

SME POWER Action Plan



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1 Introduction

SME POWER works on the role that SMEs can have in a low carbon future with the support of public funds. It brings together 7 political partners, improves 5 ERDF funds and 1 national Policy instrument. Welcomes 1 Advisory Partner, who played an important role in connecting partners interested in this topic, based on his work on Interreg Europe's REBUS and ZERO CO₂ projects.

EREN is in SME POWER to share its great experience as a regional energy agency in terms of energy saving and efficiency due to many years of developing and promoting energy saving and efficiency in Castilla y León region, in Spain. Likewise, EREN is here to collaborate with other partners and exchange different experiences with them, in order to properly develop their different actions.

Leveraging the good practices of the SME POWER partners and the bilateral contacts with Heinola, LEASP and Durham, EREN has been able to come up with some ideas to implement new actions that could be useful to SMEs in Castilla y León, offering a tool to facilitate access to energy savings and efficiency.

2 General Information

Project: SME POWER

Partner organization: Ente Regional de la Energía de Castilla y León (EREN)

country: Spain

nuts2

Contact person: Alfredo Cadórniga Pedrosa

email address: cadpedal@jcyl.es

Phone number +34 987 84 93 93

3 Policy Context

The Application Form of SME Power project includes the ERDF Operational Programme Castilla y León 2014-2020, priority axis 4, investment priority 4.2, promoting energy efficiency and use of renewable energies by companies, as the the policy instrument to be addressed within the project.

Initially, additional calls for grants based on these funds were expected. However, and according to the information confirmed by the General Directorate of Energy and Mines (SME POWER's stakeholder) that runs these ERDF funds, no additional calls will be published, therefore we have deemed necessary modify the initial proposal and set out a different policy instrument to be addressed.

Currently, the mentioned Regional Administration Department is managing a call for grants for energy efficiency improvements in SMEs and large companies in the industrial sector, funded by European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) included in Multiregional Programme of Spain (POPE).

In this regard, the policy instrument we are proosing to be addressed in this project and we expect to improve with the Action Plan proposals, is the **European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) included in Multiregional Programme of Spain (POPE), 2014-2020.**

The responsible body for the management of this policy instrument in Castilla y León region, is the General Directorate of Energy and Mines, as set out in the Order of september 27th, 2019, of the Regional Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Specifically, we will improve the Policy by impacting the call **“Aid program for energy efficiency actions in SMEs and large companies in the industrial sector”**, established by Royal Decree 263/2019, of April 12 and, specifically for Castilla y León established in the Call for grants in the Order of September 27, 2019, of the Regional Ministry of Economy and Finance.

All the information on this call can be found at this [link](#).

The current situation of this call and the estimated funds that will be applied, is shown in the following table and charts (information provided by the General Directorate of Energy and Mines):

Total ERDF funds available in the call: 31.443.689,92 €
Closure date of the call: 30/06/2023

Status on March 31st 2022		Applications	Subsidies applied	Monthly average applications	Monthly average subsidies	Decrease in funds applied	Expected grant applications according to current tendency
	2020	66	12.206.089,92	5,50	1.017.174		
	2021	33	6.632.592,07	2,75	552.716	45,66%	
	2022	5	660.718,40	1,67	220.239	60,15%	2.642.873,60
	2023						526.549,86 (*)
		104	19.499.400,39				22.008.105,45

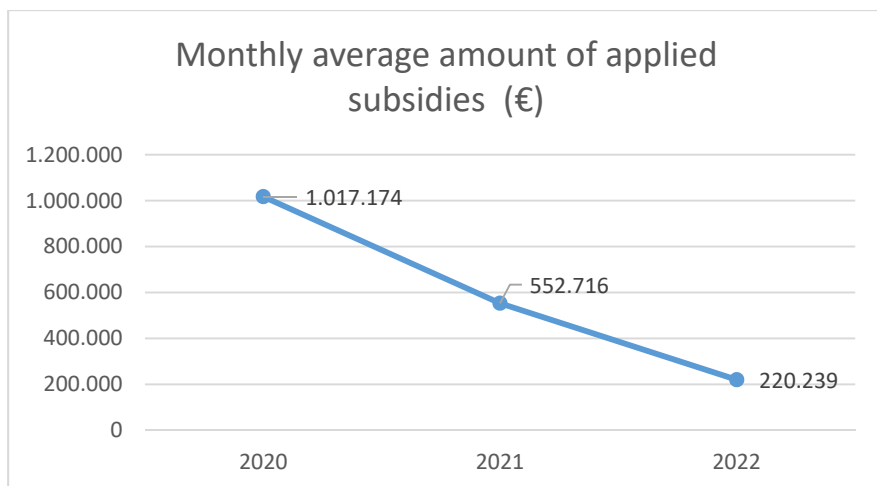
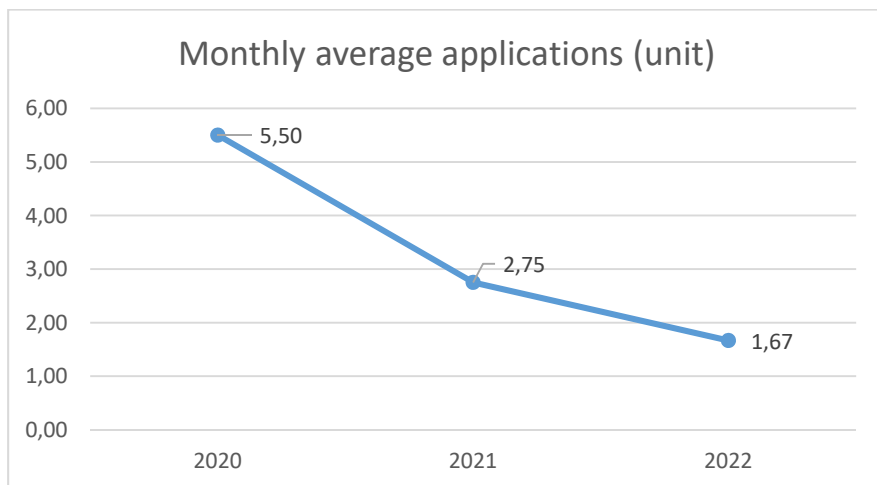
62,01%

Percentage of total available

69,99%

(*) 6 months in 2023

The following charts show that grant applications are clearly declining:



4 Lists of Actions

EREN, together with the Managing Authority (General Directorate of Energy and Mines) and the rest of the Regional Energy Stakeholders (RES) have agreed on the following action for the policy identified – the ERDF Multiregional Programme of Spain (POPE), Aid program for energy efficiency actions in SMEs and large companies in the industrial sector.

