

Interim report for the National eea Offices Setup

Deliverable 2.1. of the LEEAN-CET project

Responsible partner: AERE

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Author: Anne Rialhe (AERE)

Reviewer: Maria Manolova (EnEffect)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thanks to the LEEAN-CET project, the European energy award (eea) will be extended to two new countries and reinforced in three eea pilot countries.

This report is devoted to the process of the eea national office setup in the “new” pilot countries, namely Croatia and Hungary, and its reinforcement in the three “old” pilot countries: Bulgaria, Slovenia and Ukraine. The first step of this process involves two main elements:

- Identifying stakeholders who may wish to participate, support, or finance the eea;
- Establishing the institutional framework for the eea.

For each country, the report highlights:

- The mapping of stakeholders;
- Progress in national implementation.

Meetings were held with various partners, both online and in person. These meetings provided the opportunity to engage with municipalities pre-selected for the eea and to present the process as well as their role within it.

Work has been developed in close collaboration and alignment with the set-up of the Energy Transition Teams across the participating countries.

For the subject of this document, the eea institutional arrangement, all partners are involved: Alternatives pour l’Energie, les énergies Renouvelables et l’Environnement (AERE), as coordinator of the eea institutional arrangement, with a strong expertise on the eea requirements. The companies and organisations, IMRO, EIHP and EKO-SUSTAV, as the two new eea pilot countries, are working to answer to all the eea requirements: set up of the national eea office and of the other eea bodies have been discussed and secured, the contract licensees prepared, and are submitted to the eea international office. The municipalities pre-identified in the proposal have been questioned, only one change appeared in Hungary (Gyenesdiàs has replaced Lenti). All municipalities have been visited during the first meetings, with a presentation of the eea, its benefits, its requirements for each municipality (what is expected from municipalities). Preliminary work to establish the Energy Transition Teams has been realised too.

In all countries, the establishment or review of stakeholders’ lists interested in the eea has been undertaken, with contacts already made or currently in progress. The objective is to position the eea as a strong partner within each national landscape and to align it with national policies.

The organizations ENEFFECT, KSSENA, and EECU have carried out this update in the three existing pilot countries. They have also initiated contacts and organized meetings with municipalities targeted by the LEEAN-CET project. The reception of the eea process by these municipalities has been very positive.

Both EARF and AEA have been engaged in the process. EARF took part in the initial meetings in Croatia and Hungary, which marked the first steps of the Energy Transition Teams in municipalities. AEA has been kept updated on developments.

1. INTRODUCTION

General introduction

Thanks to the LEEAN-CET project, the European energy award (eea) will be extended to two new countries, Croatia and Hungary, and reinforced in three eea pilot countries, which were part of the EU EXCITE project: Bulgaria, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Nota 1: The aim of the LEEAN-CET project is similar to the work implemented in the EXCITE project. So, as a consequence, the work to be developed is very close to the one developed in the EXCITE project.

Nota 2: Some materials of EXCITE have been adapted to LEEAN-CET.

Methodology for stakeholder's mapping

Each partner has been requested to produce an inventory of stakeholders, taking into account all actors related to energy and climate, including both mitigation and adaptation.

An Excel table, adapted from the EXCITE project, was provided to each partner for this purpose and has been completed.

eea national implementation

For the eea national implementation, in the two new eea countries, one week of work has been conducted by country. The LEEAN-CET partners have been informed on the role of the eea national office, to understand what it is expected. Training for them, as a national office, has been provided, including the role of the different eea bodies: the eea national certification (or label commission) body, the advisors, the auditors. Specific training for the adaptation of the eea catalogue and the eea assessment guidance have also been provided.

The licence agreement has been discussed too and it is in the way of signature or signed.

Furthermore, the eea assessment guidance has been provided to partners in both the new and the existing eea countries. This guidance includes Area 7 on climate adaptation, which represents a new dimension of the eea framework in these countries.

Municipalities in the two new eea countries have been visited, and information has been provided, including training on both the role of municipalities within the eea and the responsibilities of the Energy Transition Team.

Work on the eea national implementation and the establishment of the national office has been carried out in accordance with the rules of the eea Association. The status of the Association, together with its Internal Rules and Regulations, has been presented to the various partners.

2. Progress in Croatia

Stakeholders' mapping

19 stakeholders have been identified in Croatia.

