

Best Practice #10: Public call for the use of renewable energy systems in family buildings

Name:	Public call for the use of renewable energy systems in family buildings
Geography:	Croatia
Organization interviewed:	Energy Institute Hrvoje Požar (EHIP) (written comments)
Organization Interviewing:	Trinomics
Website:	https://www.fzoeu.hr/hr/nacionalni-javni-pozivi-i-natjecaji/1367
Category:	Financing
Description:	<p>Grants for renovation - For different types of heat pumps:</p> <p>(ATW) Max of €4,250 and up to 40% subsidised</p> <p>(GSHP) Max of €4,250 and up to 40% subsidised</p> <p>(SHW) Max of €4,250 and up to 40% subsidised</p> <p>In less economic developed regions, subsidy is increased up to 60% (max. €6,375) or up to 80% (max. €8,500).</p> <p>Auxiliary components and installation works are acceptable cost.</p>
Questions:	
<p>1. Please briefly describe the key elements behind the public call for use of RES in family buildings in Croatia.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Croatia has adopted its Long-term Renovation Strategy in accordance with EPBD and aims at decarbonising its building stock until 2050. To do that, governmental programmes have been adopted to boost energy renovation of different types of buildings. Single-family houses are particularly important as they constitute two thirds of the residential building stock in Croatia, and 50% of overall national building stock. Moreover, households (residential sector) in Croatia are responsible for one third of overall final energy consumption, with almost 70% of that consumption occurring in the single-family houses. Given the fact that approx. 80% of final energy consumption in residential sector is for thermal uses (space heating and cooling and domestic hot water preparation), the importance of decarbonising heating systems in residential sector, and single-family houses in particular, is obvious. That was exactly the rationale behind this call – to increase the use of (advanced) renewable energy sources in this segment of Croatian building stock. - Namely, the structure of energy use for heating purposes in single-family houses is as follows: 56% traditional fuel wood; 21% natural gas; 11% electricity; 5% modern biomass; 4% heating oil and remaining small shares of solar and ambient heat. - With the aim of changing these structures towards higher RES share, the technologies supported by this call were: advanced biomass boilers (wood chips/pellets and pyrolytic fuel wood boilers), heat pumps, solar thermal collectors and photovoltaic systems (on-site production for electricity-based heating systems). 	
<p>2. What are some of the key challenges/barriers you've encountered in promoting RES systems in family buildings in Croatia? E.g. regarding encouraging citizens to apply? Barriers to replacement of inefficient heating sys.?</p>	

<p>In general, the interest of the citizens is huge and usually much more applications are received than there is available funding for grants. For this particular call, there were 4,234 applications, while total grants on the amount of 12.6 million € were awarded to 2,098 single-family house owners (https://www.fzoeu.hr/hr/zavrse-na-obra-da-svih-prijava-na-javni-poziv-za-poticanje-oie-u-obiteljskim-kucama/9486). This shows that citizens are well aware of the benefits of replacing inefficient heating systems. Usually, the barrier is in rather high investment costs, low energy prices, which combined with the general poor purchase power, is driving the citizens to wait for public calls for grants, rather than replacing systems by themselves. Hence, the penetration of RES technologies is slow and rather dependant on the public funding.</p>
<p>3. Have you held any public awareness campaigns to promote the program? What has been your experience? How important are public awareness campaigns to ensure successful uptake of RES solutions?</p>
<p>For this particular public call there was no specific public awareness campaign. However, Croatian Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund (which manages these public calls), continuously implements public awareness campaigns to promote energy efficiency, energy renovation of houses and the use of RES. Videos from promotional campaigns may be seen here: https://www.youtube.com/@fondzazastituokolisaienerg7883/videos</p>
<p>4. Can you list at least 3 key success factors that have made the overall program successful?</p>
<p>There are two main factors – high grant rates and promotion.</p>
<p>5. What do you think are some of the key elements that can be replicated by other regions/municipalities?</p>
<p>Croatian programmes for increasing the share of RES for heating is actually based on the Energy Efficiency First principle, which is mandatory according to Energy Efficiency Directive. This means that firstly, it is needed to reduce energy demand of the building and then, for that reduced demand, to decarbonise the system. In this particular call for RES, there was a condition that eligible houses must be energy efficient, with energy rating class C or better in continental Croatia and B or better in coastal parts of Croatia. In new call for energy renovation announced in March 2024, this principle is also applied and is considered to be best practice, contributing to fulfilling both energy efficiency and RES targets.</p>
<p>Any final comments?</p>
<p>Respect Energy Efficiency First principle.</p>