



MountEE - Energy efficient and sustainable building  
in European municipalities in mountain regions  
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# QUESTIONNAIRE GOOD PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS

**ENERGY VISION MURAU**

**CATEGORY: REGIONAL STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS**

<b>Region / local area considered:</b>  Alps / Austria	<b>Good practice submitted by CIPRA</b>
<b>1) Short description of the action/strategy/project</b>  <b>Energy vision Murau</b>  Murau is a small region in Austria (Styria) with 35 municipalities aiming to be energy self-sufficient by 2015. The strategy 'Energievision Murau' was collaboratively developed in several regional working groups managed by energy consultants of the region. The objectives and measures were developed by the "energy-actors" themselves (representatives of the building chain and renewable energies, installers, energy suppliers, farmers and foresters, schools, administration and political representatives, interested citizens).	
<b>2) Background/targets</b>  Context: In the past, the energy issue was not taken very seriously in the region. Knowledge connected with the technical aspects of the issue was available, but it was scattered among many different people (all acting independently).  Motivation: The driving motivation of the "energy actors" lied in the desire of changing the fossil energy system into a regional, sustainable, renewable system and in the same time developing regional economic cycles.  Aims: The project aims at having a self-sufficient heat and electricity production from renewable energy sources within the region in 2015 and at producing added value in the region by exporting surplus energy. The important thing was to get individual stakeholders to work together in order to create a common process.  "Energievision Murau" is supported by the energy agency of Styria (EAO), which manages the project with the consulting agency (Wallner&Schauer – W&S) as moderator.	
<b>3) Detailed project/program description</b>  The project began with individual actors who wanted to change the mix of energy used in the region, and decrease the energy consumption. A broad participation process started in order to implicate active actors of the regions. The Goal of the project was to create of a support model for a good performance in realizing "energy systems of tomorrow" which is characterised by a simultaneous technical and social accompaniment to manage a broad participation of local and regional actors. In this way, the coordinator of the project organized: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interview with local energy stakeholders</li> <li>- Big Workshops (5 meetings from 2002 to 2006)</li> <li>- A central-group of stakeholders + an extended group with interested people</li> <li>- Working groups with specific thematic (Bio heating, Intelligent building and renovation, solar energy and biomass for private housing, regional electricity).</li> </ul> All relevant regional groups took part in designing the process and proposing a definition.	

Actions have been implemented in the areas of:

- Private housing
- Public building
- Local economy (knowledge transfer, capacity-building)
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The implementation process of the strategy is drawing to its end and there were three main steps:

- In the first step, capacity-building was most important, simultaneously important stakeholders were identified and became valuable supporters of the whole project.
- In the second step, investments were made
- At all times and even after the goal is achieved in 2015, consciousness for the topic has to be improved, by meetings, workshops, also excursions

At all steps, the Energieagentur Obersteiermark was the main promoter of the strategy; they acquired support from particular entrepreneurs and mayors.

There were difficulties, specific for the different stakeholders:

- Public building: Need for action is high, but financial shortages put restrictions.
- Demography decrease and aging result in less investment into new private housing and not much public building (schools...).
- Local economy: Most actors need enduring motivation to study further and acquire new technologies.

Ideas for further improvement have been collected in the brochure "Gelingensfaktoren zur Energieregion der Zukunft".

#### **4) Funding/financing/costs**

The strategy was one of the first approaches in Austria as holistic turnaround in energy-supply. Different stakeholders were involved in the process (politic, families, industry, energy suppliers...). Thanks to its innovative approach, it received financial support from the Austrian Environment ministry and was taken as a good example for the design of new funding frameworks of the ministry.

Management of the Energievision process and animation is supported by:

- Land Steiermark
- BMVIT - Austrian Ministry for transportation, innovation and technology
- Lebensministerium – Austrian ministry for Environment

Financing of individual projects is organised on an individual project basis, sometimes with public co-funding.

Estimation says that around 20 Mio € will be invested in the project until 2015 (energievision process and individual projects). This investment is mostly reinvested in the region (local material, services and local energy).

#### **5) Main results**

Until today, the energievision Murau process has good results:

- Success in setting in motion a process with goals that are supported by the community.
- The theme-specific working groups that are responsible for the actual implementation are working well and doing a good job.
- The Stolzalpe hospital (LKH), the region's largest energy consumer, has managed to replace over a million litres of heating oil with biomass.

Until 2015 the aim is to become energy-self-sufficient in the areas of heating and electricity by exclusive use of regional resources. External results are also expected: a socio-technical support model for a good performance in realizing sustainable total energy solutions should be created within the process. This support model will be described in a manual addressed to energy agencies and regional managements for development and similar organisations which are responsible for the topic of energy to afford a broader realization in other regions of Austria.

Currently the project is on a good way to achieve its aim, energy-self-sufficiency, until 2015. Some facts are:

- Some of the municipalities go ahead faster than others; one is already "free of fuel oil".
- Renewable electricity production is at 140% of the consumption already
- A big -installation biogas from local biomass is currently being built
- All in all the region is about 80% energy-self-sufficient (according to their definition)

## **6) Analysis – lessons learnt and success factors**

*(Extract of an interview in 2009 with Josef Bärnthaler)*

Major challenges:

1. Persuasion: you have to be able to get the sceptical people on board, too.
2. Staying power: you have to be able to keep the process running over a long period of time.
3. Tenacity: the project management team have to constantly keep their eye on the ball, otherwise there is a danger that the processes that have already been set in motion will peter out after a short time.

Lessons learned to create a successful energy region:

1. You need a foundation of trust. The project management team must be impartial and independent; communication must be open and honest. How the working groups are moderated is very important: actors who are normally in competition with each other, such as tradespeople in the energy sector, have to unite around a common philosophy.
2. You need motivated people, who take a proactive approach to implementing ideas, are active in working groups and have their own business models. For example, mayors who refurbish local authority buildings in an exemplary way.
3. You need beacon projects. Abstract concepts are very difficult to sell, whereas a new energy facility or a well-executed refurbishment project demonstrates both the vision and the fact that it can be translated into reality.

The manual "Sozio-technisches Betreuungsmodell für Energieregionen der Zukunft" (socio-technical support for energy regions of the future) should be – in terms of process - transferable to other regions.

More information:

[http://www.nachhaltigwirtschaften.at/edz\\_pdf/energieregionen\\_gelingensfaktoren\\_leitfaden.pdf](http://www.nachhaltigwirtschaften.at/edz_pdf/energieregionen_gelingensfaktoren_leitfaden.pdf)

## 7) Time frame

Start in 2003, ongoing, Evaluation in 2015.

## 8) Contact project owner

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[www.murau.steiermark.at/](http://www.murau.steiermark.at/)

Source: <http://www.klimabuendnis.at/start.asp?ID=229816>

<http://www.energiesystemederzukunft.at/results.html/id4473>

[http://www.energiesystemederzukunft.at/edz\\_pdf/20070920\\_energieregionen\\_der\\_zukunft\\_folien\\_08\\_baernthaler.pdf](http://www.energiesystemederzukunft.at/edz_pdf/20070920_energieregionen_der_zukunft_folien_08_baernthaler.pdf); <http://www.nachhaltigwirtschaften.at/results.html/id4645>

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RzBTtSPiE>

  
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