



Third UP-STAIRS Workshop

outcome report

Deliverable 5.6

Dissemination Level:	PU
Authors:	Lorena Sánchez Relañó, IERC Ivanka Pandelieva-Dimova, SEC Paco Jofra, ECO Christine Öhlinger, ESV
Contributors:	Anna Piórkowska, KAPE Karolina Loth-Babut, KAPE



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 891775

Table of contents

Table of contents.....	2
List of acronyms	3
Executive summary	4
Part 1: Energy Poverty Advisory Hub	4
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Participants and Agenda.....	5
2.1. Participants.....	5
2.2. Agenda.....	6
3. Summary of delivered presentations.....	8
4. Interactive activity results.....	8
4.1. Group 1	8
4.2. Group 2	9
4.3. Summary.....	10
5. Conclusions, recommendations and further actions.....	10
Part 2: Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum	11
1. Introduction.....	11
2. Participants and Agenda.....	11
2.1. Participants	11
2.2. Agenda.....	12
3. Summary of delivered presentation.....	13
4. Group activity results	14
5. Conclusions, recommendations and further actions.....	14

List of acronyms

AMB	Barcelona Metropolitan Area
CoMIF	Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum
DSO	Distribution System Operator
ECO	Associació Ecoserveis
EPAH	Energy Poverty Advisory Hub
ESV	OÖ Energiesparverband
EU	European Union
IERC	International Energy Research Centre
KAPE	The Polish National Energy Conservation Agency
OSS	One-Stop-Shop
SEC	Sofia Energy Centre
WP	Work Package

Executive summary

The report from the third workshop under WP5 has been divided into two different parts. Each of them includes a description of the event in which the UP-STAIRS workshop was conducted. The first is: "One-Stop-Shops to Empower Citizens: Involving Communities to Help Alleviate Energy Poverty". It took place in the context of the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH) conference in Warsaw in September 2023 and was attended by partners from Poland, Ireland and Bulgaria. The second event was "The Covenant of Mayors Investment Energy Transition Forum", which took place in Brussels at the end of October 2023 and was attended by partners from Spain and Austria.

Part 1: Energy Poverty Advisory Hub

1. Introduction

The UP-STAIRS interactive workshop "One-Stop-Shops to Empower Citizens: Involving Communities to Help Alleviate Energy Poverty" was held as a parallel session in the framework of Annual Conference of Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH), on 20th September 2023 in Warsaw, Poland. The conference was attended by local, regional and national authorities, as well as energy agencies, universities and research institutions. The workshop was a joint exercise of two European projects dealing with establishment and operation of home renovation and community energy OSSs: UP-STAIRS and ComAct Projects.

The main aim of the workshop was to communicate the activities, results and lessons learnt of UP-STAIRS pilot OSSs in Cork City and Asenovgrad Municipality. The idea was to make a dialogue with the conference audience on the advantages and challenges of creating home renovation One-Stop-Shops and how their establishment can contribute to the alleviation of energy poverty.

The workshop duration was an hour and a half. It was divided in two parts: 40 minutes for presentation of the case-studies of OSS Cork (Cork City, Ireland) done by Lorena Sánchez Relaño from IERC, OSS ASEN (Asenovgrad Municipality, Bulgaria) done by Ivanka Pandelieva-Dimova (SEC), and the ComAct project presentations, followed by 50 minutes of discussions held in parallel groups around two discussion tables. At the beginning of the discussion, four questions were introduced to workshop participants. They were asked to split into two groups and in each group to work together and provide thoughts and opinions. The questions and answers were put on a flipchart paper with sticky notes. At the end of the group discussions, the results were harvested and a summary was presented by each group's reporter with the results and conclusions achieved during the exercise.

SAVE THE DATE

Energy Poverty Advisory Hub ANNUAL CONFERENCE

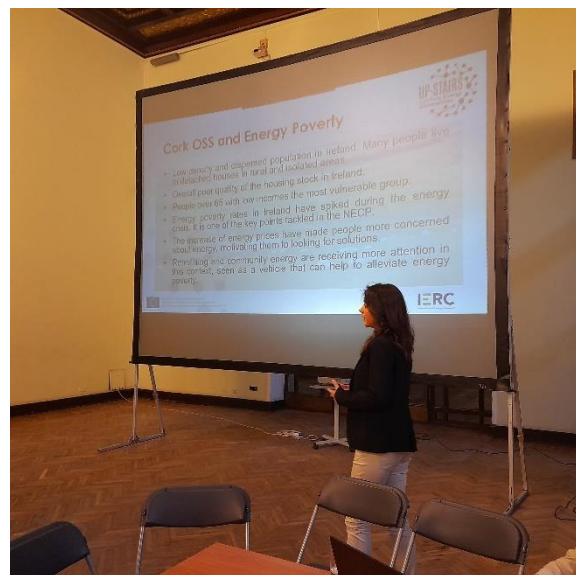
19-20 September 2023, Warsaw, Poland



2. Participants and Agenda

2.1. Participants

The workshop was attended by about 30 participants from various relevant organisations – national, regional and local authorities, universities, research institutions, energy agencies, etc., interested in the role of home renovation OSS in the fight against energy poverty. Following are some pictures of the workshop:





2.2. Agenda

The workshop covered the advantages and challenges of creating one-stop-shops for home renovation and offered valuable perspectives on efficiently connecting with homeowners in multi-family apartment buildings via community resource centers. The workshop's kickoff involved presentations from the UPSTAIRS and ComAct project's pilot countries after which participants were actively engaged in interactive scenarios. Following are the main presenters during the workshop:

- Karolina Loth-Babut, Managing Director, Krajowa Agencja Poszanowania Energii Spolka Akcyjna (KAPE) (workshop moderator);
- Gyorgy Sumeghy, Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy, Europe and the Middle East, Habitat for Humanity International (workshop moderator);

- Lorena Sánchez Relaño, Research Engineer, International Energy Research Centre (IERC) – presentation of UP-STAIRS Project and the case of Cork OSS, moderator of Group Activity 1;
- Ivanka Pandelieva-Dimova, Project Manager, Sofia Energy Centre (SEC) – presentation of the case of UP-STAIRS ASEN OSS, moderator of Group Activity 2;
- Liljana Alceva, Deputy Director, Habitat for Humanity Macedonia (ComAct Project);
- Stanislav Andreev, Energy Efficiency Expert, EnEffect Center for Energy Efficiency (ComAct Project).



3. Summary of delivered presentations

The presentation of the Cork OSS provided firstly an overview of the UP-STAIRS project, introducing its main objectives and pilot regions, focusing on the Cork case. In this way, the services that are provided to citizens in the Cork OSS were detailed, as well as the outcomes achieved so far since its opening in June 2022. Furthermore, the presentation showed the ongoing situation in Ireland with regard to energy poverty and how it could be mitigated through community engagement actions. This was justified with the lessons learnt in the Cork OSS as a result of the interaction with different population groups and the barriers faced by the OSS during its setup and running.

The presentation of ASEN OSS outlined the concept, activities and results of its establishment and operation. It explained how OSS ASEN helped Asenovgrad municipality to alleviate energy poverty through identification of a specific group of apartment owners in multifamily building who are at risk of energy poverty. This process also involved provision of assistance and consulting to them on funding options, in addition to how to come together and form an association of owners and how to receive funding and refurbish the entire building.

4. Interactive activity results

4.1. Group 1

Group 1 discussion counted on 7 participants and was moderated by Lorena Sánchez Relaño (IERC). The main goal of the interactive activity was to discuss with the attendees on possible solutions to the four questions introduced at the beginning of the exercise. The outcomes from the activity are presented below:

On the **first question** “Do you consider the establishment of an OSS as a tool to alleviate energy poverty?”, all the participants agreed that OSS can be a tool to combat energy poverty.