Table 1. Stakeholders' mapping in Croatia

No	Name/title of stakeholders	Type of stakeholders	Level of stakeholders operations (national, regional, municipal/neigborhood)	Knowledge/expertise relevant to project (high, medium, low)	Decision making power (veto, high, medium, low)	Interest for participation (high, medium, low)	Relationship (not established, good, needs improvement, bad)
1	Vukovar-Srijem County	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	regional	high	high	high	good
2	Andrijaševci Municipality	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	medium	high	good
3	Bošnjaci Municipality	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	medium	medium	good
4	Vrbanja Municipality	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	medium	medium	good
5	Lovas Municipality	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	medium	medium	good
6	Real Estate Agency (APN)	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	medium	high	good
7	Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	medium	good
8	Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund (FZOEU)	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	medium	medium	good
9	The Croatian Green Building Council (GBC Croatia)	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	low	medium	good
10	DOOR (Society for Sustainable Development Design)	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	low	medium	needs improvement
11	Croatian Association of Counties	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	low	medium	not established
12	Croatian Association of Cities	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	low	medium	not established
13	Croatian Association of Municipalities	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	low	medium	not established
14	Regional Development Agency for Vukovar-Srijem county	Public company	regional	high	medium	medium	not established
15	Vukovar Development Agency (VURA)	Public company	regional	high	medium	medium	not established
16	HEP ESCO d.o.o.	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	high	medium	medium	good
17	Ministry of Regional Development and European Union Funds	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	high	not established
18	Ministry of Economy	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	high	not established
19	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Green Transition	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	high	not established

eea national implementation

EIHP has confirmed its role as national office for Croatia, based on the following organization. EIHP will play a major role in the eea: with the support of Eko-Sustav as national advisors. This organisation is similar to the one developed in other eea countries, like Italy and Luxembourg.

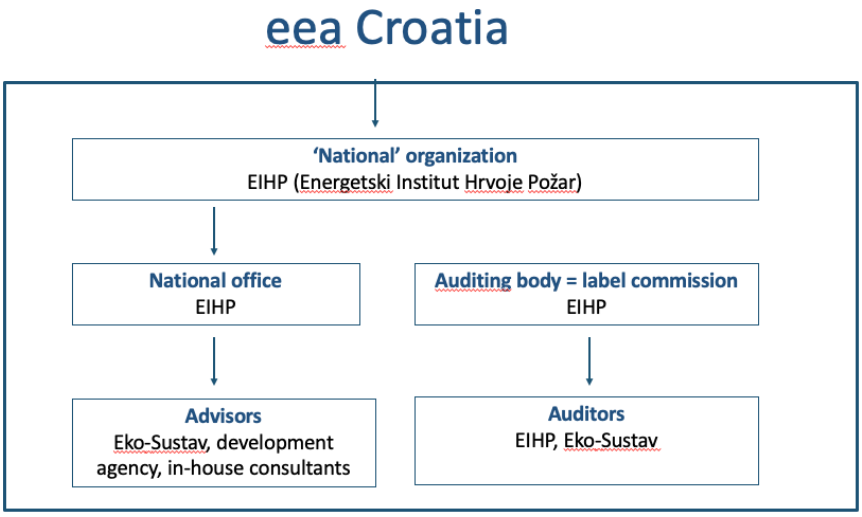


Figure 1. The eea organization in Croatia

The licence agreement has been prepared, validated and signed by EIHP. It has been sent to the International Office of the eea for signature.

Current Project Status

The municipalities pre-selected in the proposal, and the country, have been invited to common sessions to learn more on the eea label and discuss its benefits for them. What is expected in an eea process from a municipality (respectively a country) has been also presented and discussed, especially for the initial energy review. The current actions implemented by the municipalities (and the country) have been presented.

During these sessions, the first steps of the energy transition teams were also discussed, so the municipalities can start their internal organisation.

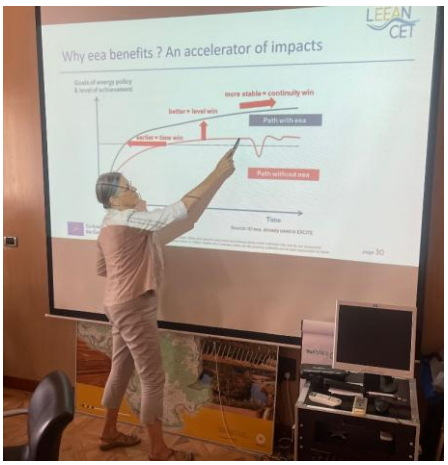


Figure 2. Working session with municipalities in Vukovar on the eea benefit



Figure 3. Working session with municipalities in Vukovar on climate change

3. Progress in Hungary

Stakeholders' mapping

21 stakeholders have been identified in Hungary.

