

D9.7: Report on Intra-Project Collaboration Including Study Visits and Peer-to-Peer Workshops 3

+CityxChange | Work Package 9, Task 9.1

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Authors	Annemie Wyckmans, Konstantina Karatzoudi, Désirée Brigg, Dirk Ahlers (NTNU)
Contributors	Eszter Marklund-Nagy, Savis Gohari Krangsås (NTNU); Ina Karova (EAP); Mihai Bilauca, Pat Stephens, Rosie Webb, Terence Connolly (LCCC); Silja Rønningsen, Bjørn Ove Berthelsen (TK); Tudor Drambarean (MAI); Miloš Prokýšek, Jiří Tencar (MP); Luis Carlos Delgado Ortiz, Andy Bäcker (SB); Eftima Petkova (SMO); Tiina Hallimäe, Valdeko Lukken (Võru); Tjark Gall (ISOCARP)

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List of Acronyms

+CxC	+CityxChange or Positive City ExChange
AIT	Austrian Institute of Technology
API	Application Programming Interface
CIEMAT	Centro de Investigaciones Energéticas, Medioambientales y Tecnológicas
ENEA	Energia Nucleare ed Energie Alternative
EU	European Union
FP7	Seventh Framework Programme, European Union
IREC	International Renewable Energy Conference
ISE	Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems ISE
JPI UE	Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCCC	Limerick City and County Council, Ireland
LHC	Lighthouse City
LNEG	State laboratory of the Portuguese Ministry of Environment and Energy Transition
MAI	Municipality of Alba Iulia, City of Romania
MP	Mesto Pisek, City of Czeck Republic
PED	Positive Energy District
SB	Sestao Berri 2010 Sociedad Anonima
SCC01	Horizon 2020 Smart Cities and Communities call
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SINTEF	Norwegian Independent Research Organisation
SMO	Obshtina Smolyan, City of Bulgaria
TK	Trondheim Kommune
VORU	Võru Linnavalitsus, City of Estonia
VTT	Technical Research Centre of Finland
WP	Work Package
ZenN	Near Zero Energy Neighbourhoods



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1 Executive Summary

This report (Deliverable 9.7) provides an overview of the study visits, peer-to-peer workshops, and other intra-project learning activities performed by the Lighthouse and Follower Cities in +CityxChange, between 1 November 2019 and 30 April 2020 (i.e., Months 13-18 of the +CityxChange project).

These activities form part of Work Package 9 “Inter-Project Collaboration and Clustering”, Task 9.1 “Intra-Project Lighthouse and Follower City Cooperation”. They are designed to address the needs of the participating cities and solution providers in an effective manner, to better align goals and priorities, to promote cross-cultural communication, understanding and collaboration between the partners, and to speed up the learning process and iteration of results across the entire value chain.

As support to deliver better study visits and peer-to-peer workshops, the deliverable also describes ex-ante/ex-post evaluation of cross-cutting issues within clean energy, open innovation, gender, socio-economic science and humanities to increase impact and deliver practical recommendations to partners and beyond.

This report (Deliverable 9.7) is complemented by Deliverable 9.8: “Report on Attendance at Events Held By Other SCC01 Coordinators”.



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2 Learning Sessions (Digital)

2.1 Scope

The second +CxC Learning Workshop was originally planned to take place in March 2020 in Follower City Písek, with corresponding study visits, knowledge exchange and discussions. Due to COVID-19, the workshop was moved to digital format instead, and distributed across a series of Learning Sessions to take place in Spring 2020. If the format is successful, the series will be extended into Autumn 2020 and 2021.

The Learning Sessions aim to support the Follower Cities in their development of Positive Energy Blocks, including a wide range of topics such as how to work with building owners, how to engage with regulatory authorities, how to attract relevant innovation and start-up companies to collaborate, how to secure the necessary investments from public and private sources, how to identify RES for their respective PEBs in a manner that can be scaled up and replicated, and so forth; in short, how to organise and structure the process of developing a Positive Energy Block. The topics of the learning sessions are developed during the monthly Executive Board meetings as well as dedicated meetings with and among the Follower Cities.

The Learning Sessions are open to all project partners, and provide a good arena for documenting the processes that take place in the project, including local experiences that might be difficult to extract into written guidance documents.

