



# GHENT

CLIMATE-NEUTRAL BY 2050

The City of Ghent, in Belgium, is situated in the Flemish Region and it is characterized by humid continental climate (Cfb).

With 156,2 km<sup>2</sup>, Ghent counts a population of 267,709 (2022), with expected growth for the next decades. The student population in Ghent is a key component of the City's growth, with currently 69,872 students in Ghent.



## LEADING ECONOMIC SECTORS IN GHENT:



KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY



TECHNOLOGY AND IT SERVICES



TOURISM

## MAIN SOURCES OF CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS (2022):



TRANSPORT



TRADE AND SERVICES



DOMESTIC SERVICES



INDUSTRY



AGRICULTURE

## MAIN SOURCES OF ENERGY GENERATED :



NATURAL GAS



RENEWABLES



OIL

## MOBILITY PATTERNS:



AROUND 40% OF THE POPULATION USES A CAR, 33 % CYCLES AND 10.8 % USES PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## SNAPSHOT OF GHENT ON CAPACITY BUILDING:



### KEY COMPETENCE AREAS:

- Implementation and technology
- Social innovation



### KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Finance
- Governance and policy



### TOPICS OF INTEREST:

- Public-private-partnerships
- PCED implementation
- Private climate investments
- Business models and financing schemes for energy-related projects



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NATIONAL LEVEL:

CLIMATE COMPETENCES ACROSS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENTS



IN GHENT:

CLIMATE INSTITUTIONAL ROLES ACROSS DEPARTMENTS



CROSS SECTORAL CLIMATE PLANS



CO-DESIGN WITH LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

## GOVERNANCE AND POLICY

Competences on climate policy in Belgium are split among the federal and regional governments, and each level defines its climate targets. Although currently there is no national climate law in Belgium, the country aligns with the EU climate neutrality goals for 2050 and the Flemish government focuses its decarbonization strategy on the built environment.

The city of Ghent has set its climate targets, aiming to reduce emissions by 40%, making Ghent 'climate proof' by 2030 and becoming climate neutral by 2050.

Within the city of Ghent, climate roles and responsibilities are shared across six departments - Urban Development & Land-use Planning; Environment & Biodiversity; Energy; Transport, Mobility, and Infrastructure; Economic Development, and all departments are directly involved in the implementation of the city climate agenda.

Despite the regularity of collaboration among staff and departments, coordination of data and sharing of information could be improved.

The municipality is very active in engaging with the local stakeholders to collect input and discuss the city climate agenda priorities. With a formal Advisory Board, the city co-designs the climate plans with organizations from different sectors and with a focus on climate adaptation.

## SOCIAL INNOVATION

The city of Ghent mobilizes its local stakeholders and citizens, acknowledging their vital role in fostering an inclusive and just transition. From co-design sessions to district walks, public assemblies, and social media, the city strives to involve the local ecosystem across sectors and perspectives. Although the city places importance on stakeholder and citizen involvement, participation is generally low. The city is looking for effective ways to make its citizens heard and co-creators in the decision-making process for the city's climate action and energy transition.

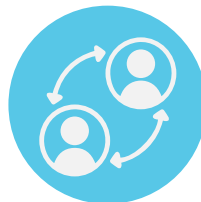
The main barriers to engagement are mostly due to a lack of awareness of climate change, reluctance from communities to change behaviors, and resisting interests from the industries involved in the transition. Addressing housing affordability and raising energy prices for tenants and homeowners poses a significant challenge.

In the pursuit of a just transition, Ghent liaises with local social organizations advocating for housing rights. Nonetheless, specific actions to ensure gender equality in the participatory process are yet to be defined.

To improve its social engagement capacity, the city of Ghent is looking to innovate in the following areas:



POLICY INNOVATION



ENGAGEMENT METHODS



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION WITH INTERMEDIARY LOCAL ORGANISATIONS



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## IMPLEMENTATION AND TECHNOLOGY

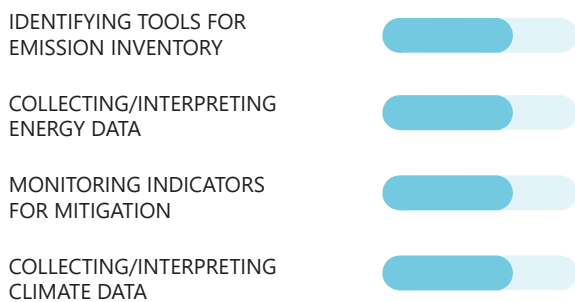
The city of Ghent focuses on decarbonizing its Transport system, Built Environment, and Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU).

When trying to reduce carbon emissions, Ghent faces challenges related to the fragmentation of responsibilities within the local government's organizational structure, which results in the need for better administrative and operational capacity. The need for more targeted regulations and enabling policies at the federal level is also a main barrier to implementation.

While Ghent has experience with PCEDs only at the planning level, the city has a track record of actively engaging with the local ecosystem of stakeholders, especially investors, homeowners, tenants, and other local actors involved in the energy supply chain, as key components for successful implementation.

The city has also set up a One-Stop-Shop (OSS) to boost energy efficiency renovations.

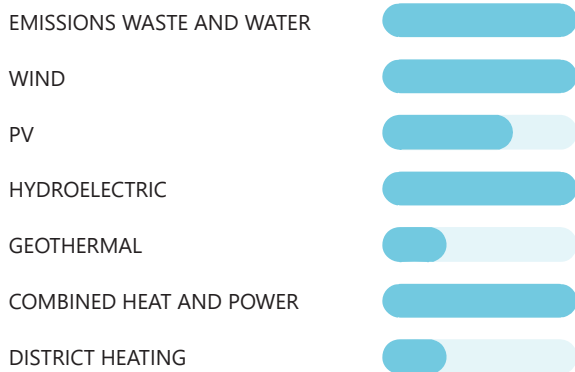
### CLIMATE AND ENERGY DATA COLLECTION ANALYSIS



### ADAPTATION SECTORS



### LOCAL ENERGY RENEWABLE PRODUCTION



### COLLABORATION



NEUTRALPATH key target sectors for the PCEDs implementation are: Built Environment, Energy and Mobility



## FINANCING AND BUSINESS MODELS FOR PCEDS AND CLIMATE NEUTRALITY

The city of Ghent is experienced in energy efficiency, leveraging tools like revolving funds, soft loans, and Third-party financing, alongside the use of innovative Citizen Finance schemes like Crowdfunding.

Ghent is seeking to enhance its financing skills using financial schemes, mixing different investment tools, and improving the aggregation of investments for climate and environmental projects. Upskilling the financial knowledge of the city staff across departments is also a key interest.

A significant priority includes designing effective business models specifically tailored for the PCED.

In terms of climate finance, the city of Ghent allocates climate budgets encompassing mitigation, adaptation, circular economy, green mobility, renewables, and energy efficiency.



### KEY COMPETENCE AREAS:

- Third-party financing
- Citizen Finance Energy
- Efficiency Investments



### INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT:

- Business models for energy-related projects
- Blended Finance

The Capacity Building Program will support the upskilling of public authorities and local communities across these key cross-cutting areas and the Key Target Sectors to enable successful PCED implementation and unlock the systemic transformation necessary to achieve climate neutrality.

If you want to know more:



[Ghent Crowdfunding Platform](#)



[Ghent Citizen Participation Platform](#)



[Ghent Climate neutral city](#)



[neutralpath.eu/](https://neutralpath.eu/)



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