Table 2. Stakeholders' mapping in Hungary

No	Name/title of stakeholders	Type of stakeholders	Level of stakeholders operations (national, regional, municipal/neigbourhood)	Knowledge/expertise relevant to project (high, medium, low)	Decision making power (veto, high, medium, low)	Interest for participation (high, medium, low)	Relationship (not established, good, needs improvement, bad)
	Please type the official name of the stakeholder	*Please select the type of stakeholder (using the dropdown menu)*	*Please select the level relevant to stakeholders operations and responicibility (using the dropdown menu)*	*Please rate the level of knowledge, experience and/or expertise of stakeholders relevant to the project (using the dropdown menu)*	*Please rate the decision making power of the stakeholder related to the project (using the dropdown menu)*	*Please rate the interest of stakeholders to participate in the project and/or other related activities (using the dropdown menu)*	*Please rate yours relationship with the stakeholders (using the dropdown menu)*
1	Municipality Nagykanizsa	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	high	good
2	Municipality Zalalövő	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	high	good
3	Municipality Szombathely	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	high	good
4	Municipality Gyenesdiás	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	high	good
5	Municipality Nagypáli	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	high	good
6	Zala County Government	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	regional	low	medium	medium	good
7	Hungarian Climate Alliance	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	medium	medium	good
8	Vas County Government	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	regional	low	medium	medium	good
9	Hungarian National Association of Local Authorities	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	low	medium	medium	not established
10	Association of Cities with County Rights	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	low	medium	medium	not established
11	Ministry of Energy	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	low	not established
12	University of Pannon	Academia & Research	regional	high	medium	medium	good
13	Bay Zoltán Nonprofit Ltd.	Academia & Research	national	high	low	medium	not established
14	Enerin Co.	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	high	low	medium	good
15	Hungarian Energy Efficiency Institute (MEHI)	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	medium	medium	good
16	Hungarian Energy and Public Utility Regulatory Authority (MEKH)	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	low	not established
17	Ministry of Construction and Transport	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	low	not established
18	Hungarian Association of Single-Family Home Owners	Home Owner Associations	national	high	medium	medium	good
19	National Association of Condominium Owners and Managers	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	medium	medium	good
20	Hungarian Chamber of Engineers	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	medium	low	not established
21	Association of Climate Friendly Municipalities	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	medium	medium	good

eea national implementation

IMRO has confirmed its role as national office for Hungary, based on the following organization.

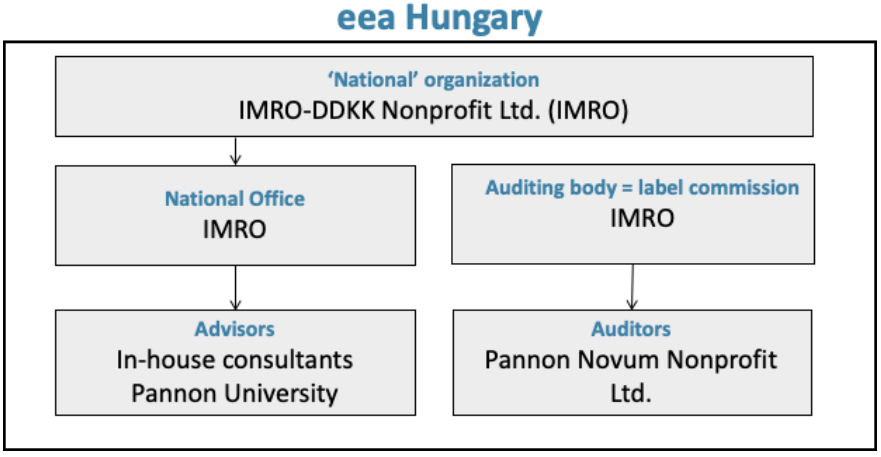


Figure 4. The eea organization in Hungary



Figure 5. Working session with IMRO on the energy transition team

The licence agreement has been prepared and is under validation by IMRO.

Current Project Status

A visit and a working session was dedicated to each municipality that is part of the LEEAN-CET project. Except this difference, the program was similar to the one in Croatia: what is expected in an eea process from a municipality has been also presented and discussed, especially for the initial energy review. The current actions implemented by the municipalities have been presented, completed by some on-field visit.

During these sessions, the first steps of the energy transition teams were also discussed, so the municipalities can start their internal organisation.



Figure 6. Working session with Szombathely municipal team



Figure 7. Diverse PV, wind and hydrogen installations in Nagypáli

4. Progress in Bulgaria

Stakeholders' mapping

As of 2025, the stakeholders' mapping for Bulgaria has been updated and currently includes 37 identified stakeholders, showed below:

