Multi-city One-Stop-Shop for energy renovation

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Executive snapshot

The Italian Mission Cities – Padova, Bologna, Bergamo, Florence, Milan, Parma, Prato, Rome, and Turin – face a shared challenge: accelerating building energy renovation while engaging citizens and stakeholders in the transition to climate neutrality by 2030. To address this, RENAEL and four local energy agencies conducted a feasibility study for a Multi-City One-Stop-Shop (OSS) that would support cities in delivering integrated services for energy renovation.

Using a Service Design approach and the Double Diamond methodology, the team co-developed solutions with nine cities and energy agencies through research, workshops, and co-design sessions. This user-centered process enabled cities to identify common needs, align stakeholders, and design a coordinated service system capable of supporting citizens, businesses, and local actors in implementing energy renovation projects.
The study highlights the importance of hybrid OSS models, combining physical service points, digital platforms, and mobile outreach to ensure accessibility for diverse users. It also emphasises stakeholder engagement and sustainable funding as critical success factors.

The result is a practical blueprint for a Multi-City OSS that supports local city services, facilitates the matching of demand and supply for renovation solutions, and strengthens the implementation of Climate City Contracts across the participating cities.

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Knowledge Report

THE CHALLENGE

Cities play a central role in achieving climate neutrality, yet the transformation of the building sector remains one of the most complex challenges. Residential energy renovation requires coordination between citizens, building managers, local authorities, financial institutions, and service providers.
In Italy's Mission Cities, fragmented services and limited coordination between actors can slow down the adoption of energy efficiency measures. Citizens often lack clear guidance on technical, financial, and regulatory aspects of renovation projects.

To address these barriers, a consortium led by the National Network of Local Energy Agencies (RENAEL) conducted a feasibility study using the NetZeroCities City Expert Support Facility (CESF). The objective was to explore the creation of a Multi-City One-Stop-Shop (OSS) capable of supporting nine Italian Mission Cities – Padova, Bologna, Bergamo, Florence, Milan, Parma, Prato, Rome, and Turin – in accelerating building renovation and supporting the implementation of their climate strategies.

THE APPROACH

The study analyses the technical, organizational, legal, and economic conditions required to establish a coordinated OSS model. The concept builds on two complementary levels:

- City OSS operating locally to support citizens and building stakeholders.
- Multi-City OSS providing coordination, tools, and expertise across the nine cities.

The Multi-City OSS would support local OSS services by facilitating the matching of demand and supply for energy renovation services and by coordinating actors such as energy operators, financial institutions, and local stakeholders.
To design the model, RENAEL applied a Service Design methodology using the Double Diamond process, a structured approach centred on user needs and collaborative problem-solving.

The process unfolded in four phases:
Discover: A market analysis of Italian and European OSS initiatives was conducted, alongside interviews with the nine cities to understand existing services, priorities, and expectations.
Define: Energy agencies and cities participated in workshops and discussions to identify common challenges and opportunities for a shared OSS structure.

Develop: Through co-design sessions and brainstorming activities, participants created a service system map that visualized the actors, services, and interactions required for the future Multi-City OSS.
Deliver: The resulting concept was refined through a Business Model Canvas and presented to cities and stakeholders during the final LET'S GOV event, allowing feedback and further improvements.

This methodology represented the first application of Service Design in this type of public infrastructure feasibility study, enabling a more collaborative and user-centred approach to designing city services.

THE IMPACT

The study produced a practical framework for implementing a Multi-City OSS supporting the renovation ecosystem across the nine cities.

Key insights emerged from the process.

- Cities recognized the importance of a hybrid service model combining physical service desks, digital platforms, and mobile outreach. This ensures accessibility for different population groups, including vulnerable users or those less comfortable with digital tools.
- The initiative demonstrated the importance of co-creation with stakeholders. Rather than treating stakeholders solely as service users, the process positioned them as partners in designing and delivering the service. This included collaboration with energy agencies, ESCOs, property managers, local enterprises, and financial actors.
- Cities identified the importance of long-term financial sustainability. While services should remain accessible to citizens, maintaining a high-quality OSS requires coordinated public funding and support from national and European programmes.
- The project reframed the role of OSS structures. Cities increasingly see them not only as technical support services but as institutional infrastructures enabling systemic change toward climate neutrality.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

A structured Service Design approach can significantly improve coordination between diverse stakeholders. Visual tools such as system maps and collaborative workshops helped align perspectives and identify potential challenges early in the process.

The design of energy renovation services should consider the diversity of target users, including citizens, SMEs, condominium managers, and vulnerable households. Different engagement strategies may be required for each group. Cities also highlighted the need for strong partnerships with national institutions and financial actors to ensure sustainable funding and effective implementation.

Finally, collaborative platforms like a Multi-City OSS can create economies of scale and shared expertise, helping cities accelerate complex transitions that would be difficult to manage independently.

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NEXT STEPS FOR THE CITY

The feasibility study identifies the creation of the Multi-City OSS entity as the next step.

Once established, the Multi-City OSS would support the development of local city OSS services and coordinate engagement with market actors and financial institutions. Future activities include:

- Developing integrated physical and digital service platforms
- Engaging target user groups and local stakeholders
- Facilitating market matchmaking between renovation demand and service providers
- Supporting capacity building and knowledge sharing between cities
- By strengthening collaboration between cities and stakeholders, the Multi-City OSS can become a key enabler of large-scale building renovation and accelerate progress toward climate neutrality.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Learn more about Padova

Read the Feasibility study on the creation of a multi-city One-Stop Shop (OSS) for the Italian Mission Cities under the Let's GOv project consortium

Still got questions? Ask us:

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