



Sustainable Energy Communities

Common actions for common goals



Project report



Integrated initiatives

34 projects funded by
the Intelligent Energy –
Europe programme

N°6 – April 2009



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Integrated initiatives



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Editorial information

Project Reports are published by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation of the European Commission (EACI). The reports showcase projects funded across the European Union by the Intelligent Energy – Europe programme (IEE), which promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy. The projects are presented by theme and contain contact details for participants to help build a network of project participants across the EU. The reports are available in English, French and German.

Editor: EACI.
Design and layout: Tipik S.A./Chili con carne.

More details on the IEE programme and the EACI are available online (<http://ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy>).

Useful tools and guidebooks resulting from IEE and other projects can be downloaded from the Intelligent Energy e-library (www.iee-library.eu).

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Projectreport



Integrated initiatives



Introduction

Faced with enormous energy challenges relating to competitiveness, climate change and security, Europe has launched several initiatives for an intelligent energy policy. Coherent and joint efforts from all governance levels will be required, if it is to meet the '3 times 20' targets set at EU and national levels for renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and reduction of CO₂ emissions by 2020.

Efforts like these are essential for the development of a coherent energy mix around Europe. It is hoped that this approach will lead to Europe making greater use of renewable energy sources and focusing more on energy-efficient methods, which will contribute to social and economic growth and a reduction in environmental damage.

Europe is already a leading developer of energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy sources. Throughout the EU, many pioneer communities have already successfully made a genuine change in their energy supply and use on the basis of ambitious energy plans and participatory approaches. And some of these pioneer communities have benefited from European support.

The IEE programme

Several EU programmes have been established to support the main sustainable energy actors, both on the demand and supply sides. Their goal is to develop concrete projects that demonstrate the benefits of new technologies and tools and enable a real exchange of experiences between stakeholders.

The Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE) programme is one of these EU support programmes, focused on removing the non-technological barriers to the uptake of renewable energies and end-use-efficient technologies. It encourages the sharing of knowledge between countries, as well as engaging the wider community and developing methods to foster sustainable energy use and production.

Sustainable Energy Communities

Sustainable Energy Communities are communities that implement a set of sustainable energy policy measures in the field of renewable energy, rational use of energy and sustainable mobility with the strong involvement of the local population in the planning and implementation process.

Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) is a significant part of the IEE programme. SEC concentrates on funding initiatives that support the development of energy fora – involving strong participation by all local stakeholders, and the creation of local energy action plans and concrete measures in the field of energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable mobility. The activities funded through this key action are considered crucial, since they create a coherent framework for the implementation of local and regional energy-related measures.

So far, over 30 projects have been funded under the SEC action. They involve more than 290 cities and regions across Europe and represent most European countries. The overall ambition of these projects is



“Once established, a Sustainable Energy Community clearly has the potential to raise the profile and competitiveness of a region or municipality.”

to foster the establishment of Sustainable Energy Communities around Europe, in order to boost the number of local and regional communities pioneering a low-carbon future and to encourage civil society in general to commit to this goal.

All the SEC projects clearly contribute to sustainable development by:

- > **mobilising civil society to endorse energy-related measures** through local competitions, events or the creation of networks of actors, which in turn contribute to real behavioural changes in energy consumption;
- > **developing planning or management tools** for calculating energy balances, estimating the current state of play in energy efficiency and proposing appropriate actions to improve the situation;
- > **launching processes towards a low-carbon community at local level** through local energy action plans, the establishment of self-supply energy cooperatives or concrete measures in the field of renewable energy sources and rational use of energy;
- > **encouraging knowledge transfer between local actors** through European partnerships, peer-to-peer meetings or training.

Thanks to these ambitions, sustainable energy-related issues become part of everyday priorities for all actors and can be dealt with in a holistic way. Once established, a Sustainable Energy Community clearly has the potential to raise the profile and competitiveness of a region or municipality. A community like this can help to overcome existing administrative, social and economic barriers to renewable energy sources, rational use of energy and sustainable mobility, and can greatly contribute to reaching, or even beating, the targets set in key EU directives.

More importantly, a Sustainable Energy Community values its citizens by improving their quality of life. Yet, it does this without harming the natural environment, by proposing holistic and coherent

energy-efficient actions that are economically viable and environmentally neutral – responsible and provident actions that are well accepted and put into practice by numerous different actors.

The Covenant of Mayors

The European Commission launched the Covenant of Mayors initiative in February 2009. This initiative aims to bring together European mayors in a permanent network, to exchange and apply good practices to improve energy efficiency significantly in the urban environment. Signatories to the Covenant commit themselves to go beyond the objectives set out in the EU energy policy in terms of CO₂ reductions, renewable energy production and use, and energy efficiency. Over 400 cities throughout Europe have officially joined the initiative and more are expected to do the same in future.

The Intelligent Energy – Europe programme wishes to support the Covenant of Mayors initiative by actively sharing the results and experience gained from SEC projects. Indeed, these projects can serve as a good reference and support for local and regional authorities interested in committing themselves to ambitious energy targets. Although the majority of IEE projects on Sustainable Energy Communities are not yet complete, they have already resulted in beneficial concrete actions and specific methodologies, tools, guidelines and web tools. These are all available in our Intelligent Energy e-library (www.iee-library.eu) to anyone interested in finding out more and are well worth consulting.

This brochure aims to raise awareness of the Sustainable Energy Communities projects funded by the Intelligent Energy – Europe programme. It is hoped that readers will discover useful information about the funded projects and their results to date, and feel encouraged to apply them in their own community.



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Spotlighting
truly
sustainable
cities

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1

Sustainable Energy Communities in Urban Areas in Europe SECURE

Duration: 1/2006–12/2008

Objectives

The project set out to show that cities can achieve ecological sustainability by increasing their share of renewable energy, using energy more efficiently and reducing traffic's impact. By focusing on the creation of long-term sustainable action plans for the four cities of Malmö, Dublin, Hillerød and Tallinn, the SECURE partners aimed to highlight how the results of successful demonstration projects can be adopted Europe-wide.

To identify success factors, the project carried out structured benchmarking, which was used to create the sustainable energy action plans. The concepts of passive houses and carbon-neutral cities were analysed and several activities implemented in this field.