Action 1: Lean SME Platform for Energy Efficiency

This Action aims to increase the number of funded projects by the addressed Policy Instrument by implementing an **online advisory platform** to facilitate grant's application to the funds and, therefore, promote energy saving and efficiency projects towards a decarbonization of SMEs in Castilla y León. In other words, the objective of the project is to improve and bring subsidies closer to SMEs.

5 Details of the Action Envisaged

Title of the Action:

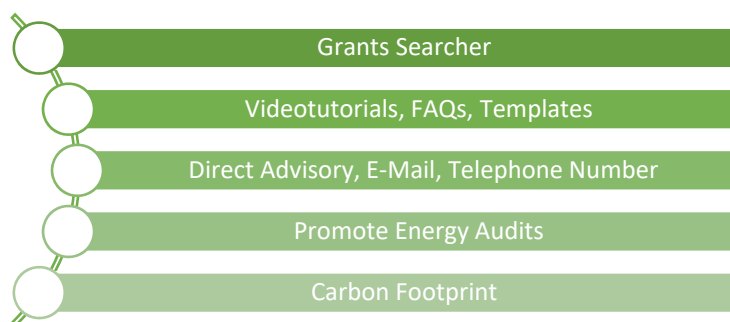
“LEAN SME PLATFORM FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY”

Overview of the Action

The proposal consists of the **definition, designing and implementation of a new online platform** to support applications for the selected policy instrument, so that access to the processing of aid for SMEs is facilitated and simplified, increasing the knowledge of companies on tools for improving energy efficiency, and offering access to other tools and indicators that allow better monitoring of the energy savings generated.

The **tools and services that the platform will include** in order to facilitate the application process for SMEs with the policy instrument, will be the following:

1. **Energy aid search engine** for SMEs, with links to the application system for each call.
2. **Better instructions and better digital support system** in energy aid for SMEs (video tutorials, documentation completed as examples, FAQs, etc).
3. **Promotion of energy audits among SMEs:** templates, technical documents and short informational videos available throught the web platform.
4. **Monitoring of energy investments:** the platform will provide tools that allow companies to assess the energy performance of investments. Promotion of Energy Management Systems (ISO 50,001) and the calculation of the business carbon footprint.



The action described in this Action Plan consist of support and provide guidance to potencial beneficiaries that want to apply to calls for energy efficiency aids, addressing the weaknesses detected, offering the following solutions and improvements:

- Facilitate the processing of ERDF aid, with very visual practical examples, which will increase the number of applications and, therefore, savings and energy efficiency of SMEs, decarbonizing the business sector.

- Unify in a single website the necessary information for the correct development of procedures, necessary documents, templates, minimum common requirements, etc. Also, add the possibility of making direct inquiries to the advisors.
- Help companies on the type of energy efficiency projects that can be carried out, since many times SMEs do not know what improvements, they can implement or how it can benefit them.
- Offer access to training documents on energy efficiency: "you only invest in what you know".
- Facilitate access to energy audit models, essential for any energy improvement project that requests ERDF aid. It is an idea extracted from the good practices of LEASP.
- Provide information about tools to monitor the energy improvements implemented. Like the carbon footprint calculator.
- Increase the presence of workshops and dissemination events so that companies find out the existence of subsidies.

The project is based on support for policy instrument, so it is deemed to be suitable that the regional energy agency (EREN), belonging to the Regional Government of Castilla y León, manages this supporting tool, considering that EREN already has a large experience in promoting and disseminating energy efficiency. In addition, EREN has direct contact with the Regional Administration Services that manage the funds referred to in the policy instrument. Therefore, using EREN's own resources is appropriate to maintain all the information on the support platform for SMEs to ensure its proper functioning over time.

The key elements of the Action Plan are defined in the *business model canvas* included in annex I.

Policy Needs Addressed

During the beginning of the SME POWER project, an intense work was carried out to analyse the situation of aid for energy saving and efficiency in the region, reflected in the Energy Support Map document delivered in July 2020 (annex II overviews the Energy Support Map activities). This entire process is shown in the mentioned document done by EREN itself as well as by stakeholders in different collaborative activities.

After the in-depth study carried out during the Energy Support Map and the intense exchange and collaboration with the stakeholders, we analyzed the policy instrument that is intended to be improved with this Action Plan, and the following problems or opportunities for improvement were detected:

- Simplification: simplify and harmonize the procedures for grants and computer applications throughout the Administration (regional and national).
- Energy Audits: new lines of support for energy audits, not linked to grant applications for investment projects (before and after investments).
- Awareness: promotion and dissemination campaigns, to overcome internal barriers in companies and spread the possibilities of investing in efficiency.
- Energy Indicators: new tools that can help in a real control of the energy improvements. It could offer an adequate energy diagnosis of the company, which would allow

