



PEACE_Alps

Policy recommendations



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Short Description

This document defines recommendations FOR POLICY MAKERS at EU, National, Regional and Local (inter-municipal) levels, on accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy through the implementation of centralised energy services that can effectively support the implementation of sustainable energy action plans at sub-national levels.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 5

2. Layout 6

3. Recommendations 7

1. Introduction

The following section summarizes **recommendations for POLICY MAKERS at EU, National, Regional and Local (inter-municipal) levels**, on accelerating the transition to a low-carbon economy through the implementation of **centralised energy services at regional and inter-municipal levels** that can effectively support the implementation of sustainable energy and climate action plans.

The recommendations are based on the outcomes of discussions and activities carried out by Project Partners within the framework of the Alpine Space PEACE_Alps project. They were derived by identifying gaps in existing policy instruments and defining key elements that could be introduced in future or revised legislation and tools in order to facilitate the implementation of centralised energy services.

The following policy recommendations are addressing issues at stake or areas for improvements that have been tackled by the PEACE_Alps project, such as the needs to:

- Strengthen the role of regional and local authorities in sustainable energy and climate change planning
- Recognize climate change mitigation and adaptation as statutory duties of Local and Regional public authorities (in all Alpine Space Area Member States)
- Support regional and local public authorities in implementing economies of scale through aggregated projects
- Implement awareness raising among policy makers about the possibilities and benefits of implementing aggregated projects supported by centralised services
- Support local authorities by implementing centralised energy and climate services at regional level.

At a European level, recommendations can inform the review of Directives within the framework of the “Clean energy for All Europeans” strategy. They also consider the implementation of EU initiatives in climate protection and sustainable energy such as the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy as well as the Managenergy initiative. They also provide insights for the effective implementation of the EUSALP macro-regional strategy. Finally they consider the future development of new programme priorities according to the new EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027.

Additional measures are listed below that can be implemented by Member States or Regions directly in their own policy instruments, depending on their own legislative framework, in order to facilitate the implementation of centralised energy strategies and services.

2. Layout

10 policy recommendations are described in section 3. Their presentation uses a common layout as indicated below:

1. **Targeted** policy level(s) and organization(s):

For instance, policy makers that can make a change at:

EU level:

EC DGs in charge of Legislative framework, Cooperation programmes and EU initiatives
EUSALP Executive Board in charge of EUSALP strategies and action plans

Member State level:

MPs in charge of laws, transposing EC directives
Central administration in charge of implementing national policy instruments: developing application decrees, managing funds and incentive programmes

Regional or Inter-municipal levels:

Elected representatives in charge of sub-national legislation
Administration in charge of implementing policy instruments support activities, managing incentive programmes and operational funds, etc.

2. **Issue at stake:**

For instance:

Legislation not implemented or lacking
Awareness raising among policy makers
Recognition of new organizational and economic models in existing policy instruments
Need to prioritize specific priorities in existing policy instruments (coherence with other sustainable development goals,..)
Need to facilitate specific processes (difficulties in accessing funds, enabling networking processes..)
Lack of incentive mechanisms
Additional capacity building needed

3. **Recommendation:**

Description of the proposed recommendation

4. **Successful example(s)**

Examples successfully implemented by policy makers

3. Recommendations

1

RAISING AWARENESS OF NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY MAKERS POLICY LEVEL: *EU LEVEL: EC DGs*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? The role of Territorial Coordinators in facilitating the effective implementation of energy and climate plans at regional and local levels and their added values, are not well known by policy makers at National, Regional and Local levels, therefore limiting the **support that is needed at local level from policy makers** in order to set up and operate Territorial Coordination structures within the territories.

RECOMMENDATION: Existing EU initiatives such as Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and the Managenergy initiative should emphasize the role of Territorial Coordinators through tangible examples and results. This could be done by implementing an **awareness raising** campaign dedicated to policy makers (e.g. in relations with a CoM signatory event, Managenergy activities, etc.)

Added values provided by Territorial Coordinators should be highlighted for instance in:

- standardizing working methods (planning, monitoring, communication)
- maximising capacity building
- providing “one-stop shop” services to local authorities and citizens
- upscaling energy transition through the implementation of aggregated projects
- facilitating the cooperation and decision processes, improving the governance process
- networking activities, exchanges of experience
- proposing and implementing economies of scale
- implementing a better allocation of incentives

EXAMPLES:

EU: Covenant of Mayors Ceremony - Gathers the Covenant of Mayors community to showcase how local governments develop integrated climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

EU: EUSEW annual award specific to Territorial Coordinators – Aims to recognize outstanding innovation in energy efficiency and renewables from the year’s most successful projects.

