim to trigger the investment of more than EUR 320 million in sustainable energy, providing 213 cities and their groupings with financial support and technical services to develop tailor-made investment concepts," notes Gonçalves. The activities include the preparation of technical feasibility studies, market analyses and stakeholder analyses, as well as legal, economic, financial and risk analyses.

A network of national experts will help cities deliver credible and scalable investment projects, which should trigger public and private investment. Overall, project partners expect to reach out to more than 10 800 cities and municipalities across Europe, through the Covenant of Mayors-Europe channel.

The resulting investment concepts will represent an initial step towards a fully-fledged business and financial plan, thereby facilitating the subsequent mobilisation of local investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Sources of funding will stem from the private sector, as well as from other EU-funded instruments such as the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the European Structural and Investment Funds, various Project Development Assistance facilities, such as the ELENA facility of the European Investment Bank, or various national investment platforms.

The EUCF's ambitious goals are closely linked with those of other major EU initiatives focused on city transformation, such as NetZeroCities.

"The EUCF helps bridge the gap between the long-term energy and climate plans and their implementation. By offering technical and financial support, it gives cities an opportunity to accelerate investments and jump-start their sustainable energy project ideas," Gonçalves concludes.

By offering technical and financial support, it gives cities an opportunity to accelerate investments and jump-start their sustainable energy project ideas.

PROJECT
EUCF – European City Facility

COORDINATED BY
Energy Cities, France

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

CORDIS FACTSHEET
cordis.europa.eu/project/id/864212

PROJECT WEBSITE
eucityfacility.eu/home.html

Preparing the future leading energy agencies in Europe

In an era where energy management is a matter of vital importance, initiatives that aim to facilitate energy efficiency are more than ever under the spotlight.

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The work of the EU ManagEnergy service was based on the idea that more investments are needed in this sector at the local/regional level in Europe and that energy agencies are in a unique position to support the energy transition in their regions and cities.

"The ambition of ManagEnergy during 2017 to 2020, the most recent period of its activity, was to make local and regional energy agencies the leaders in the energy transition and to increase sustainable energy investments in Europe," explains Seamus Hoyne, ManagEnergy trainer and coordinator and Dean of Flexible and Work Based Learning at Limerick Institute of Technology.

The ambition of ManagEnergy during 2017 to 2020 (...) was to make local and regional energy agencies the leaders in the energy transition and to increase sustainable energy investments in Europe.

This was achieved mainly by providing capacity-building training via 8 masterclasses to 200 participants in Brussels, coupled with 21 expert missions. During these missions, ManagEnergy experts visited energy agencies and their regions to support them in strategic and technical development aspects relevant to their needs, engaging with 680 stakeholders.

Moreover, 3 networking events were organised, which attracted 85 energy agencies from 25 countries. To further raise awareness around the initiative, three ManagEnergy talks were organised in the context of relevant EU energy events attracting over 525 attendees.

The emphasis was given to scaling up delivery and building the knowledge, skills and competencies of energy agencies on investments, finance and funding of sustainable energy initiatives, programmes and developments.

As part of the programme, a survey of energy agencies across Europe was completed. There are over 350 such organisations with over 2 500 staff across the EU with expertise in all aspects of sustainable energy – entities at the forefront of translating European policy into action on the ground.

During the ManagEnergy initiative, EUR 750 million of investments were triggered across multiple sectors and areas such as buildings, renewables and transport.

"The satisfaction rate from participants involved in various activities and aspects of the service was extremely high (98 %), indicating that it met the needs and requirements of the energy agency staff that it served," notes Hoyne.

The ManagEnergy talks organised in 2018, 2019 and 2020 were a novel and fruitful feature, engaging energy professionals, experts and actors in discussing and considering topics relevant to the energy transition.

The audience was invited to take a step back from day-to-day issues to focus on larger overlying questions and values. Critical thinking was also key during the capacity-building activities of the project. The ManagEnergy experts constantly engaged participants in highly interactive sessions, forcing them to leave their comfort zone and think actively about what could bring their agency to the next level.

The ManagEnergy Service will be re-launched by the Commission in late 2022 with a new series of activities and measures to support local and regional energy agencies and their local and regional authorities. Meanwhile, the ManagEnergy website and its social media channels continue to provide up-to-date information on projects, events and policies relevant to its target audience.

PROJECT
ManagEnergy

COORDINATED BY
Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest, Ireland

FUNDED UNDER
H2020

PROJECT WEBSITE
managenergy.eu/frontpage

Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum Energy Efficiency finance Marketplace, 18 October 2022

Founded in 2008, the EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy brings together thousands of European local governments voluntarily committed to implementing EU climate and energy objectives. The Covenant works based on a municipality's Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP), a key document that shows how a local authority will reach its commitments towards 2030 and beyond.

The annual Conference Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum Energy Efficiency Finance Marketplace, this year organised on 18 October, showcases successful initiatives to finance sustainable energy and climate adaptation, presented by practitioners for practitioners. The conference brings together cities, financial institutions and other actors to exchange good practices and successful solutions to common challenges.

CORDIS Results Pack

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CINEA – Horizon project manager

All projects featured in this Results Pack are managed by CINEA, the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency, established by the European Commission under the motto 'Funding a Green Future for Europe'. CINEA contributes to the European Green Deal by implementing parts of EU funding programmes for transport, energy, climate action, environment, and maritime fisheries and aquaculture. CINEA now manages the Connecting Europe Facility 2 (Transport and Energy), the Climate, Energy and Mobility Cluster of Horizon Europe, the LIFE programme, the Innovation Fund, the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, the Renewable Energy Financing Mechanism and the Public Sector Loan Facility under the Just Transition Mechanism and seeks to promote synergies between the programmes in order to benefit EU citizens and promote economic growth.

CINEA also implements two societal challenges of the Horizon 2020 programme: Secure, clean and efficient energy, and Smart, green and integrated transport. CINEA provides technical and financial management services at all stages of the programme and project life cycle – from the calls for proposals, evaluation of projects and the award of financial support, to the follow-up of project implementation and control of the use of funds allocated.

CINEA provides visibility for EU funding opportunities and project results – and supports potential applicants and beneficiaries, allowing them to benefit from the Agency's long-standing experience of programme implementation with a high level of performance.

More details can be found on CINEA's website at: cinea.ec.europa.eu/index_en

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RESULTS PACK ON DIGITALISATION OF THE ENERGY SYSTEM

Digital solutions can help build a more secure and diversified energy supply, all while improving efficiency and resilience, reducing emissions and providing citizens with innovative energy services. This CORDIS Results Pack features 11 projects that are paving the way for the digitalisation of our energy system.

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cordis.europa.eu/article/rcn/436700

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