

GHENT, Belgium

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
PROJECT TITLE	'Duurzame vraag? dito aanbod!' Sustainable demand? sustainable supply!
Beneficiary	The City of Ghent is the direct beneficiary initiating, coordinating and co-implementing the constituent activities of the project.
Duration of project	Phase 1: November 2008 – October 2010: 24 months Phase 2: October 2010 – October 2012: 24 months
Member State	Belgium, Province of East Flanders, City of Ghent
Geo size	243 366 inhabitants, 156.18 km ²
Funding	Phase 1: Total Budget: €283 675 ERDF contribution: €113 470 (40%). Match funding: Flanders Region 40%, Province of East Flanders 5%, City of Ghent 15% Phase 2: Total Budget: €269 491 ERDF contribution: €107 796.50 (40%) Match funding: Flanders Region 35%, Province of East Flanders 5%, City of Ghent 20%
Operational Programme	Operational Programme 'Flanders' Flemish Administration (Region) CCI nr 2007BE162PO002 Priority 1: The knowledge economy and innovation
Managing Authority	Vlaamse Overheid (Flemish Regional Administration) Agentschap Ondernemen (Enterprise Agency) – Afdeling Europa Economie (Europe Economy Department) Koning Albert II-laan 35 bus 12 B-1030 Brussel Tel.: +32 2 553 38 63 E-mail: economie.europa@vlaanderen.be Web: http://agentschapondernemen.be Operational Programme 'Flanders': http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/prordn/details_new.cfm?gv_OBJ=ALL&gv_PAY=BE&gv_reg=ALL&gv_THE=ALL&gv_PGM=1079&LAN=7&gv_per=2&gv_defL=7
Cohesion Obj.	Competitiveness
Theme	Theme 3: Regulatory provisions in the field of housing in favour of marginalised groups
Main reason for Highlighting this case	The City of Ghent has demonstrated persistence in its attempt to bring the demand for sustainable construction and renovation and the supply and provision mechanisms closer together. In an integrated way the project stimulates householders, property owners, organisations and businesses to introduce energy-saving measures, so raising or creating demand. Simultaneously it works on the supply side, mobilising the construction sector, businesses and design professionals to provide solutions which respond to this demand. This intelligent approach is especially valuable as the project's prime focus is to support particularly disadvantaged individuals, families and communities to reduce their energy expenditure. The initiative is both innovative and potentially transferable, open to all but particularly designed to help people in difficult socio-economic circumstances, households whose annual income is less than €27 200. The project has secured funding for the second time to continue its strategy of encouraging business and community to move towards achieving an energy neutral urban environment.
Key Contact person	Flora Van den Heuvel (project leader) – Flora.VandenHeuvel@gent.be

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION	
Overall objective / goals	<p>The overall aim of the project is to encourage householders and property owners to initiate measures which can reduce energy consumption in their homes or buildings. So there is an element of awareness raising, as well as support to find and implement low-carbon solutions. Similarly the project looks to ensure that construction firms, architects and the local building and business sector in general are equally prepared to modify their practices: to supply the materials, use the techniques and design the solutions which result in effective eco-construction and renovation.</p> <p>While access to assistance is open to all, priority is given to support for householders in difficulty – low-income, unemployed, those living in deprived neighbourhoods, migrants and newcomers to the city (facing language difficulties), and those suffering from fuel poverty. It is even more important here to match and tailor the offer of energy reduction measures to the needs, capacities and means of this target group, as well as maximising the benefits of lower energy bills. This is a key concern for city politicians and also (apart from the public interest in the project objectives) at least partly explains the willingness of the city to continue and extend the initiative – and increase its portion of co-financing in order to put more feet on the ground.</p>
Description of activities	<p>There is a strong element of ongoing awareness raising to stimulate and convince property owners and households to take action and change habits and lifestyles. This also applies to the building and supply sector, and for both sides of the demand-supply equation this is a precondition of concrete intervention. The project is pursuing a cluster of mutually reinforcing actions designed to achieve change in attitude and intervention on both sides of the energy conservation market. The current phase of the project clearly builds on the initial work and positive results of the activities set up in the first funding period 2008 – 2010.</p> <p>During the first project phase six priority actions were started:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision and communication of advice on sustainable construction and renovation by the City of Ghent. The proposed objective of reaching 300 individuals and organisations was more than achieved in the first phase. 2. Process guidance for the social target group (taxable income less than €27 200 a year) in cooperation with the vzw REGent (non-profit city agency). This involves close accompaniment of households from the first contact to the implementation and delivery of sustainable renovation measures (advice on intervention, help in finding contractor, grant or loan possibility, follow-up of work and delivery). Here also the objectives were surpassed in terms of numbers of ‘clients’ assisted in realising financial and sustainable solutions e.g. group purchase roof insulation. 3. Process guidance for schools in co-operation with vzw REGent. This started later than planned, and continued in the new project phase in 2010. The idea was that schools would also benefit from advice and support to make energy conservation interventions in their buildings, but this has not been widely taken up. 4. Organisation of ‘eco-construction pools’. Some 150 construction sector professionals followed these information and training events (based on peer-to-peer transfer of experience and practice) in the first phase. 5. Study day on ‘Sustainable Heritage Conservation’. A forum was organised in the first phase to explore the ‘state of the art’ on this important urban concern for Ghent, with the goal of ultimately producing a brochure on sustainable urban conservation. 6. Translation of the existing ‘sustainability monitor’ for urban development projects to cover economic sites. This initiative was still in development at the end of the first phase. Here outreach is undertaken to convince SMEs to take sustainable, energy reducing renovation measures in their production processes and in their buildings (e.g. bakery or engineering workshop). <p>The relative success of the initiatives during the first phase (in combination</p>