Results

- > Sustainable energy action plans and energy partnerships were developed for Dublin, Hillerød and Malmö, and a guidebook was published on the partner's experiences. The plans build on European energy policies and add value to the numerous individual local demonstration projects in these cities, such as those on buildings' energy performance. While the sustainable energy action plan could not be finalised in Tallinn within the framework of the project, adoption is foreseen during the course of 2009.
- > Technical guidelines were drawn up for developing energy action plans.
- > A set of toolboxes and models was developed for mainstreaming the concept of sustainable energy communities.
- > A benchmark study was completed on best practices in European buildings' energy performance, after comparison of different urban sustainable energy projects in northern Europe.
- > The project drafted a general description of a carbon-neutral system for enterprises. Small companies across Europe could adopt this system, many of which are sceptical about the value of carbon neutrality.

Budget: €1 261 112
(EU contribution: 50%)





Rural renewables: a golden harvest



Integrated initiatives

2

Energy Self-Supply in Rural Communities ENSRC

Duration: 1/2006–12/2007

Objectives

The project's chief goal was to produce a guide for rural developers to encourage rural communities in establishing energy self-supply cooperatives. The guide is based on the ENSRC partners' practical experience of setting up energy self-supply cooperatives in Bulgaria, Ireland, Portugal and Wales (UK) and assistance provided for the operation of these cooperatives in their first year of operation.

This project sought to set up energy self-supply cooperatives that could support farmers and rural dwellers in developing locally available sustainable energies for electricity generation, heat production and the production of sustainable fuels.

Results

- > Establishment of an energy self-supply cooperative in each of the four participating countries (Bulgaria, Ireland, Portugal and Wales).
- > Production of a guide to assist the development of self-supply energy cooperatives, calling on local renewable energy sources such as biogas, liquid biofuels, solar energy, and wind and geothermal power. The guide focuses on encouraging farmers, farmer groups, local government, rural development agencies and developers to form cooperatives like this. It also demonstrates how this can be achieved, based on the practical experience gained by project partners in establishing such cooperatives in their own region.
- > Launch of renewable energy installations in each of the participating countries.
- > Development of rural renewable energy enterprises.
- > Partners learned that rural energy self-supply cooperatives must first be set up, before the introduction of any techniques, technologies, systems and so on to facilitate their development.

Budget: €370 438
(EU contribution: 50%)

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3

Cooperation between Communities for Energy Action Plans WISE-PLANS

Duration: 1/2006–12/2007

Objectives

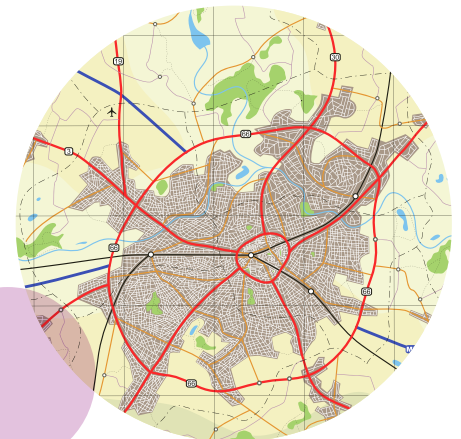
The project partners wanted to create sustainable energy action plans in each of four communities, in Spain, Italy, Sweden and Wales. The emphasis was on energy saving (rational use of energy) and the deployment of renewable energies.

The partners worked cooperatively towards the objectives of Europe's Sustainable Development Strategy and its policies for sustainable energy. The aim was to identify requirements to mitigate the impacts of the production and supply of energy, to reduce emissions of CO₂ from fossil fuels and reduce dependence on external resources.

Results

- > Adoption of Sustainable Energy Action Plans for communities in ecologically sensitive regions, including natural parks, urban and rural areas. These plans highlighted the body responsible for each action, the economic resources required and the corresponding savings in greenhouse gas emissions.
- > Exchange of knowledge on energy solutions already adopted in the communities to improve environmental and social conditions.
- > Engagement of local actors to support the implementation of the plans.
- > Promotion of the replication of the action by other communities at both national and European level, through the preparation of general guidelines on developing and adopting sustainable energy action plans.
- > Development of a common methodology to analyse communities, discover opportunities for improvement and deliver Sustainable Energy Communities.

Budget: €1 039 987
(EU contribution: 50%)



Right tools for the job



4

Energy Service Communities in new member states – Sustainable energy development at local level energy planning & financing tools SEC-TOOLS

Duration: 1/2006–12/2008

Objectives

The SEC-Tools action was dedicated to meeting the extensive need for energy efficiency improvement and further use of renewable energy in communities in New Member States and accession countries. A core part of the action concerned the development of generic tools with a view to encouraging qualified sustainable energy thinking and practices. The key target groups were small communities of 3 000 to 30 000 inhabitants. The tools were tested in nine communities in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, eastern Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland and the project resulted in a 'Toolbox' on energy planning, activation of the energy market and mobilisation of end-users at local level. The action included a broad set of dissemination activities to help ensure the wide-scale dissemination of the developed tools and lessons learnt.

Results

- > The project's main output was the generic SEC Toolbox, with proven guidance on energy planning, activation of the energy market and mobilisation of end-users at local level. The tools are designed for adaptation and use by other small communities.
- > While developing and testing the toolbox, the partners undertook specific actions in the pilot communities within the three SEC areas: local energy planning, activation of the energy market, and end-user mobilisation.
- > Dissemination activities were designed to circulate the developed tools and lessons learnt. They were channelled through the project website, regular e-newsletters, and European and local events. The partners also produced an SEC-Tools package including media and videos on good SEC practices.
- > Pilot actions were implemented in nine communities in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, eastern Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Together with the development of generic tools, this paved the way for improving SEC operations in New Member States.
- > At the project conference in Prague on 13 November 2008, held under the Energy Efficiency Business Week Conference, the partners presented the tools developed under the project for small municipalities and best practices they had developed.

Budget: €1 420 124
(EU contribution: 50%)

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Good things
come
in threes

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5

3-fold initiative for energy planning and sustainable development at local level 3-NITY

Duration: 1/2006–6/2008

Objectives

Key objectives were to improve the level of consistency and security throughout the planning and decision-making processes for energy policy at local level, and to involve all relevant stakeholders in local energy planning processes. The partners in 3-NITY also wanted to demonstrate that the concept of sustainable excellence can result in qualitative improvements which can be measured.

The project's name derives from the development, testing and demonstration of a comprehensive set of tools, quality systems and sustainable best practices for local energy planning and implementation in three main areas: sustainable planning, sustainable measures and activities, and sustainable excellence.