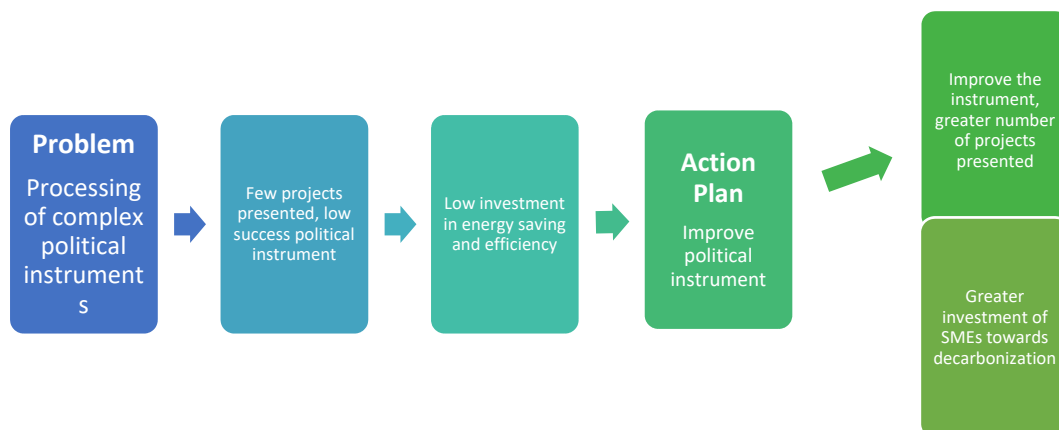
comparison with other companies through the implementation of a system of energy indicators.

The proposed Action consists of the implementation of a type 2 project, according to Interreg Europe since this is a change in the management of the policy instrument (improved governance). The ERDF fund would not be used directly to fund the platform as a project, but the platform will improve the way to manage this fund. Indeed, the platform is intended to be a new tool for supporting the projects' application submissions.

Essentially, the Action will **consist of the implementation of a tool that facilitate the access of SMEs to the aid offered by the policy instrument**. In this way, the use of these policy instrument that seeks to promote energy efficiency projects in SMEs is improved, since the knowledge of the economic aid instruments that companies have is increased, as well as facilitating access to their processing so that an improvement in the policy instrument is achieved due to the success of the policy instrument is measured in the number of projects submitted by the companies to receive a subsidy also in the amount of investments to improve energy efficiency.

Based on the results of the field forces analysis and their evaluations, a ranking of the level of importance and difficulty of the proposals for change was established. The conclusion of this work was that the actions to be proposed should focus fundamentally on two issues (policy needs):

- **improving knowledge about aid**, not only in technical matters but in administrative processes,
- and offering **investment monitoring tools** through kind of indicators.



Overview of the Policy Improvement that this Action refers to

This action is intended to impact the addressed Policy Instrument by introducing an improvement in terms of Policy Management (type 2), thanks to a platform that will simplify the application process for SMEs.

The Action is intended to create a platform with EREN's budget, that should support and provide guidance to potential beneficiaries that want to apply for projects funded by the selected policy instrument, so to help them to improve their applications and, as a final result,

increase the number of final successful applications and therefore, increasing the ERDF funds spent in energy efficiency projects.

Together with the stakeholders, the main weaknesses of the policy instrument identified during the different phases of SME POWER analysis, in addition to the interviews and subsequent meetings, were the following:

- Requirements and terminology are especially difficult for SMEs. There is a lack of specific support on how to prepare applications and all related documents.
- Grant calls with excess credit, probably there is a problem of lack of dissemination. The amount offered in the grants is not spent.
- Very complicated process. The formal requirements of the ERDF are very difficult to fulfill: most applications have formal errors, so the Administration requires to be modified.
- Need for an external consultant or specialized staff, something quite difficult for most SMEs.
- The excess of bureaucracy and the lack of harmonization between the State and the Regional Administrations, makes the system very inefficient.
- The results of the energy improvements implemented are always subsequent to the granting of the financial aid, so the actual energy savings are not monitored.
- There are no energy diagnosis systems or real measurement control systems. Energy audits should be required before and after (better promotion of energy audits and other calculation tools needed).

All the proposed measures are focused on a better processing of applications and a higher ratio of successful applications, since the objective is that unlike in the past, the total amount of ERDF funds allocated to policy instrument is executed. Therefore, the two success indicators of this Action Plan can be the following:

- Number of aid applications submitted and observe if these have increased compared to other calls.
- Reach 85 % exhaustion of available funds (62% currently applied).

With the support measures proposed in this Action Plan, it is intended to act directly on the demand of the SMEs requesting the subsidies, facilitating the preparation of applications for companies and, therefore, increasing the success of the policy instrument by increasing the number of applications. Thus, it is expected that all available funds will be exhausted, which means that progress is being made more quickly in improving sustainability among SMEs.

The group for which this Action Plan is intended are SMEs that will see improved and facilitated their ability to work and to qualify for ERDF funds intended for energy savings and energy efficiency. Likewise, this Action Plan will also help energy consultants and energy service companies to promote their clients' energy efficiency and saving projects by facilitating the application process.

On the other hand, local and regional administrations will also be directly benefited, since their advisory work is facilitated by having more direct and simple information and useful tools.

Action Plan: Proposes support measures for the improvement of policy instrument

HOW?

Assistance Platform for SMEs for ERDF funds allocated to Energy Efficiency



1. Facilitates Processing

2. Better knowledge in Energy Efficiency

3. Impulse Energy Audits and Carbon Footprint

YOU ONLY INVEST IN WHAT YOU KNOW!!



IMPROVING POLITICAL INSTRUMENTS POLITICY INSTRUMENT

Greater number of requests applications for grants submitted



BENEFITS FOR SMEs

More projects, more investment in energy efficiency and decarbonization, therefore, more competitiveness



Facilitates processing, greater number of applications.

Direct advice to SMEs in terms of energy efficiency, greater interest in companies.

Energy audit templates, greater access and availability for SMEs.

Training documents on energy efficiency.

"You only invest in what you know"

Carbon footprint calculator to be able to monitor the results of the improvements.