	<p>with the fact that certain planned or additionally identified activities could not be realised within the funding period) inspired the application for new funding based on continuing and implementing the following actions:</p> <p>Working on the demand side</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuation of provision and communication of advice on sustainable construction and renovation: this action is aimed at householders, especially the social target group, providing 3 hours of free advice from an architect specialised in eco-construction. For the social target group this can be the start of a full trajectory of accompaniment to realise necessary improvements in their homes. It promotes the concept of the 'passive house' as a means of reducing the energy bill – longer-term benefits repay any intervention costs. This is organised in collaboration with, and in the offices of, the NGO Milieuadvieswinkel ('Environmental advice shop') as a first point of contact, a chance to explore needs and possibilities which can then be translated into more targeted guidance based on the capacities (financial, skills and social) of the candidate. 2. Continuation of process guidance for socio-economically weaker groups: this involves assistance to individual householders from the social target group whereby an architect is assigned to follow their whole trajectory of sustainable renovation or construction (from energy scan, through building advice, grant and subsidy search and application, search for and engagement of contractors). 3. Stimulation and implementation of group purchase of roof insulation: It is estimated that only 50% of homes in Ghent had roof insulation at the start of the project. Information and awareness raising campaigns have not been sufficient to mobilise people to install them. Here the city Environment Service takes the role of enabler to help organise a group purchase (good contractor, fair price search) to lower the threshold for this intervention. Info-sessions are organised to explain the benefits and modalities of placing an 18 cm layer of insulation (12 cm is the legal standard for new construction). Further candidates are afforded personal advice and assistance, a free workshop on installing roof insulation and accompaniment through the whole insulation process. <p>Working on the supply side</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Reinforcement of 'eco-construction pool' working: Knowledge sharing based on good practice peer-to-peer exchange between actors in the construction sector. This involves organising training workshops (minimum 4 linked to production of technical guides), and also info-sessions and site/project visits. 5. Mobilising sustainable SMEs: Exploring strategies and impulses which a local authority can provide to stimulate firms and organisations to adopt sustainable operational and production methods. Knowledge exchange and best practice sessions are coupled with production of a brochure on sustainable entrepreneurship. 6. Fostering SME collaboration: During the first phase of the project the city developed a 'sustainability monitor' tool. Using energy as an entry point the project develops activities to exchange knowledge and build cooperation between SMEs operating in Ghent to take responsibility for their environmental impact.
<p>Recipients</p>	<p>The project is intended to directly benefit both sides of the interaction between supply and demand in terms of sustainable construction and renovation. On the one hand the project targets building firms, architects and insulation contractors, SMEs in Ghent, existing and new industrial estate managers in Ghent, and business organisations supporting SMEs such as UNIZO (Union of Independent Entrepreneurs), BouwUnie (Union Of Construction Companies), VeGHO (union of harbour enterprises), VOKA (Flanders Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and VKW (the Entrepreneurs platform). On the other side the focus is on private individuals and property owners, real estate managers – but especially householders and particularly those facing most</p>