Results

- > Commercially available energy-planning software, known as REAM. The REAM-model is designed for local energy planning, especially periodic reporting. It can be updated with ease and was successfully tested in the 3-NITY project.
- > A web-based computer game that allows users to visualise energy balances at local level. Developed for communication and educational purposes, it is freely accessible on the Web.
- > A tested methodology for putting activity and measure planning into action.
- > A tested methodology for implementing sustainable excellence at local level.
- > A guidebook for energy and climate planning in municipalities, providing a practical introduction to the different steps in the process. It includes major contributions from the 3-NITY project, while building on various national and international methodologies linked to local energy and climate planning.

Budget: €1 379 800
(EU contribution: 50%)





Energy lifelines for island communities

6

Integration of renewable energy technologies in rural insular areas RERINA

Duration: 1/2006–12/2007

Objectives

The main objective was to call on integrated approaches when developing Sustainable Energy Communities in islands and ecologically sensitive areas. These places face a number of energy challenges, which necessitate the development of an energy planning strategy adapted to the local context and the various objectives of the local stakeholders.

To help with their implementation of European policies on energy, environment and sustainable development, the RERINA project developed Sustainable Energy Plans and implemented actions in sensitive areas to demonstrate the feasibility of the methodology. In particular, the partners from five countries examined suitable renewable energy technologies, best practices for the development of Sustainable Energy Communities, awareness and training campaigns, and existing and potential barriers.

Results

- > An integrated methodological approach, for supporting stakeholders in insular communities with the development and implementation of efficient Sustainable Energy Plans.
- > A Practical Guide for Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) Planners, available for free downloading from the project website. It provides both background material and a step-by-step approach, so that insular and ecologically sensitive areas can develop an effective sustainable energy planning process and manage successfully their long-term energy use.
- > A typology on use of renewable energy technologies on European islands and ecologically sensitive areas, as well as renewable energy sources appropriate for these areas.
- > Insight that can be shared with policymakers when developing a successful policy on SEC development, such as the need for public participation schemes and policy measures supporting awareness of renewable energy sources, acceptability and adoption, as well as implementation issues.
- > Partners learned from their project work that renewable energy solutions could reduce dependence on mineral fuels, strengthen regional development and serve as a pole of development for small local communities.

Budget: €528 369
(EU contribution: 50%)

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Weighing up municipal energy and emissions

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7

Balance globally, evaluate locally BALANCE

Duration: 1/2006–12/2007

Objectives

The project partners further developed the European Energy Award (eea). This award has been successfully used since 2002 by more than 320 municipalities in nine European countries to identify strengths, weaknesses and potential for improvement in communal energy policy and, above all, to implement effectively energy-efficient measures.

The project team sought to add energy and CO₂ balancing features, plus estimations at municipal level and individual hard and soft measures. Other objectives included implementing the eea in the Czech Republic and the Netherlands, developing schemes for voluntary agreements between local and regional bodies, and CO₂ town-twinning projects.

Results

- > The implementation of harmonised methodologies and/or tools for energy and CO₂ balancing at municipal level in each participating country, after testing of the tools and evaluation of the test phase. This was followed by widespread implementation in each country. A further 130 municipalities joined the European Energy Award programme during the project.
- > Finalisation of the Impact Tool for the estimation of energy and CO₂ saving potential of measures in municipalities, before its implementation in each country.
- > Three Dutch cities and two in the Czech Republic were certified by an external auditor and awarded the European Energy Award.
- > A scheme for voluntary agreements between national or regional ministries and local authorities was worked out. In Austria and Switzerland commitments for CO₂ reduction are already part of the eea contract between the authorities and the communities.
- > An expert hearing on CO₂ town-twinning examples and good practice took place in Kaunas, Lithuania. Further work included initiation of the first CO₂ town-twinning projects.

Budget: €819 510
(EU contribution: 50%)





8

Building in Europe Local Intelligent Energy Forums BELIEF

Duration: 1/2006–6/2008

Objectives

The BELIEF project aimed to promote the concept of Sustainable Energy Communities at European level, by setting up Local Intelligent Energy Forums in 11 countries. The forum concept was key to their work. Twenty European local authorities participated in the project, which concentrated on local authorities in new Member States and candidate countries.

Specific goals included preparing and/or adapting Sustainable Energy Actions Plans, finding the financial resources to turn these action plans into reality, formalising methodologies and preparing tools, improving the internal capacity of the 20 BELIEF communities, and implementing and communicating sustainable energy initiatives and projects, and sharing their experiences with others.

Results

- > Creation of a group of local EU pioneers, who successfully established and ran Local Intelligent Energy Forums in 20 European communities in 11 countries.
- > Concrete improvement in the energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources in the 20 BELIEF communities involved, underlining the potential for larger-scale investments in this field.
- > Development of an EU replicable concept on Sustainable Energy Communities, in line with EU priorities on energy, sustainability, competitiveness and innovation.
- > Exchange of good practice led to improvements in sharing knowledge and know-how to communities lacking expertise in energy matters. The partners put together 20 case studies of communities around Europe, as well as methodologies, tools and publications – including a recommendation guide and e-newsletters.
- > Organisation of eight workshops and two large international conferences, enabling Europe-wide dissemination of information and methodologies developed under the project.

Budget: €2 539 009
(EU contribution: 50%)

Sharing
the vision

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9

NEw Concept of local sustainable development in pilot communities NEC

Duration: 1/2006–12/2007

Objectives

The project sought to create a Sustainable Energy Community in every country involved and to promote more widely the benefits of a SEC. Partners worked with local and national authorities, to stimulate them to develop new energy certification standards for buildings, coherent with maximum possible energy savings.

Other goals for the partners included promotion of the rational and efficient use of electricity and taking the SEC message to primary schools. They also encouraged the use of public transport in the partners' own cities and the use of biofuels or methane gas in vehicles.

Results

- > The SEC concept was introduced and disseminated to citizens and local authorities in the pilot area. This raised awareness of energy-saving tools, despite a general initial scepticism among many people about the need for boiler inspections or energy certification.
- > A common tool for energy certification was developed and adapted for the three project communities.
- > Workshops on rational use of energy and renewable energy sources were held in all three participating countries, for citizens, companies, authorities and experts. They include debates on laws in these areas, the potential for further exploitation and the cost and benefits for communities.
- > Following a citizens' questionnaire on local public transport, authorities analysed three new transport plans for Foligno, Brasov and Rousse. A 'Clean Transport Day' was also organised in these cities, highlighting public transport and biofuels.
- > Pupils and teachers in local primary schools debated and explored SEC, under the guidance of project participants.