The sessions support the alignment of expectations among partners, Tasks and Work Packages, in an informal manner. While this alignment formally takes place within the Technical and Executive Boards (among WP Leads and Cities, respectively), we see that subtle differences in collaboration cultures, communication routines and internal quality assurance procedures, amongst others, come to light more easily in informal discussions, enabling us to make them explicit and take them into account in the continuation of the project.

We have also experienced the importance of feeding back what we learn in collaborative activities in the project and in interaction with other projects, into our own organisations - to make sure that learning is not restricted to the few who travel, and those who participate actively in +CityxChange. To those that actively participate, however, it is not always clear what they have learned until prompted for specific information - and experiences of one event will vary among the participants. For this reason, we are planning to organise systematic "after action reviews" (Garvin et al., 2019) for each workshop, event or similar activity which we organise, or in which we participate as a project. This will enable the participants to better reflect on the potential impact of a collaborative event, discuss it with others, and feed it back into +CityxChange.



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The outcomes of the learning sessions are fed back into the project towards guidance documents (WP7) and Follower City feasibility studies (WP6). In addition, they are used as input towards the development of SCIS Solutions Booklets in cooperation with selected other SCC01 projects (see Wyckmans et al. 2020, Section 2.3).

2.2 Learning Workshop (Písek, originally planned March 2020)

The Learning Workshop in Písek was originally planned to be held on 24-25 March 2020. The programme included welcome speeches by the Mayor of Písek and the city government, as well as study visits to local PEB and other urban development projects, a storytelling workshop with local stakeholders, and presentations of Písek's participation in other smart city-related projects. This programme is now moved to Spring 2021, pending development of COVID-19 restrictions.

Dedicated modules for exchange of experiences between the Lighthouse and Follower Cities were set up to identify preconditions and pathways towards replication of successful solutions and to avoid pitfalls already encountered by other project partners - or other SCC01 projects. This topic is very timely in Spring 2020 as the Follower Cities currently are developing their own feasibility studies. Therefore, these sessions were transferred to online formats and distributed across several smaller learning sessions in March-May 2020, to facilitate the Follower Cities' continued progress.

The workshop further included a range of focus groups on cross-cutting topics such as the flexibility market, eMaaS and regulatory frameworks, in which the participants could discuss the state-of-the-art, experienced barriers and challenges, and discuss potential solutions for testing in the Lighthouse and Follower Cities. These discussions are for the time being also moved to digital formats, together with local partners and stakeholders. The flexibility market and regulatory frameworks are also taken forward in cooperation with other SCC01 projects, amongst others towards dedicated workshops during the URBIS expo in Brno in September 2020, and the development of a new EIP-SCC initiative on regulatory frameworks, led by +CityxChange.

2.3 Learning Session on “Getting building owners on board & getting agreements in place for the work to take place” (25 March, online)

As the face-to-face Písek learning workshop had to be postponed, we started to organise a series of online learning sessions instead. Each session emphasises a specific challenge that the LHCs and FCs experience in the project. During the session, selected LHCs and FCs of +CxC, and potentially external guests, shared their experiences and learnings for discussion with the +CxC partners.



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The challenge of getting building owners on board and putting agreements in place for the work to take place, is shared across all cities that are participating in +CxC. It is of course also highly relevant for the solution providers and other local associated stakeholders in each city, to make sure all expectations are clarified, good agreements are in place, and the cooperation will be fruitful for all partners and stakeholders involved.

Therefore we have chosen this challenge as the topic of the first online learning session. Presentations were held by +CityxChange Lighthouse Cities Limerick and Trondheim, with questions and comments by the Follower Cities.

The first presentation was held by LCCC. The Limerick PEB mainly has private citizens or local stakeholders as building owners.

2.3.1 Limerick's Story

When getting a project funded, a first action is to let the partners and stakeholders know that we have received this project and how it will impact them. This starts off the cooperation with a story of success, and creates a high-level idea of the type of future towards which we want to move.

The next thing to do is to align the picture of a high-level future, as we imagine it should be, with the change the stakeholders want, i.e, the existing desire for change that already exists within these communities. People like change if they are in charge of it. We have to address the areas that are important for the building owners, social communities, business communities, and geographic communities. Sense of well-being is important to address, not just from a health point of view. We need to include an easy connection to climate change, and address how to create lifestyle changes for the better, with financial security. Indigenous and renewable energy is important, in particular if the local building owners can own some of these energy assets, enabling them to participate in the transition.

The next step is how to bring this high-level vision down to the operational level. It's important to show leadership support, with a strong local team and political backing from the municipality when approaching building owners, to build confidence. The strategy also has to be aligned with national policy, this is important when we go to look for funding. In order to start, we align ourselves with the first handful of building owners that are on the same page, and that believe in doing what we want to do. These come on board as the first champions in our project. During the launch, we put in writing an MoU, giving a shared sense of common purpose, although not legally binding. This is something everyone can read again at their leisure, with simple language, that sets out what we are going to be doing together. The MoU establishes the baseline for moving forward. A lot of time was spent on putting together a documentation package for the building owners, including health and safety, insurance, and data protection. The building owners that commit, can also expect free access to the energy staff, monitors, surveys etc. (Limerick 2020b). Limerick is very aware of data processing and is currently performing a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA). This will give the partners themselves the confidence that they are treating the data correctly and it will give confidence to the building owners that their



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data will be treated correctly, in consultation with them, and in line with all legal requirements.

The building owners we are trying to bring on board, will be providing information and working with the partners to create the microgrid. We needed headquarters for this to happen, a place where people know they can get information about the project, a kind of “shop front” providing access to content about the project, with a fixed point of contact. This would also be a place where we can hold workshops, display info boards, models, play games, etc, supported by a digital platform disseminating information about concrete project activities and results, and inviting people to interact with the project.

In order to succeed in this effort, we need to make sure that we relate to distinct groups and individuals, i.e., as owners, occupiers, organisations, and other communities of interest. It is important to have all of these groups on board. At the start of the project, we are very much relying on people we already know, we have built up a lot of goodwill. Furthermore, we are building up trust with new stakeholders, by providing people with information and support in initiatives such as a planning clinic. We are monitoring this process so we and others can learn from it, and we can feed it back into the project to improve our activities.

In H2020, a lot of innovation work happens in a controlled environment. This allows you to make mistakes. But when it comes to working in a city, working with people, innovation can have unintended side effects.

The second presentation was held by Trondheim municipality. The Trondheim PEBs mainly have commercial building owners, some of which are beneficiaries in +CityxChange.

2.3.1 Trondheim’s Story

The Trondheim PEBs themselves do not have sufficient buildings to create a viable and sufficiently broad flexibility market and eMaaS hub. Hence, it is very important to connect additional local associated stakeholders and building owners to the project. Additional agreements have been made with the local building owners in order to secure cooperation on the +CityxChange trading market, which requires the main interfaces to the buildings of many external/associated owners in order to create it. The buildings and building owners hence are not only building stock, they are also actors in the local market. The cooperation relies on official agreements, combined with regular meetings and carefully drafted and approved meeting minutes to create mutual understanding.

In both Lighthouse Cities, the agreements that have been drafted with local building owners are highly useful for replication within the Follower Cities. While some of the content is confidential, the templates for these documents and the processes surrounding the agreements can be made available for replication.



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2.4 Upcoming Learning Sessions

On 12 May, OV will host an online investment workshop, aiming to review +CityxChange investment strategies in the light of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, mitigation plans, and potential new funding sources within European and national economic recovery plans. This workshop will be followed by dedicated sessions with local stakeholders, per city, in the coming months.

On 11, 14 and 15 May, +CityxChange will organise three online learning sessions on "Pathways to PEBs". In the first session, the LHCs will present the processes they used to develop their PEBs, from the +CityxChange proposal phase onwards, and their learnings after 18 months of project experiences. In the second and third sessions, the FCs will present the current status of the feasibility studies for their PEBs, and the challenges they face, for discussion with the LHCs and solution providers.

In June-September, further sessions on crowdfunding and cooperation with regulatory authorities will be held.



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3 PED Talks

3.1 Lunch Talks (Trondheim)

NTNU has organised regular lunch talks in Trondheim, aiming to bring together local partners to discuss selected challenges across talks. Presentations would typically be held by a local +CityxChange partner presenting their work in the project, or a local stakeholder invited to bring an outside perspective into the project, for potential further cooperation.

After having tested this format for about one year, we see that the scope is too limited to enable fruitful discussion 1-2 times per month.

When the COVID-19 lockdown necessitated a shift towards a digital format, we used the opportunity to extend the scope of our lunch talks to include additional Norwegian and +CityxChange partners. We re-branded the format into “PED Talks” instead.

