

## Citizen's Engagement - Good-Practice

### Velenje (Slovenia)

**“Establishing an Energy Efficiency Consulting Office and Awareness Raising of Citizens”**



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Velenje is a young city, as it experienced its greater economic development only by the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century with the opening of a coal mine. The coal in Velenje is one of the reasons this area got a railway that connected Velenje with other Slovenian cities. After 1950, with the significantly increased demand for coal, the need to build a modern city became more and more apparent. On 20th September 1959, a new centre of the city of Velenje was officially opened. On this day the municipality of Velenje celebrates its municipal holiday.

Velenje therefore faces great challenges in the process of restructuring the coal region into a green transformation. Coal from Velenje produces one third of Slovenian electricity. A just transition, the restructuring of companies and jobs, ensuring new comparable jobs and the transformation of remote heating with environmentally acceptable heat sources are the most important of them.

#### Highlights, Benefits and Challenges

Please describe

Highlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Efficiency Office was launched in September 2022 and has been available to citizens since October.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The materials developed under the EXCITE project, which will provide citizens with information and concrete guidance, are an important part of the office.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipality Velenje also support Energy Agency KSENA for their active operation in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, energy innovations and for cooperation in establishment of energy efficiency consulting office.</li> </ul>

Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a physical energy efficiency consultancy office in Velenje open for two days per week.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens of municipality Velenje can use public bus called “Lokalc” for free, within municipal territory. There is also a free bike sharing system called “Bicy” with 148 bicycles (half of them are electric). Financial support for bicycles amounted to € 50,000 and for buses € 37,730.</li> </ul>

Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial support for KSENA in the year of 2022 is around € 65,000.</li> </ul>

Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There must be regular communication with all citizens and associations of owners which is important because they are main groups.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It' important to renovate buildings, to reduce energy consumption and costs.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subsidies need to be obtained for energy renovations and for where and how much is to be decided.</li> </ul>

### Involved Stakeholders and partners

The Mayor of the municipality Velenje, Mr. Peter Dermol (together with his colleagues) launched an initiative to inform and ensure citizens for just transition. Their goal is to present to the citizens their view on the restructuring of the region, conditions to be met by the state (during the restructuring process) and present them the guidelines for the future of the region's decarbonisation. It is important to them that the citizens completely understand and support the work of the local authorities.

### Communication channels

The public has been informed through various brochures ("Velenje for the youth and elderly", "Velenje - a city with a heart" "Welcome, the future" and with leaflets. There have been advertising: jumbo posters around the city, posters at bus stations, video pages and announcements in the local newspaper. The municipality of Velenje sent 10,000 letters to citizens and 14,000 brochures to raise awareness of projects and information.



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**For more information, please contact:**

“Information for the public about our projects and our work can be followed as articles on the website or on social networks.

They can always email us on **MAIL** for forward questions and ideas.”



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