SI: RAS – The role of Territorial coordinator in Slovenia is promoted by local energy agencies and is linked to the EU Covenant Supporter initiative.

2

RAISING INTEREST OF LOCAL POLICY MAKERS ABOUT AGGREGATED PROJECTS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED BENEFITS

POLICY LEVEL : *Member States and Regions*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? Local policy makers usually lack relevant information and advanced technical support to evaluate possible economies of scale through **joint/aggregated projects** in sustainable energies and climate change. Although they see the need for more coordinated effort, they rarely engage in joint actions.

RECOMMENDATION: Besides supporting the setting up of Territorial Coordinating structures, MS and Regions should raise the interest of local policy makers in joint projects by **prioritizing** National and Regional **subsidies** to Local authorities. Subsidies, incentives, or part of them, should be contingent on implementing joint sustainable energy projects involving several local municipalities.

EXAMPLES:

DE: [Energiewende Unterallgäu Nordwest](#) – Initiative targeting at accelerating the implementation of renewable energy and efficiency projects in rural areas through intensive cooperation with a regional coordinator (eza!). The incentive for municipalities is free consulting regarding all energy projects for three years. The initiative is financed by the national ministry for Agriculture.

FR: [POSITIVE ENERGY TERRITORY](#): National programme supporting joint sustainable energy initiatives that are taken by neighbouring local public authorities (financial support grant). The initiative is financed by the Ministry of Energy and regions.

3

SUPPORTING THE CREATION OF TERRITORIAL COORDINATING STRUCTURES

POLICY LEVEL : *Member States*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? Territorial Coordinators play a key role in implementing and accelerating the energy transition at regional level. Structures already exist within some EU regions that can or are already endorsing this function (regional energy agency, regional public authority, regional consulting organization, etc). Their **sustainability** can sometimes be questioned and hindered by decisions at regional level.

RECOMMENDATION: In an effort to maximize economies of scale as well as facilitate the energy transition at National level, Member States should propose a standardized scheme and take **legislative measures** to ensure that **regulatory energy and climate plans** are developed and include at least one measure to set up or identify of **Territorial Coordinators** within the region. These structures or technical assistance services should be sustained over time and be considered as a strategic regional priority for supporting the energy transition.

EXAMPLES:

DE: Verein Bayerischer Energieagenturen – Network of regional energy agencies in Bavaria that provides funds and workforce for small municipalities in order to reach their objectives.

FR: TECV law – Regional energy and climate plans (Plans climat énergie territoriaux– PCET) are compulsory at inter-municipal level and aim to cover the entire region.

SI: Local Energy Agency Pomurje (LEAP) supports the development of binding Local energy concepts for municipalities in the Pomurje region. LEAP provides also support for the implementation of the European Energy Award. Both tools include measures for the implementation of technical assistance services.

4

DEVELOPING ADVANCED TECHNICAL SKILLS

POLICY LEVEL : *EU LEVEL: EC DGs, EUSALP*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? Territorial Coordinators play a key role in implementing innovative approaches at regional or inter-municipal levels. Thus, they need to **develop advanced technical skills** in innovative areas such as the aggregation of projects, cooperation schemes and multi-level governance models, innovative financing such as Intracting, Energy Performance Contracting, etc. Further capacity building activities and technical support are to be provided through EU initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION: Existing EU initiatives such as Covenant of Mayors and Managenergy should develop additional **capacity building tools** dedicated to Territorial Coordinators. Several online tools should be implemented for example: Massive Online Open Courses, guides, knowledge platforms or dedicated sections in other existing platforms, etc. Exchange of experiences among Territorial Coordinators could be facilitated through cooperation programmes. Peer learning among institutions and exchange programs, sharing knowledge and success stories are essential to enrol new projects and approaches.

EXAMPLES:

EU: BuildUp – The European portal for energy efficiency in buildings enables professionals and policy makers to share knowledge, find resources and access online services.

EU: Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy – The global initiative provides a set of energy and climate planning and support tools.

EU: Fedarene webinars – FEDARENE promotes the exchange of experiences and provides an array of services, including webinars that provide tools, examples and exchanging platforms to better replicate successful projects and create new ones.

