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## **Cities and local actors decarbonize heating and cooling: a journey from vision to implementation**

*11 October 2023 – KBR Brussels, Mont des Arts 28, 1000, Brussels Belgium*

*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 decarbonizing heating and cooling systems to achieve the EU climate objectives. **Which solutions should be implemented in cities to decarbonize 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 from the Decarb City Pipes 2050 project will share their main 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 11<sup>th</sup> October, [registrations are now open \(until 4<sup>th</sup> October\)](#)!

### Agenda

8h30	Registration and coffee
9h	<p><b>Welcome address and introductory statement</b></p> <p><b>Developing local transition roadmaps to decarbonise heating and cooling: which lessons learnt?</b> Waltraud Schmid, Head of Energy Department, Urban Innovation Vienna</p> <p>Followed by a panel discussion with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Waltraud Schmid, Head of Energy Department, Urban Innovation Vienna</li><li>• Christine Kugler, Permanent city counsellor, head of Department of Climate Change and Environment, City of Munich</li><li>• Adela Tesarova, Head of Unit Consumers, Local Initiatives, Just Transition, DG Energy, European Commission</li></ul> <p><i>Moderation: Julien Joubert, Project management and overall coordination, Energy Cities</i></p>
10h	<p><b>How to decarbonize the “city pipes”?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to develop new and decarbonised district heating in cities? - John O’Shea, Senior Energy Systems Analyst / Heat &amp; Electricity Lead, CODEMA (Energy Agency of the city of Dublin)</li><li>• Key success factors to phase out natural gas - Lea Schubert, Department of Building and Mobility, City of Winterthur</li><li>• How to build governance capacity for urban H&amp;C transformations? - Prof. dr. Jochen Monstad, Utrecht University (<i>tbc</i>)</li></ul>

	<i>Moderation: Astrid Madsen, Energy expert</i>
11h	<i>Coffee break</i>
11h30	<p><b>How to perform energy spatial planning?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to integrate district heating benefits in the energy system? – Luis Sánchez García, Doctoral Student, Halmstad University</li> <li>• How to model current and future energy demand? - Patxi Hernandez, Senior researcher, Tecnalia, Bilbao</li> <li>• Which efficient data policies for heat planning? - Hemis Herbert, Energy Planning expert, Department of Energy Planning, City of Vienna</li> <li>• Which techno-economic costs to consider in energy scenarios? - Marie-Emilie Ingen Housz, Heat Advisor, City of Rotterdam</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderation: Julien Joubert, Project management and overall coordination, Energy Cities</i></p>
12h30	<i>Lunch on site</i>
14h	<p><b>Adapting gas infrastructure for climate neutrality: how EU and national policies can foster local solutions for the energy transition?</b></p> <p>Video message from <i>Mr Czernohorszky, Executive City Councillor for Climate, Environment, Democracy and Personnel, City of Vienna</i></p> <p><b>Panel 1: which future for gas infrastructure and how to avoid stranded assets?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kees Van Der Leun, Sustainable Energy Expert and Managing Director of Common Futures (<i>moderator</i>)</li> <li>• Feodora Petit, Internal Energy Market, DG ENER, European Commission</li> <li>• Andris Piebalgs, Professor, Florence School of Regulation</li> <li>• Johannes Imminger, Head of EU Office of Wiener Stadtwerke</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel 2: which change do we need in the multi-level governance and which roles for municipalities in the heat decarbonisation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claire Roumet, Strategic partnerships, EU Policy &amp; Overall Coordination, Energy Cities (<i>moderator</i>)</li> <li>• Jens Geier, Member of the European Parliament (S&amp;D, Germany)</li> <li>• Judith Neyer, Head of Department Strategic Energy Policy, Federal Ministry for Climate Action</li> <li>• Astrid Madsen, Energy Expert</li> </ul>
16h	<p><i>Conclusion, followed by a reception</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waltraud Schmid, Head of Energy Department, Urban Innovation Vienna</li> <li>• Anette Jahn, Head of Sector, LIFE Climate &amp; Energy Unit, CINEA (European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency)</li> </ul>