Background

Input from interregional exchange in SME POWER (including GPs and any other inputs)

<u>Lessons Learnt</u>	Important Points of Interest	Elements to be Transferred	Exchange Process
<u>Energy Aid, Finland</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dissemination and awareness are a big part of the success of the platforms, we both think that it is one of the key parts of the action that we plan to execute, reaching SMEs is very important, because if they do not know the platform, they cannot use it. - Making the platform simple and fluid is our main objective, and Energy Aid webpage is all that, with just one screen, SMEs have all the information they need to know if they can apply, how and when, and what requirements they must meet. - The indicators to watch the success of the platform are important, as we need to monitor the success of SMEs using the subsidies, they received by monitoring their improvement, with energy audits or carbon footprint, for example. - Direct contact with some experts is very good for SMEs, it is one of the things that stakeholders have been asking, and Energy Aid has experts assigned to help SMEs during the application if necessary. 	<p>Groups of experts that can be contacted directly by SMEs is a very good idea that we like to take for ourselves, since the stakeholders insisted a lot on the importance of this type of help for SMEs.</p> <p>Energy Aid application system is very simple and fluid, so it is a very good reference for our platform and the tools it incorporates.</p> <p>In addition, we like the importance they give to energy meters, energy audits and the carbon footprint, being a recurring requirement in the applications, either as a requirement or as a control and evaluation measure to carry out the monitoring of the project and of the grant, in order to assess the correct use of the funding. We are going to implement energy and carbon footprint audit tools on the platform in order to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SME POWER 4th Interregional Event. Good practice peer reviews. 16 - 20/11/2020. • SME Billateral Call EREN – Heinola on 30/06/2021.

		apply them in the same way.	
<u>Carbon footprint, Finland</u>	<p>We learned how to raise awareness so that SMEs stop rejecting carbon footprint calculation, how in Finland the carbon footprint has a good reputation among SMEs because it is a quality mark for them to make a difference with other SMEs, even when the main objective of the carbon footprint, is a definition and analysis for SMEs and sometimes a requirement for some applications.</p>	<p>Creating awareness about the carbon footprint among SMEs is a very important issue for us, so we will follow their steps on how to improve its importance in Castilla y León, so that we can use the carbon footprint as a tool for analysis and measuring to justify the request for ERDF funds, linking with the other good practice of Heinola.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SME POWER 4th Interregional Event. Good practice peer reviews. 16 - 20/11/2020. • SME Billateral Call EREN – Heinola on 30/06/2021.
<u>LEASP, ECO Fund – Energy Audits, Energy Management System</u>	<p>We all agree that Energy Audits are very important for improving energy efficiency, but we also agree that SMEs are unlikely to do them, since it is extra work for them. That is why ECO Fund, are non-refundable financial incentives for Energy Audits and Energy Management Systems. They also have very simple templates, so that SMEs can handle Energy Audits on their own, in this way it is easier for them and they are encouraged to carry them out.</p> <p>On the other hand, Durham was also very interested in Energy Audits, and they said that they have a system similar to LEASP, small templates for Energy</p>	<p>Add some free energy audit templates like LEASP and DURHAM suggest, using as a starting point their templates.</p> <p>We also think and realize that the workshops are very useful for promotion with energy companies and also through EREN, so we will improve the amount we do and its promotion through the EREN newsletter and other public bodies.</p>	<p>SME Billateral Call EREN – LEASP - Durham on 15/07/2021.</p>

	<p>Audits, which they facilitate for SMEs.</p> <p>Talking about the training of SMEs, one of our main objectives, we share some conclusions with LEASP, both we use the Chamber of Commerce and others to promote workshops. In addition, the Energy Audits or Energy Certificate is a requirement for some grants, so it is another way of promoting that LEASP proposes.</p> <p>Durham suggests a business forum so you can contact and help each other through the process, which is also a way to meet different businesses as we have a great list of energy companies.</p>		
<p><u>Covid-19:</u> <u>Business support</u> <u>and assistance</u> <u>service</u></p>	<p>The support and assistance service is a good practice and has significant learning or transfer potential due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The fast answer of the Administration creating a business support and assistance service to help companies navigate the complexity of the economic measures being taken to deal with the consequences of COVID-19. - The coordination and centralization of all the actions of the different administrations (local, regional and national) and departments, creating a single window with clear and constantly updated information, and with direct access to all online procedures. 	<p>Example of how to simplify processes for SMEs. Therefore, we will take its platform and its service to SMEs as a successful reference and we will transfer it to energy efficiency. We will take for ourselves the processes carried out to achieve this bureaucratic simplification by creating a single portal where all the actions taken regarding Covid-19 are collected, which have been many, very different and some very complex.</p>	<p>It has not been possible to organize any meeting. The study of good practices has been done through the INTERREG website.</p>

<p><u>The reduction of the administrative burden imposed by regulation is crucial for competitiveness of businesses, especially for SME's.</u></p>	<p>The SCM (Supply Chain Management) has become a reference methodology to identify and quantify administrative burdens for companies throughout Europe. Most countries, as well as the European Commission, have adapted the method to make it easier.</p> <p>The Standard Unit Cost System is also suitable to be adapted to most countries considering the internal parameters related to labor costs and the time values for the most representative information obligations.</p>	<p>It is a clear example of how the reduction of bureaucracy and its processes directly favors SMEs to a great extent. In addition, having been adapted in other countries, it proves to be really effective and sufficient. We want to implement the bureaucratic reduction process shown in this good practice. Since bureaucracy, in addition to the complexity of the applications themselves, is one of the main obstacles for SMEs.</p>	<p>It has not been possible to organize any meeting. The study of good practices has been done through the INTERREG website.</p>
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Likewise, an intense work was carried out with the group of regional stakeholders, and their contributions and ideas made a better design of the proposals for improving the policy instrument. It should be pointed out the “force field analysis” carried out during the early stages of the project, and the “problem-solution fit” methodology implemented to validate and improve EREN’s initial proposals.

An overview of the lessons learned from regional stakeholders, are included in annex III.

Specific Activities and Timeframe

During SME POWER Phase 1, the following activities have been carried out, essential for the achievement of the policy improvement envisaged:

- Design of the platform outline.
- Initial proposal of web portal contents.
- Stakeholder survey and validation of the platform outline and contents’ proposal.
- Definition of the main functionalities integrated within the new web portal, both front-end and back-office.

Definition of the structure and types of contents and sections, as well as definition of specific functionalities adapted to the platform.

