

Title

Collective District Renovation Aalst

Short description

The aim of this policy (initiated by vzw Bea) is to provide inhabitants, especially those with low SES, that live in the city of Aalst and nine surrounding municipalities with the opportunity to receive support for the renovation of their house. Regularly, initiatives for group purchases (i.e., roof insulation, electric bicycles, solar water heater) are offered to the inhabitants of Aalst and the surrounding municipalities to make renovation of the own house less expensive. In addition, the inhabitants, especially the disadvantaged, receive extensive support during the complete renovation phase (i.e., help with the application for energy bonuses for their house, guidance during the renovation process – attention for avoiding lock-in effects) in order to make the renovations as manageable as possible.

Many municipalities and cities in Flanders are initiating collective district renovation and group purchases to create an energy efficient house at a lower price. However, few of them are evaluated. The example in Aalst was chosen as vzw BEA paid particular attention to help disadvantaged people through their cooperation with the Public Centers for Social Welfare (OCMW). Currently, no evaluation is conducted for this practice. However, given the promising character, it would be very interesting to conduct a thorough evaluation of this practice in order to help it become an evidence-based part of a policy kit.

Topic

Living – Energy efficient housing

Characteristics (type, level)

Regional

Policy

Country/Countries of implementation

Belgium

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy (initiated by vzw Bea) is to provide inhabitants, with a focus on the disadvantaged, of the city of Aalst and nine surrounding municipalities with the possibility to receive support for the renovation of their house. Regularly, initiatives for group purchases (i.e., roof insulation, solar water heater) are offered to the inhabitants of Aalst and the surrounding municipalities to make renovation of the own house less expensive. In addition, the inhabitants, especially the disadvantaged, received extensive support and guidance during the renovation phase.

Target Group

All inhabitants of the city of Aalst and nine surrounding municipalities, with a particular focus on disadvantaged people.

Status

Ongoing

Start and Completion dates

Vzw Bea started with the energy loans in 2010.

Lifestyle and Behavior Change

This policy helps people to renovate their houses and make them more energy efficient. The collective district renovation does not focus on the lifestyles and behaviors itself.

Effects on:

Health and Wellbeing	This policy helps people to renovate their houses and make them more energy efficient, and also takes into account improvements regarding dampness and good ventilation. Therefore, this policy could impact health.
Vulnerable populations	In cooperation with the Public center for Social Welfare (OCMW), the policy also targets inhabitants with a low socio-economic status.
Environment	This policy helps people to renovate their houses and make them more energy efficient, and also takes into account improvements regarding dampness and good ventilation.

Initiated and/or implemented by

Vzw Bea, a subsidiary of the city of Aalst is responsible for all energy-related projects in Aalst. The main goal of vzw Bea was originally to help inhabitants receive an energy loan (an initiative from the Flemish Government). However, this organization also provides collective district renovation by offering regular group purchases for renovation. The initiative can also be framed in the Mayor Covenant for Energy and Climate as well as the Climate Goals of the Province to reach Climate neutrality by 2050.

Stakeholders and sectors involved

- Regional authority/local policy makers: vzw Bea, the subsidiary of the city of Aalst, the city Aalst

- Social partners: Public Center for Social Welfare (OCMW), Kringwinkel/Energiesnoeiers (organization focusing on circular economy, as well as on sustainable energy)

Financial support

The Flemish Government lanced the idea of the energy loan and provides the financial support. The city of Aalst supports the group purchase initiatives.

Evidence-base

Not applicable

Main activities

The aim of this policy (initiated by vzw Bea) is to provide inhabitants of the city of Aalst and nine surrounding municipalities, with a particular focus on the disadvantaged inhabitants, with the possibility to receive support for the renovation of their house. Regularly, initiatives for group purchases (i.e., roof insulation, electric bicycles, solar water heater) are offered to the inhabitants of Aalst and the surrounding municipalities to make renovation of the own house less expensive. In addition, the inhabitants, especially the disadvantaged, received extensive support during the complete renovation phase (i.e., help with the application for energy bonuses for their house, guidance during the renovation process – attention for avoiding lock-in effects).

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Evaluation

The policy has not been evaluated yet. However, vzw Bea has plans to look into the effects by using an energy audit (i.e., performance of an energy scan of the house) before and after the renovation.

Main results

No results yet

Key success factors and barriers

Not applicable

INHERIT Perspective

The 'collective district renovation' project in Aalst provides inhabitants with group purchase opportunities, extensive guidance and support for the renovation of their house. Although this project did not include an evaluation yet, it has a high potential to create a more energy efficient and healthier home. Given that it focuses on disadvantaged residents, it also contributes to reducing inequality. This project mainly focuses on providing OPPORTUNITIES for the inhabitants to change their PHYSICAL HOME ENVIRONMENT and influence their individual EXPOSURE & EXPERIENCE to (un)healthy living conditions.

More information

<http://www.vzwbea.be/>

Contact

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