EU: ManageEnergy Master Classes - Courses targeted at experienced energy agencies staff who wish to acquire the tools to boost their capacity to obtain energy projects investments within their region or city.

EU: (SEI) Sustainable Energy Investment Forums – In order to meet EU's climate goals for 2030, SEI forums aim to work with national stakeholders to boost large-scale investment and financing for sustainable energy. European Commission initiative.

5

FINANCING AGGREGATED PROJECTS
POLICY LEVEL : *EU LEVEL: EC DGs, EUSALP*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? Territorial coordinators can play a significant role to help identify the various sources and programs that can **finance aggregated projects**. **Complementarity of funding programmes** can be achieved through common frameworks and local and **regional investment platforms**. The topics of the Horizon 2020 programme are similar with other centrally managed programmes and are all complementary to the cohesion policy. However, their **administrative processes** are very different. There are practical barriers to actually realising the combination of funds which need to be addressed if we are to maximise accessibility and realise the benefits of the complementarity of these programmes.

RECOMMENDATION: A **common framework and common procedures** should be sought for the future Horizon Europe and other centrally managed Union programmes in the areas of research, innovation and market facilitation. These procedures should facilitate access to funds to regional and local public authorities. In order to achieve “coordination and synergies between ESI funds and other union policies and instruments”, the **next Multiannual Financial Framework should support the creation of local and regional investment platforms or “one-stop shops”** to aggregate projects, interact with various EU financial programmes and initiatives, and ensure a reliable interface between investors, project developers and citizens.

EXAMPLES:

IT: 2020 Torino is GETting THERE (2020 TOGETHER) – Coordinated multilevel authorities and other stakeholders in order to create partnerships that will allow for the refurbishment of over 60 public buildings and street lighting throughout the region. Regione Piemonte/ City of Turin.

EU: Horizon2020-Integrated home renovation services – Horizon2020 call for projects targeted at creating or replicating innovative local or regional "integrated home renovation services". The developed services should cover the whole "customer journey" from technical and social diagnosis, technical offer, contracting of works, structuring and provision of finance (e.g. loans or EPCs), to the monitoring of works and quality assurance.

6

PRIORITIZING OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES

POLICY LEVEL : *MS, Regional*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? **Significant economies of scale** can be achieved in the case of aggregated projects. Priorities of the Operational Programmes (European Structural and Investment Funds) are already determined for the ongoing financial period. They usually don't give preference to aggregated projects.

RECOMMENDATION: New OP priorities should be developed for the new financial period 2021-2027 and give **priority to aggregated projects**. This could be done through the introduction of new selection or impact criteria.

To be noted: Aggregated projects should not only be characterized by the amount of money invested but also by the number of public or private investors joining efforts and developing aggregated projects. Funds could also be used to stimulate the market, to finance bankable aggregated projects, thus improving the leverage factor in the use of public funds.

EXAMPLE:

IT: [ROP Energy Efficiency for municipalities](#) – Call for tender to large or grouped municipalities with the aim to explore increments in investments when grouping projects.

7

PROMOTING TERRITORIAL ENERGY and CLIMATE COOPERATION PROJECTS

POLICY LEVEL : *MS, Regional*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? Territorial energy cooperation projects represent a major opportunity for engaging a wide range of stakeholders and thus maximising the chance of achieving ambitious sustainable energy objectives at local level. They include for instance: RES community projects, urban-rural energy cooperation projects, innovative territorial programmes targeting energy independence using advanced applications such as self-consumption and technologies such as micro-grids. Although they can bring major benefits, these **cooperation projects** are by nature difficult to initiate, finance, operate and sustain. Territorial Coordinators can facilitate the process.

RECOMMENDATION: In order to fully gain advantage from the presence and support of Territorial Coordinators, MS and Regions should ensure that they fully **support territorial energy and climate cooperation projects**, facilitate mutual learning and promote their results. This could be done through communication campaigns, incentive programmes, legislative framework, networking activities, etc.

EXAMPLES:

DE: European Energy Award – the management system systematically displays potentials where municipalities can implement actions. The regional coordinator supports municipalities participating in the EEA programme in organizing experience exchange meetings four times each year with the objective to disseminate successful projects and initiate actions that can also be facilitated by pooling through the energy. Regional Energy Agency eza!.

