SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK

An initiative of the European Commission

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TOWARDS A DECARBONISED EUROPE:

Increasing energy efficiency in SMEs for clean transition

Mara Corbella, 19th October 2021, 9.30

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National schemes for energy efficiency in SMEs

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Improving Cold Chain Energy Efficiency in food and beverage sector

SME mPower Efficiency

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Session #3

Implementation of Energy Efficiency in SMEs

A shared approach to help SMEs to overcome the barriers to the adoption of energy efficient solutions

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Some of the main barriers that hinder the adoption of energy efficient solutions by SMEs

It must be considered that it is not a single barrier in itself that hinders the start or strengthening of an improvement process. Every SME, every entrepreneur, in reality, is always faced with a **multiplicity of barriers**, of which one barrier alone, often, would not be decisive.

- What is decisive, instead, is **the "accumulation" of the many barriers** that, more or less at the same time, the entrepreneur is facing.

Therefore, capacity-building activities, albeit with different facets according to the various contexts and types of SMEs, should deal with all this aspects in an integrated way.

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Some of the main barriers that hinder the adoption of energy efficient solutions by SMEs

FINANCIAL	COMPETENCES	REGULATIONS
- Low availability of capital; - High investments costs for energy efficiency upgrades in SMEs; - Low financial profitability of intervention, with regards to the energy consumptions costs; - Long payback time of the energy efficiency interventions.	- Divergent priorities and limited in-house capabilities of the different actors; - Different perceptions of risk (for instance Risk of production disruptions when implementing energy efficiency measures in SMEs); - Lack of external technical support for SMEs; - Lack of awareness and proactivity in SMEs; - Lack of interest and motivation.	- Varying regulations on country level and administrative burdens; - Lack of standardization in calculation of energy consumptions, due to a lack of common available energy performance indicators.

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Some of the main barriers that hinder the adoption of energy efficient solutions by SMEs

- Starting from the context analysis and the results collected, the sister projects have developed a common approach and strategy to intervene and overcome some of the mentioned barriers:

a **<u>TAILORED TRAINING / AWARENESS PROGRAMME</u>** for SMEs and all the actors potentially involved in the process of energy transition

Strategies to overcome the barriers

The short term strategies implemented by the Sister projects:

- Participation to national and international dissemination and awareness events;
- Design and implementation of a **Capacity building programme** (local workshops, synchronous and asynchronous training, pre-audit simulations for the identification of EEM) this should then ease the implementation of energy efficiency measures based on the availability of **high skilled employees**;
- Valorization of the relevance of non-financial benefits from investments for energy savings (auditing and voluntary certification, green reputation and marketing, new market possibilities linked with supply chain…);
- Updated database of best practices.

Strategies to overcome the barriers

Long term strategies and actions:

- Sketch of policy frameworks and market architecture, with recommendations applicable for other European countries;
- Networking between SMEs and external actors, to overcome the barriers (development of standardize tools to facilitate the implementation of EEM, information on public or private funding opportunities);
- Spread the concept that energy transition in all the industrial and tertiary sectors is strictly linked with the fight to climate change (energy audit = climate audit)
- Support SMEs in this process of transition, by connecting them with strategic partners to advise them on their options, help them to focus on priority, finance their projects, communicate results, etc… (set up an “Alliance for energy transition”).

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How the projects evaluate the effectiveness of activities to overcome the barriers?

Impacts produced by project activities

Nr. of stakeholders involved in the project activities and consultations

Nr. of companies involved in the pilot studies (i.e. SMEmPower)

Nr. of tools developed during the project

Nr of legislative recommendations

Training activities

Nr. of SMEs, workers, energy managers involved in the capacity building programme

Evaluation of questionnaires collected after the trainings

Nr. of SMEs which, after the trainings, have implemented investments focused on boosting energy efficiency

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TAKEOVER AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE COMMON EXPERIENCES SHARED BY SISTER PROJECTS

- policy recommendations after the end of the project
- sustainability plan for the accredited Educational & Training Program
- platform for the collection and display of training materials
- process of energy transition, shifting the focus from financial benefits of EEM adoption
- the energy auditor has the key role of leading and supporting companies towards a (more) green culture
- big companies can play a role in the process, by encouraging SMEs in adopting EEM
- the focus must be extended to the whole supply chain, not only on the single company

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Contact Us

IIPLE
Istituto Professionale Edile di Bologna

EMAIL
maracorbella@edili.com

WEBSITE
https://innoveas.eu/

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