



2nd SMAFIN National Roundtable in Bulgaria

16-17 March 2022

**Borovets, Samokov hotel and
online**

www.smafin.eu



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AGENDA AND BACKGROUND PAPER

2nd SMAFIN NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE IN Bulgaria

16-17 March 2022
(Borovets, Samokov Hotel and online)

**“Municipal energy management and sustainable energy
investments”**

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
THE SMAFIN PROJECT IN CORELLATION WITH THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES	3
AGENDA	5
1 st THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSION: Municipal energy management systems and their role in attracting funding	9
2 nd THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSION: Attracting funding for RES projects – challenges and solutions for energy cooperatives	9
3 rd THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSION: Unleashing financing for building renovation through involvement of energy poor households	10
Additional session: Quality assurance.....	11

THE SMAFIN PROJECT IN CORELLATION WITH THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The second roundtable in Bulgaria aims to build on the outcomes of the previous event from May 2021, as well as following the 2 roundtables in the framework of Horizon 2020's parallel initiative – the project BeSMART, building upon results from past SEIFs towards the common goal to:

- Establish a permanent platform for contacts between supporting initiatives and stakeholders to mediate and stimulate investments in energy efficiency,
- Generate recommendations for development of programs and mechanisms stimulating private investments in energy efficiency at national level,
- Promote good practices in various thematic areas related to energy management,
- Stimulate the implementation of quality renovation projects of public and residential buildings and the participation of financial institutions and citizens in national programs and local initiatives.

The roundtable has been planned in a hybrid format – both online and in person, with full consideration of current COVID-19 safety guidelines. The format of the SMAFIN RT will follow that of previously held SEIFs, featuring an opening (plenary) session, three parallel sessions and a closing plenary and panel discussion. The event will be held in Bulgarian.

The key role of local and regional authorities for delivering the energy transition is widely cited in the latest EU legislature. However, this remains mostly on paper, and to put it to practice more pronounced strategic steps need to be taken at the municipal level.

In Bulgaria municipalities have a long-standing tradition in the operational management of the national support programmes for energy efficiency. The most evident example is the National Programme for Energy Efficiency, which, after several attempts for centralized management, was transferred to the municipalities and they ensured its uptake through the homeowners' associations (HOAs). However, this support was delivered in a context of a 100% public grant, while current conditions are quickly changing, necessitating co-financing and increased responsibility of the project owners. The same situation applies to the newly emerging field of energy cooperatives and RES projects – all areas which are to receive specific funding under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

Currently, the NRRP is undergoing its 5th actualization, which is postponing the announcement of new national energy efficiency programs and financial instruments. At the same time the interest in EE investments, especially in RES installations in the present-day energy crisis, is growing. Unfortunately, so does the percentage of energy vulnerable households, while there is no established definition in the country, which would enable access to EE renovation programs and flexible financial support – something the financial institutions and commercial banks have expressed readiness to address through relevant products and co-financing.

In this context, it is evident that the expectations from the newly elect government are high and decisive actions cannot be delayed.

To address the most pressing issues, with regards to discussions and consultations with the main stakeholders and working group members, the following topics have been carefully chosen as main pillars for the event:

- Municipal energy management systems and their role in attracting funding
- Attracting funding for RES projects – challenges and solutions for energy
- Unleashing financing for building renovation through involvement of energy poor households

The 2nd SMAFIN Roundtable in Bulgaria is organised by **EnEffect** (www.eneffect.bg). It is supported by **Municipal Energy Efficiency Network EcoEnergy** (www.ecoenergy-bg.net) and **National Trust EcoFund** (<https://ecofund-bg.org>).

AGENDA

16 March 13:30 – 15:00	Introductory plenary (90 min)
Welcome	Key takeaways from the previous national roundtables Dragomir Tzanev, Executive Director, EnEffect
13:40 – 13:55	EU and national energy efficiency policies
Moderator:	Dragomir Tzanev , Executive Director, EnEffect
	Possible measures to mitigate the effects of increased energy prices Ivan Hinovski (Bulgarian Energy and Mining Forum)
	Support measures for local authorities and businesses to tackle the energy crisis Ministry of Energy representative (invited)
	Energy efficiency in the latest version of the NRRP Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works representative (invited)
	Preventive action against the rising energy expenses at local level Vladimir Georgiev (Mayor of Samokov Municipality)
	DISCUSSION
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break

15:30 – 17:00 Parallel sessions	1st Thematic parallel session (90 min)
	Municipal energy management systems and their role in attracting funding
Moderator	Kamelia Gerogieva (National Trust EcoFund)
	Benefits of energy management on municipal level – communicate your projects with the financial sector Stanislav Andreev (EnEffect Consult)
	New sustainable instruments for financing of EE projects Kamelia Georgieva (National Trust EcoFund)
	Municipal Energy Information System and its role to create trust in the financial institutions Alexander Stankov (EnEffect)
	Discussion - Participation of group of experts

15:30 – 17:00 Parallel sessions	2nd Thematic parallel session (90 min)
	Attracting funding for RES projects – challenges and solutions for energy cooperatives
Moderator	Kamen Simeonov (EnEffect)
	National policies in support of energy cooperatives Ivan Hinovski (Bulgarian Energy and Mining Forum)
	Barriers to investments in energy cooperatives in Bulgaria Meglena Antonova (Greenpeace Bulgaria) (invited)
	Opportunities for local authorities to attract funding for energy cooperatives Todor Popov (Gabrovo)
	Discussion - Participation of group of experts

