

SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

DECEMBER 2025



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ABOUT THE PROJECT

Consumers Leading the EU's Energy Ambition Response through uptake of Heat Pumps (CLEAR-HP) is an ambitious adaptation of a tried-and-tested methodology, designed and developed to address consumers' needs, specifically in the adoption of heat pumps for space heating, cooling and domestic hot water production.

The **overall objective** is to facilitate consumers' access to heat pumps products by accompanying consumers throughout the whole purchasing journey, and by addressing financial and regulatory barriers.

The **specific objectives** are:

1. Consumer awareness and trust in heat pump products and available subsidies is increased and more than 40,000 consumers are ready to act and change their behaviour.
2. More qualified and skilled installers of heat pumps are available to consumers at national level.
3. Consumer investments in heat pump products increase.
4. Regulatory frameworks and financing schemes for easier adoption of heat pump products are simplified and more accessible for consumers.

Through the provision of trusted information, collective purchase schemes, an improved regulatory framework, and better access to qualified installers, CLEAR-HP will facilitate consumers' access to household renewables at an affordable price, thus allowing consumers to improve the energy performance and comfort of their homes and to reduce their energy bills in the long term.

The project activities cover [7 target countries](#), Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain, where independent national consumer organisations are supported by BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation and the International Consumer Research & Testing (ICRT).

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CONTENTS

ABOUT THE PROJECT	2
Introduction	4
Objective of the Roadmap	4
Sustainability Assessment	5
Replicability Strategy	8



INTRODUCTION

Focused on ensuring consumers have an easier access to proven energy efficient heat pump technology, CLEAR-HP strategically employs collective purchase schemes, consumer workshops and advocates for enhanced financial support mechanisms, aiming to eradicate financial barriers and make it easier and more affordable for consumers to make the transition to heat pump products. The project's ambition to stimulate €3.5 million worth of heat pump installations reflects a commitment to create a lasting impact with energy and monetary savings at the household level, while also reducing EU dependence on natural gas and ultimately support the EU in reaching its climate and energy targets by 2030.

Building on the past successes

The CLEAR-HP project builds on the solid foundations laid by the CLEAR and CLEAR 2.0 initiatives, which enabled consumer organisations to deepen their understanding of how consumers adopt RES and EE technologies and to facilitate this uptake through well-structured collective purchase campaigns. It also draws on the experience of CLEAR-X, which organised 9 group purchases and triggered 1,777 installations during a period of energy crisis and political uncertainty, particularly regarding financial support schemes in the target countries. Through CLEAR-X, consumer organisations further strengthened their capacity to guide consumers by improving access to reliable information, simplifying administrative processes, and contributing to more supportive national and EU energy policies—advances that served as a strong basis for CLEAR-HP.

Leveraging the successes and lessons learned from these activities, CLEAR-HP continued addressing the trend of consumers installing renewable energy systems to combat rising energy costs and extended the CLEAR-X impact to South and North Europe. With the aim of engaging 43,000 consumers across seven target countries, CLEAR-HP further tackled the challenge of consumers lacking reliable advice for switching to more energy-efficient heating and cooling systems and is playing a key role in shaping national and EU energy policies.

OBJECTIVE OF THE ROADMAP

The CLEAR-HP sustainability roadmap aims to ensure that the simplification and affordability of heat pump technology continue for EU consumers after the end of the project. With 42% of EU energy consumption attributed to buildings and 75% of existing buildings being energy inefficient¹, addressing these inefficiencies is imperative. With ambitious recasts of the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive adopted in 2023, transposition at the national level should aim to not only implement these directives in the spirit they were written, but go further where possible to ensure the energy transition. For this reason, the CLEAR-HP project published [national recommendations](#) for the Fit for 55 transposition in autumn 2023 specifically for the roll-out of PV panels and heat pumps.

¹ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/topics/in-depth/buildings-and-construction>

The sustainability roadmap serves as a guide for maintaining the project's positive outcomes, impact, and benefits well into the future, thus creating sustainable positive change in the targeted regions.

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Throughout the implementation of CLEAR-HP, the Consortium executed the project's activities with the aim of fostering a long-lasting and positive change towards the adoption of heat pump technologies. Specifically, three key results were achieved to secure the project's sustainability beyond its completion.