Table 3. Stakeholders' mapping update in Bulgaria

No	Name/title of stakeholders	Type of stakeholders	Level of stakeholders operations (national, regional, municipal/neigbourhood)	Knowledge/expertise relevant to project (high, medium, low	Decision making power (veto, high, medium, low)	Interest for participation (high, medium, low)	Relationship (not established, good, needs improvement, bad)
	Please type the official name of the stakeholder	*Please select the type of stakeholder (using the dropdown menu)*	*Please select the level relevant to stakeholders*	*Please rate the level of knowledge, experience and/or*	*Please rate the decision making power of the*	*Please rate the interest of stakeholders to*	*Please rate yours relationship with the stakeholders (using*
1	National Assembly	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	low	low	low	needs improvement
2	Council of Ministers	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	low	low	low	needs improvement
3	Ministry of Energy	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	high	high	medium	good
4	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	medium	high	medium	needs improvement
5	Ministry of Environment and Water	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	medium	high	low	needs improvement
6	Ministry of Transport and Communication	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	medium	high	medium	needs improvement
7	Sustainable Energy Development Agency	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	national	high	high	high	good
8	Regional autorities (District/Region - NUTS3 according statistical reporting)	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	regional	low	low	medium	good
9	Regional Authority **Burgas**	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	regional	low	medium	high	good
10	National Association of the Municipalities in Republic of Bulgaria	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	national	medium	high	medium	needs improvement
11	Pilot Municipalities - **Burgas, Yambol, Dobrich, Gabrovo**	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	municipal	medium	medium	high	good
12	Other municipalities with interest in the area	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy	municipal	low	medium	low	needs improvement
13	Municipal Energy Efficiency Network EcoEnergy	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	municipal	high	medium	high	good
14	Black Sea Energy Cluster	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	medium	high	good
15	Sofia Energy Agency – SOFENA	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	medium	medium	good
16	Energy Agency - Plovdiv	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	medium	medium	good
17	Bulgarian Energy Efficiency and Renewable Sources Fund	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	national	high	medium	medium	good
18	Regional Energy Agency of Pazardjik	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	low	low	good
19	Black Sea Energy Research Centre	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	low	medium	good
20	Association of Bulgarian Energy Agencies (ABEA)	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	medium	low	good
21	Sofia Energy Centre	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	municipal	high	low	low	good
22	National Trust EcoFund (NTEF)	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	national	high	medium	high	good
23	Climate Coalition - Bulgaria	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	medium	low	good
24	Energy Office - Burgas	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	municipal	high	low	medium	good
25	Energy Office - Gabrovo	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	municipal	high	low	high	good
26	Energy Efficiency Center Sofia	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	municipal	high	low	low	good
27	Green Synergy Cluster	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	high	low	low	good
28	Energy Saving	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	municipal	high	low	low	good
29	National Association of the Homeowners in Bulgaria	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	neigbourhood	medium	low	low	good
30	Association of Condominium Management Companies	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	regional	low	low	low	good
31	Bulgarian Facility Management Association	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental	national	high	low	low	good
32	Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (IPS), Bulgarian Academy of Science	Academia & Research	national	medium	medium	medium	needs improvement
33	Federation of social NGOs in Bulgaria (FSSB)	Academia & Research	national	medium	medium	medium	needs improvement
34	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEBA), Sofia	Academia & Research	national	high	medium	medium	needs improvement
35	Net-Zero Lab, FEBA, SU	Academia & Research	national	medium	low	low	needs improvement
36	Technical university of Sofia	Academia & Research	national	high	low	medium	good
37	Technical university of Gabrovo	Academia & Research	national	high	low	medium	good

eea national implementation reinforcement

The EXCITE project ensured continuous and constructive engagement with all relevant national authorities, despite the ongoing political turbulence in Bulgaria, where six snap

parliamentary elections have taken place since 2021. This instability has made it impractical to advocate for a centralised national financing scheme for the European Energy Award (eea), as long-term policy commitments and budgetary arrangements are repeatedly interrupted by changes in government leadership.

Nevertheless, EnEffect has consistently maintained positive working relations with all ministries, regardless of political configuration. Most notably, cooperation with the Sustainable Energy Development Agency (SEDA) remains particularly strong, as the agency holds the primary mandate for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of local sustainable energy and climate policies. Since June 2023, institutional dialogue with newly appointed ministers, deputy ministers and ministerial experts from the Ministries of Environment and Waters, Energy, and Regional Development and Public Works has also intensified. Efforts for continuing this positive trend with the current government, appointed in the beginning of 2025, are also being made, resulting in several consecutive meetings in the first half of the year.

A key milestone was the final EXCITE conference, strategically organised after the public consultation phase of the updated National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), which was jointly managed by CEE EnEffect and the Ministry of Energy. This reinforced policy-level recognition of the project and demonstrated EnEffect's role as a trusted facilitator, even in periods of administrative transition.

While the collaboration with the ministries will depend on the political stability in the country, the strong and uninterrupted collaboration with SEDA provides a solid and reliable foundation for continued support to Bulgarian municipalities engaging in the eea process.

In Bulgaria, currently CEE EnEffect acts both as National eea organization and National eea office. The trained local eea consultants are selected through the previous EXCITE project and are listed below as follows:

- **Stanislav Andreev -** EnEffect Consult Ltd, sandreev@eneffect.bg
- **Antonia Novakova** - Center for Energy Efficiency EnEffect, a.novakova@eneffect.bg
- **Maria Manolova** - Center for Energy Efficiency EnEffect, mmanolova@eneffect.bg
- **Zdravko Georgiev -** Sofia Energy Agency SOFENA, zgeorgiev@sofena.com
- **Todor Tonev -** Black Sea Energy Cluster, v_1@mail.bg; energy@ubbsla.org

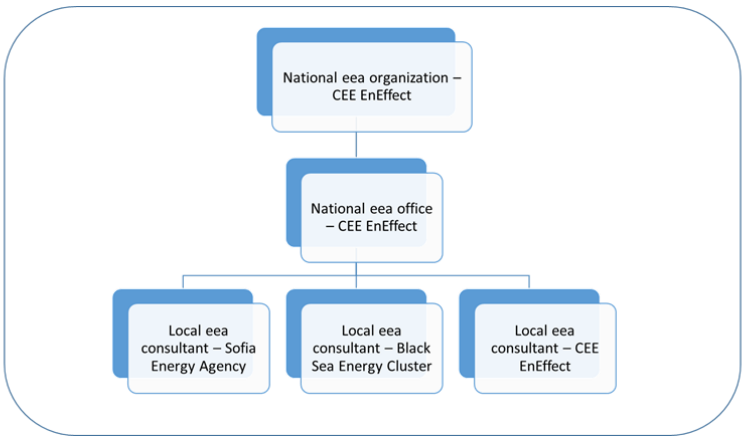


Figure 8. The eea organization in Bulgaria

Current Project Status

As an extension of the completed EXCITE project, the Bulgarian eea office has initiated activities related to the LEEAN-CET project, demonstrating a confident and proactive approach. The initial round of meetings with key municipal stakeholders from the 3 pilots in Bulgaria - including the municipalities of Burgas and Yambol, as well as the Burgas Regional Administration - was successfully concluded in mid-November 2025.



Figure 9. Presentation of Gabrovo's carbon-neutral residential area concept at Burgas Regional Administration

The meetings focused on advancing cleaner energy solutions, fostering local cooperation, and enhancing sustainable energy planning. Given the current underutilization of local energy planning instruments, the discussions underscored their relevance and demonstrated the potential for more results-oriented approaches.

The commitment of the Burgas Regional Administration to actively participate in the LEEAN-CET project was further emphasized after the presentation of the new Regional Sustainable Energy Programme for the period 2026-2035. This event took place on 11 November 2025 in Burgas, as part of other international project final event, in which experts from EnEffect took part.

On the same day, an in-depth training session was held at the Municipal Energy Office of Burgas. The training explored the integration of climate adaptation themes into the LEEAN-CET project methodology, building upon experiences from the municipalities of Gabrovo, Dobrich, and Sofia.



Figure 10. Training session at Municipal Energy Office of Burgas

Subsequently, on 12 November, a focused meeting was conducted in Yambol Municipality with Deputy Mayor Vasil Alexandrov and his team. The meeting reaffirmed the municipality's commitment to the project, highlighting the importance of accurate energy data and active civic engagement in the local energy planning process.

As already demonstrated during the implementation of the European Energy Award (eea), the project partners Gabrovo and Dobrich are taking active steps in advancing the topic of climate adaptation. Gabrovo has initiated a new initiative focused on the development of a carbon-neutral residential area, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable urban transformation. Dobrich is undertaking actions to establish a local transition team and to systematically collect data on local climate characteristics, strengthening the municipality's capacity for evidence-based energy planning.

5. Progress in Slovenia

Stakeholders' mapping

The updated stakeholders' mapping for Slovenia includes 34 identified stakeholders, shown below:

Table 4. Stakeholders' mapping update in Slovenia

No	Name/title of stakeholders	Type of stakeholders	Level of stakeholders operations (national, regional, municipal/neigbourhood)	Knowledge/expertise relevant to project (high, medium, low)	Decision making power (veto, high, medium, low)	Interest for participation (high, medium, low)	Relationship (not established, good, needs improvement, bad)
	Please type the official name of the stakeholder	Please select the type of stakeholder (using the dropdown menu)	Please select the level relevant to stakeholders operations and responicibility (using the dropdown menu)	Please rate the level of knowledge, experience and/or expertise of stakeholders relevant to the project (using the dropdown menu)	Please rate the decision making power of the stakeholder related to the project (using the dropdown menu)	Please rate the interest of stakeholders to participate in the project and/or other related activities (using the dropdown menu)	Please rate yours relationship with the stakeholders (using the dropdown menu)
1	Municipality Velenje	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	high	high	medium	good
2	Municipality Celje	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	high	high	medium	good
3	Municipality Slovenj Gradec	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	high	high	medium	good
4	Municipality Nazarje	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	medium	good
5	Municipality Mislinja	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	medium	good
6	Municipality Šoštanj	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	medium	good
7	Municipality Solčava	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	municipal	medium	high	medium	good
8	LEA Spodnje Podravje	Other	regional	high	medium	high	good
9	GOLEA	Other	regional	high	medium	high	good
10	LEA Pomurje	Other	regional	high	medium	high	good
11	LEA Gorenjska	Other	regional	high	medium	high	good
12	LEAD	Other	regional	high	medium	high	good
13	Energap	Other	regional	high	medium	high	good
14	PETROL	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	high	medium	low	needs improvement
15	RESALTA	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	high	medium	low	needs improvement
16	Interenergo	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	high	medium	low	needs improvement
17	KLEAS - consortium of local energy agencies of Slovenia	Other	national	high	medium	high	good
18	SOS	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	medium	medium	high	good
19	SMOS	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	medium	medium	high	good
20	Ministry of infrastructure - MZI	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	high	high	high	good
21	Borzen	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	high	high	high	good
22	Institute Jožef Štefan – IJS	Academia & Research	national	high	medium	medium	bd
23	Faculty of Energy Technology	Academia & Research	national	high	medium	high	good
24	E-zavod	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	medium	low	high	needs improvement
25	Zavod Bistra	Academia & Research	regional	medium	low	medium	good
26	Green building council Slovenia	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	medium	low	needs improvement
27	Umanotera - NGO	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	high	medium	medium	needs improvement
28	Fokus – Association for Sustainable Development	CSO (Grass root NGOs, Social or environmental organisations, thinktanks)	national	medium	medium	medium	good
29	Energetika.net	Other	national	high	low	medium	good
30	Finance in energija	Other	national	high	low	low	needs improvement
31	National Eco Fund	Public company	national	high	high	high	needs improvement
32	SID bank	Public company	national	high	high	low	needs improvement
33	Individual ESCOs	Energy services (e.g. ESCOs, utilities)	national	medium	medium	low	good
34	SPIRIT Slovenija	Public Authorities / Aministration & Policy makers	national	medium	medium	low	needs improvement

eea national implementation reinforcement

In Slovenia, the implementation of the European energy award (eea) is coordinated by KSSENA, which acts both as the National eea organization and the National eea office. This unified structure reflects the size of the country and the established role of KSSENA as the main point of reference for municipalities engaging in structured local energy management.

The national framework for municipal energy planning is defined through the Energy Act and the Decree on the Methodology and Obligatory Contents of Local Energy Concepts, which already require municipalities to follow a systematic approach to local energy planning. These obligations align well with the eea methodology, enabling its direct integration into existing planning processes. By participating in the LEEAN-CET project, Slovenia is further strengthening its capacity to support municipalities in applying structured and measurable approaches to clean energy transition planning, consistent with the project's objectives to build local capacities and implement energy-management tools.

Three Slovenian advisors were trained during the previous EXCITE project and continue to operate as accredited national eea consultants:

- **Nejc Jurko**, KSSENA – nejc.jurko@kssena.velenje.eu
- **Hana Kolenc**, KSSENA – hana.kolenc@kssena.velenje.eu
- **Sašo Mozgan**, KSSENA – saso.mozgan@kssena.velenje.eu

Within the LEEAN-CET project, Slovenia is expanding this advisory capacity through the introduction of two new eea consultants:

- **Nika Krajnc**, KSSENA – nika.krajnc@kssena.velenje.eu
- **Gregor Gradišnik**, KSSENA – gregor.gradisnik@kssena.velenje.eu

With this strengthened team, Slovenia is well positioned to support municipalities in implementing the eea methodology and to reinforce structured, data-driven local energy and climate planning. The dual role of KSSENA as both national eea organization and national eea office ensures consistency, stability, and long-term support for the eea system in the country.

As new municipalities will be involved in the eea in Slovenia, two new advisors have been selected, they will be trained along with the training of advisors in Croatia.

Current Project Status

KSSENA held the first eea working group meeting with the municipality of Mislinja on 30 September 2025. The meeting focused on reviewing the municipality's current energy-planning activities, identifying priority areas, and outlining the first steps for applying the eea methodology. This initial coordination established the groundwork for structured cooperation and marked the practical start of Mislinja's involvement in the project.

KSSENA presented the LEEAN-CET project on 2 October 2025 in Velenje to representatives of Slovenia's local energy agencies. The presentation covered the main aims of the project, its three-year implementation framework, and the type of support municipalities will receive in preparing or updating their clean energy action plans. Particular emphasis was placed on the adapted European energy award methodology, the development of a new energy-management tool, and the strengthening of local capacities. The discussion highlighted the need for stronger regional cooperation, improved transparency in energy management, and a more active municipal role in the clean energy transition.



Figure 11. First working group meetings in Slovenia

6. Progress in Ukraine

Stakeholders' mapping

There is no significant change in the stakeholders' mapping in Ukraine.

In Ukraine, another project is ongoing: MEMCU (Municipal Energy Management Certification Ukraine), which seeks to improve municipal energy management with the European Energy Award. It is being developed together with ECONCEPT, a Swiss partner, and coordination between the two projects will cover financing and workload.

The overall analysis of stakeholders shows the following results:

Table 5. Stakeholders' mapping update in Ukraine

Partner name	Purpose of institution	Legal/ financial power	Relevant know-how	Credibility	Multiplication capabilities
Manage closely:					
Minregion	Setting of national policy in Energy Efficiency in buildings, and municipal management	High/low	mid	mid	high
eea cities/Energy Teams (26 communities as of 2025)	Implementation of energy and climate policy in their communities	Low/high	mid	mid	high
eea consultants/ auditors	Support of eea cities in their development	low/low	high	high	high
SECO	Ensure a high credibility of eea and help Ukrainian government in implementation of energy and climate policy	mid/high	high	high	mid
Keep informed:					
Minenvironment & **Minenergy**	Setting national policy in environment, waste, DH, energy areas	high/low	low	mid	high

CoM signatories	Implementation of energy and climate policy in their communities	low/low	mid	mid	high
NGOs, professional networks/associations of experts	Providers of a specific know-how to municipalities	low/low	mid	mid	high
Providers of EE solutions	Providers of a specific know-how to municipalities	low/low	high	mid	mid
Oblast level authorities	Support in strengthening municipal governance on regional level	low/mid	low	low	mid
Keep satisfied:					
Covenant of Mayors East project	Promotion of sustainable development, EE and climate goals	Low/low	high	high	high
EU Delegation	Promotion of sustainable development, EE and climate goals	high/high	low	high	high
Monitor:					
SAEE	Implementation of EE policy, support to RES	mid/low	mid	mid	mid
International donors	Support to good governance in local authorities	low/high	mid	high	high
Educational/training institutions	Enhancing the capacities of human resources	Low/low	mid	mid	mid

Results of the stakeholders' analysis are presented below:

1. **Minregion** develops and forms the national policy in Energy Efficiency in buildings and municipal management and is interested in its effective and rapid implementation.