15:30 – 17:00 Parallel sessions	3rd Thematic parallel session (90 min)
	Unleashing financing for building renovation through involvement of energy poor households
Moderator	Dragomir Tzanev (EnEffect)
	Attitude of energy poor households towards building renovation programmes, nationally representative survey by CSD and EnEffect Todor Galev (Center of the Study of Democracy)
	Results of a similar study by EnEffect for Gabrovo and Burgas Dragomir Tzanev (EnEffect)
	Results of measuring comfort parameters (temperature, humidity, CO2) in specific dwellings in multi-family buildings in Gabrovo Borislav Ivanov (EnEffect)
	Results of a CSD study on the impact of carbon prices on household energy costs Todor Galev (Center of the Study of Democracy)
	Discussion – Participation of group of experts

17 March 09:00 – 10:30	Closing plenary, lessons learned and upcoming activities (90 min)
	Presentation of the outcomes of the parallel sessions, moderators of the three sessions
Moderator	Kamelia Georgieva (National Trust EcoFund)
	Energy efficiency and RES projects as sustainable local solutions to energy crises Panel discussion with the participation of: Tanya Hristova, Mayor of Gabrovo municipality, and representatives from the municipalities of Burgas, Pavlikeni, Lyaskovets, Smyadovo, Dobrich, Samokov
	Q&A
	Concept for new financial instruments of NTEF Presentation by National Trust EcoFund with feedback from municipalities
	Coffee break

11:30 –12:30	Quality assurance
	Demo and examples from the municipal energy management information system Alexander Stankov, (EnEffect)
	Role of energy performance certificates for attracting investments Kamen Simeonov (EnEffect)
	Q&A
12:30	END OF EVENT

1st THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSION:

Municipal energy management systems and their role in attracting funding

This session is focused on the issues that municipal experts face in collecting and analysing data for energy consumption, discussing possible solutions, good practises, and tools, all for the purpose of utilizing the financial resources foreseen in the future financial mechanisms.

The first part of the session will discuss the benefits of municipal energy management, the available municipal energy information system, as well as a vision for the development of sustainable financing schemes and tools.

The presentations will be followed by a discussion about barriers and challenges faced by the local authorities during the energy management process. The discussion will be based on the following questions:

- Does local energy management help you to attract funding for energy efficiency projects and if so, how does it help?
- Do the financial institutions recognise energy management as a risk mitigation activity for energy efficiency projects?
- Is there an energy efficiency measures implementation protocol that ensures the validation of the savings obtained by new energy efficiency measures?
- How can energy management support sustainable investments in energy efficiency?
- Can you make a comparison between the costs of energy management and its benefits?

2nd THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSION:

Attracting funding for RES projects – challenges and solutions for energy cooperatives

Bulgarian municipalities have a long track record of supporting citizen-led initiatives, partnerships, and their own investments in this area, and are increasingly aware of the benefits of stimulating additional private investment, for which increased state support is also expected.

However, the implementation of citizen-led sustainable energy projects is still underdeveloped in Bulgaria, with outstanding administrative, legal, technical, and financial obstacles. Despite these barriers, municipalities have the potential to manage such RES projects – a notion growing in its salience given the skyrocketing energy expenses, making the investments ever so attractive.

Following the presentations on the opportunities and challenges that local governments face, as well as on the broader regulatory framework, there will be a discussion, based on the following questions:

- What are the successful business models to accelerate the introduction of public-private energy cooperatives?
- Will the energy crisis and the rise in energy prices stimulate you to look for new financing opportunities for renewable energy projects?
- What is needed in terms of capacity building and technical assistance to facilitate energy cooperatives?
- How best to support the collaboration between public and private organizations?
- What legislative changes are needed to support energy cooperatives?

3rd THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSION:

Unleashing financing for building renovation through involvement of energy poor households

In light of the expected uptake of self-financing instruments for the renovation of multi-family residential buildings, one of the barriers to the full implementation can stem from the inability of energy poor households to afford it. The NRRP has a provision for the development of a definition for energy poverty, but there is still no official position from the responsible institutions. Thus, the first part of the session will focus on a few topical studies on energy poverty in Bulgaria, aiming to facilitate the creation of a national definition to help the development of sustainable financial instruments. The following questions will set the scene for the planned discussion:

- What do you think should be the key components of the future renovation programs to facilitate the involvement of energy poor households?
- How do you assess citizens' awareness of building renovation programmes and the existing financing instruments?
- How can a definition of energy poverty enable the functioning of innovative financing instruments?

- Have the presented surveys changed your understanding of whether households are willing to co-finance renovation projects?
- What do you think are the most appropriate communication channels to influence attitudes and stimulate citizens to participate in the building renovation process with a view to participation in the programme by energy poor households?

The roundtable will be concluded with presentations on the outcomes of the three parallel sessions, which would then be discussed among representatives of Bulgarian municipalities and financing institutions (National Trust EcoFund, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Sources Fund). The session will be chaired by Kamelia Georgieva (NTEF).

The questions to be discussed are:

- 1) Impressions from the conclusions presented by the facilitators of the parallel sessions and key topics to be addressed in the following roundtables
- 2) Key issues that need to enter from the professional discussions into the political and media discourse to initiate the necessary reforms in energy efficiency policies
- 3) Important stakeholders who are not yet actively involved in the debate on energy efficiency policies and programs and further steps in the dissemination of the roundtable's outcomes
- 4) The role of the upcoming National Decarbonisation Fund

Additional session: Quality assurance

Based on outcomes from the previous roundtables, the question of quality assurance, namely, the importance of ensuring the quality and enabling a reliable monitoring of EE projects' results for the attraction of additional private investment, remains of high priority for all stakeholders. This supplementary session has been planned as a capacity building opportunity, with a demonstration of best practice examples from the municipal energy management information system, and a presentation on the role of energy performance certificates for attracting investments.