



The EU-funded CLEAR-X project (or 'Consumers Leading the EU's Energy Ambition Response, Expansion') ran from September 2021 to February 2024. It aimed to enable consumers to lead the energy transition by investing in renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies at an affordable price. It did this through trusted information, collective purchase schemes, and an improved regulatory framework.

### The project in numbers

**Nine collective purchase campaigns across:**

Bulgaria, Cyprus, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Slovakia and Slovenia

**25,000+** consumers reached

**10.50 GWh/year** renewable energy production (from PV panels) – enough to fully charge 1 billion smartphones

**17,500** consumers registered to the campaigns

**€7.24m** of investments in sustainable energy technologies triggered

**13 policies & strategies** created/ adapted to include sustainable energy issues at any governance level, submitted to the European Commission

**651 tons of CO2 emissions reductions** - equivalent to driving from Lisbon to Bratislava over 1,000 times

**2.85 GWh/year** primary energy savings (from heat pumps and tumble dryers) - equal to the electricity consumption of 1,300 homes in Lithuania



### Consumer Testimonials from CLEAR-X



"The group purchase campaigns are useful because all the information is gathered in one place and the purchase is cheaper. In a flood of information, such campaigns seek the best value for money, and they filter the best in terms of the technical and user experience of the selected appliances."

Sara S., Ljubljana, heat pump tumble dryer



"Thanks to [the] campaign we were able to install a photovoltaic system in our house. The installation company did a great job, very professional from start to finish. The benefits were noticeable immediately, my electricity bills have fallen. We would have no hesitation in recommending the project. They should do another!"

Theodoros Konstantinou, Nicosia, PV panels

## National policy wins during the project

### New law on multi-unit building renovations

The Bulgarian National Association of Active Consumers oversaw the introduction of the 'Condominium Management Act,' which will facilitate energy renovations and the installation of renewable technologies in multi-unit buildings.



### Free smart meter installation

Thanks to advocacy from the Cyprus Consumers Association, consumers will not have to pay for the fitting of a smart meter in their home.



### Smart meter roll-out and transparency

The ambitious smart meter roll-out in Lithuania and the open, live sharing of data on the roll-out makes Lithuania a "best in class" example of promoting renewables in Europe.<sup>1</sup>



### Availability of green loans

After OPM organised meetings with banks across North Macedonia, the national government stated its intention to create attractive green loans at reasonable interest rates for consumers.



### Better informed consumers

Thanks to the advocacy efforts of SOS Poprad in the adoption of the new 'National Energy Act,' energy suppliers must now inform consumers on their bills about their rights to install a smart meter and how to obtain one.



### Better protections for green loans

The Eco Fund is an ambitious state scheme helping vulnerable consumers to avoid the up-front costs of energy retrofits and renewables installations. ZPS raised its profile at EU level as a best practice in financing the energy transition and succeeded in having the Fund offer fixed interest rates to consumers on green loans.



## National challenges that remain

### Delayed climate legislation

With five elections in two years, political instability in Bulgaria continues to impede the introduction of legislation for the shift to renewables.

### Slow application process for grid connections

Cyprus has been very slow in processing grid connection applications due to understaffing at the Electricity Authority. CCA has called on the Ministry of Energy, Commerce & Industry to speed up the process by hiring more staff.

### Industry v consumers: access to renewables

Large renewables developers need greater network capacity for their industrial-scale projects. They continue to lobby for a reduction in the quota for household prosumers, which would reduce consumer access to the grid, making the energy transition more difficult at the household level.

### Renewables remain a luxury

Renewables devices in North Macedonia remain out of sync with average salaries, making them a luxury. The price needs to come down to match consumers' purchasing power.

### Cancellation of subsidies

The sudden cancellation of several renewables subsidy schemes, including "Obnov Dom" (Renovate a Home), saw overnight reduction of interest from consumers in PV panels. This has been exacerbated under the new government.

### Lack of skilled installers

All project partners reported a lack of skilled installers for the renewable transition – upskilling of current technicians is badly needed. In addition, an EU-wide communications campaign should be run encouraging younger people into the field.

<sup>1</sup> <https://ismaniejiskaitikliai.lt/>