<p>June - September 2022 (Deployment activities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a new web platform with all the requested functionalities and where each manager has access to the assigned resources. It will have a current design in line with EREN's corporate image. • Deployment of web platform sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ S.1. Energy aids search engine for SMEs ○ S.2. Better instructions and better digital support system for aids applicants. ○ S.3. Better templates and technical documents on energy audits for SMEs. ○ S.4. Monitoring tools for energy investments: Energy Performance Indicators and carbon footprint.
<p>October 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official launch of the online platform <p>The platform will be operative to support beneficiaries within the application of open calls, including the one from the addressed PI</p>
<p>October 2022 - July 2023 (Monitoring activities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and implementation of contingency plans if needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weekly monitoring of the proposed indicators on access and use of the platform.

- Monthly dissemination in social networks and mailing to the main business organizations and clusters in the region.
- Monthly meetings with General Directorate of Energy and Mines to collect data on the evolution of subsidy applications.
- Stakeholder surveys and validation of the platform:
 - Contacted by email in December 2022 and sent a questionnaire on the usefulness of the platform's contents.
 - Second survey on platform's usefulness by email in May/June 2023.

		2022										2023						
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	
Designing	Final design of the platform outline																	
	Initial proposal of web portal contents																	
	Stakeholder survey and validation of the platform outline and contents' proposal																	
	Main functionalities integrated within the new web portal, both front-end and back-office																	
	Structure and types of contents and sections (at least 4 main sections), specific functionalities adapted to the platform																	
Deployment	Creation of a new web platform with all the requested functionalities																	
	Section 1 deployment: energy aids search engine for SMEs																	
	Section 2 deployment: better instructions and better digital support system for aids applicants.																	
	Section 3 deployment: better templates and technical documents on energy audits for SMEs.																	
	Section 4 deployment: monitoring tools for energy investments. Energy Performance Indicators and carbon footprint.																	
	Deployment of possible additional functionalities included in the definition of the web platform.																	

Stakeholders Involved

Name of Organisation

Role in Action Plan Implementation

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICE: Institute for Business Competitiveness of Castilla y León. Regional Administration. • A3E. National Association of Energy Efficiency Companies. • Anese. National Association of Energy Services Companies. • Sodebur. Provincial Energy Agency of Burgos. • CARTIF. Applied Research Technology Center. • ITCL. R&D Technology Center. • URCACYL. Regional Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Castilla y León. • UGT. Trade Union. • Vitartis. Food Industry Association of Castilla y León. • Fundación Anclaje. Foundation for Training and Employment in Castilla y León. 	
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Costs and Funding Sources

Costs	Funding Sources
New section for the platform in the Energiacyl website	EREN budget
2/4 employees, engineering, ICT specialist, web design and social media.	EREN budget

Risk and Contingency Plans

Description of Risk	Level of probability (High, Medium, Low)	Description of Contingency Plan
Platform hard to follow	High	Guides, Videotutorials, Forum of Doubts...
Lack of Knowledge	Medium	Formation about efficiency
SMEs have low interest in energy audits	High	Promotion and help around energy audits
Need of tools for monitorization and measurement	Low	Include tools to make easier the monitorization and the measurement
Awareness about energy efficiency	Low	Promotion, formation and facilities
Excess of bureaucracy and complicated process	High	Templates and online support

Monitoring

Self-defined Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Means of Verification
Number of additional SMEs' applications to the improved policy instrument	25 ud.	Monitoring of successfully project applications (Monthly contact with the General Directorate of Energy and Mines to collect the data on the evolution of applications and funds allocated)

Remaining funds available	Reach 85 % exhaustion of available funds (62% currently applied)	Monitoring of funds allocated to energy efficiency project applications (Monthly contact with the General Directorate of Energy and Mines to collect the data on the evolution of applications and funds allocated)
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The figures that should be monitored in order to check the number of submitted applications thanks to the platform are the following:

Total ERDF funds available in the call:	31.443.689,92 €
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Expected grant applications calculated according to current tendency:	22.008.105,45 €
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Target:	85,00%	26.727.136,43 €
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Improvement by the platform with respect to the estimated trend:	4.719.030,98 €
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Number of additional SME's projects triggered by the platform:	25
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Output Indicators

Indicator	Target	Means of Verification
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Annual entries to the platform	1,700	Server Domain
Downloaded and Visualized Documents	1,000	Server Domain
Average Usage Time	5-15 min	Cookies
Annual ratio of inquiries from companies interested in energy efficiency	200	Server Domain
Request/enforcements ratio	70%	Track successful and submitted applications to the funds

6 Signature

Institution: Castilla y León Regional Government

Name of Signatory: Mr Alfonso Arroyo González

Position: General Director for Energy and Mines

Date

Stamp (if available)



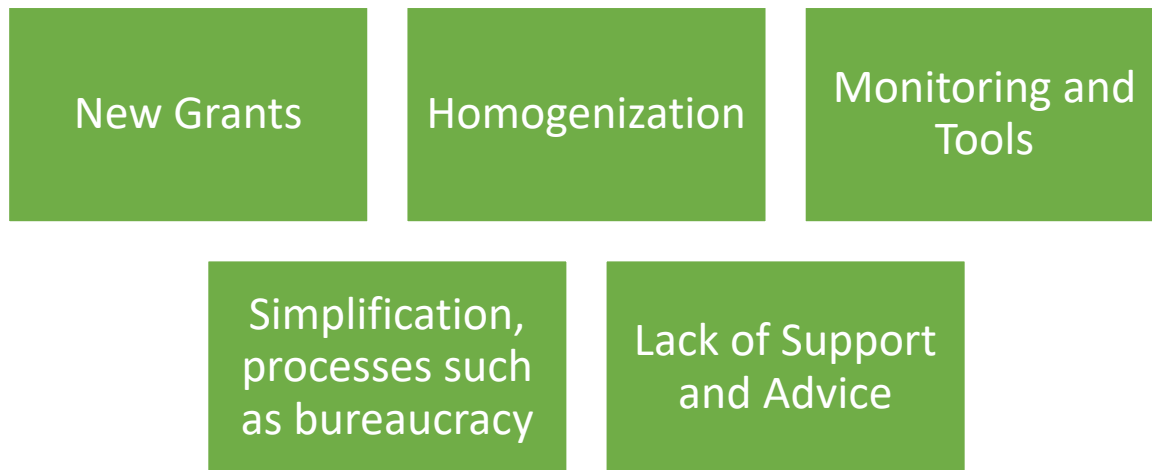
Signature

Annex I. Business model canvas of the Action Plan.