Budget: €486 163
(EU contribution: 50%)

Results
speak louder
than words



Building constructive relationships

10

Energy Efficiency Communities – establishing pilot communities for the building sector EFFCOBUILD

Duration: 1/2006–6/2008

Objectives

The project's main objective was to reduce the energy demand of buildings in the target communities by linking joint economic and environmental interests. The partners planned to overcome existing barriers to energy saving in the building sector by working with and connecting the different stakeholders, including building owners, administration entities, financing institutes, private companies and regional politicians.

The project sought to show to communities that a sustainable energy supply in Europe is feasible, that energy efficiency in buildings contributes to this vision and that energy efficiency can improve environmental protection and be of economic benefit to a region.

Results

- > Development of a 'virtual saving power plant' for buildings in each community. Based on energy demand analysis, this virtual tool helped citizens to see the potential of energy-saving measures.
- > Energy demand and energy-saving potential studies, as well as vision documents in all participating communities.
- > Community actors learned how they could be more proactive in energy efficiency, thanks to numerous measures and actions organised under the project.
- > A brochure with the 10 'best of' examples of energy efficiency measures in buildings in each of the communities involved. This publication is available for downloading in Czech, German and Slovenian.
- > Pilot communities served as a role model for other communities in their region and beyond.
- > Even ambitious communities are sometimes not aware of energy-saving potential but they can still benefit from guidance and assistance from qualified players to identify and realise that potential.
- > Refurbishment projects in particularly small communities can often be too small scale to become viable through contracting models. New approaches to financing such projects at a smaller scale are required.

Budget: €761 839
(EU contribution: 50%)

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Making sustainable energy a public matter

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11

Renewable Energy Sustainable Planning and Use within public Bodies in Liaison with Involved Community Actors RES PUBLICA

Duration: 1/2007–6/2009

Objectives

The project's main objective is to create and launch at least six local energy forums, involving all relevant stakeholders. It is expected that these forums will create local sustainable energy programmes, focused on renewable energy sources and rational use of energy.

The partners in RES PUBLICA want to create synergies at local level between policymakers, citizens and market actors, through a common methodology based on local Agenda 21. Further aims include the use of a common methodology for benchmarking activities, the exchange of best practices among the partners and development of 'bottom-up' intelligent energy strategies.

Results

- > A common methodology for the creation and facilitation of sustainable energy forums and for developing sustainable energy programmes was created.
- > Fora and sustainable energy programmes are being established in seven countries.
- > A project catalogue on local projects implementing the sustainable energy programmes will be developed.
- > A national network for extending project activities will be set up.
- > Useful knowledge gained about the value of creating a national working group on energy. This was already successfully done under the project in several Italian provinces and could be replicated in the other partner countries.

Budget: €589 196
(EU contribution: 50%)





12

Achieving Energy Sustainability in Peripheral Regions of Europe ASPIRE

Duration: 10/2006–3/2009

Objectives

The project's main objective was to develop a replicable model for creating Sustainable Energy Communities in peripheral areas in Europe. Security of energy supply is a growing concern throughout Europe and is of particular significance for peripheral and rural communities, which are frequently situated at a distance from national sources of energy supply.

The project partners intended to draft and adopt sustainable energy action plans, while ensuring wide engagement with EU citizens and key stakeholders. They demonstrated the key role that energy plays in the development of communities and the importance of sustainable energy measures.

Results

- > Creation of six Sustainable Energy Communities in peripheral European regions (Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom).
- > Start of the process of sustainable energy action planning in three further 'level 3' communities.
- > Creation of a 'tool-kit' which can be used by other peripheral communities to replicate the ASPIRE model.
- > Launch of a dialogue between a wide range of stakeholders at local, regional and EU level in each community involved in the project and promotion of 'energy citizenship' within the local population through awareness-raising and educational activities.
- > Transnational transfer of knowledge of the issues faced by communities that are peripheral to national energy networks, and of the solutions that exist to increase both their energy and economic sustainability.

Budget: €1 584 160
(EU contribution: 50%)

Peripheral
vision

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13

Boosting efficiency in electricity use in eight European regions EL-EFF REGION

Duration: 1/2007–4/2009

Objectives

Rising consumption of electricity may outstrip growth in electricity production from renewables. The project therefore focuses on raising awareness of these increases among the public, small business, public authorities and political decision-makers at regional and local levels.

The partners want to boost efficiency in electricity use in eight target European regions. They hope to meet their 1% efficiency target through various project activities in the field of electricity, for example through analysis and data collection in each region, regional action plans and action packages (households, agricultural and social residences sectors), awareness campaigns and inter-regional cooperation.

Results

- > Regional actions plans to boost electricity efficiency are being set up in eight different countries.
- > Some 8 000 decision-makers in public administration and businesses are being reached through project dissemination activities.
- > It is hoped that around 5% of the population in each region will be reached through project dissemination activities, the equivalent of more than 800 000 citizens.
- > Some 560 households and 240 companies or institutions are being encouraged to participate in the 'Minus 10% action', a campaign to reduce energy consumption which was launched in Gdansk, Poland, in May 2008.

Budget: €984 224
(EU contribution: 50%)

Curbing energy
consumption
increases

Seeking the multiplier effect



Integrated initiatives

14

Multiplying Sustainable Energy Communities – a blueprint for action MUSEC

Duration: 12/2006–5/2009

Objectives

The project's main objective was to develop and implement a Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) strategy in seven European communities. Working in five different countries, the partners sought to integrate best practices in local energy policies, financing mechanisms and awareness-raising and dissemination programmes.

An energy baseline assessment was to be developed for each partner community and successful best practices identified on energy. These practices should be easily replicated and adapted at the local level by the MUSEC communities, with local stakeholders and citizens. The final goal was to produce a 'Sustainable Energy Communities Blueprint', with guidelines for other communities.

Results

- > Creation and dissemination of a Sustainable Energy Community Blueprint, as a tool for other communities.
- > Development of seven Sustainable Energy Community strategies and implementation of action plans in the communities involved in the project.
- > Forging of solid partnerships and strengthening of existing ones between local stakeholders, for an effective implementation of the Sustainable Energy Community strategy.
- > Setting up of one National Advisory Group in each of the countries participating in the project.