I. Long-term benefits for project beneficiaries beyond the conclusion of financial assistance

To ensure the project's impacts continue beyond the end of the European Commission's financial support, a series of strategic measures were implemented.

Already during the CLEAR-X project, it became evident that Collective Purchase Campaigns (CPCs) require dedicated capacity and funding to remain viable, and cannot be sustained as a standalone activity once project financing ends—unless organizations have developed their own IT tools to support them independently as these are quite costly. In response, we began exploring alternative communication approaches—refining partners' ability to tailor their outreach strategies by applying a nuanced “fishing net vs. harpoon” approach depending on the product type. This strengthened their communication and engagement capacities both during and after the project's implementation period.

Moreover, partners drew inspiration from certain CLEAR-X members who had successfully adopted a forward-looking strategy by training journalists on heat pump technologies. This investment in media education brings lasting value to the target countries by increasing the likelihood of continued, accurate coverage on energy topics. Trained journalists are better equipped to disseminate reliable information and are more receptive to advocacy efforts by consumer organisations, particularly in the area of improved energy efficiency regulations.

In addition to replicating sustainability-oriented practices developed under CLEAR-X, the CLEAR-HP partners incorporated from the very beginning an activity designed to outlast the project itself: consumer workshops. These sessions were carefully structured around key topics—such as available financial support schemes, types of heat pumps, and household readiness—and will remain publicly accessible beyond the project's duration through platforms like YouTube and partners' websites. To further extend the project's impact, the most frequently asked questions from these workshops were compiled either into a dedicated FAQ section on the CPC website and/or served as inspiration for consumer-focused articles, ensuring that the most sought-after information continues to circulate after the project's conclusion.

Additionally, several partners organised workshops for installers to help them better understand consumers' needs and questions regarding heat pump installation. Some even developed model contracts for installers, ensuring that consumers' basic rights are clearly defined, protected, and enforced.



Collectively, these efforts ensure that the project's impact endures well beyond its formal conclusion—empowering consumers to remain informed, engaged, and active in adopting renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies.

II. Upskilling consumers in the field of heat pump technology

The CLEAR-HP project strengthened consumer knowledge and confidence in renewable heating technologies, in particular heat pumps (HPs), by upskilling them on the technical, financial and practical aspects related to their adoption. Consumers were guided to make informed choices on the availability, quality and suitability of HP products for their homes, as well as on the general advantages of HPs compared to traditional heating and cooling technologies, encouraging more efficient and sustainable investments.

This objective was mainly achieved through the consumer workshops (WP6), complemented by the communication activities carried out during the collective purchase campaigns (WP5) and the overall project communication (WP7). Across these activities, partners consistently worked to explain HP technology and communicate its benefits in a clear and accessible way — focusing on aspects such as energy savings, comfort, environmental impact, smart functionality and access to financial support schemes.

Workshops proved to be one of the most effective capacity-building actions, combining technical expertise with practical consumer engagement. These sessions, organised both online and in-person, involved installers, engineers, energy experts and consumer advisors who explained in simple terms how HPs work, what is needed for their installation and what kind of maintenance they require. Partners also shared advice on available subsidies and tax incentives, helping consumers understand the real costs and long-term savings of these systems. Feedback collected during and after the workshops confirmed their success: participants appreciated the opportunity to ask questions directly and to receive tailored advice, and many reported that the workshops played a decisive role in their decision to join the campaigns. By publishing the recordings and related materials on their websites and social media channels, partners ensured that this knowledge remains available to the public, extending the project's educational impact beyond its duration.

The communication activities carried out during the collective purchase campaigns also played a key role in upskilling consumers. Throughout the project, partners tested and refined different outreach methods and identified the most effective strategies to engage consumers and motivate action. These lessons will be directly applied in future initiatives aiming to promote renewable energy solutions such as HPs. **Partners also learned to adapt their messaging to the continuously evolving economic and political context** — shifting, when needed, from a focus on cost savings to a broader communication on environmental impact, comfort, convenience and the “future-proof” nature of HP investments.

Thanks to this experience, partners are now equipped with tested tools, materials and communication practices that will continue to be used to inform and empower consumers even after the end of the project, ensuring that CLEAR-HP's impact will be sustained and multiplied over time.

III. CLEAR-HP collaboration with EU and national projects

Throughout its implementation, the CLEAR-HP project fostered strong collaboration with various EU and national initiatives, reinforcing the shared goal of accelerating the clean energy transition across Europe.