<p><u>Problem/Opportunity:</u> Proposals for change from previous work with stakeholders:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Simplification: access to complex grants. 2. Training: widespread lack of knowledge about energy efficiency. 3. Energy audits: little application among SMEs. 4. Energy indicators in SMEs: lack of tools for monitoring energy efficiency. 5. Awareness: there are still many barriers to energy efficiency. 6. Direct contact: Availability of a manager and advisor. 	<p><u>Solutions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the processing of ERDF grants. - Advice on the possibilities of investing in energy efficiency. - Promote the application of energy audits. - Promote training and information on energy efficiency. - Provide monitoring tools. - Assign an advisor to an email and phone number with office. <p><u>Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual entries to the platform - Downloaded and viewed documents - Average use of the platform - Annual rate of queries from companies interested in energy efficiency - Relationship request / executions 	<p><u>Value Proposition:</u></p> <p>“Lean Platform”: online platform in order to provide SMEs easier and better access to ERDF subsidies for energy saving and efficiency and decarbonization at the local and provincial level in Castilla y León, in line with ERDF funds.</p>	<p><u>Special advantage:</u> Driven by the Regional Administration itself, through the regional energy agency with direct support from the regional Administrative Unit that manages the ERDF funds in energy, since they are integrated in the same Regional Ministry.</p> <p><u>Channels:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association of municipalities and provinces. - Clusters of companies in C&L. - Chambers of Commerce and Industry. - Social agents. - Associations of industrial estates. - Website of energiacyl. 	<p><u>Customer segment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Local and provincial Administrations. - SMEs that want to improve their energy bill. - Energy consultancies. - Energy services companies
<p><u>Cost's structure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New section on the energiacyl website. - 2 / 4 employees: engineering, ICT specialists, web design and social networks, administrative staff. 			<p><u>Funding Sources:</u> Own financing EREN budget (JCyL)</p>	

Annex II. Overview of the Energy Support Map activities

Firstly, a study of strengths and weaknesses of subsidies for energy saving and efficiency in Castilla y León was carried out by the EREN. The weaknesses obtained were the following:



The feedback from the stakeholders was obtained through surveys to some of these stakeholders: General Directorate of Energy and Mines, two technology centers such as ITCL and CARTIF, and the company ESCAN. The survey consisted of the following questions:

- Are there enough resources available?
- Are there any special requirements when applying for grants?
- Is the application process difficult or easy? How long does it usually take?
- What is the monitoring process after commissioning?
- What works especially well?
- What areas should be improved?
- What is the impact on the minor economy?
- What measures should be carried out around the priority axis 4.2.1?

The answers were illustrative, and the sum of both works, EREN analysis process and stakeholder surveys, resulted in the following proposals:

- **Simplification**: simplify and harmonize the procedures for grants and computer applications throughout the Administration (autonomous and state).
- **Energy Audits**: new lines of support for energy audits, not linked to grant applications for investment projects (before and after investments).
- **Awareness**: promotion and dissemination campaigns, to overcome internal barriers in companies and spread the possibilities of investing in efficiency.
- **Energy Indicators**: new tools that can realize a real control of the improvement operations. It could offer an adequate energy diagnosis of the company, which would allow comparison with other companies through the implementation of a system of energy indicators.

- **Training programs:** promote training both in technical matters and in administrative processes associated with calls for subsidies.

Once we had an initial proposal for changes to solve the problems detected, a "Force Field Analysis" was carried out, which would take place during the first face-to-face meeting of stakeholders on January 22, 2020.

The workflow would be as follows:

1. Form groups of 5 people.
2. Choose change proposal.
3. Identify the forces of change.
4. Identify the forces against change.
5. Assign them a value from 1 to 5.
6. Apply and analyze the results obtained.

An example of this working method, and of the results obtained during this meeting, would be:

Forces FOR change	Score	<div>CHANGE PROPOSAL</div> <div>Proposal 1: <u>SIMPLIFICATION</u></div> <div>Simplify and harmonize subsidy procedures and computer applications among all Administration (regional and state)</div>	Forces AGAINST change	Score
Knowledge and experience of managers.	5		ERDF regulation	5
National framework for coordinated management (previous experience with E4 and Per agreements).	5		Excessive ERDF administrative burden, both in management and later	5
Experience of different budgetary arrangements in other organizations.	3		National management framework imposed instead of coordinated	4
Motivation of the management team and not fear of change.	5		Rigidity between budget management and grants management	4
Technological development of computer tools.	2		Rigidity in the organizational structures of the administration	5
Grants are direct benefits for companies.	5		Lack of human and material resources that guarantee the correct functioning of computer tools.	5
Total	25		Total	28

This process was applied to each of the change proposals and the result of the assessments was as follows:

	Change Forces	Value of Change Forces	Forces Against Change	Value of Forces Against Change	Total
Promotion	7	24	7	30	-6
Energy Audits	3	14	5	19	-5
Simplification	6	25	6	28	-3
Energy Indicators	7	22	5	17	5
Capacity Training	6	26	4	17	9

Annex III. Lessons learned.

The intense work carried out with the group of stakeholders is highlighted in this annex, with their contributions and ideas to make a better design of the proposals for improving the policy instrument.

Regional / Local input, including input from SME POWER Stakeholder Group

This section describes the different inputs received from the group of energy stakeholders within the SME Power project, during the following group meetings:

- 1st meeting on Valladolid, 22/01/2020.
- 2nd online meeting, 10/06/2020.
- 3rd online meeting, 27/01/2021.
- 4th online meeting, 19/04/2021.
- 5th online meeting, 27/01/2022.

