Wallonia region, BE - “Energethical municipality” Charter

**Time period:** 2007 - ongoing  
**Application:** energy efficiency  
**Theme of collaboration:** Implementing joint financial mechanisms, Engaging stakeholders in energy plans  
**Topic:** Financial support, Training programmes, Setting up support organisations, Technical Support

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**Description**

In 2007, the Wallonia Region energy and employment ministers launched the “energethical municipality” programme to encourage communities to adopt a proactive role regarding energy management.

The programme provides a framework for municipalities to define their sustainable energy policy, and in particular funds the hiring of an energy adviser over an initial period of 2 years extended until now.

The collaboration is formalised through the signing of a Charter by the municipality and by the Wallonia minister for energy and the minister for employment.

The Union of Wallonia towns & municipalities has the role of guidance and support towards the local energy advisers. It conducts their initial and continuous training, organizes meetings days between advisers, and generally oversees their network. It also relays information between the regional level and the municipalities and offers them punctual technical and legal supports. It notably monitors the enforcement of the European Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings.

The local energy advisers have 4 main roles:
- Manage the energy consumption of municipal buildings
- Control energy performance standards when granting building planning permissions (min. 50 files analyzed/year)
- Raising the awareness of municipal staff on energy issues
- Advise citizens on their energy management and public grant (office hours ensured at least 2 evenings per week)

**Key results**

95 out of 262 (meaning 36 %) Wallonia municipalities have benefited from 66 local energy advisers funded by the region.

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**Partners involved – Governance**

- Regional public authority (minister for energy; minister for employment);
- Municipalities;
- Union of towns & municipalities of Wallonia.
Context / Background

Sustainable energy actions need to be implemented at all levels of governance, for effective impact on the ground, including the municipal level. However municipalities often lack the resources, capacity, and know-how for sustainable energy management, and need the help of technical staff: energy advisers, who in this case are funded by the region. The technical work needed includes: creation/update of the register of municipal buildings classified on the basis of their energy characteristics, annual accounting of municipal buildings’ energy consumption, definition of priority measures and their budget - taking into account energy costs when investing.

Financing & costs

Since 2007, the 95 selected municipalities have received funding for their local energy adviser.

Results achieved

The presence of local energy advisers has greatly facilitated effective action in sustainable energy management at the municipal level: creation of buildings registers, energy accounting, increased awareness of municipal staff and households to use energy more efficiently, energy policy monitoring, etc - which ultimately have fostered higher energy savings.

The fact that there has been an increasing number of demands for local energy advisers to be funded shows the need for such programmes.

Lessons learned & Success factors

The municipal authorities have expressed that the local energy advisers have been vital in carrying out the local sustainable energy policies. It is very difficult for small municipalities to recruit skilled staff on such a wide field, thus the regional grant is really helpful. It is hoped that the future regional government after the 25 May 2014 elections will renew the grant beyond 2014.

Similar Initiatives – Transferability

- Download the Charter document for inspiration to create your own! www.uvcw.be/no_index/cont/charterenerg.pdf
- Best Practice: “Shared energy consulting services”, Pays Rochefortais Agglomeration Community, Poitou Charentes Regional Council (France)