In Italy, Altroconsumo worked closely with the *Close with Gas* campaign—an initiative led by major environmental NGOs such as CLASP, Legambiente, WWF, and Kyoto Club—highlighting the alignment between the campaign’s decarbonisation objectives and CLEAR-HP’s mission to promote the switch from gas to heat pumps.

In Spain, OCU contributed to a workshop on household decarbonisation, presenting CLEAR-HP as a practical tool to support European emission reduction commitments and advocating for more holistic consumer support beyond subsidies, in cooperation with ministries and the Alliance for a Sustainable Household.

In Bulgaria, BNAAC partnered with a wide network of organisations including WWF Bulgaria, Greenpeace Bulgaria, and Habitat for Humanity Bulgaria to develop a position paper assessing the national Social Climate Plan, ensuring fair and effective measures for citizens.

In Portugal, DECO actively engaged with national stakeholders such as ADENE, APIRAC, and the HQHeatpumpServices LIFE project, exploring synergies to strengthen installer training, promote quality installations, and tackle market barriers.

In Slovenia, ZPS contributed to the *Save Energy Together* project and participated in multiple multi-stakeholder meetings to enhance public awareness and exchange best practices on energy efficiency.

Similarly, in Slovakia, SOS partnered with organisations like Dual Academy, Association of mineral insulation manufacturers, and environmental and consumer organisations to improve installer qualifications, promote renewable energy use, and support the development of energy communities. Together, these collaborations demonstrate CLEAR-HP’s commitment to building synergies with complementary initiatives, amplifying impact, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of project outcomes at both national and European levels.

At EU level, BEUC actively engaged with other EU-funded projects and initiatives. BEUC organised two online webinars together with the Street HP-Reno and the Plan4Cold LIFE project. We exchanged with the LIFE project REVERTER and CoolLIFE on our projects’ results and learnings. In addition, we explored synergies with other EU-funded initiatives such as the Cities Heat Detox campaign and Citizen-led renovation (CLR) initiative. BEUC shared the best practices and lessons learned from the collective purchase campaigns with organisations involved in CLR and exchanged ideas on how to make collective action more effective and beneficial for consumers.

Furthermore, DECOP, AE, and OCU are also partners in HORIS, a LIFE project aimed at creating a digital one-stop shop for integrated home renovation services, supporting homeowners throughout the renovation process with a strong focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy. As heat pumps are among the improvement measures promoted through this platform, CLEAR-HP and HORIS have coordinated joint communication and advocacy actions.



REPLICABILITY STRATEGY

Collaboration with policymakers for broader implementation

Throughout the CLEAR-HP project, the Consortium - especially the consumer organisations in the target countries - have maintained and will continue to foster strong collaboration with policymakers at the national level to facilitate the broader implementation of the project's activities and results.

Since the beginning, one of the project's main goals was to establish ongoing dialogue with relevant authorities to align CLEAR-HP initiatives with existing and emerging policies in the field of energy efficiency (WP3). By actively participating in policy discussions and sharing our project insights, we aimed to influence the development of supportive frameworks that encourage the adoption of heat pump technologies.

Additionally, we recognise the importance of working collaboratively with policymakers to address regulatory hurdles and ensure the scalability and sustainability of our initiatives. This collaborative approach enhances the likelihood of institutionalising the project's impact.

At the EU level, clean and affordable heating and cooling is one of BEUC's key energy priority. We call for homes that are affordable to power, heat and cool. Over the past years, BEUC has actively brought the consumer perspective into discussions with policymakers, industry, NGOs and other organisations such as the IEA. Drawing on the experience of the project partners through the CLEAR-HP project, BEUC has shared a wide range of practices, and consumer experiences with policymakers and suggested policies and practical measures to address barriers that currently stand between consumers and the access to clean technologies such as heat pumps. As member of the Heat Pump Accelerator Platform, BEUC contributes to the exchange of concrete ideas to lower costs of heat pumps and other demand-side measures to accelerate the heat pump roll-out. In our meetings with the Commission and other stakeholders, we were able to make a valuable contribution by bridging the gap between the technical debates and the practical implications of the heat transition for household consumers.

