



14<sup>th</sup> September 2022

## ZEROCO2 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES ACCEPTED BEFORE FINAL PROJECT MEETING

The Interreg Europe Project ZeroCO2 additional one-year activity is drawing to its close by end of September 2022. The project has succeeded in securing additional funds from the Fifth Interreg Europe Call to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on energy efficiency initiatives in buildings.

During this year, three Good Practice Examples have been identified and promoted. These have now been approved and published on the Interreg Europe Good Practice Platform.

One of the identified Good Practices "Deep Renovation of a Social Housing Block to Zero Energy Levels" – <https://www.interregeurope.eu/node/42169>, deals with the building renovation of a 40-family housing block in Zabbar. A detailed pre-analysis of the building and the possible measures that can be feasibly implemented has been fully conducted by the University ahead of the Housing Authority's commitment to fund the project from national funds. The publication can be freely accessed at <https://doi.org/10.3389/fenrg.2020.560892>

Another Good Practice Example "Encouraging Behavioural Change in Households and Micro SMEs" – <https://www.interregeurope.eu/node/42165>, highlighted the efforts carried out by the Energy and Water Agency to reach out to homeowners and micro-SMEs, to support them in achieving a higher efficiency status in their buildings. This programme is still ongoing and any person can contact the Agency to avail themselves of this free consultation.

The third Good Practice Example "Irrinova Darek (Renovate your Home)" – <https://www.interregeurope.eu/node/42167>, was a bold move by the Building and Construction Authority to support the renovation of some of the worst performing dwellings in the inner harbour areas to achieve significant improvements in their energy ratings and indoor comfort. This was a pilot financial scheme that was immediately taken up when launched and is currently being implemented.

Thanks to the close cooperation that the ZeroCO2 project has fostered between the University of Malta, the Energy and Water Agency, the Building and Construction Authority and the Housing Authority, it was possible not only to identify these Good Practices but also to work together in promoting a number of policy action proposals.

Four proposals will be discussed during the Final Regional Stakeholders Meeting to be held at the Waterfront Hotel on Wednesday 28 September 2022.

The first proposal is the need to discuss and eventually propose a local indoor air quality standard to be managed by the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA) with the participation of all stakeholders that can provide a better framework to ensure that buildings have a healthy and safe indoor environment based on the most appropriate European standards, thus avoiding misunderstandings and providing clear guidance to engineers and architects when designing new



buildings or renovating existing ones. This can also reduce the risk of air contamination and the risk of contracting airborne-viruses infections.

Another action proposal that was identified during this year's ZeroCO2 project was the need for further awareness with regards to energy consumption. It is proposed that the data gathered by the existing electricity smart meters is made available online or via a mobile app to all consumers. Incidentally, the Water Services Corporation has this year initiated a similar initiative, whereby consumers can monitor their water energy consumption in a very detailed manner online. This helps in avoiding wastage through automatic alerts and in curbing peak loads.

A third initiative that can be taken up is making better use of the existing energy performance certificates (EPCs), through a more detailed analysis of their ratings, to establish typical energy rating of existing building categories which serves as a benchmark for triggering renovation strategies, as well as identifying the worst performing categories to prioritise their renovation process. The forthcoming recast of the EU Energy performance of Buildings Directive is specifically aiming at establishing controls and trigger points for deep renovation across the EU, by better use of the existing EPCs and establishing the building renovation passports for each building.

The final proposal calls for the establishment of a one-stop shop for energy efficiency and renewable energy, to consolidate the existing initiatives that are being taken by different entities and to harmonise the support given, not only to consumers and potential energy efficiency implementers but also to provide technical advice to practicing engineers, architects and project managers on methods and best-practices to accelerate the shift to zero energy status and carbon neutrality in buildings and to address the whole customer journey from information, technical assistance, structuring and provision of financial support, to the monitoring of energy savings.

Registration for the Final Regional Stakeholders Meeting is now open and interested participants can send a request by email to [charles.yousif@um.edu.mt](mailto:charles.yousif@um.edu.mt) by Friday 23 September 2022. Only confirmed registrations will be able to attend.



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