Budget: €1 681 084

(EU contribution: 50%)



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Committed
for the long
term



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15

Actions and strategies for sustainable growth through community networking and Innovative Thinking INNOVATIVE THINKING

Duration: 12/2006–5/2009

Objectives

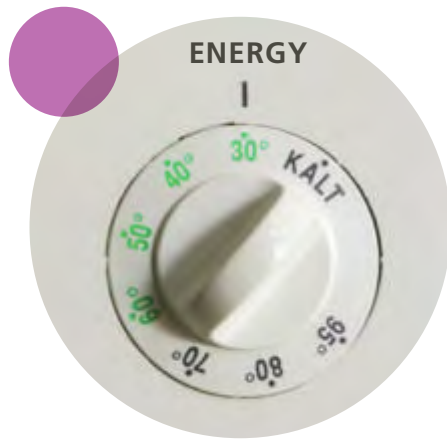
The basis for the project is the fact that building a sustainable future needs the involvement of politicians and decision-makers, as well as community market actors, utilities, and key energy users in the community. The partners in eight countries focus on overcoming existing barriers to sustainable development within the communities, so as to produce long-term commitments.

The aim is to establish and implement an action plan in each community. These would include concrete actions, such as investment plans, as well as information and training initiatives. The work will cover renewable energy, energy efficiency in buildings as well as industry and transport.

Results

- > Community status reports, with an overview of the present energy situation and key barriers for sustainable development and energy savings have been developed.
- > Community strategies for the transition towards a Sustainable Energy Community will be created.
- > Community action plans will be adopted. These will include concrete actions to overcome the barriers to energy efficiency and renewable energy project implementation.
- > Guidelines for community processes towards sustainable energy and energy saving in transport, housing and industry will be published together with a booklet featuring good examples.

Budget: €885 620
(EU contribution: 50%)



16

Energy-Conscious Households in ACTION ECHO ACTION

Duration: 11/2006–4/2009

Objectives

The project sought to reduce the long-term energy consumption in 1 700 private households in seven European countries. It called on the active and voluntary involvement of families, who were divided into thematic working groups, as well as local economic actors and financial institutes, all coordinated by the local energy agency.

The main objective was to encourage and 'hand-hold' participating families to adopt energy-efficient behaviour by implementing no-cost and low-cost energy saving measures; exploring the potential to retrofit their homes and to change their mobility patterns by making them more sustainable. Furthermore, the project created local networks between consumers and producers, retailers, handicrafts people and financing institutes in order to stimulate market uptake of energy efficiency products.

Results

- > Some 1 700 households made their lifestyles and energy consumption more sustainable, through high-efficiency technologies, renewable energy and alternative solutions for personal mobility.
- > Retrofit work on families' buildings and heating systems, and/or action promoting self-production of energy at home and/or a major shift in personal mobility patterns.
- > Creation of local networks of specialised market actors, such as RUE and RES technology suppliers, distributors and installers. They can be easily accessed via the project's 'yellow pages' and can provide selected, reliable and ready-to-adopt solutions, as well as specialised financial packages supplied by 'green' or 'ethical' banks.
- > Creation of at least 10 purchasing groups to negotiate better market prices for specific technologies and plants.
- > Development of a consistent network of at least 40 cities, as project 'observer partners' willing to replicate the project in their own territory.

Budget: €1 374 942
(EU contribution: 50%)

Families
for energy
action

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Integrated initiatives

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Learning by doing



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17

Promoting Reproducible Actions in the Communities to Improve Sustainable Energy PRACTISE

Duration: 1/2007–12/2009

Objectives

This project aims to develop and test a package of best practices for the creation and implementation of four Sustainable Energy Communities in the participating countries, namely La Coruna (ES), Ille-et-Vilaine (FR), Alessandria (IT), and Ploiesti (RO). The consortium aims to achieve a 25% reduction in energy consumption as well as a 20–30% increase in renewable energy systems in the target communities by establishing local SEC Boards, developing an action plan and implementing measures during the lifetime of the project.

Results

- > Creation of local 'SEC boards'. These are responsible for decisions on the energy action plan and long-term strategy covering all sectors, including buildings, transport and renewable energies.
- > Development of an 'energy action plan package' that can be used throughout Europe.
- > Lower energy bills for households and greater use of new intelligent energy technologies.
- > Training of researchers, trainers, teachers, and experts and professionals working in the energy field to build a community of sustainable energy technicians.

Budget: €1 611 437
(EU contribution: 50%)



Think global, act local

18

Strategy for energy sustainability and strengthening of the planning of the energy use in sustainable or potentially sustainable municipalities ENERGY 21

Duration: 1/2007–6/2009

Objectives

In line with the long-established United Nations Agenda 21 programme, the project aims to strengthen energy sustainability at the local level. The partners from four countries are working to change the behaviour and daily habits of consumers and producers, while promoting more cooperation between everyone involved in energy generation, production and consumption.

In the areas covered by the project, experts carry out an energy diagnosis of domestic and community infrastructures and of various energy distributors, producers and consumers. They work together to develop an energy performance plan, which could also be taken up by other municipalities throughout Europe.

Results

- > A European guide, to strengthen the development of the local Agenda 21 process in the energy field will be developed.
- > A Performance Plan to strengthen the local Agenda 21 process in terms of energy and consumption will be defined.
- > The current energy consumption and production, energy use and renewable energy in the project area has been defined, followed by the drafting of a report.
- > Awareness and education programmes to foster behavioural changes that promote renewable energies are being organised.

Budget: €782 460
(EU contribution: 50%)



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Integrated initiatives

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Maximising
the benefits
for all

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19

Regional Energy Profit Clusters – economic growth, competitive advantages and employment incentives in regions through regional energy profit clusters REGIO ENERGY PROFIT

Duration: 10/2007–9/2009

Objectives

The project is working in its target areas to maximise the potential regional economic benefits that flow from sustainable energy systems. The underlying assumption is that sustainable energy concepts will find broader and greater support if they can be justified by proven benefits of this kind.

The partners are developing strong cooperation throughout the energy-based regional value chain, including with regional authorities and energy agencies. Work includes optimising cluster management structures for sustainable energy systems and regional economic growth, employment and innovation, as well as identification of local best practices.