FR: PTRE Territorial Platform for Energy Refurbishment – Aims to mobilize, stimulate and aid all actors in order to facilitate the refurbishment of buildings. ADEME (National energy agency).

SI: ENIDO and PEN regional networks of actors including project planners, architects, installers and supervisors in the construction, renewables or energy efficiency domains. Local Energy Agency Promuje.

8

PROMOTING TERRITORIAL ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

POLICY LEVEL : *EUSALP, Member States, Regional*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? A sound **energy management service** is essential to address available funds for the best investments to be implemented and to reduce energy waste and avoid useless costs. It is also essential to monitor and understand the effectiveness of implemented projects. Finally, local authorities can communicate to citizens about the improvements achieved along the years. In most cases energy management is not implemented in a structured and systematic way, leading to uncertainties and poor decision making. Territorial Coordinators can offer centralized solutions for supporting the energy management for a pool of municipalities reducing costs and providing standard approaches and economies of scale.

RECOMMENDATION: In order to fully gain advantage from the presence and support of Territorial Coordinators, EUSALP and Regions should promote aggregated projects providing **joint energy management services**. The use of online tools and GIS could ease this process, the benchmark among consumptions recorded by different municipalities and the provision of alerts and interpretation of data with standard methods and approaches. European database, such as DEEP (De-risking energy database) could be also fed more effectively by adequate central actors and EUSALP territorial coordinators. They could share their experiences and results as they are working on a territory with similar issues and challenges.

EXAMPLES:

DE: [Energy Alliance Oberallgäu](#) – Aims to facilitate energy management action in municipalities by providing ready-to-use actions and supports with expertise and workforce. Oberallgäu Landkreis.

FR: [Shared Energy Consulting](#) (Conseil en énergie partagée) provides small local communities with shared energy support services. ADEME (National energy agency).

IT: [ENERCLOUD+](#) Webtool introducing an energy management system for small and medium municipalities. Piemonte Region.

9

PROVIDE **ACCESS TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND GENERAL PUBLIC TO AGGREGATED ENERGY AND CLIMATE DATA AT TERRITORIAL LEVEL**

POLICY LEVEL : *Member States, Regional*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? Sustainable energy planning at regional and local levels requires strong multi-stakeholder engagement (civil society, financiers, etc.) in order to actively contribute to the implementation of the plans. As of today, **access to aggregated territorial energy and climate change data** is limited. Aggregated energy data not infringing the data protection rules (energy consumption, RES production, etc.) should be made accessible to the local public authorities and general public. EU legislation should include recommendations for Member States to ensure National and Regional public authorities provide access, in a free and easily accessible way, to territorial aggregated energy and climate data.

RECOMMENDATION: Member States should take **legislative measures** to ensure that aggregated territorial energy and climate data sets are created by the National Distribution System Operators and other data providers and that they are easily available to the local public administrations and general public, at least upon request.

EXAMPLE:

FR: TECV law – This measure provides for data relative to energy to be transmitted to public authorities, by the gas, electricity or heat network operators, as well as by operators supplying petroleum products, where such data is of use to those public authorities in fulfilling their public duties.

10

PROVIDE SUPPORT TO REGIONAL ENERGY AND CLIMATE DATA CENTRES

POLICY LEVEL : *MS, Regional*

WHAT IS AT STAKE? MS and regions can play a crucial role in supporting local municipality sustainable energy planning by facilitating access to energy data from multiple providers and by setting up **regional data centres or observatories**. Several European initiatives have already proven successful. More initiatives could be undertaken and provide effective support to aggregated projects.

RECOMMENDATION: EU legislation should recognize the key role of sub-national data centres working closely with municipalities and facilitating data access and processing for sustainable energy planning. It could be done by **requesting MS to encourage regional public authorities**, especially the ones that have signed up to the Covenant of Mayors as territorial coordinator to set up or facilitate the creation of independent voluntary **“one-stop shop “ data centres** providing free data sharing services to local authorities and interfacing with multiple data providers. MS, through their National energy agencies or equivalent organization, should also facilitate capacity building activities among these regional data centres (e.g. by creating a National network or capacity building capabilities).

EXAMPLE:

Across Europe, more than 30 regional data centres exist that are supported by public authorities and work closely with energy data providers and energy agencies in order to provide free of charge energy data services to local authorities for energy planning. A European network has been created and is supported by FEDARENE <http://www.energee-watch.eu/>