	<p>difficulties in socio-economic terms. The priority target groups of the project are families living in deprived neighbourhoods or in conditions of disadvantage. By publicising its presence and inviting people to come and seek advice and learn about opportunities, the first approach is to individual households. However this is followed up in the work of other services (i.e. the Public Centre for Social Welfare) and in neighbourhood meetings. The message is spread by word of mouth in the community and this fosters a neighbourhood dynamic which is an added value in facilitating group purchasing initiatives for roof insulation and thermic glazing.</p>																																						
Mainstreaming of gender equality and non discrimination	<p>There is no specific focus on this issue but non-discrimination (gender, race, age) and social inclusion are policy positions which underpin the contact and stimulation of the social target group.</p>																																						
Intended outputs and results	<p>During the first project phase (2008-2010) 600 individual householders took advantage of the offer of free eco-construction advice, 320 people from the social target group were assisted through expert accompaniment in the process of applying measures to reduce energy consumption, 150 professionals in the building sector followed eco-construction pool workshops and 220 building contractors and architects participated in the study day on sustainable built heritage conservation. It was largely the success reflected in these figures which ensured the continuation of the project and inspired a new application for ERDF support.</p> <p>As with the first phase, in the second funding phase of the project (2010 – 2012) the project team set itself targets based on output and result indicators which they set out and itemised in the table below. While it could have been interesting to link this to a deeper monitoring of impacts, this was the model accepted by the MA. The progress report of January 2012 already presents a positive balance in terms of achieving these basic project targets:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="491 1059 1399 2022"> <thead> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Planned</th> <th>Achieved Jan. 2012</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3"><u>Output results</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of guidance actions organised in firms, organisations and institutions to support knowledge development and application of techniques</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of accompaniment activities to assist firms, organisations and institutions in developing knowledge and applying concrete sustainable measures</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><u>Result indicators</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of knowledge exchange and technical advice inspired solutions implemented by firms, organisations and institutions</td> <td>134</td> <td>157</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><u>Other measurable results</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Action 1. No. of individuals receiving 3 hours sustainable construction advice (vast majority social target group)</td> <td>350</td> <td>368</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Action 2. No. of families following programme of process accompaniment</td> <td>130</td> <td>291</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Action 3. No. of families in group purchasing programme for roof insulation</td> <td>40</td> <td>655</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Action 4. No. of people consulting aerial night heat image survey</td> <td>0</td> <td>110</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Action 4. No. of contractors and architects participating in training workshops</td> <td>200</td> <td>25</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Action	Planned	Achieved Jan. 2012	<u>Output results</u>			Number of guidance actions organised in firms, organisations and institutions to support knowledge development and application of techniques	1	4	Number of accompaniment activities to assist firms, organisations and institutions in developing knowledge and applying concrete sustainable measures	8	9	<u>Result indicators</u>			Number of knowledge exchange and technical advice inspired solutions implemented by firms, organisations and institutions	134	157	<u>Other measurable results</u>			Action 1. No. of individuals receiving 3 hours sustainable construction advice (vast majority social target group)	350	368	Action 2. No. of families following programme of process accompaniment	130	291	Action 3. No. of families in group purchasing programme for roof insulation	40	655	Action 4. No. of people consulting aerial night heat image survey	0	110	Action 4. No. of contractors and architects participating in training workshops	200	25
Action	Planned	Achieved Jan. 2012																																					
<u>Output results</u>																																							
Number of guidance actions organised in firms, organisations and institutions to support knowledge development and application of techniques	1	4																																					
Number of accompaniment activities to assist firms, organisations and institutions in developing knowledge and applying concrete sustainable measures	8	9																																					
<u>Result indicators</u>																																							
Number of knowledge exchange and technical advice inspired solutions implemented by firms, organisations and institutions	134	157																																					
<u>Other measurable results</u>																																							
Action 1. No. of individuals receiving 3 hours sustainable construction advice (vast majority social target group)	350	368																																					
Action 2. No. of families following programme of process accompaniment	130	291																																					
Action 3. No. of families in group purchasing programme for roof insulation	40	655																																					
Action 4. No. of people consulting aerial night heat image survey	0	110																																					
Action 4. No. of contractors and architects participating in training workshops	200	25																																					

	Action 5. No. of SMEs participating in good practice workshops	200	95
	Action 6. No. of participating higher administrations, knowledge institutes, construction centres etc.	5	5
	<u>Communication</u>		
	N° of architects supplied with 'sustainable construction details' CD-ROM	0	1000
	<p>These results show that the project is indeed reaching its targets but also that it is not restricted to simply following the plan when opportunities arise. The use of an aerial heat imaging survey which enables owners to see their own roof energy loss, and the option to produce a construction detail CD-ROM, were unplanned but important features in advancing the work and impact of the project team. The lower success levels linked to training and good practice workshops (eco-construction pools) are in fact the result of the success of the project. A number of overarching agencies in the construction sector have copied and internalised this into their own working. So it could be said that this has weakened this initiative started by the Ghent Environment Service, but in fact the inspiration has resulted in spreading the activity to a much wider audience.</p>		
2. POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT			
National and regional framework for implementing ERDF-funded urban development projects	<p>In reaction to European agreements to implement the Kyoto protocol, Belgium is committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 7.5% (in relation to 1990 levels) in the period 2008-2012. The National Climate Plan 2002-2012 sets out energy reduction measures at federal and regional level to implement Kyoto objectives. Within this framework the Flemish region in its Climate Policy Plan takes responsibility to similarly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2%.</p> <p>The project is therefore interestingly situated between Flemish environmental policy and the policy ambition to foster economic growth which is reflected in the operational programme for the region.</p> <p>The operational programme for Flanders for the period 2007-2013 focuses on three strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote knowledge transfer among companies, non-profit organisations and public administrations; • to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation in order to boost job creation and strengthen economic structures so as to maximise economic growth; • to optimise support for development projects to make towns and cities more attractive in terms of entrepreneurship and innovation. <p>In particular, this means strengthening the economy by making towns and cities more accessible, upgrading their internal transport systems, improving their inhabitants' quality of life and developing tourism and socio-cultural facilities. The OP priorities are: 1. The knowledge economy and innovation; 2. Entrepreneurship; 3. Improving the basis for economic structuring and spatial planning; 4. Urban Development.</p> <p>The Flemish operational programme also links economic growth to citizens' quality of life and social inclusion, so it is clear that the project touches all three pillars of sustainable development: economic; social, and environmental.</p>		
The planning context	<p>The city of Ghent has had a tradition of environmental activism which may explain the fact that it became the first Belgian city to produce its own Local Climate Plan. The current document for 2008-2020 is subject to review but in fact the city imagines an even longer vision on this issue. By 2020 the city council targets a 20% reduction of energy consumed in its own buildings and by public lighting (50% of the energy supply should come from renewable sources) and a 60% reduction in CO₂ emissions (compared to 2003 levels).</p>		