Results

- > A methodological framework has been developed to evaluate the economic growth, innovation and employment benefits of sustainable energy systems at regional level.
- > Conclusions will be drawn on how to stimulate regional economic activities, value chains and supply networks in support of sustainable energy systems.
- > Conclusions will be drawn on how to establish efficient and workable cluster management structures for further promotion of 'Regional Energy Profit Clusters'.
- > Regional actions will be implemented for suitable management structures, policy instruments, financial resources, training, communication and marketing activities.
- > High recognition of the project's 'Regional Energy Profit Cluster' concept (economic growth, employment and innovation) is expected throughout Europe.

Budget: €840 576
(EU contribution: 50%)





Sharing insular expertise



Integrated initiatives

20

Transparent Energy Planning and Implementation TRANSPLAN

Duration: 9/2007–2/2010

Objectives

The project is focused on energy planning for local and regional communities that lack financial resources. It will demonstrate how they can simply collect data to determine energy balances and how they can draw up efficient plans to introduce the use of renewable energy sources.

TransPlan aims to get all stakeholders working towards a common goal – including a 5% reduction in fossil fuel use by the project's end. The final goal is to create long-term energy action plans and strategies for five islands. Included in these will be systematic monitoring of energy consumption, a demonstration of efficient processes and tools for dissemination activities.

Results

- > Energy balances and action plans for five islands in five different countries will be made available.
- > An Energy Planning Tool (EPT) is available for sharing with other European municipalities and regions.
- > Platforms for implementation of energy actions and local implementation groups for each type of action on the five islands have been set up.
- > Trans-island implementation groups working in areas such as biogas, waste to energy, utilisation of solar and biomass in district heating and cooling, and local production of fuels for transport were launched.
- > Observers from the islands Rügen (Germany), Hiiumaa (Estonia), Oland (Sweden) and three provinces in Sardinia are participating in the process and kept informed about the project's methodology. The results are being presented in each of these observer-areas, in the hope that they too can develop and implement long-term sustainable energy strategies with high local involvement.

Budget: €714 324
(EU contribution: 50%)

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21

Pathways to Renewable and Efficient Energy Systems PATH-TO-RES

Duration: 11/2007–4/2010

Objectives

This project aims to develop a seven-step assessment tool based on real data from local and regional energy systems, by studying and assessing a number of case studies in European countries.

The project will establish a detailed description of the present system, analyse the possibilities for, and technical and institutional barriers to the energy transformation process, and develop the bridging towards a more sustainable, renewable and efficient energy system.

To assess whether this tool will work well for sustainability, the partners intend to combine quantitative and qualitative analysis and to investigate and develop a methodology for each of the steps. The quantitative analysis will focus on energy systems, markets, technology assessment and assessment of goals and directives. The qualitative analysis will mainly focus on regional case studies, as well as the results from seminars and workshops with stakeholders.

Results

- > An assessment methodology to evaluate and define pathways to renewable and efficient energy systems.
- > Case studies, based on short-term results, on pathways to renewable and efficient energy systems.
- > Preparation of assessment methodology for dissemination and sharing with other EU regions, calling on the project's longer-term results.

Budget: €688 404
(EU contribution: 50%)

Seven
steps to
sustainability



Building sustainability consensus

22

Sustainable Energy Citizenships SEC

Duration: 9/2007–5/2010

Objectives

This project aims to enhance the coherence of projects and activities, and to develop visions that will be shared by a broad range of key actors in a process that will ultimately deliver sustainable energy supply in four European regions.

The partners will develop road maps for this purpose and set up formal energy citizenships. Work is also underway to provide comprehensive information on the project to key and market actors and the general public in four target areas in Germany, France, Austria, and Poland. The goal is to ensure successful continuity of the process in the medium and long term by building consensus on future activities. Project results will be shared throughout Europe.

Results

- > Regional road maps for ambitious targets on sustainable energy supply.
- > Implementation structures now established.
- > Assessments and lists of potential measures in each region.
- > 'On the way to the 100% region', guidebook in English and Polish.
- > A range of information and dissemination materials.

Budget: €694 214

(EU contribution: 50%)



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Integrated initiatives

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Capitalising on case studies

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23

Partnership Energy Planning as a tool for realising European Sustainable Energy Communities PEPSEEC

Duration: 1/2008–6/2010

Objectives

The project aims to support the emergence of European sustainable energy communities, calling on local community planning for the efficient supply, distribution and use of renewable energy sources and improved management of conventional energy.

The partners want to learn from, and widen the use of, existing best practice on energy planning methodologies from Sweden and elsewhere in the EU. They want to develop these by adding innovative techniques to facilitate the involvement of all stakeholders with the potential to deliver an effective energy plan.

Community needs and aspirations will be recognised and incorporated into energy plans that promote the wider benefits of a low-carbon economy.

Results

- > Interactive knowledge base, with over 150 case studies from all over Europe on best practice in building partnerships to achieve sustainable energy communities. The focus is on community engagement and behaviour change.
- > Tool kit on practice and methodologies for engaging partners and stakeholders and building sustainable partnerships, plus sustainable energy action plans in participating city-regions.
- > Advice and guidance on how engagement approaches, from policy/strategy level to practical level, can best be used to stimulate partner/stakeholder engagement in three key areas: senior decision-makers, citizens and businesses.
- > Identification of the way innovative digital technologies and applications can be used to improve energy planning, community and business involvement and wider behaviour change.
- > Establishment of an effective dissemination and communications network through European local authorities and regional government agencies, coordinated through EURO CITIES.

Budget: €1 344 796
(EU contribution: 50%)





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Sustainable Energy Communities – Benchmarking of energy and climate performance indicators on the web SEC-BENCH

Duration: 11/2007–4/2010

Objectives

The main objective of the SEC-BENCH project is the development of a web-based tool to help municipalities to realise their potential in terms of energy savings and conversion to renewable energy sources.

The partners are working to achieve this by establishing national thematic networks in the seven partner countries, involving as many municipalities as possible in each one. They also intend to carry out pilot energy and climate plans, to develop energy performance indicators and a web-based benchmarking scheme. Finally, they will organise a series of dissemination activities to involve all relevant stakeholders at local, regional, national and international level.

Results

- > Investigation of existing solutions, and development of a web-based benchmark tool for municipal energy and climate indicators.
- > Establishment and/or operation of national thematic networks in seven partner countries.
- > Review of existing planning models as well as publication of a practical guide on local energy planning.
- > Presentation of relevant indicators and preparation of a proposal for data collection routines and data processing.