Action: to assign Minregion a role of the coordinator of the eea on national level in Ukraine by involvement firstly to project steering committee and afterwards into eaa Council, building their involvement and ownership over eea.

2. eea cities/Energy Teams are key players of the eea community that are responsible for implementation of energy and climate policy on local level. They highly expect that eea will enhance their recognition and provide them with effective governance tool to increase their capacities and support them in their efforts, and also open new funding opportunities for measures in energy and climate.

Action: eea National Office has to put the great efforts to keep them motivated, satisfied with their expectations and shall actively promote eea cities, maintains the eea certification system by looking for experts who might assume a role of eea consultants and auditors, liaising with key stakeholders to attract the attention to eea and trying to take them on board. Certain actions shall be focused on public servants who are engaged to eea, e.g. networking and exchange of experience opportunities, recognition of success.

3. eea consultants/auditors are professionals and experts looking for new eea cities to provide their services.

Action: eea National Office has to increase the number of eea cities to meet their demand and ensure constant improvement of their knowledge and service quality.

4. Minenvironment & Minenergy which shape national policy in environment, waste, district heating and energy, are particularly interested in reliable statistics and planning to support national contributions and reporting under the Paris Agreement.

Action: Increase awareness on eea and position eea as a tool that might help them in introduction of national policy on local level. Help promote good examples from successful municipalities.

5. CoM signatories are responsible for implementation of energy and climate policy on local level and are interested in tools and instruments to increase energy efficiency, improve overall planning and governance, and are constantly looking for attracting funding into the cities.

Action: Increase awareness on eea, promote benefits of eea as a tool for better implementing COM commitments. The national executive body responsible for implementation of energy efficiency policy and renewable energy sources could potentially be interested in eea benchmarking tool and support municipalities with regard to this area.

Action: Monitor SAEE's activities and provide information whenever possible.

6. International donors and technical assistance programs, including GIZ, IFC, U-LEAD and USAID, may, while formulating priorities for their projects, also take into account potential synergies and capacity building of cities, which would enhance their ability to form a municipal management system that would be able for self-improvement. They are also important to ensure "loan of trust" to the eea system in the country.

Action: Monitor international donors and their funding opportunities, share materials and involve them to eea events.

7. Educational/training institutions, providing in-service training in the management sphere to public servants. They might contribute to building a better reputation and

professional level of the consultants, and bring new management practices to the municipal management level.

Action: Communicate with National Academy for public administration and regional centers for in-service training to explain eea; promote it as an additional tool for improving governance on the regional level. Monitor the educational/training institutions that provide capacity building to public servants and energy experts, potentially involving them as experts

eea national implementation reinforcement

The eea structure in Ukraine could be pictured as follows.

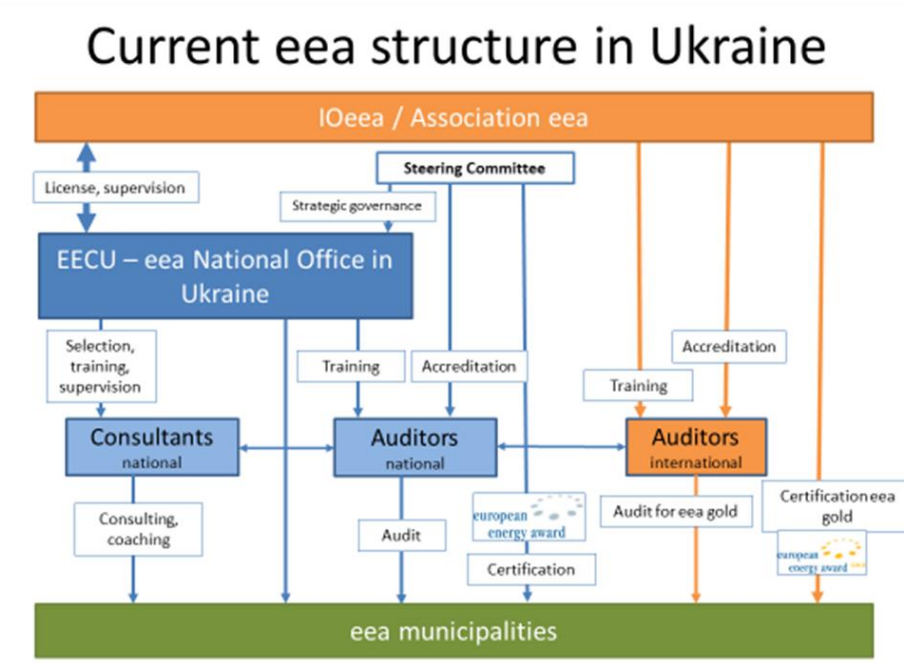


Figure 12. The eea structure in Ukraine

The National Office of the eea in Ukraine

The National Office of the eea in Ukraine is an organizational structure that is established within the framework of the EECU and governed by the EECU Statute, the requirements of the licensing agreement with the eea Association, and the Memorandum of Understanding with IOeea.

Functions of the eea National Office in Ukraine:

- Carries out general coordination of activities related to the implementation of eea in Ukraine;
- Collaborates with stakeholders at the international, national, regional and local levels;
- Responsible for the regular adaptation of the eea instruments;
- Promotes the eea ;
- Supports communication with the eea participants;
- Conducts regular selection and training of candidates for the role of national consultants and auditors of the eea;
- Maintains a register and organizes the process of accreditation.

Within the previous project (EXCITE) a preliminary analysis of transforming eea into the national energy management standard was conducted. Recently the National Office initiated the development of the draft of the mentioned standard and organized the first open nation-wide discussion of the document that started in Kyiv on November 13, 2025 within the official meeting with national governing bodies.

Current Project Status

- Following the steps undertaken within EXCITE project, the EECU, as eea National Office, has performed the initiative meetings with the Energy (Transition) Teams of all 5 pilot cities in online format for clarifying the personal and quantitative composition of the local teams, the progress in performance, problems, obstacles and needs of these teams. The teams were informed about the main objectives, goals and planned activities within LEEAN-CET, as well as the closest next steps in accordance with the project workplan.
- The eea National Office had the internal meeting dedicated to the discussion regarding the potential update of its internal organization and structure, as well as to the organization of the work with the eea communities in Ukraine and clear division of tasks and responsibilities of its members and involved experts within two projects - MEMCU with Swiss Government financing and EU-supported LEEAN-CET (LIFE Program). The appropriate decisions were made concerning the workload of the members of both project teams.
- The Moodle learning program was analyzed and updated with the new information and parts of the learning Modules. The selected modules were revised, adapted and translated into English for further distribution and replication among the project partners.
- The eea Consultants for 5 pilot cities were selected and appointed. They were invited and took part in the meeting with the elements of training for existing and new eea Consultants organized by the National eea Office within MEMCU project at the beginning of October.



Figure 13. Training of eea consultants in Ukraine

- The information about the implementation of LEEAN-CET in Ukraine, its objectives, goals and planned activities was presented by the EECU project coordinator during the study visit to Vilnius within the RenoWave project (August 2025), as well as during the

project teams meeting within Interreg ESiNERGY project in Bad-Hindelang (Germany, September 2025) and another LIFE Program CETAC project in Vilnius (October 2025).

CONCLUSION

The eea national implementation has started as scheduled and has encountered no obstacle.

- The set-up of the national office is underway in the two “new” eea countries, Croatia and Hungary. In Croatia, the licence contract has already been sent to the EEA International Office for approval, whereas in Hungary it is still being prepared at IMRO.
- The other national bodies of the eea, auditors, advisors, label commission have been identified too.
- In the “old” pilot cities, review of the stakeholders’ mapping has been conducted, first contacts and meetings organized with municipalities.

The stakeholders’ mappings have been conducted, contacts have been taken to present the eea to national stakeholders.

Only one municipality, of all the ones pre-identified for LEEAN-CET, has decided to withdraw from the project, due to too many commitments. It was replaced by another one.

Kick-off meetings in the municipalities have been an opportunity to present the eea label, its benefits, the working process and the expectations of the labels. This information was very well welcomed by the participants. Some municipalities are already part of European projects, some have already projects and actions online with the eea expectations.

REFERENCES

- Status of the eea association: “eea Articles of Association_20230522.pdf”, version 2022
- Internal Rules and Regulations of the European Energy Award AISBL, version January 2024

ANNEXES

For Croatia

Agendas of the kick-off meetings, with EIHP and Eko-Sustav, and with municipality

- A1-25-08-18-22-KOM-HRV-LEEAN-CET-agenda-VF.pdf
- A2-25-08-20-21-KOM-HRV_LEEAN-CET-agenda-VF.pdf

Presentation for the national office

- A3-25-08-18-19-NO-HRV-KOM - LEEAN-CET.pdf

Presentation for the municipalities

- A4-25-08-20-KOM - LEEAN-CET.pdf
- A5-25-08-21-KOM - LEEAN-CET.pdf
- A6-25-08-eea Croatia general presentation-LEEAN-CET.pdf

For Hungary

Agenda of the kick-off meetings, with IMRO and with municipality

- A7-KOM-HU-LEEAN-CET-Agenda-VF.pdf

Presentation for the national office

- A8-25-08-25-29-NO-Hu-KOM-LEEAN-CET.pdf

Presentation for the municipalities

- A9-25-08-25-29-KOM - LEEAN-CET-Hu.pdf
- A10-25-08-25-29-KOM - LEEAN-CET-Hu-Short.pdf

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