	<p>For the city as a whole energy consumption and CO₂ emission are to be reduced by more than 20% by 2020. It is within this context that the project is developed, but the environmental consideration is strongly integrated in the more traditional and statutory planning and regeneration policies and projects of the city, as well as the working of agencies like the Ghent Public Centre for Social Welfare and the City Economic Department (city structure plan and actions in deprived neighbourhoods, transport policy with extended public transport network and cycling promotion, heritage approach).</p>
<p>3. IMPLEMENTATION</p>	
<p>3.1. PROJECT DESIGN AND PLANNING</p>	<p>Project idea</p> <p>The project idea is consistent with the development of the city environmental policy in recent years. Ghent had already established a collaboration with the NGO Milieuadvieswinkel (Environmental advice shop) to act as an information and guidance point for eco-construction and sustainable practice in general. Through public interest shown in this service, evaluation suggested that there was a real demand, but also a capacity and knowledge deficit on the part of potential 'clients'. On the other hand the construction sector was not sufficiently adapted or informed to react to this 'new' demand for sustainable renovation and construction. Experience in Antwerp with establishing Eco-construction exchanges gave a further stimulus for the city and its Environment Service to build this package of support measures to assist and mobilise householders/property owners and the construction and business sectors in general.</p> <p>Needs assessment and analysis</p> <p>There was no specific needs assessment, rather the project developed as a logical conclusion of evolving integrated city policy and based on the information coming from the Milieuadvieswinkel. The high number of people approaching the NGO for information and advice was a key impulse in the initiation.</p> <p>Selection by the managing authority</p> <p>During the funding period 2007-2013 the project has been supported through successful submissions in response to calls for projects launched by the managing authority (Flemish Region, Agentschap Ondernemen – Enterprise Agency), for both project phases. The project was considered in response to its potential contribution to Priority 1 of the Flemish operational programme and was positively evaluated as a tool to advance the operational aims of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness-raising • providing support • cooperation, and • highlighting of examples illustrating new ways of exploiting knowledge <p>The first project proposal had initially presented 7 actions. One of these, concerning linkage to education and training establishments, was not retained by the managing authority. Also in the second phase there was a limited steering of action proposals by the MA. The good evaluation of project results from the first phase together with strong motivation for continuing the project were key factors leading to approval of the second funding phase.</p> <p>Consideration of risks in the selection process</p> <p>The initial project application was not subject to a risk analysis. The managing authority considered that the guarantee provided by the city of Ghent as sponsor of the project provided sufficient collateral, together with the fact that the budget foreseen was limited. The managing authority has a provincial contact point for East Flanders which is housed in the city administration, so this also provided additional security for the good progress of the project. As the project had performed well during the first phase (2008-2010) the follow-up application was evaluated as being without any real risk.</p>

	<p>Consideration of sustainability, results exploitation and transferability</p> <p>The project was conceived with the aim of stimulating sustainable ways of living (citizens) and operating (construction sector). It extends and adapts the delivery of city services to needs and opportunities identified on both sides of the eco-construction equation. In this sense the city will pursue its activities until demand and supply are matched, adjusting to results and changes of emphasis as part of an ongoing process, together with its key partners and stakeholders. From the very beginning the idea of transferability and results exploitation was at the core of project design. The initiators themselves were inspired by an initiative in the neighbouring city of Antwerp and actively looked to use experiences from other cities, including outside Belgium.</p> <p>The starting position of the City Environmental Service and vzw REGent was to spread the actions and their message to as wide an audience as possible – to citizens above all, to operators in the construction sector and business community and to research and educational institutions – ‘we don’t keep the knowledge to ourselves’. This seems to have borne fruit at local, sector and even international levels.</p> <p>Role of EU support</p> <p>The EU funding allowed the city to engage and assign staff and organise activities within a structured project framework. Without this impulsion it is unlikely that the full range of actions could have been initiated and implemented. Now that the value of the interventions has been recognised, the added effect of the EU impulse has provided important leverage to continue the core activities further within the service delivery structure of the city, so even if the second phase funding had not been forthcoming the city would have continued the project.</p> <p>Other funds</p> <p>The project is not subsidised by other European funding channels.</p>
<p>3.2. MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM</p>	<p>Management structure and selection of project manager</p> <p>The management of the project is delegated to the city department responsible for environmental matters (Environment Service) which operates in close liaison with a non-profit arms-length agency set up by the city (REGent) to manage the reduction of energy and water consumption.</p> <p>The Environment Service coordinates and drives all actions of the project as part of its core business but with the appointment of extra staff to ensure day-to-day running, contact with stakeholders and communication. The project is so embedded in the work practice and relationships and networks of the Environment Service that at first glance it might appear to be quite a loose structure, not immersed in a bureaucratic straightjacket or fixed directives but open to ideas from all levels and expertise. In fact under the leadership of the project initiator the structure adapts in a flexible way to apply appropriate staff and expertise to tackle the particular tasks set. The Environment Service organises contacts, cooperation and activities on the supply side with the sector organisations, contractors and professionals.</p> <p>REGent has a strong role in implementation, providing the possibility for energy scans, concrete assistance with sustainable building (also through low-interest loans and grants) and recently organising the group purchase of high performance glazing. It is responsible for the process accompaniment of individual householders on a one-on-one basis. This service is open to all but a more limited offer is afforded to more comfortably-off and better-educated applicants. Advice should lead this group to organise themselves, while the full process accompaniment is intended to give a complete assistance to less able members of the community. The Infopoint Milieuadvieswinkel is contracted to be an open shop to supply building advice, and channel ‘clients’ into the actions initiated by the project. The Environment Service has the role of directing, coordinating, managing and implementing parts of the project, but there is substantial delegation to REGent and a contractual relationship (service delivery) from the Milieuadvieswinkel. The formation of REGent using</p>