Budget: €838 669

(EU contribution: 50%)

**Benchmarking
success**

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Quest
for peak
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25

RES and RUE stimulation in Mountainous-agricultural communities towards sustainable development MOUNTAIN-RES/RUE

Duration: 12/2007–11/2009

Objectives

The project's main objective is to stimulate renewable energy sources and the rational use of energy in four local agricultural communities located in mountainous regions. The partners will analyse the needs and potential of these communities, before identifying relevant new technologies and land use planning.

Specific objectives include the identification of viable and socially useful RES and RUE project opportunities and the preparation of a guide for self-sufficient energy communities. There are also plans to launch the first European 'sustainable energy network in mountainous-agricultural communities'.

Results

- > The state of play of RES and RUE in the participating communities was analysed and best practice examples on implemented techniques were collected.
- > The needs and prospects for RES and RUE market growth in the communities were demonstrated.
- > RES and RUE project ideas for implementation in each community will be identified and put into place.
- > A guide for self-sufficient energy communities will be published.
- > The design for a sustainable energy network in mountainous-agricultural communities will be presented.

Budget: €647 857
(EU contribution: 50%)





Waving the flag for sustainability

26

Energy Actions and Systems for the Mediterranean local communities EASY

Duration: 12/2007–11/2009

Objectives

The project has its origins in the premise that Mediterranean communities have great potential for sustainable development. The partners are working to improve local production of renewable energies, energy efficiency, and to achieve wide-scale sustainable management in decentralised and remote settlements in this region.

The general objective is to define and disseminate a standardised model of local-based energy systems for small and medium-sized remote urban areas – including islands and favourite tourist areas in Mediterranean regions. The focus is on growth of sustainable energy. The model is being applied and tested in four Mediterranean locations.

Results

- > A model sustainable energy system integrating supply and management for local decentralised and remote areas will be developed and local energy plans launched in each community.
- > Local community educational programmes on the energy planning and management processes are being set up.
- > A progressive revitalisation of the energy market's basic conditions at local and regional levels, starting with the improvement of technical know-how and market viability in the communities.

Budget: €616 296

(EU contribution: 49%)

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Integrated initiatives

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Beating the odds

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27

'Bet to win!' – the climate competition between municipalities and their citizens

ENERGY NEIGHBOURHOOD

Duration: 10/2007–4/2010

Objectives

The project's overall objective is to bring the Kyoto Protocol closer to people, right into their living rooms, and into their community. For that purpose, the partners are organising a 'bet' in each country, between a selected community and its citizens.

Groups of households, the 'Energy Neighbourhoods', are being set up. They must try to save as much heat and electricity as possible during the six-month period of the bet. They are supported by volunteer 'Energy Masters', who are specially trained under the project to share their knowledge of energy efficiency with households. The community will present an award to each Energy Neighbourhood that saves 8% or more energy in the given time.

Results

- > Transfer of successful forerunner Flemish project 'Klimaatwijken' to new countries and its extension in Belgium is being achieved.
- > Energy Neighbourhoods (with around 8 to 12 households) in each of the eight countries in the project have been set up.
- > Energy savings of at least 8% as an outcome of the 'bet' in each neighbourhood, equivalent to up to 7 704 000 kWh throughout the project, plus cost savings of up to €250 099 over six months and CO₂ reductions of up to 4 730 tonnes are expected.
- > 'Energy Masters' who support the Energy Neighbourhoods were identified and successfully trained.
- > Local climate debate, where participants can challenge the authorities in their energy-saving efforts and policies will be launched.

Budget: €1 198 331
(EU contribution: 50%)





28

Raising awareness on renewable energy developing agro-energetic chain models

RADAR

Duration: 11/2007–10/2009

Objectives

Made up of 11 partners from seven EU countries, RADAR aims to promote energy citizenship by setting up Rural Sustainable Energy Communities. These can facilitate the adoption by local communities of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures and prepare the way for large-scale investments in these fields.

The project concentrates on the implementation of awareness-raising activities. The creation of Rural SECs enables the use of a bottom-up approach and adjustment of the activities to meet the needs of the areas concerned. The partners plan to describe the pilot areas, define Agro-Energetic Chain Models and carry out a feasibility study.

Results

- > A transnational Pilot Areas Network (PAN) has been set up. This enables the communities to share best practices and exchange data for the implementation of Agro-Energetic Chain Studies.
- > Partners have completed a description of the pilot areas and are producing Agro-Energetic Chain Models for each one, based on a maps database that includes information on energy consumption and biomass availability.
- > Feasibility studies will be carried out to check the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agro-Energetic Chain Models and agro-energetic chains agreements made among stakeholders involved in each Rural SEC.

Budget: €865 968

(EU contribution: 50%)

Model
behaviour

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29

Energy and Urban Planning In Restructuring Areas ENPIRE

Duration: 1/2008–12/2009

Objectives

The project will evaluate the state of the art in energy and urban planning in participating countries, so as to gain and share experience on policy benchmarking.

The project will generate recommendations and guidelines for local policy processes, which will be used in seven case studies in areas being redeveloped. The partners have adopted an active dissemination policy and will focus on local target groups in all EU-27 Member States, while paying particular attention to the local situation in eastern Europe. The outcome of local case studies will generate conclusions and recommendations for future projects, to be presented at an international symposium and nationally by participants.

Results

- > Guidelines on energy and urban planning, in particular, covering aims and legislation, concept development and implementing agreements.
- > Testing of guidelines in seven local case studies and subsequent refining of them for dissemination to a wider European audience.

Budget: €1 109 210
(EU contribution: 50%)

**Constructive
assistance**



Breaking through barriers

30

Novel and Integrated Model of Sustainable Energy Communities NIMSEC

Duration: 1/2008–2/2010

Objectives

Targeting more than 20 local communities in four European regions, NIMSEC is trying to resolve a series of locally identified problems related to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources.

Following analysis of the local framework conditions and data collected during energy audits, the partners will engage in concrete pilot actions aimed at creating a novel, proactive and broadly supported type of Sustainable Energy Community. Actions are designed to bring down the local market and training and awareness barriers to energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy. They will focus on sectors ranging from local administrations to industry and/or agriculture and the general public.