3.2 Lunch Session on “Game-Based Approaches Towards Citizen Engagement” (6 December 2019, Trondheim)

In Trondheim, a PhD researcher of the project “Planning Instruments for Smart Energy Communities” (PI-SEC 2020) is collaborating with +CityxChange to co-create a game through which citizens and planning professionals can exchange knowledge and ideas about the development towards a Positive Energy City.

Players have to suggest actions that will bring the neighbourhood closer to being energy positive on a societal, technical, or bureaucratic level. They have to balance collaboration and competition, since they have to achieve the collective Positive Energy City goal in order to win the game themselves.

On 6 December, this game was tested with local partners and stakeholders in Trondheim, to gain feedback for further development.

In Limerick, a game had already been developed with a similar purpose (Limerick, 2020). In the Limerick game, using a 3D model of the block, and their imaginations, participants help us develop future visions of a sustainable city by taking part in this interactive game. The participants work on different scenarios to collaboratively create a model for a green, efficient and people-friendly Limerick. They develop new ideas to determine the growth and adaptability of their city block.

We are now investigating how the two games may be used and further developed to complement each other in the development of Innovation Playgrounds in Trondheim, Limerick and the +CityxChange Follower Cities.



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3.3 PED Talk on “Positive Energy Districts: Definitions and Regulatory Frameworks” (13 March 2020, online)

In 2019, the EERA Joint Programme on Smart Cities (European Energy Research Alliance) has developed a working definition for Positive Energy Districts (PEDs), in close cooperation with +CityxChange and some of the other lighthouse projects. This working definition was handed over to DG Energy of the European Commission, as well as to SET-Plan Action 3.2, managed by Joint Programming Initiative Urban Europe.

The first PED Talk on 13 March was organised to present the most recent updates regarding working definitions of Positive Energy Districts, and their consequences for regulatory frameworks as enablers or barriers. The workshop was organised in cooperation between +CityxChange and the Norwegian Research Centre on Zero Emission Neighbourhoods in Smart Cities (FME ZEN). The workshop had around 30 participants.

The workshop provided the opportunity to reflect on the two existing approaches towards PEDs in Norway, +CityxChange and FME ZEN, and aimed to help to identify the Norwegian contribution to the PED concept. We asked the participants: Where can the two definition approaches complete each other to strengthen the PED definition and concept?

The workshop started by introducing SET-Plan Action 3.2, aiming to commit 100 PEDs by 2025, the EERA JP Smart Cities, creating a cooperation platform between 45 European research institutions and universities, and the SCC01 smart city lighthouse projects, that as of 2018 are working with Positive Energy Blocks and Districts. In addition, the SCIS Solution Booklets were introduced as a potential format to which this PED Talk could contribute, aiming to summarise important learnings from the SCC01 projects into an attractive format for decision makers and stakeholders, mainly city officials. Each booklet tries to clarify the basics of solutions, but with an integrated perspective, for each theme including chapters on governance, finance, technical solutions, etc.

The basis for the discussion was formed by the European PED working definition with 4 PED models, developed by EERA JPSC in Spring 2019 with contributions by +CityxChange partners (Wyckmans et al. 2019, Section 3.2), and the Norwegian definition of Zero Emission Neighbourhoods (ZEN) as developed by FME ZEN. +CityxChange and FME ZEN furthermore presented their respective concepts for regulatory frameworks, aiming to enable trial innovation in cities.

The presentations and discussions made it clear that a PED definition needs to be viable in practice, but at the same time supported by evidence and able to be monitored and compared to others. For +CityxChange, this means that we need to define what kind of added value a PEB or PED label would bring to make it attractive for developers, energy companies, investors, politicians, local communities and other decision makers, and how it will be supported by appropriate KPIs. These concepts and KPIs need to be tested in local and European conditions, monitored, compared, analysed and their results iterated back



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towards relevant projects. This is the reason why +CityxChange invests a considerable amount of time and resources in cooperation with the other SCC01 projects and with SET-Plan Action 3.2 (see Wyckmans et al. 2020).

We furthermore need to clarify in which cases PED is the correct ambition. Working at the district scale gives a lot of new possibilities that do not exist at the building scale. However, the most likely best level of optimisation is at the city and regional level, including all demand and supply. Balancing out the regional energy system is most likely the most optimal. All local actors should have access to the global market if possible; on top of that we can create a local flexibility market as an added value for storage, consumption and production. Local and global markets should play together.

