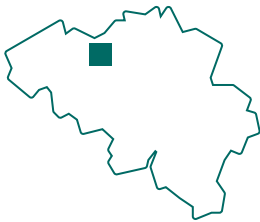


GHENT ENABLING BUSINESS TO BE MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT



261,483

INHABITANTS

Ghent was the first Belgian city to sign the Covenant of Mayors and its commitment was confirmed in 2015 when it became the first city, ahead of COP21, to join the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy. A subsequent updated climate plan focusing on social climate policy puts Ghent on course for climate neutrality by 2050.

20%

EMISSIONS REDUCTION
TARGET 2007-2020

40%

EMISSIONS REDUCTION
TARGET BY 2030

AMBITION TO BE CLIMATE
NEUTRAL BY

2050

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GUIDING BUSINESS TO INVEST AND BENEFIT FROM GREATER ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Ghent has identified companies as an important target group for CO₂ reduction and set up a customised coaching scheme to encourage investment in energy efficiency measures when existing simple energy audits failed to lead to action.

The scheme offers three levels of support based on annual energy consumption. Light coaching for companies using less than 100,000 kWh/year, includes an energy review and up to 10 hours of customised advice and implementation guidance.

Medium coaching (100,000-500,000 kWh/year), provides an energy review and a year's coaching to deliver an energy action plan. Companies pay €400 and commit to implement all measures with a payback time of two years. Maxi coaching for the highest energy users provides all of the above plus more consultancy hours for €700.

Since 2014, 106 medium and high energy using companies have saved 6,280 tonnes of CO₂ a year. Most of these savings come from insulation, relighting, air pressure monitoring, peak load control and investment in combined head and power (CHP).

While this case-study focuses on initiatives involving the private sector, the city also offers citizens integrated services with the same goal. These include an online tool to understand the need and value of retrofitting and free advice for managing renovations and contractors, including quote reviews and renovation follow-ups. Available via a one-stop-shop energy hub, these services have led to €30m of investments and annual CO₂ reductions of 5,800 tonnes.

CHALLENGES

- **Convincing** companies to participate can be difficult and time consuming
- **Persuading** companies to implement measures with longer payback periods
- **Following** up with companies about impact measurement
- **Dealing** with delays where decision-makers are based abroad in a parent company
- **Overcoming** citizens' view of energy renovations as non-urgent
- **Making** it easier for citizens to get technical knowledge and a good contractor
- **Convincing** homeowners it is possible to juggle renovation with family life, work and finances



LESSONS LEARNT

- ***Make contact with the right person within a company and at the right time, when new investments or retrofits are being planned***
- ***Management teams must be on board with the need for action and champion the company's energy action plan***
- ***Companies need to understand the importance of energy accounting, even for the smallest measures***
- ***Enthusiastic energy coaches have the greatest impact***
- ***Companies need to find payback periods acceptable***



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