Results

- > Fully formulated integrated plans and strategies for four Sustainable Energy Communities, directly reaching a dozen local administrations, will be developed.
- > Pilot projects for a Smart Energy Efficiency House/Corners in the form of a permanent exhibition will be set up.
- > Soft commercial loans and voluntary commercial agreements will be launched.
- > Basic and advanced courses for university students and technicians, on energy efficiency and renewable energies will be designed.

Budget: €756 382
(EU contribution: 49%)



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31

Sustainable Energy in Tourism dominated Communities SETCOM

Duration: 10/2008–3/2011

Objectives

The project aims to build up and promote 10 communities from 10 countries as pioneers for sustainable energy use in the tourism sector. Target groups include all tourism stakeholders, including companies, administrations, employees and tourists themselves.

Throughout the project, target groups will learn how they can reduce energy consumption and CO₂ emissions via seminars, campaigns, energy tours and other information material. The partner will also set up action plans to develop sustainable energy use in tourism in the target communities. The project's objectives coincide with the scope of the EU Action Plan for more Sustainable European Tourism.

Results

- > The collection of sustainable traffic concepts and case studies is under way.
- > Awareness-raising activities for tourists on their energy consumption during their holidays, thanks to energy tours, as well as for tourism facilities are currently being planned.
- > Reduced energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in the tourism sector in 10 communities, through the definition and approval of clear energy action plans, are expected at the end of the project.
- > An increase in use of renewable energy sources in the communities is expected.

Budget: €1 383 586
(EU contribution: 75%)

Encouraging
virtuous
vacations





Guiding governments and communities

32

European Sustainable Energy Communities – effective Integrated Local Energy Action today

SUSTAINABLE NOW

Duration: 9/2008–8/2011

Objectives

Over a period of three years, the project will work towards building local capacity development for integrated energy management and implementation of local energy action plans. It will strengthen the role of local and provincial governments and political and administrative bodies, while guiding communities in the sustainable energy transition period.

The partners will address non-technical aspects, capacity building, peer exchange and reviews in order to create an environment of tangible and long-term sustainable results with an extensive audience of local and regional actors.

Results

- > Two Europe-wide Circles of Learning and Excellence have been set up.
- > The Circles of Learning cities have started to develop their local energy action plans and established management structures for these.
- > The Circles of Learning cities have organised energy weeks to include their communities.
- > The capacity of local governments will be improved and an energy guidance package with instruments will be developed.

Budget: €1 454 863
(EU contribution: 75%)



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Setting
a good
example

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33

Management of Domains related to Energy in Local authorities MODEL

Duration: 9/2007–2/2010

Objectives

The project aims to help 34 local authorities from eight new EU Member States and candidate countries to become energy models for citizens and other municipalities. The partners assist these municipalities with planning, implementing and evaluating activities to improve local energy efficiency, focused on their overall process management, and improve practical capacities at both individual (municipalities) and collective (networks) levels.

Activities will include preparing the ground for Sustainable Energy Communities, by establishing a Common Framework Methodology for Municipal Energy Programmes. The best MODEL Energy Manager and/or the best MODEL Shining Example will be awarded.

Results

- > Forty-two cities (around 2.2 million citizens) have decided to become MODEL pilot cities and to change their city's image by leading their citizens in the fight against energy wasting.
- > The first MODEL award has been presented.
- > Activities such as Municipal Energy Programmes and annual Action Plans in at least 34 pilot municipalities will be implemented, aimed at saving at least 10% of the energy consumed in municipal properties.
- > Awareness-raising events and activities for all local stakeholders and citizens concerning possible sustainable actions in the field of energy.
- > Energy Managers/Units in local authorities will be appointed and/or strengthened.
- > A replicable common methodology (tool) influencing the process management will be created, used in the respective countries and promoted by national applicants.
- > In all countries, sustainable collective capacities (such as networks) will be established to inform local authorities, initiate, coordinate and support municipal projects, and train energy managers.

Budget: €1 731 008
(EU contribution: 50%)





Help for historic communities



Integrated initiatives

34

Sustainable Energy Communities Historic Urban Areas SECHURBA

Duration: 9/2008–2/2011

Objectives

This project aims to look at historic buildings on a community level. The partners intend to develop ways to encourage energy efficiency practices and renewable energy systems in these communities as well as best practice examples to encourage other communities and local actors and policymakers to follow suit.

Specific objectives include a 40% reduction in CO₂ emissions in the studied buildings and communities, funding guidelines and secure funding commitments, and the creation of a route map for policymakers, so-called 'Historic Community Climate Change Strategies'. The partners will also produce a best practice guide and a software tool for choosing appropriate intervention in historic buildings.

Results

- > Historic Community Climate Change Strategies (to be developed).
- > Target of 40% reduction in CO₂ emissions in studied buildings and communities to be reached.
- > Historic Community Climate Change Strategies – route map for policymakers (taking into account the particular historic context in the target communities).
- > SECHURBA Guide, including best practice and identification of barriers and prospects for sustainable energy intervention, to be drafted.
- > A software tool for choosing appropriate intervention in historic buildings, designed for use by planners, architects, surveyors and decision-makers in historic communities and buildings.

Budget: €981 441

(EU contribution: 75%)

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Projectreport



Integrated initiatives

Find out more online

Intelligent Energy – Europe programme

Learn more about the Intelligent Energy – Europe programme online (<http://ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy>).

The site provides guidance on how to apply for funding (http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/call_for_proposals/index_en.htm) and how to implement your project once you get funding (http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/implementation/index_en.htm).

The Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation

Find out about the EACI, the Agency that manages the IEE programme, online (<http://ec.europa.eu/eaci/>).

European Commission – Energy and Transport

More information about what the European Commission is doing in the field of energy and transport is available online (http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/index_en.htm).



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Sustainable Energy Communities Common actions for common goals

As climate change and the security of energy supply increasingly dominate the headlines, the need to move European communities towards a low-carbon future becomes more obvious by the day. The European Union's main response is contained in its recently adopted climate action and renewable energy package, which sets ambitious targets on cutting greenhouse gases, boosting energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy sources at EU and national levels by 2020.

Many of the same objectives underpin Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE). Launched in 2003, this EU support programme focuses on delivering more renewable energy and energy efficiency to end-users. This brochure features 34 projects funded under the IEE's Sustainable Energies Communities (SEC) component, highlighting the work and achievements of local and regional communities across Europe in the field of sustainable energy.

<http://ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy>