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Journey to Net-Zero

ZEROCO2 continues on its decarbonisation journey

15 September 2022

From 2016 to 2020, the [Interreg Europe ZEROCO2 project](#) defined Near Zero CO₂ Emission Buildings due to energy use (NZCO2EB). The project presented various benefits, which resulted from various types of building. The original project demonstrated the combination of different technologies and energy efficiency sources – these technologies could be used to achieve the set carbon reduction targets to design tailored policies, which promoted NZCO2EB at the local, regional, national and EU level. The ZEROCO2 project also presented various financial methodologies in order to promote these types of buildings.

In 2021, the ZEROCO2 project received additional EU Interreg Europe funds to continue its applauded work in increasing awareness of and sharing best practices in the realm of decarbonisation technologies for buildings. The extension of the European-funded ZEROCO2 project allowed the participating partner regions take another leap forward targeting the decarbonisation agenda, net zero policies – particularly the [European Green Deal](#) – by addressing policy instruments to optimise allocated recovery funds with a focus on deep renovation of public and residential buildings.



The international Interreg Europe ZEROCO2 project consortium at the Interregional Exchange of Experience & Good Practices Peer Review Event and Steering Group Meeting this June 2022 in Malta.



The international consortium has, indeed, continued to make waves on their journey to net zero over the past year of additional activities. From conducting valuable baseline studies – including the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) regional analyses jointly developed with regional stakeholders, as well as the exchange of experiences and expertise in Ptuj (i.e., what the partnership has learned; identification of common challenges) – to the identification of twelve good practice examples and peer review event in Malta, the international consortium has been working towards their main goal of submitting relevant good practices onto the open-source Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform database.



The ZEROCO2 partnership convened in March 2022 in Ptuj, Slovenia for an interregional exchange of experiences and partner meeting. The meeting was hosted by the project's lead partner, Local Energy Agency Spodnje Podravje (LEASP).

During the first in-person partner meeting of the extended project (March 2022, Ptuj, Slovenia), each project partner presented the findings of their regional SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analyses, which had been carried out over the previous few months in regards to the promotion of near-zero CO₂ emission buildings due to energy use; specifically, within through the identification of measures that address energy efficiency, sustainability and the integration of renewable energy sources (RES) as part of the COVID-19 relief.



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To support in the development of the regional SWOT analyses and baseline studies, regional partners across Slovenia, Greece, Italy, Finland, France and Malta hosted regional stakeholder meetings. During the respective meetings, partners presented the Interreg Europe ZEROCO2 project and the policy instruments to be addressed under the SWOT analysis, which outlined the regional state of affairs surrounding energy subsidies. The main purpose of the regional meetings was to bring together major actors within the region to present the results of the analysis in an effort to benefit from their vision and feedback on regional initiatives related to decarbonisation of buildings.



Furthermore, the consortium communicated and disseminated project results and work conducted within the ZEROCO2 project well beyond the diverse project partnership. On the 5th of May 2022, the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform hosted a webinar as the second episode of the renewable energy financing series on the topic of mobilising citizen financing for renewables. During the session, Charles Yousif from the University of Malta, Institute for Sustainable Energy, and Sandro Lauri from the Energy and Water Agency of Malta presented a case study on [Solar Photovoltaic Communal Farm Scheme](#). The Solar Photovoltaic Communal Farm

Scheme was identified as a good practice through the ZEROCO2 project and is now being shared on the Policy Learning Platform to inspire others and ensure helpful knowledge exchange of identified good practices. The webinar itself will be centred on renewable energy finance in the private domain, with a strong focus on mobilising citizen financing and what public authorities can do to facilitate this.

In these final months of the extended ZEROCO2 project, the partners have reached their final step at regional level: hosting regional events at which the good practices identified by the consortium to be most relevant for a particular region(s) shall be presented to key stakeholders in the energy, technology and public sectors (e.g., representatives from energy agencies, technology providers, local/regional/national authorities, municipalities, etc.). These identified good practices highlight those technological transferred to the region. The ZEROCO2 Exchange of Experiences Event followed by a Steering Committee Meeting took place on the 8th-9th of June 2022 in Malta, organised by the Institute for Sustainable Energy of the University of Malta.

On the 8th June 2022, the Interregional Good Practice Peer Review Forum was held in Malta with the participation of all Interreg Europe ZEROCO2 Project Partners, their invited stakeholders and a select of key stakeholders from Malta. Approximately 50 attendees were present. During the event, 12 Good Practice actions on energy efficiency in public buildings were identified and underwent critical peer review analysis from all attendees, before being presented to the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform for publication on the Interreg Europe website.



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In the following videos, hear from the partners of the ZEROCO2 project highlight the good practices identified through the extended ZEROCO2 project and shared amongst partners and stakeholders at the ZEROCO2 Good Practice and Experience Exchange Workshop in June 2022 in Malta:

- [LEASP](#)
- [Thermopolis](#)
- [AViTeM](#)
- [CIHEAM-MAICH](#)
- [University of Malta](#)



Partners and stakeholders of the Interreg Europe ZEROCO2 project convened on 8th-9th June in Malta for an Interregional Exchange of Experience & Peer Review of Good Practices in the realm of decarbonisation technologies for buildings.

Thanks to additional European Regional Development Funds and another twelve months, the Interreg Europe ZEROCO2 project has continued to make waves in the field of energy efficiency in buildings, extending beyond its original aims – and continuing to decouple economic growth from the use of resources and support the shift towards decarbonisation, increased use of renewable energy sources and promotion of energy efficiency – on the path toward a net-zero carbon economy by 2050.



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Project partners

1. Local Energy Agency Spodnje Podravje (LEASP) – Slovenia



2. Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania (MAICH) – Greece



3. Molise Region – Italy



4. Thermopolis Ltd. – Finland



5. Agency for Sustainable Med Cities & Territories (AVITEM) – France



6. University of Malta – Malta



External expertise: European Institute for Innovation – Technology (EIfI-Tech) Germany