**1st Meeting of the Regional Energy Stakeholders of Castilla y León (RES-CyL)
22/01/2020**

The 1st meeting with the stakeholders in person, was a first contact with the working group with which we will collaborate for the development of the platform. Formed by different entities, representatives of SMEs, business associations, clusters, technology centers and representatives of the regional government.

During this workshop, the attendees participated in an intense dialogue on the experiences around energy saving and energy efficiency, and on the possible improvements to be established in Castilla y León.

Groups of five participants were formed, where they would discuss the results of the surveys previously filled out by them, using a “Force Field Analysis” methodology. From this discussion we collected interesting proposals for improvement reflected in the point *Addressed Policy Needs*.



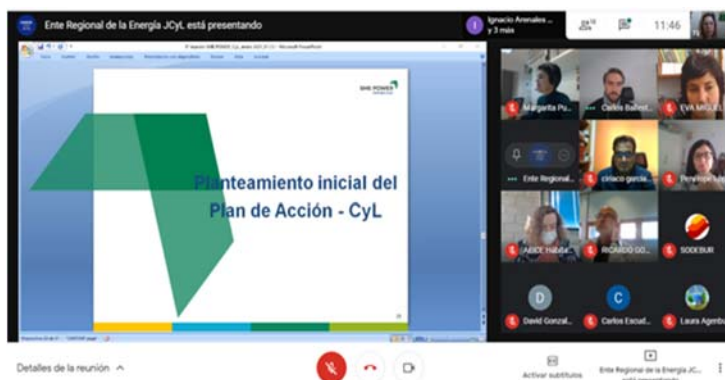
2nd Meeting of the Regional Energy Stakeholders of Castilla y León (RES-CyL) 10/06/2020

The 2nd workshop, which was online due to the current health situation, established the conversation around the second part of the **Energy Support Map**, where the proposals of political needs and potential good practices in the region are specified. Stakeholders worked around turning weaknesses into opportunities for improvement, obtaining five proposals for change and proposals for improvement for the policy instrument.



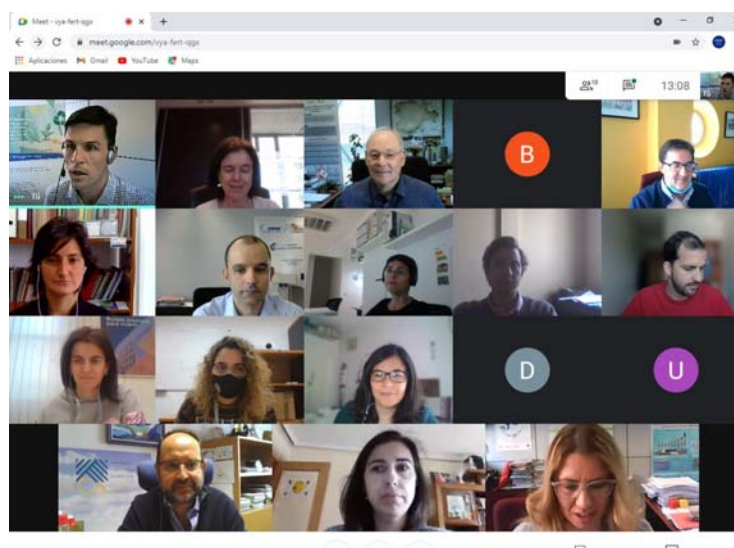
3rd Meeting of the Regional Energy Stakeholders of Castilla y León (RES-CyL) 27/01/2021

The 3rd workshop, developed online due to the current health situation, is focused on the exposure and analysis of the good practices of the partners by the stakeholders, discussing which are the best ones for our project and how they can be implemented within Castile and Leon.



4th Meeting of the Regional Energy Stakeholders of Castilla y León (RES-CyL) 19/04/2021

The 4th workshop, which took place online due to the current health situation, was a discussion on the results obtained in the surveys on the good practices from the partners as well as on the ideas for improvement raised. In this way we got a clear idea of what the partners believe best and what their priorities are. In addition, they were presented with a first document on the Action Plan and a script with the next activities to be carried out, such as personalized interviews.



The results obtained from the surveys discussed during the 4th meeting were on average the following:

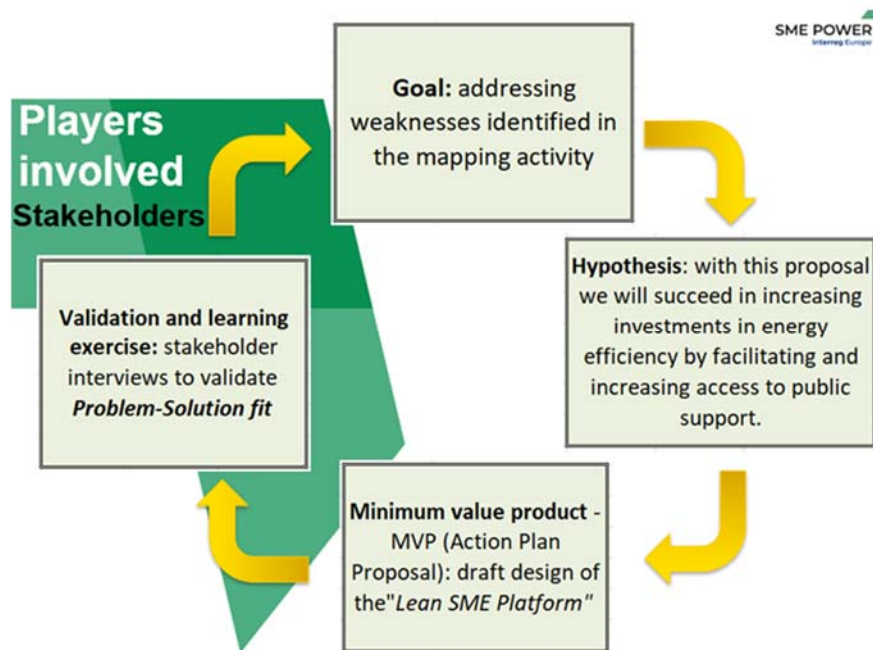
	<i>Ideas for better policies to support the improvement of energy efficiency in SMEs in the region</i>	AVERAGE
1.	Web platform with energy aid search engine for SMEs, with links to the application system for each call.	4,71
2.	Capacity Building Web Platform - Online courses on energy efficiency and best available technologies for SMEs.	4,57
3.	Web platform including better instructions and an improved digital support system on energy efficiency grants for SMEs (videotutorials of applications, standard completed documents, frequently asked questions, etc.).	4,00
4.	Web platform to promote energy audits among SMEs: it would include at least templates, technical documents and short informative videos.	3,86
5.	Create a new playlist on the Energi aJCyL YouTube channel: how to improve energy efficiency, how to prepare grant applications, "energy champions" videos, etc.	3,86
6.	"Energy Champions": Web platform including the list of companies that have energy audits or energy management systems, and that have officially communicated them (RO 56/2016). Demonstration videos of investments in energy efficiency in SMEs that have been supported with ERDF funds.	3,71
7.	Modifications to the calls for subsidies: include the calculation of the carbon footprint as one of the scoring criteria for the evaluation of the subsidy application.	3,71
8.	Modifications of the calls for subsidies: improve the monitoring of the subsidized actions, requiring the calculation of the carbon footprint and the presentation of reports before and after 2-3 years of the investments.	3,71