On the **second question** “How the creation of OSS can contribute to fight energy poverty?”, there were two main suggestions:

- There should be OSS that target specifically energy poverty.
- These OSS should act as facilitators in the implementation of financial grants for vulnerable citizens, advising governments how to make simpler schemes for them.

On the **third question** “What are the main barriers to create OSS?”, there was a wide variety of opinions, most of them related to financing schemes and regulation. However, the biggest barrier found to run successfully an OSS in which everyone agreed was the **lack of trust** in the institutions:

- National and regional funding schemes for OSS tend to be complex and are usually designed for co-financing.

- There is a lack of proper legislation in many aspects related to community energy, preventing these OSS from being successful.
- In some countries (especially the ones with a communist background), there is a stigma related to collective engagement. Citizens are more reluctant to the services delivered in the OSS and do not trust neither other citizens nor the system.

On the **fourth question** “Name the measures local governments should take in order to support the creation of OSS”, the following suggestions were shared:

- Local governments should support municipalities, which usually struggle in terms of finance and personnel to run OSS.
- Local governments should review and define better who are the population groups target of OSS.
- Local governments need to work on improving trust among all the involved parties in the development of OSS.

4.2. Group 2

Group 2 discussion was attended by 9 participants and was moderated by Ivanka Pandelieva-Dimova (SEC). It aimed at interaction with participants on the four main questions which were introduced in the beginning of the exercise. The activity results are presented below:

On the **first question** “Do you consider the establishment of an OSS as tool to alleviate energy poverty?”, all 9 participants agreed that it is indeed a tool.

On the **second question** “How the creation of OSS can contribute to fight energy poverty?” there were different suggestions and opinions, as follows:

- Energy poor should be the main target of OSS as the rest of the citizens can have their own advice and can afford to pay for it.
- OSS should cover energy audits for energy poor citizens.
- OSS should provide support to energy poor citizens to act on funding help.

On the **third question** “What are the main barriers to create OSS?” for some participants the main challenge is how to come together to act collectively but there are others who don’t see as an issue.

- OSS should support the energy poor on fulfilling the administrative requirements for getting support;
- Online services can be a problem as often energy poor are not sage with internet and online services. So services should be in person;

On the **fourth question** “Name the measures local governments should take in order to support the creation of OSS” the following opinions were shared:

-
- Capacity building is needed for municipal staff to set up and operate OSS;
 - OSS should be funded by the municipality or other public body not by private organisation - issue of trust and impartiality;
 - Services should be free for energy poor citizens and paid for industries and professionals;
 - Green tax proposal - the example of Cyprus where they apply green tax to hotels (which are the predominant industry) and the money will be used to fund energy audits.

4.3. Summary

The main points from the group discussions can be summarised as follows:

- OSSs are considered necessary tool to help alleviate energy poverty;
- OSS should act as facilitators between governments and citizens, helping to simplify and improve the current financing schemes.
- OSS usually struggle to find personnel and funding for their setup and running, needing more support from local governments.
- OSS can help to rebuild trust between citizens and institutions.
- OSSs should be publicly owned and provide impartial advices, which should be free for energy poor citizens, and paid for other stakeholders like industries or working professionals;
- OSS staff should receive specific training and capacity building in order to establish and operate the OSS;
- OSSs should provide in-person services for energy poor citizens as in many cases they are not well acquainted with on-line services and cannot benefit from them.
- OSSs should assist energy poor citizens during the entire process - information on funding options, filling the administrative forms to apply for funding, get funded and do the building works;
- OSSs should cover the costs of energy audits for the energy poor citizen's housing.

5. Conclusions, recommendations and further actions

The conclusions from the workshop are related to the agreement among the participants about the important role of home renovation OSS as a support tool for home owners and especially those at risk or in energy poverty, and to the various practical aspects of its establishment and operation, proposed and discussed by the participants. It is recommended that the main results from the discussion are included in D3.4 "Guidelines for practical implementation of OSS business models for collective action" and further disseminated among relevant stakeholders to be potentially used when establishing and operating home renovation and community energy OSS.

Part 2: Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum

1. Introduction

The Covenant of Mayors Investment Forum (CoMIF) energy transition event served as a pivotal gathering, drawing together a diverse and influential array of stakeholders deeply entrenched in European projects and initiatives. Beyond its sector-specific focus, the workshop that took place in the event was a testament to inclusivity, opening its doors to the wider public, thereby creating a dynamic forum that brought together perspectives from various corners. The notable success of the event, marked by reaching over 70 participants, underscored the relevance and resonance of the discussions that unfolded. Attendees, spanning the spectrum of energy transition stakeholders, actively engaged in workshops and sessions, contributing to the event's vibrancy and setting the stage for in-depth exploration.

The workshop took place on the 25th October in Brussels.

COVENANT OF MAYORS INVESTMENT FORUM ■ ENERGY EFFICIENCY FINANCE MARKETPLACE

25 October 2023



2. Participants and Agenda

2.1. Participants

The convergence of stakeholders at the event represented a comprehensive cross-section of the energy transition landscape. While the primary focus was on participants from local authorities, investment sector stakeholders and European projects partners, the intentional inclusivity extended the dialogue to a broader public audience, enriching the discourse with diverse perspectives. The event's resounding success was further amplified by the depth of engagement, with participants assuming proactive roles in the various workshops and sessions.

UP-STAIRS was represented by Christiane Egger from ESV and Paco Jofra from Ecoserveis Association; who presented the outcomes from the One-Stop-Shops set-up in the pilots of Upper Austria and Barcelona, respectively.

2.2. Agenda

COVENANT OF MAYORS INVESTMENT FORUM ENERGY EFFICIENCY FINANCE MARKETPLACE

25 October 2023






AGENDA

Times indicated in CET/Brussels time

25 Oct	08:00	Sign-in		
	09:00	Opening Plenary Welcome by Paloma Aba Garrote , Director, European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) Kurt Vandenberghie , Director General, Directorate-General for Climate Action, European Commission Hans Van Steen , Principle Advisor, Directorate-General for Energy, European Commission José Antonio Álvarez Álvarez , Vice-Chair, Banco Santander Joško Klisović , President of the City Assembly of Zagreb, Rapporteur Commission for Environment of the Committee of the Regions » Ballroom		
	10:00	Coffee break ☕ Networking		
		Cities and regions at the centre of the Clean Energy Transition and climate adaptation  How public authorities can prepare local heating and cooling plans and initiate impactful projects. » Ballroom	Mobilizing sustainable energy investments in the public and private sectors  Seamless services for Housing Energy Efficiency Renovation in Sofia, Bulgaria » Studio 4	Emerging approaches to boost energy efficiency finance  Dublin's innovative project finance and delivery structure to upscale sustainable energy investments » Studio2/3
	10:30			
	11:30	 REMARKABLE Climate Leaders - Stimulating Investment Towards Carbon Neutrality » Ballroom	 One stop shops to support energy communities » Studio 4	 Improving energy security and citizens' lives through EU taxonomy-aligned green homes and green finance » Studio2/3
	12:30	Lunch 🍽️ Networking		
	13:30	 The role of Positive Energy Districts in the ongoing energy transition in urban areas » Ballroom	 ELENA - European Local Energy Assistance, the INTERACT project » Studio 4	 Guaranteed financing schemes for deep energy renovations of multifamily buildings » Studio2/3
	14:30	 Generating resilient actions against the heat island effect on urban territory » Ballroom	 Transformation of the district heating system in the Salaiska valley » Studio 4	 Accelerating family home retrofitting with a cost neutral, on-tax, end-to-end solution in The Netherlands. » Studio2/3
	15:30	Coffee break ☕ Networking		
	16:00	 The City of Amsterdam and a green blue solution share key success factors for collaboration based on real life deployment stories » Studio 4	 Support to cities and municipalities in mobilising sustainable energy investments » Ballroom	 Social energy services: co-designing communities with people in energy poverty » Studio2/3
	17:00	» Ballroom Closing Plenary - Eero Allio , Adviser, Energy transition and local governance, Directorate-General for Energy, European Commission - Frédéric Boyer , Co-lead of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy - Europe Office - Aneta Willems , Head of Department Natural Resources, Climate, Sustainable Blue Economy and Clean Energy, CINEA		