	<p>personnel seconded from the Environment Service and Public Social Welfare Service ensures continuity of understanding, good communication and facility of coordination.</p>
	<p>Delivery of the project</p> <p>The principal budget lines for the project cover operational costs (organisation of events, venues, catering, material), external contracts for service delivery, promotion and publicity and personnel costs.</p> <p>During the second phase of the project €133 761 is set aside for staff costs within the structure of the Environment Service.</p>
	<p>Steering groups</p> <p>The managing authority at the Flemish Regional level, the Enterprise Agency, organises an annual meeting to bring all funded projects together and provide a progress report. For a two-year funding phase (as in this case), three meetings are organised with the project team, with representation from the city of Ghent and the Environment Service: at the inception point, at mid-term and at the end. At the city level there is a formal six-monthly meeting between the finance officer and the Environment Service project team. Project follow-up is based on an open relationship between the responsible city departments with contact as need dictates or opportunity arises.</p> <p>At project level there is no fixed steering committee. Meetings of a core group within the Environment Service with project partners, delegated service providers and essential stakeholders are frequently organised but on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis.</p>
	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>The project team produces quarterly progress reports (financial and action) including a check of achievements in relation to the set output and result indicators, and this is also transmitted to the managing authority. Monitoring is organised on a continuous basis with statistics on results fed in to a computer system which allows up-to-date recording of numbers of construction advice contacts, levels of loans and grants supplied, and people participating in the process accompaniment programme, for instance. This makes quarterly reporting easier and means that each member of the project team can consult the state of play in relation to whichever action at any point in time.</p>
	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>The output results and indicators identified in the application form the basis of the evaluation process. However both the relative success and dynamic of the project have meant that this has an element of flexibility. The team members responsible for particular actions have therefore set out the tasks they expect to achieve over shorter periods of the project lifecycle (max. 1 year planning), and the computer monitoring allows progress to be followed up on an almost continuous basis. Evaluation is therefore predominantly internal except for the final reporting and analysis of the managing authority. The managing authority evaluates on the basis of the objectives and results set in the original application forms for ERDF funding.</p>
	<p>Overcoming obstacles</p> <p>The project has not encountered many real obstacles. The main challenge has been to find and engage with people who really need assistance. Listing of potential recipients is complicated by data protection and privacy measures, but the project has mobilised civil society organisations and social partners to identify contacts. Concentration on good communication, using all contacts working in the community and mobilising the media on a relatively 'hot topic' was fundamental in raising awareness and lowering thresholds. In this the formation of REGent is interesting in that it is basically an amalgam of staff seconded from the city, the Environment Service and the city Public Service for Social Welfare. Its members have good knowledge and contact structures with local residents.</p> <p>The government's decision to stop fiscal benefits for energy conservation</p>

	<p>measures (end 2011) led the project to reappraise the loans and grants that REGent can provide. This assistance is highly integrated with other social actions or urban regeneration grants which can be combined to ease the financial burden on the target group. For example a grant made to a householder from a regeneration action initiated by the city (e.g. in the neighbourhood of Ledeborg – project <i>Ledeborg Leeft!</i> – Ledeborg Lives!) can be paid directly into the loan account which an individual has with REGent for energy conservation measures. So there are few administrative barriers, which minimises the pay-back burden. In fact REGent gives comprehensive advice on cumulating grants which can be accessed for home renovation, high performance glass, insulation etc. at all administrative levels: federal, Flemish region, city of Ghent, energy companies and through REGent itself. The city of Ghent backs this up with a brochure outlining all possible financial support channels – <i>Woonpremies in Gent 2012</i> ('Housing grants in Ghent').</p> <p>The copying or internalising of the eco-construction pools action by sector organisations was experienced as a negative by the project team in the first instance. However instead of digging in to protect their own brainchild the decision was taken in fact to support this branching out of the initiative, so maximising the effect on an even wider range of key stakeholders.</p>
<p>3.3 GOVERNANCE: PARTNERSHIP, PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT</p>	<p>Composition of the partnership</p> <p>The core partnership of the project is between the City Council as policy determining body, the city Environment Service charged with managing, coordinating and implementing the project, and the city's arm's-length agency REGent which is responsible for implementing sustainable energy and energy conservation measures. The Milieuadvieswinkel has a contractual relationship with the city of Ghent to provide environmental information and advice to the population. This is a standard service delivery but the advice shop has a very open door policy, a good location at a major public transport node and organises environment events at particular festivities through the year which reach a wide and differentiated public.</p> <p>On a secondary level an ad hoc partnership has been built with various organisations (construction confederation, entrepreneurship agencies), research institutions (UGent – university) and individuals (architects and energy specialists) to maximise the effect of organised activity and the production of advisory and technical documents.</p> <p>Roles of the partners</p> <p>The city Environment Service is both author and driver of the project. This department of the local authority is allowed to operate relatively autonomously but in close cooperation with other city departments as and when required. The project team within the Environment Service has responsibility for management and coordination, implementation of certain events and activities (i.e. group purchase of roof insulation) and for general or targeted communication of the project – as well as activities organised with the supply sector. Implementation of key project components is assured by the link with the arm's-length agency REGent and through a service provision contract in the case of the Milieuadvieswinkel. REGent is fully occupied with the process accompaniment programme geared primarily at the social target group, and with actions to benefit the householder, schools and organisations like youth clubs (so predominantly on the demand side). Wider participation in the project is achieved by involving sector and business organisations which recognise the benefits of including this as part of their core business and research institutions. The project has been equally successful in capturing voluntary expertise from architects and energy conservation specialists, for instance in contributing to the production of technical guides and brochures.</p> <p>Involvement of stakeholders and end-users</p> <p>The project is consciously conceived to reach end-users, especially the social target group of low-income families, to involve them in energy conservation, and also to reduce the burden of their energy costs. Similarly design profes-</p>

sionals, contractors, installation firms and the business community in general were actively contacted to engage in the project and modify working and delivery practices to produce sustainable homes and buildings (schools and youth clubs were also targeted in the first phase). This objective of attracting the key stakeholders to participate in the actions offered within the project has been largely successful, simply by maximising dissemination and communication through existing information and support channels operated by the city and its partners. In fact it appears that there is a high topical interest in the action areas developed by the project. A little surprisingly, simply the opening of the advice shop door was an invitation which attracted great interest. This may be due to the environmental dynamic which has characterised debates and other actions in the city in recent years – so exploiting in a way an existing or underlying momentum.

Role of the city administration

The city administration is formally the initiator of the project and provides both a mandate to its environment service and strong political and administrative support for the implementation and advancement of the project.

Steering and implementation

Leadership of the project is assured by an experienced and dynamic group of people operating within the Environment Service, which works on an informal but highly professional basis. A key staff member was seconded from this department to the vzw REGent when it was formed, so the relationship between coordinating and implementing bodies is underpinned by a good common understanding. The use of network contacts by the 3 main partners in the project has been particularly effective and demonstrates a high level of cooperation. The bottom-up approach from the city to work with households, firstly understanding their needs and hopes and the demand from economic sectors and sector organisations has been a new feature within the wider governance context in Flanders, but basically the team has concentrated on drawing the maximum out of existing practices and structures while applying state of the art technologies wherever possible – aerial heat imagery, for instance.

The mobilisation of experts and specialists to co-produce technical documentation has equally been successful and remarkably founded on the recognition of mutual benefit for the participants.

4. INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS AND NOVEL APPROACHES

4.1 INNOVATION

New approaches, management practices different from common practice

The integrated working between the three principal partners is an effective extension of a previous structural development within city departments in relation to service provision. New opportunities to make contact with stakeholders were developed through the working of the NGOs and particularly in the process accompaniment for the social target group. This has been both new and enriching for the process. However perhaps the most effective and innovative element of the whole project is the consideration given to whole chain solutions e.g. in the case of process accompaniment, a full package from energy scan and renovation advice to support in selecting measures, help and provision of grants and loans, selection of contractors, follow-up and delivery of work... This means that there is effectively a one-stop-shop rather than the opportunity to participate in one particular action organised by one body or department. Households which need support are in this way accompanied from the moment of considering sustainable home improvements right through to the realisation of the work (helping them through questions of affordability, understanding the benefits of technical solutions, ensuring they are well served by implementation contractors etc. Similarly in work with the supply side the Eco-construction pools for example put great emphasis on cradle-to-cradle solutions.

<p>4.2. KEY IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICES</p>	<p>New approaches in exploiting and transferring the results</p> <p>The key element in exploiting and transferring results was not especially related to new approaches but rather to maximising the impact of existing channels and networks to spread information and knowledge. This conscious mobilisation of wide-ranging networking and motivation of sector interests was of course helped by technical and instrument advances and appears to have had a real effect. The project team considered this as a logical, task-oriented extension of their working practices.</p> <p>Reaching and maintaining engagement with the social target group remains one of the prime challenges for the project. Convincing this group, particularly migrants or older people, is not evident and many express interest until cost estimates appear and then terminate their interest before taking action. In this situation extra efforts are taken to attract new clients but also to revisit those who have fallen by the wayside. Follow-up newsletters and more outreach tactics are being employed to resolve this problem.</p> <p>The agency REGent itself both provides grants for certain energy-saving interventions (organisation of bulk insulation material based on cellulose, giving a 25% cost reduction as compared to glass wool type products) and provides low-interest, long pay-back loans of up to €10 000 for families with an income of less than €27 200 a year.</p> <p>Similarly the willingness of contractors to provide tenders is waning. It is clear that more tenders are produced than work commissioned and this represents an extra work burden for contractors potentially without return. This is a feature that is still under consideration, and the project team is researching ways to persuade key suppliers to participate.</p>
<p>4.3. THEMATIC FOCUS</p>	<p>Theme 3: Regulatory provisions in the field of housing in favour of marginalised groups</p> <p>The project is very connected to the theme in that its principal motivation was to support households in difficulty to contribute to energy reduction objectives while at the same time improving their fuel budget conditions. It was realised however that in order to achieve this it would be necessary to communicate (convince) and support householders, but at the same time essential to involve the supply agencies (professionals, contractors, building and business sectors) to deliver the products and solutions required to make this happen. In this sense the project has been very integrated and forward looking.</p>
<p>5. FUNDING</p>	
	<p>The ERDF budget constitutes 40% of the total in both phases. The allocation of ERDF funds is based on reporting of real expenditures (quarterly financial reports from the project team) with no pre-financing. There is no private funding of the project in financial terms, but professionals, researchers, representative agencies and semi-public bodies have contributed logistics and services in kind (organisation of events and activities, co-production of guidance documents. The potential of the project to generate new demand is recognised by the private sector and in part explains the willingness to invest time and manpower, although there is also a real benefit to them in exchange of knowledge and techniques.</p>
<p>6. PROJECT ASSESSMENT</p>	
<p>6.1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>It is the intention that after the funding period, the City of Ghent will ensure the continuation of the project as a standard part of its service provision structure, through coordinated collaboration between the City Environment Service and the association REGent vzw. The Environment Service will assume the role of providing construction advice, accompanying the work and ensuring cooperation with higher and sector administrations, SMEs and international contacts.</p>

<p>6.2. TRANSFERABILITY</p>	<p>The service will also exploit its strong connection with the City Economic Department. The city's association REGent takes responsibility for the continuation of accompaniment to socially weaker end-user groups. REGent stands for 'rational energy and water consumption in Ghent'. Supported by the city, this arms-length agency mobilises the Ghent population to save energy and water without loss of living comfort. It will continue to provide free energy scans for householders and low-interest loans for sustainable interventions in the home and will operate as the central information point for citizens, especially the disadvantaged. This decision has already been taken by the Executive Committee as regards REGent's 2012-2018 business plan.</p>
	<p>Continuity and mainstreaming</p> <p>The fact that the project was also supported by ERDF funding for a second phase has solidified the continuity and acceptance of the actions. The success in result terms suggests that the city will continue its focus on both measures and target group as long as need remains. The project was not started as a pilot action or action plan (URBAN, EQUAL, URBACT).</p>
	<p>Transferability</p> <p>This is difficult to quantify for the project as a whole. However the NGO Milieuadvieswinkel (Environment advice shop) which acts as the local info-point and antenna for the project vis-à-vis the community, is now providing the same service it provides to Ghent as a result of the project (particularly advice and guidance on sustainable construction and renovation) to some 15 other municipalities. Similarly the eco-construction pools concept has been copied and internalised by overarching and representative organisations in the building sector. While in a sense this has weakened the initiative as a city-piloted activity, the city is also happy to participate in and support these alternatives which have the capacity to reach an even wider audience. The wide-ranging invitation and dissemination to sector organisations (which often have an international dimension) has generated considerable interest in the Ghent initiative. A number of enquiries and requests have come from cities and agencies outside Belgium to the Environment Service and REGent to learn more about the project and its methods, particularly from France and the Netherlands.</p> <p>The project seems very transferable as a whole: the outreach, advice and guidance, group insulation purchase, methods to inform and engage construction stakeholders, training workshops on 'passive house' techniques etc. The technical guidance documents on using natural paints or wood skeleton construction in passive housing for instance have been widely asked for and used by professionals (architects), firms and training institutions.</p>
<p>6.3 ISSUES AND PROBLEMS</p>	<p>The project has not experienced major difficulties apart from those cited in section 4.2 and this is confirmed by managing authority, project team and partners. On the contrary the project is in a constant state of adaptation trying to match the offer, methods and modalities to meet the needs of individual 'clients'. This is borne out in the way it has used the new tools of heat loss imagery, the production of extra guidance material ('using natural paints') and the development of cooperation with a Public Centre for Social Welfare initiative to place people in employment through working in an odd-job service (ideal for low-cost and quality implementation of roof insulation for example).</p>
<p>6.4 PROJECT OUTPUTS & RESULTS</p>	<p>The interim results of the project would seem to indicate that the project has largely surpassed its own targets particularly in engaging the public to sign up for energy conservation measures in their homes. The process accompaniment for families in the social target group has been particularly successful as well as the number of individuals who have joined the group purchasing programmes for roof insulation. So the ground level offer of advice, assistance and support is the critical element in driving action in the community, informing people of possibilities that they may have considered were beyond their means. It also provides a safety net in terms of ensuring that the most useful, cost-effective techniques are applied to the needs of the client. The demand</p>

	<p>side and particularly that of the social target group has been the clear driver of the project, highlighting the deficiencies and need to activate the supply side in delivering truly sustainable home improvement – where retrofitting of traditional urban landscapes is the greatest challenge for cities and their inhabitants in this respect. Simple interventions in roof, wall, glazing, insulation and heating systems can make an important contribution to easing financial expenditure for families in difficulty.</p> <p>Communication and information channels have clearly been effective here without using particularly new techniques but instead maximising the impact of existing channels and media opportunities.</p> <p>On the supply side the project has stimulated other organisations to copy and implement training and workshop activities, which effectively spreads the message to many more firms and professionals than the city network could have hoped to achieve. Contact and engagement with the construction sector and business organisations as well as design professionals and researchers has helped to build a real dynamic around the project. The production of technical sustainable construction details and professional building guidance documents have been result of co-production (often with voluntary input) and are widely solicited by both contractors and architects operating in the city and also across the country. The following link gives access to information on the aerial heat image survey (city level, individual building), the sustainable technical details CD-ROM, and the four specific technical advice bundles on: low energy massive construction; low energy wood frame construction; passive massive construction, and passive wood frame construction. http://www.gentsklimaatverbond.be/bedrijven/handleiding-laagenergetisch-en-passief-bouwen-voor-professionals</p>
7. CONCLUSIONS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The involvement of the construction sector, business, professional and research groups has been an added value for the project in terms of raising awareness and in generating wider support and contributing to the co-production of actions and technical advice/construction detail documents. • The project importantly responded to specific demands arising out of the community and was able to tailor the action programme to the particular needs and expectations of 'client' groups, both householders in difficult socio-economic situations and the producers and designers of sustainable solutions. • The mobilisation of different groups, professionals and specialists to assist in the production of technical documents represented a strong added value both in terms of content and spreading the message and techniques even wider. • The opportunity to use aerial heat image technology has been very useful in attracting and convincing potential 'clients' to engage. • Group purchasing has been a particularly effective tool to get people to sign up to taking real concrete action in their homes. • The full-time operation of two renovation teams as part of a job-creation scheme set up by the city Public Centre for Social Welfare.
8. FURTHER INFORMATION	
Bibliography	<p><i>Maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen</i> (Community responsible enterprise) http://www.mvovlaanderen.be/kenniscentrum/praktijkvoorbeeld/efro-project-duurzame-vraag-dito-aanbod-van-stad-gent-gestart/t/duurzaam-veranderen/ <i>Lokaal Klimaatplan Gent 2008-2020</i>, Stad Gent (Local Climate Plan – 105 actions for a climate neutral city. http://www.gent.be/docs/Departement%20Milieu,%20Groen%20en%20Gezondheid/Milieudienst/20080605%20Lokaal%20klimaatplan%20Gent%202008-2020%20105%20actiepunten.pdf</p>

	<p>Information on sustainable technical construction details: http://www.gentsklimaatverbond.be/bedrijven/handleiding-laagenergetisch-en-passief-bouwen-voor-professionals</p> <p>Information on the programme of group purchasing of roof insulation: http://www.gent.be/groepsaankoopdakisolatie</p> <p>Socio-economic profile Ghent and surroundings – 2008 Ghent Department of Work and Economy http://www.investingent.be/dmdocuments/Socio-economisch%20profiel%20van%20Gent%20update%202008.pdf</p> <p>Gent Housing Study (summary), <i>Gentse Woonstudie 2008</i> – city of Ghent http://www.gent.be/docs/Departement%20Ruimtelijke%20Planning,%20Mobiliteit%20en%20Openbaar%20Domein/Dienst%20Stedenbouw%20en%20Ruimtelijke%20Planning/beleid/20090424_derde%20versie%20bailleul%20300dpi_WEB.pdf</p> <p>Housing subsidies in Ghent 2012 (<i>Woonpremies in Gent</i>) – city of Ghent updated 2012 http://www.gent.be/docs/Departement%20bevolking%20en%20Welzijn/Dienst%20Huisvesting/Premieboekje.pdf</p>
Contact	<p>Responsible city officer:</p> <p>Katleen Straetmans, Director-Manager Milieudienst (Environmental Department) Braemkasteelstraat 41 9050 Gentbrugge (Gent) Tel.: +32 9 268 23 00 Tel.: +32 9 268 23 26 Milieutoezicht Tel.: +32 9 268 23 10 Milieuvergunningen Milieuloket Fax: +32 9 268 23 68 E-mail: milieudienst@gent.be</p> <p>Joris Demoor Coordinator Objective 2 Tel: +32 9 266 53 28 joris.demoor@gent.be</p> <p>Berthold Simons Centrum Duurzaam Bouwen (Centre for Sustainable Construction) b.simons@cedubo.be</p> <p>Greet Van Eetvelde Advisor Energiekennisplatform Universiteit Gent (Energy Knowledge Platform, Ghent University) greet.vaneetvelde@power-link.be</p> <p>Geert Abts Energy saving guide REGent Geert.Abts@gent.be</p>

	Karen Peleman Responsible project officer, managing authority Agentschap Ondernemen, Flanders Region karen.peleman@agentschapondernemen.be
Name of expert who did the case study	Philip Stein
Date	May 2012

AEIDL has been contracted by the European Commission in 2012 in order to provide 50 examples of good practice in urban development supported by the European Regional Development Fund during the 2007-2013 programming period (contract reference 2011.CE.16.0.AT.035). The views expressed by AEIDL remain informal and should not under any circumstance be regarded as the official position of the European Commission.