Equally important will be the regulatory bottlenecks that will come up when developing the prosumer / flexibility market, combined with the wider regulatory landscape, e.g. on spatial and urban planning regulations, EU market directives, and GDPR. In +CityxChange, we are currently mapping the challenges and barriers in Norwegian and European regulations towards creating PEBs and PEDs.

The main point of focus is scale up and replicate. This means that as a project, +CityxChange has a large responsibility for not only developing and testing novel PEB concepts, but above all, to extract experiences, discuss and share them, and in turn learn from others. We need to showcase how PEBs and PEBs can be directly supportive towards cities' long-term urban development and energy ambitions, and how cities can use the different complementary initiatives into an integrated framework.

In +CityxChange, the commercial companies are represented, as well as the municipalities and the universities. From the business perspective, this triangle is very important for the added value and commercialisation of products. We need to be able to test PEDs and to be able to invest in resources for them; this requires a good regulatory framework. There are a lot of pilot projects at city level, but it is at the national and European level that regulations need to be changed. In Deliverable 2.1 (Bertelsen et al. 2019), we tried to map what is going on in different Member States and Associated Countries. In this gap analysis, we identified that there in fact is not that much difference for the implementation of the concepts.

The outcomes of the workshop will be used as input to the European strategy development related to Positive Energy Districts and Cities, including SET-Plan Action 3.2, Horizon Europe, an SCIS Solution Booklet on Positive Energy Districts, and an SCIS policy brief. Based on the discussions in this workshop, Norwegian participants SINTEF and NTNU wrote an abstract on "Enriching the concept of PEDs – What can we learn from the planning and implementation of PEDs in Norway?", that was submitted to the EERA JP Smart Cities Special Issue #3 in the Energies journal (see Wyckmans et al. 2020, Section 3.3.6)



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3.4 PED Talk on “How can Blockchain/DLT be leveraged for sustainable energy & smart cities?” (27 March 2020, online)

In this PED Talk on “How can Blockchain/DLT be leveraged for sustainable energy & smart cities?”, two invited speakers presented how they use Distributed Ledger Technologies to promote and support Positive Energy Districts. +CityxChange partner IOTA Foundation presented the industry perspective. University of Stavanger, partner in SCC01 project Triangulum, presented the research perspective.

The PED Talk was organised as a webinar and had around 30 participants. The discussions will be taken onwards towards joint activities between Trondheim and Stavanger stakeholders, amongst others with cooperation in the new COST Action on “European Networks for Positive Energy Districts” and within the EERA JP Smart Cities (for more information about these initiatives, see Wyckmans et al. 2020).



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4 Collaborative events organised by partners

4.1 Meetings with the Norwegian and Irish Embassies

On 8 November 2019, Trondheim municipality met with the Irish ambassador to Norway.

On 6 January 2020, NTNU met with the Norwegian embassy in Ireland to prepare for the upcoming meeting of the Norwegian Ambassador in Ireland with LCCC and UL, and to identify complementary strengths of NTNU and UL, and Trondheim and Limerick, along with their solution providers, that can be supported and promoted by the Embassy. Key topics discussed were the importance of holistic, integrated solutions, and the emergence of a new role for researchers/universities as boundary spanners and facilitators of open innovation with public and private sector and civic society.

On 7 February 2020, the Norwegian Ambassador in Ireland met with the Mayor and the CEO of Limerick City and County Council, and the University of Limerick, to pave the ground for planning a Nordic Countries Smart Cities 2020 event in Limerick. On the agenda was a mutual interest in further developing cooperation on smart and sustainable cities, as well as cooperation on development of software that may support this effort. The All Ireland Smart Cities Forum was discussed as a core arena through which cities may discuss how to offer better services, how to promote regional activity, how to support innovative solutions, and how to increase cooperation and engagement among local and international stakeholders. The meeting was a follow-up of the launch of a Nordic-Irish partnership for smart cities in May 2019.

For +CityxChange, the support of the Norwegian and Irish Embassies is highly valuable to implement project activities in Lighthouse Cities Trondheim and Limerick, and to scale up and replicate the cooperation within our own countries as well as with European partners.

4.2 +CityxChange Booth and Presentations at UN-Habitat World Urban Forum (8-13 February 2020, Abu Dhabi)

From 8 to 13 February, the Tenth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF) took place in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The WUF was established in 2001 by the United Nations to address one of the most pressing issues facing the world today: rapid urbanisation and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies. Convened by UN-Habitat, the Forum is a high level, open and inclusive platform for addressing the challenges of sustainable urbanisation.