3. Summary of delivered presentation

The objective of the UP-STAIRS project was to launch and test energy community One-Stop-Shops (OSS) implementing energy efficiency measures and renewable energy projects in four pilot countries in Europe: Ireland, Bulgaria, Austria and Spain. During the CoMIF, the cases of the Spanish and the Austrian pilots were presented in detail:

- In Spain, the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB) has established physical and online OSS in 9 different municipalities, training over 90 implementation champions. This initiative has empowered over 730 citizens and 370 SMEs in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area to launch collective energy projects.
- In Austria, OÖ Energiesparverband (ESV) has developed a very successful One-Stop-Shop for Energy Communities in the region of Upper Austria. To date, over 1,000 citizens and municipalities have been individually supported and over 100 Renewable Energy Communities are in operation in the region.

The presentation given by Ecoserveis focused on key factors to set up and run a successful One Stop Shop (OSS) in Barcelona Metropolitan Area.

On one hand, the different phases of the set-up were highlighted, using the Barcelona Pilot as a case study. Firstly, the pre-service or design phase which comprises a market analysis, resource analysis, building staff capacities, promotion strategy design and most important, identification of key stakeholders. Secondly, the service phase takes phase, which consists of delivering the One-Stop-Shop service and improving it as it goes; including continuous learning, since the energy transition sector is an ever-changing field. Finally, the post-service phase, which is key to evaluate the service and improve the quality of the advice, which also encompasses the end-user relationship management.

On the other hand, the different fields of advice were explained, such as financial, organizational, legal, communication, technical and mediation.

Finally, the UPSTAIRS Barcelona pilot region was explained and the key findings were remarked, in addition to the training programme that took place, in which capacity building was identified as a key factor for One-Stop-Shop successful functioning.

The presentation given by Christiane Egger on the Upper Austrian OSS focused on the OSS service offered in Upper Austria (events, individual advice), the OSS impact and the lessons learnt during the operation of the OSS.

4. Group activity results

After the presentations, the event transformed into a vibrant space for dynamic discussions. Participants engaged in fruitful conversations that spanned various topics, including the following:

- Viability of the business model from a municipal perspective.
- The innovative added value of energy community advice in OSS.
- Financing opportunities for Energy Communities.
- DSO network role in the energy transition.
- Reflections on training needs and the establishment of effective training programs.
- Key success factors gleaned from the pilot project.

5. Conclusions, recommendations and further actions

To streamline the establishment of an OSS service, the recommendation emerged not to initiate it from scratch. Moreover, incorporating it into existing public authority services during the exploitation phase was deemed as a more pragmatic approach, and creating meaningful stakeholder and project networks was underscored as crucial to prevent overlap and enhance the full potential of One-Stop-Shops.

The next steps for the UP-STAIRS project involve a meticulous analysis of collaboration possibilities with other EU projects, ensuring replicability and fostering a collaborative and sustainable energy transition landscape.

To conclude, the following lessons learnt from the experience of the OSS in Upper Austria were presented by Christiane Egger:

Lessons learnt on operating an OSS

- **Continuous training/upskilling of "advice staff":**
 - frequent changes in regulatory issues, funding programmes, electricity markets
 - clients often have very detailed questions and are up-to-date from the internet!
 - frequent exchanges between staff and with funding operators, regulator, authorities
- **Promotion**
 - no promotion, no demand for services!
 - continuous task that needs a budget, dedicated staff and links to other public services (e.g. funding programme authorities, planning permission offices etc.)
- **Commercial independence**
 - not linked to the sales of a product/service, otherwise not credible
- **A longer-term approach**
 - takes quite a while to build up a service, make it known etc.
 - therefore, should be planned and implemented with the multi-annual perspective (5 years)


This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 881175.

