

Priority 2. Energy transition.

Specific Objective 2.1 – Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

NB: This factsheet presents a **summary** of Specific Objective (SO) 2.1 of the Interreg North-West Europe Programme (NWE IP). The comprehensive description of SO 2.1, which contains detailed explanations and further examples **should be consulted for a full understanding of the SO in Chapter 2.1 of the NWE IP.**

Territorial challenges and opportunities

Due to its high energy consumption, the North-West Europe (NWE) region is key to reach the EU's target of an increased overall energy efficiency of 32,5% until 2030. Various fields show a high potential for improvement. Energy performance levels in buildings and in transport are still too low. Furthermore, the deployment of decentralised energy production and smart energy systems such as smart grids and smart meters needs to be improved. The Programme seeks to increase the capacity of NWE communities to improve energy efficiency and to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Objectives

Within this Specific Objective, the Programme aims to support projects that:

- Address opportunities to increase the energy performance in different sectors (e.g., dwellings and public buildings, transport or mobility, Inland Waterway Transport, as well as of district heating and cooling network lines).
- Address opportunities for the promotion of smart energy systems (storage and distribution).
- Address opportunities for the prevention of energy poverty.

Target groups

- **Local/regional/national authorities, EGTCs, governmental agencies, public equivalent organisations**, (including agencies or para-public organisations) with responsibilities relating to energy efficiency. These can include working on a reduction of the energy use.
- **Universities, public research centres, private research units, schools and higher education, training centres**. Scientific insight and evidence to regional challenges can be provided from these innovation drivers.

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- **SMEs and business support organisations** are economic drivers in the region with high potential for innovation. They can help develop innovations and solutions, to increase the competitiveness of the NWE region.
- **Sectoral associations, NGOs, lobby organisations, citizens groups**, which can act as multipliers to their networks (e.g., through educational initiatives). They can gather data, and influence policies. They can develop community-based solutions.

Activities

Projects should implement a combination of activities, such as:

- **Elaboration and implementation of joint strategies and/or action plans**, for example to implement energy efficient solutions and technologies, to overcome barriers and create networks/communities, to reduce energy poverty and to bring methods and processes for energy efficiency and energy storage into practice.
- **Pilot actions for testing tools and/or solutions**, for example demonstration and joint implementation of business models to improve energy efficiency in different sectors (e.g., building and transport), or of energy-saving solutions/ smart energy systems that change consumer engagement and acceptance and can therefore lead to a behavioural change.
- **Capacity building and awareness raising activities**, for example training schemes to support employees, citizens, and businesses in the building sector to improve energy efficiency and performance.

Results

The **combination of these activities** may lead to results such as:

- Key principles of a better energy transition are embedded into territorial strategies and local initiatives, with a specific attention to energy efficiency improvements in different settings, promotion of smart energy systems, and prevention of energy poverty.
- Increased knowledge and capacity of stakeholders to translate energy efficiency principles into policies, services, products, and actions (e.g., by systematically including energy efficiency in the planning and adaptation of new and existing infrastructure, etc.).
- Innovative technologies, solutions, products, and services that improve energy efficiency in different settings and sectors and avoid energy poverty are taken up ensuring coherence between approaches and local/regional needs.
- Citizens, consumers, and local communities are better empowered and engaged in a more efficient energy consumption.

Outputs and results of projects must contribute to the NWE Programme indicator framework (see the NWE IP).