Three partners of +CityxChange, NTNU, Trondheim Kommune, and ISOCARP Institute, actively participated at the event by co-hosting events, speaking at various sessions and



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also presenting our projects at the joint booth from ISOCARP Institute and NTNU as well as during two sessions at the stand.

In a first presentation, NTNU shared the work of +CityxChange, in particular in the mobility sector, during a session on Mobility for carbon-friendly Cities, together with speakers from Brussels, London, and Cambodia. The session was focusing on the current development and challenges of mobility, how to steer in the direction of less motorised traffic, as well as the integration of e-mobility for a more carbon-friendly mobility sector. A second presentation by NTNU showcased the overall project during a session highlighting the projects and activities of ISOCARP Institute. This session highlighted the strong core of +CityxChange which focuses on collaboration, the development of learning frameworks and networks, and the enabling of meaningful exchange of knowledge, experiences and learning inside the project as well as with other projects.

In addition to being the first time that +CityxChange was represented at WUF, the cooperation between ISOCARP and NTNU was particularly useful to discuss which key elements of the project to highlight, how to visualise them and how to build booth sessions around them, for a discerning audience at WUF that discusses global social challenges. Amongst others, we were challenged to identify how +CityxChange solutions and processes could be replicated in Asian and African countries, in a widely varying local context. This question also arose in the cooperation with the other SCC01 projects in interaction with China and India (see Wyckmans et al. 2020 Section 2.2.5) as well as global cooperation towards the SDGs (see e.g. Tanum et al. 2020 and Sections 4.5-4.6 in this document), and will be further explored in the coming months.

4.3 Webinar on “How to enable the development of Positive Energy Districts” (1 April 2020, online)

On 1 April, +CityxChange and the local project “Storskala Demo Brattøra” co-organised a workshop with local partners and stakeholders on “How to enable the development of Positive Energy Districts”. Trondheim municipality hosted the workshop in cooperation with local solution providers Entra/Skanska, Powel, and Trønderenergi, core partners for the +CityxChange PEB Brattøra in Trondheim.

During the workshop, the challenges facing Europe’s energy infrastructure were discussed from the perspectives of energy providers, real estate developers, politicians and more. PEB Brattøra was used as a concrete example to investigate the potential dilemmas between urban development and renewable energy production, as well as opportunities for innovation regarding technology and regulations. The participants also discussed how PEB Brattøra could be used as a local example to provide input to the shaping of a climate-neutral Europe by 2050.

The workshop was originally planned to be held face-to-face in Trondheim, but was transformed to a digital format instead, due to COVID-19. With 83 participants, it was very



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successful in broadening the discussion on the Brattøra district as a Positive Energy Block, and the broader challenge of reshaping energy infrastructure in cities, to a wider range of local decision makers from companies, professional organisations, and politics.

4.4 EAP 20th Anniversary (22-24 April 2020, Plovdiv)

+CityxChange partner and Lead of WP6 +Followers, Energy Agency of Plovdiv (EAP) celebrated its 20th anniversary on 22-24 April 2020. Originally the anniversary was planned to be celebrated with a series of events around the theme “The Future of our cities” focused on all Bulgarian cities as resilient, energy independent and sustainable communities with a vision to become smart cities. The participation of all Bulgarian cities that take part in SCC01 projects was confirmed.

NTNU was invited to present the +CityxChange project and join in the celebrations; Smolyan municipality would present its Bold City Vision for 2050 for the energy and climate policies in Smolyan. The Lighthouse and Follower Cities of +CityxChange were invited as well, alongside solutions providers and other partners of the project.

The programme included the “All Bulgarian Smart Cities Conference” on 22 April, followed by an evening celebration and ceremony for the 20th anniversary of the Energy Agency of Plovdiv. On 23 April, a round table discussion was planned on “The Future of our cities”. On 24 April, a round table discussion would be held on “Business perspectives on energy efficiency policies: Capturing the argumentative drivers for effective implementation”.

Due to COVID-19, the anniversary events could unfortunately not proceed as planned. They will be moved to an as-to-yet undecided date in the near future.

Extending +CityxChange meetings and events to invite other national or regional SCC01 cities and partners, gives us a good opportunity to meet with peers and discuss cross-project challenges in great detail. It also builds peer-to-peer relationships between +CityxChange cities and those involved in other SCC01 projects in the region, making it easier for them to reach out, ask for advice and learn from each other in the future.

