



Cities and local actors decarbonise heating and cooling: a journey from vision to implementation

11 October 2023 – Brussels

This conference is the final event of the EU-funded project [Decarb City Pipes 2050](#).

The energy crisis ignited by the war against Ukraine has led the EU and the Member States to a reduction of their gas dependency. Since 2020 seven frontrunner cities have already started rethinking their energy planning. Indeed, the cities of Bilbao, Dublin, Munich, Rotterdam, Vienna and Winterthur), involved in the EU-funded project Decarb City Pipes 2050, have worked out actionable, district-by-district transition roadmaps to phase out fossil fuels used for heating and cooling.

During this final conference, we want to reflect on the crucial challenge and opportunities of decarbonising heating and cooling systems to achieve the EU climate objectives. **Which solutions should be implemented in cities to decarbonise the heating and cooling system? How to perform energy spatial planning? What kind of EU policies do we need to foster local and global phase-out of gas?** Seven cities have key elements to share to answer these questions.

What can we learn from cities' experience to build sustainable heating and cooling systems?

There is no single recipe for decarbonization. To reach their ambitious climate neutrality targets, cities need to tackle the issue of their heating and cooling systems to ensure energy security and well-being for all citizens. In this process of planning infrastructure for a gas-free future, many questions are raised: How to engage stakeholders in the process? Which financial and legal instruments are available to support inhabitants to switch to affordable and renewable heating sources (district heating, heat

pumps, etc.)? The cities in the Decarb City Pipes 2050 project will share the most important lessons on how to overcome the barriers identified and how to make the most of local levers.

How can EU and national policies support and speed up the phase-out of gas at all levels?

After a first year of joint effort, the Member States renewed their commitment to reduce gas consumption by 15% between March 2023 and March 2024. The EU is strongly willing to diversify the supply of energy and to develop new strategies considering demand reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. But progress needs to be made to implement such a strategy. The EU has a crucial role to play, to adapt gas infrastructure to climate neutrality and help cities to overcome obstacles. They also play a role in answering key questions on the future of energy policies: Which role will green gas play in a fossil fuels-free future? Is the new Gas Package, currently discussed, helping to avoid stranded assets? Does the Fit-for-55 support integrated energy planning at the local level? Representatives from the EU and national institutions, cities, and energy suppliers will share and debate their answers.

Join us in Brussels on 11th October, [registrations are now open](#)

Draft agenda

Wednesday, 11 October 2023 – Closing Conference in Brussels	
KBR Brussels, Mont des Arts 28, 1000, Brussels Belgium	
9h	Welcome address
9h15	Developing local transition roadmaps to decarbonise heating and cooling: which lessons learnt? <i>By Urban Innovation Vienna</i>
9h30	The Cities' Voice: levers in local policies What are the strategies of cities to phase out fossil fuels? Which barriers are cities facing? <i>Panel discussion with the partner cities.</i>
10h30	<i>Coffee break</i>

11h	Session #1: How to perform energy spatial planning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy planning principles applied in Decarb City Pipes 2050 - Halmstad University • How to model current and future energy demand? - City of Bilbao • Which efficient data policies for heat planning? - City of Vienna • Which techno-economic costs to consider in energy scenarios? - City of Rotterdam 	Session #2: How to decarbonise the “city pipes”? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to tap into the geothermal potential in Munich? - City of Munich • How to recover waste heat in cities? - City of Dublin • Challenges for district heating expansion - City of Winterthur • Where to efficiently use heat pumps? - City of Rotterdam
12h30	<i>Lunch on site</i>	
14h	Adapting gas infrastructure for climate neutrality: how EU and national policies can foster local solutions for the energy transition? <p>Panel 1: What is the future for gas infrastructure and how to avoid stranded assets?</p> <p>Panel 2: What changes are needed in multi-level governance and what roles for municipalities to play in heat decarbonisation?</p> <p><i>Panel discussions with representatives from partner cities, academia, EU, and energy suppliers</i></p>	
16h	<i>Conclusion and Reception</i>	

Site visit: Interested in getting concrete and visiting a fossil-free district? Join us on the 10th of October in the afternoon for a visit to the **Heindijk neighbourhood in Rotterdam**, an exploratory gas-free district. We have a limited number of seats, let us know your interest in the registration form, we will confirm you later the possibility to attend.