In the last two months, BEUC has provided recommendations and best practices for the Commissions' initiative such as the Electrification Action Plan, the Heating & Cooling Strategy and the Citizens Energy Package. We will continue to actively engage in shaping these policies to ensure that clean heating and cooling solutions becomes the easy and most affordable options for consumers.

At the national level, specific policy recommendations were submitted to favor the uptake of heat pump technology and improve national energy efficiency which will be reported in Deliverable 3.4.

Integration of lessons learned into future projects

To promote replicability and knowledge transfer, we are committed to sharing our best practices with other current and future EU-funded projects operating in the same area as the CLEAR-HP project.



Lessons learned from CLEAR-HP will be widely disseminated at the end of the project through a dedicated factsheet, which will be shared during the final event with key EU organisations and policy makers in attendance. In addition, the materials have been translated and made available in the target countries via partners' websites, and are already being used in both advocacy meetings and dissemination activities. These efforts will continue beyond the project's conclusion to provide practical insights that support and strengthen similar initiatives.

We have also organised multiple events and workshops alongside other like-minded EU-funded projects, where we exchanged lessons learned and discussed project developments of mutual interest.

This proactive knowledge-sharing strategy ensures that the experiences, successes, and challenges encountered during the CLEAR-HP project become a valuable asset for the broader community working towards sustainable energy transitions. Our commitment extends beyond our immediate project boundaries, contributing to a collective effort to advance the adoption of RES and EE technologies across diverse EU-funded initiatives.

Financial Sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of CLEAR-HP beyond the initial support provided through the EU LIFE Programme grant agreement no. 101119923, we are committed to exploring a range of funding sources. This means actively seeking partnerships with public bodies, foundations, private organizations, and other potential funders (e.g., the EU) who share an interest in promoting heat pump technologies.

For example, BEUC is already looking at ways to secure funding beyond the current CLEAR-HP project, driven by the goal of keeping its energy-related work going and improving it over time. Lessons learned from ongoing projects are a key part of this, helping BEUC continuously align its activities with evolving energy goals. Partnerships with foundations and NGOs in the energy field are central to this strategy. These collaborations not only allow BEUC to pool resources and expertise but also make it possible to reuse valuable information and data across projects. Insights gained in one initiative can feed advocacy work in EU-funded projects and vice versa, creating a cycle of learning and impact. For instance, thanks to funding from the European Climate Foundation (ECF), BEUC can continue working on energy topics, including heat pumps, and use the knowledge generated to raise awareness among policymakers and stakeholders about real consumer experiences. This helps make clean heating and housing renovation more practical, accessible, and affordable. At the same time, it strengthens BEUC and its members' capacity to push for consumer-centered energy policies, support the gas phase-out, and promote clean technologies like heat pumps.

BEUC is also exploring additional funding opportunities within the EU, particularly through programs such as LIFE and Horizon Europe. These programs can provide the resources needed to keep activities going and drive continuous improvement for better results. Overall, this approach reflects BEUC's commitment to long-term impact in the energy and sustainability sector, building resilience and ensuring that its work continues to contribute meaningfully to broader energy goals.

At national level, CLEAR-HP partners follow a similar approach, although scaled to the size of their organisations:

- **Altroconsumo** (Italy): The organization does not receive any operating grant, with most of the funding coming from a subscription model. For this reason, AE will seek funding opportunities to continue energy efficiency related work to better support consumers' needs in relation to 2030 EGBD directive goals. Although the LIFE and Horizon Europe programs are the main source of funding for energy and sustainability-related topics for AE (e.g. HORIS, Compliances services, EPREL Services, BELT, previous



CLEAR editions etc), our ambition is to develop financially sustainable consumers services matching their needs with market players offers. We experienced that this effort needs private or public financial support in the start-up phase, but later on, if what has been developed in the project phase is really relevant and impactful, it should be self-sufficient, according to business models that might require organization's members support or market players' one.

- **BNAAC** (Bulgaria): Bulgarian National Association Active Consumers does not cooperate with any businesses in and outside of Bulgaria and does not accept any commercial funding, advertising or sponsorships. This ensures that its positions, market assessments and consumer support remain completely impartial and only for the benefit of consumers, which is essential for the trust consumers place in the organisation. Financial sustainability is based on a mix of EU-funded projects, international grants and a national state subsidy that supports core activities. Multi-year initiatives such as CLEAR-HP, CLEAR-X, FLEARY, Online, (W)E-democracy and JustOriginal provide stable resources for expertise-building and long-term engagement in key consumer policy areas. This combination of public and project funding allows the organisation to maintain its independence, continue developing high-quality consumer services and remain a credible actor in national and European consumer-policy processes.
- **DECOPROteste** (Portugal): In order to remain independent from political and economic powers, DECO PROteste does not receive any operating funding, with most of the funding coming from a subscription model. DECO PROteste will remain open to seeking new funding opportunities, especially through EU funding programs. The public funding that DECO PROteste receives is obtained within the framework of European projects and is used exclusively for their development. For this reason, it is imperative to seek and expand sources of funding that allow the organization to maintain its impartiality, transparency, and independence. In this regard, DECO PROteste has been seeking strategic partnerships with key market players in multiple areas, with the aim of offering efficient, reliable, and advantageous opportunities and solutions for consumers, as well as being a source of monetization for the organization.
- **OCU** (Spain): OCU will seek funding opportunities to continue its work on energy efficiency and to better support consumers' needs in relation to the 2030 EGBD Directive goals. LIFE and Horizon Europe programmes are among OCU's main funding sources (e.g. HORIS, EPREL Services, BELT, previous CLEAR editions), and the organisation has also received national project funding from the Spanish government for energy-efficiency initiatives. However, OCU's ambition is to develop consumer services that genuinely match users' needs and, whenever possible and in line with Spanish legislation, to cooperate with market players active in the energy-efficiency domain. We believe that external support is essential in the initial phase of this type of project, but long-term self-sufficiency is necessary. The business models proposed within such projects can be a useful pathway toward achieving financial sustainability. OCU generally seeks partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders, with the main objective of improving market conditions for consumers in both products and services.
- **Test-Achat** (Belgium): Testachats' philosophy is rooted in strict independence and an exclusive commitment to consumers. As a non-profit organization, it does not accept advertising in its media and derives 94.5% of its income from member subscriptions, ensuring complete impartiality. Subscribers benefit from personalized advice, advocacy, product testing, guides, and digital tools designed to support informed consumer choices. Testachats also pays particular attention to innovation and the development of effective solutions to support consumers. In key contemporary areas with significant legislative implications—such as the energy transition—subsidized projects serve as a major lever. They enable us to maintain our independence and strengthen our collaborative work with other organizations active in these fields (projects such as CICLE-X (consumer complaint handling), CLEAR-HP (supporting the transition to heat pumps), Trop vite usé (combating planned obsolescence), and Repair Guide (appliance repair solutions).
- **SOS** (Slovakia): SOS positions, market assessments and consumer support remain impartial and only for the benefit of consumers. Financial sustainability is based on a mix of EU-funded projects, international grants and a national state dotation. As SOS does not receive any operating grants, will continue to seek funding opportunities for its energy-related work. LIFE and Horizon Europe programmes remain the main source of energy-focused funding (e.g. STEP, CLEAR-X), and SOS has also successfully implemented

projects funded by the European Climate Foundation. The organization will continue exploring new opportunities with the Slovak ministry, BEUC and other sources. However, a systemic operating grant dedicated to energy consumers protection, education and assistance, mystery shoppings and/or collective purchases would be very useful.

- **ZPS (Slovenia):** As the national consumer organisation does not receive any operating grants, ZPS will continue seeking funding opportunities for its energy-related work. LIFE and Horizon Europe programmes remain the main source of energy-focused funding (e.g. iFLEX, BELT, previous CLEAR editions), and ZPS has also successfully implemented projects funded by the European Climate Foundation. The organisation will continue exploring opportunities with the Slovenian Eco Fund, the European Climate Initiative (EUKI), and other emerging sources. However, a systemic operating grant dedicated to informing and educating consumers would significantly reduce the burden of continuous fundraising, allowing the expert team to focus fully on their core mission and on supporting consumers.

By diversifying our funding streams, we aim to reduce dependence on a single source and ensure the project activities' sustainability over the long term. This approach involves ongoing engagement with relevant authorities and private stakeholders, aiming to establish partnerships that go beyond the project's lifespan. This collaborative approach involves advocating for the integration of CLEAR-HP initiatives into broader national and industry strategies. This collaborative financing strategy not only enhances the project's financial stability but also ensures that it remains embedded within the broader energy transition agenda, contributing to lasting positive change.