4.5 Bold City Vision Framework in practice (24 April 2020, online)

On 24 April, LCCC and TK hosted an online webinar (+CityxChange 2020) in which the Bold City Vision (BCV) framework of +CityxChange was presented and discussed. The Norwegian municipality of Asker presented how they have started to implement the framework in their city.

After a brief introduction about the purpose and goals of +CityxChange by LCCC, Asker municipality presented how they have translated the BCV, how they use it in cross-sectoral activities, and how they are linking it to the work the municipality is performing towards the Sustainable Development Goals.



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First, they needed to understand the content of the framework in depth. They mapped the activities, projects and measures that they were already performing, and located them within the BCV framework. This exercise showed them that they are performing a lot of highly useful activities, but they are not necessarily interlinked. They organized workshops with high level leaders to share and discuss their insights.

In a second step, they organised workshops across units, asking staff to fill out the BCV framework with their projects. This made the staff realise that most of them contribute to the same goals and their activities could become more interlinked, even though they work in different units on different projects. This could be a game changer for creating a common language and understanding, and support the staff to find their role in a collaborative effort towards reaching the SDGs.

While the potential of implementing the BCV is great, there are challenges linked to creating the necessary understanding throughout the organization to be able to fully utilize the potential. The municipality needs to spend time on anchoring the model within the organisation and making its advantage tangible. The model should also be extended with themes such as Climate, Energy, Well-being etc., to really show its usefulness.

Having another municipality test the +CxC BCV framework and explain their experiences to our cities and solution providers, was highly valuable. The discussions and feedback in this webinar provided useful reflections for the LHCs regarding their own practices, and gave the FCs an additional example of how processes can be replicated within the organisation. The format of the webinar was also very useful - with ample time for presentation of one topic, and for feedback and discussion by all participants.

4.6 Session during European Week of Regions and Cities (October 2020, Brussels)

Assuming the European Week of Regions and Cities goes ahead in October 2020, +CityxChange partners Limerick, Trondheim, Písek and Smolyan municipalities are looking to arrange a joint session as part of the Programme. The session is planned around the topic *"Bold City Vision – Practical approaches for empowering citizens to lead the change towards UN sustainable development goals"*, to be held under the "Empowering citizens" track of the European Week of Regions and Cities.

The application was submitted in April 2020 and has been conditionally accepted, pending merging of workshops. The session itself may potentially be transferred to a digital format due to COVID-19. The session was inspired by the very positive experience of organising a session at the European Week of Regions and Cities in 2019, during which Trondheim and Limerick held a session on "The future of Urban Systems Innovation for positive energy cities and sustainable communities" on 8 October 2019.



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5 Monthly Executive Board Meetings (Light)

According to the Project Management Structure in the Description of Action, the Executive Board, composed of the Project Coordinator and all Lighthouse and Follower Cities, will meet online or face-to-face on a quarterly basis.

During the project kick-off meeting, the members agreed to start with monthly meetings, to support better interaction between the cities, to get a good rhythm going, to ensure that all cities would be fully engaged and included in the project, and to make sure that the Follower Cities would have the support they need to be successful in early replication.

During the monthly meetings, the cities receive an update from the Technical Board, and each city reports on its ongoing activities. Based on these talks, topics are selected for upcoming learning sessions (see Section 3 of this document). In the past months, risk registration and mitigation due to COVID-19 has been added to the agenda. During each meeting, the EB discusses whether additional mitigation measures need to be taken, and whether the Project Coordinator should call for an Extraordinary General Assembly.



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6 Conclusions

Months 13-18 of the +CityxChange project started with a transformation of activities from planning to implementation mode, with demonstration activities being initiated in the Lighthouse Cities. Due to COVID-19, several demonstration activities experience delays and uncertainty, which are being handled in the appropriate consortium bodies.

In order to keep project activities going, and to spur on communication and sharing of experiences across partners, we have shifted all meetings and talks to digital formats. This in fact enabled us to open up our activities to additional stakeholders (requiring no travel), which in turn has provided us with more inspirational content both from our own project partners and from our peer projects and platforms.

The next six months will bring important updates regarding the viability of the demonstrations in the Lighthouse Cities, and their potential need for adjustments due to COVID-19, and the feasibility studies of the Follower Cities, showcasing their needs, priorities and pathways to PEBs. As always, these experiences will be embedded in our upcoming deliverables and posted on our website to share, as we, likewise, look to our peers to be inspired.



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