

## HUNGARY

# Implementing cooperation projects

A local action groups promoted energy efficiency upgrades in the towns of its area and in order to identify good practice examples it cooperated with partner local action groups in Scotland.

### Summary

The South Transdanubian region has very good potentials for solar energy. At the same time in most cases, local government buildings in the area score very low on energy efficiency. Their thermal insulation is outdated, and their engineering is obsolete and wasteful.



16 municipalities participated in this project aiming to reduce the energy consumption of local government buildings by using more energy from renewable sources. In the implementation phase a study trip to Scotland was carried out to examine good examples and practices with the support of Scottish partners local action groups. A series of energy upgrade actions followed including replacing old doors and windows and insulating communal buildings, installing solar panels and offering training and information to raise awareness among local leaders and carry out energy audits to various buildings.

#### Location

South Transdanubian region

#### Programming period

2007 - 2013

#### Axis

Axis 4 – LEADER

#### Measure

M421 – Transnational & Interterritorial cooperation

#### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 167 904

EAFRD 125 928

National/Regional 41 976

#### Project duration

2013 – 2015

#### Project promoter

Mecsek-Völgyiség-Hegyhat Association

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<http://www.mvh-hacs.hu>

### Results

The maintenance costs of the upgraded buildings have been significantly decreased.

CO2 emissions were reduced, and the 16 villages have come closer to their set environmental friendly targets.

The training materials produced and contribution of the teachers who participated in the courses, raised awareness in the local schools regarding energy awareness and energy efficiency topics.

Due to need to address the financial difficulties, a strong cooperation spirit has been developed between the settlements involved in the project.

### Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Without cooperation would have been feasible. The financial difficulties which the settlements confront were overcome by joining their resources and helping each other.
- ❑ Sharing knowledge and practices helped local government leaders to become more open to renewable energy. They became more aware of the need of sustainability and environmental protection and the financial benefits that can be gained.



## Context

The South Transdanubian region has very good potentials for utilising solar energy. At the same time in most cases local governments buildings in the area score very low on energy efficiency. Their thermal insulation is outdated, and their engineering is obsolete and wasteful. The operation of these inadequate buildings is a significant burden to local governments, and local authorities do not have the resources to renovate or modernize them.

The 16 municipalities participating in this project joined to the European Covenant of Mayors in 2013 in the framework of an international project aiming to reduce the energy consumption of local government buildings by using more energy from renewable sources.

## Objectives

The aim of the project was to reduce energy consumption of local government buildings. An additional goal was to transfer knowledge and share good examples.

## Activities

At the preparation phase, the beneficiaries carried out an assessment of their needs. They selected the buildings for the energy audits and prepared investment plans covering 16 settlements.

During the implementation phase a study trip to Scotland was carried out to examine good examples and practices. The Scottish Dumfries and Galloway LEADER Programme sister organisations provided support to the Hungarian association during the visit. As part of the study tour the representation visited wind farms, a pellet factory, a small, domestic hydroelectric power plant and were explained the construction principles and technics of a local passive house. The representation consisted of several mayors and notaries from the 16 settlements.

As a second step, the construction partners were selected with whom the energy investments planned in the 16 settlements were carried out. The following investments were made in two milestones due to financial difficulties:

During the **1<sup>st</sup> milestone** energy upgrade works were carried out at the towns of Máza, Magyaregregy, Kárász, Bikal, Meződ, Vásárosdombó, Vásárosdombó and Sásd. Works included replacing old windows and doors with modern plastic ones, installing central heating with wood-fired boilers, installing solar panel systems and insulating the fronts of buildings in a school, a kinder garden and towns halls.

During the **2<sup>nd</sup> milestone phase** similar activities were carried out in the towns of Szászvár, Magyarszék, Egyházaskozár, Alsómocsolád. Gödre, Magyarhertelend, Mánfa, Mindszentgodisa and Hosszúhetény. In these town energy upgrade works were carried out in a pediatric clinic, a nursery, a school and town halls.

At the **closing phase**, training on energy efficiency was provided to municipal workers and teachers. Energy audits of buildings got carried out in the 16 settlements. However, not necessarily to the buildings involved in two milestone phases. Finally, a closing event was organised.

The project was co-ordinated by the Association of Mecsek-Völgység-Hegyhát, and in many cases the contractor was selected by the association as well. The sub-projects were continuously monitored by the association and also by the technical inspector commissioned by the association.

## Main results

The maintenance costs of the upgraded buildings have been significantly decreased.

CO2 emissions have been reduced, and the 16 villages have come closer to the targets declared by the European Covenant of Mayors.

The training materials produced and contribution of the teachers who participated in the courses, raised awareness in the local schools regarding energy awareness and energy efficiency topics.

Due to need to address the financial difficulties, a strong cooperation has been developed between the settlements involved in the project, and this cooperation serves as an outstanding example in Hungary.

## Key lessons

In terms of the project's feasibility, the need for cooperation was imperative. Due to financial difficulties, settlements were able to join resources and help each other in order to reach the common goals.

Sharing knowledge and practices helped local government leaders to become more open to renewable energy. They became more aware of the need of sustainability and environmental protection, and see more clearly the necessary steps for the future.