The conclusions that can be drawn from the surveys is that the most valued proposals are:

- Aid search engine.
- Platform for capacity development, training on energy efficiency.
- Support platform in the application procedure.

Validation of proposals with stakeholders. July to August 2021

A validation and learning exercise were developed with the stakeholders. It consisted of conducting interviews to analyze the fit of the solution to the problem (**problem-solution fit**), sharing the proposal with the stakeholders and obtaining very valuable feedback from the participants.



The objective of this exercise is to eliminate inefficient practices and increase the value of the proposal during the development phase, avoiding designing a proposal that users are not interested in.

The process followed consisted of the following phases:

1. We have an idea: we need to address the weaknesses identified in the **Energy Support Map**.
2. We define our hypothesis: we believe that with this proposal we will be able to increase investments in energy efficiency by facilitating access to public aid.
3. Pre-design of the platform (MVP: minimum value product) and presentation to stakeholders.
4. The developed "experiments" consist of interviews with potential users.
5. Learning process with stakeholders and adjustments of the initial proposal.

During the months of July and August 2021, individualized interviews were carried out with the stakeholders indicated in the following table, in order to obtain an opinion on the design and approach of the platform so far. With a preliminary design and a brief compilation of questions, each one is interviewed, obtaining a very good reception to the platform and to the

decisions made till this point. On the other hand, new ideas and concepts to consider have also emerged.

The stakeholders who participated in this process were the following:

Nº	Stakeholder	Date	Contact Person
1.	ANESE: Asociación Nacional de Empresas de Servicios Energéticos	24/08/2021	José María
2	VITARTIS	28/07/2021	Gema Prieto
3.	ITCL Centro Tecnológico	29/07/2021	David González Asenjo
4.	Asociación de empresarios de eficiencia -energética – A3E	25/06/2021	Penélope López Antonio López-Nava
5.	CYLSOLAR: Clúster de Energías Renovables y Soluciones Energéticas de Castilla y León	14/06/2021	Mª Jesús Jiménez
6.	Scan Consultora Energética	6/07/2021	Margarita Puente
7.	Comisiones obreras (CCOO)	15/06/2021	Eva Miguel Cuñado
8.	SODEBUR	28/06/2021	Laura Ortega
9.	URCACYL	27/07/2021	José Santos
10.	CECALE	14/06/2021	Sonia Martínez Fontanos
11.	<u>UGT</u>	20/07/2021	Cristina García

In addition, as these are more personal interviews compared to the other processes carried out so far, we take the opportunity to talk about other relevant issues for the development of the project and the Action Plan, such as supporting documentation, advertising and promotion, and the formation.

The conclusions obtained during the different interviews with stakeholders about the platform and its design are as follows:

- Implement a **simulator/search engine for the subsidy**, a multimedia guide with keywords to access the different calls or a block diagram of the subsidies in energy saving and efficiency. More images than text.

- Pro-active platform or page in such a way that on the first page you can see all the **information synthesized** with a summary, that helps to understand the objectives, content and deadlines. What do you need? Where to find it? Thus "going from top to bottom would be avoided." Design a block diagram and put a specific section for the "frequently asked questions". It can be a question box along with frequently asked questions and update the calls.
- Important: **explain the compatibility of the grants with other calls** and projects, and clarify the eligible costs in the respective calls. For example: compatibility between aid from different ERDF, EAFRD, R+D+i funds and between the programs of the different administrations.
- Study how to inform and coordinate the subsidies of the different administrations. **Clear and concise supporting documents** on the platform.

The ideas that emerged around the supporting documents of the platform are:

- Preparation of **video tutorials, standard models, carbon footprint calculator and energy justification guides**.
- **Virtual assistant, in addition to email and telephone number**.
- Documents on tax advantages and compatibilities.

During the interviews the stakeholders gave great importance to publicity, the ideas they considered the most important were the following:

- Publicity and information of the most innovative projects in HORIZONTE EUROPA, especially for clusters.
- Information and publicity of information of companies and technological platforms related to energy saving and energy efficiency projects.

Finally, the importance of training in the business field:

- Preparation of specific manuals: renewable energy and energy management.
- Advanced courses on European projects directly or indirectly linked to energy efficiency.
- Use a link with the "Fundación Anclaje" that provides training for business and for employment.

5th Meeting of the Regional Energy Stakeholders of Castilla y León (RES-CyL) 27/01/2022

The first draft of the action plan was presented to the stakeholders, based on the lessons learned from the project partners and the contributions of this regional working group. The next steps for implementing the proposed actions were explained and future meetings were scheduled to review the progress.