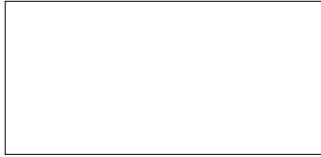


The POWER HOUSE nearly-Zero TaskForces



The Public, Cooperative and Social Housing sector is facing a set of diverse challenges provided by a dynamically changing environment. Demographic shifts in an aging European society, social hardships due to a multi-year economic crisis in many Member States, and regulatory requirements related to the building

stock and new construction are creating conditions which at first glance may seem to place an unacceptable burden on housing companies and associations. Yet, with these challenges come opportunities which allow the sector to develop and implement strategies to 'future-proof' its business for the coming decades.

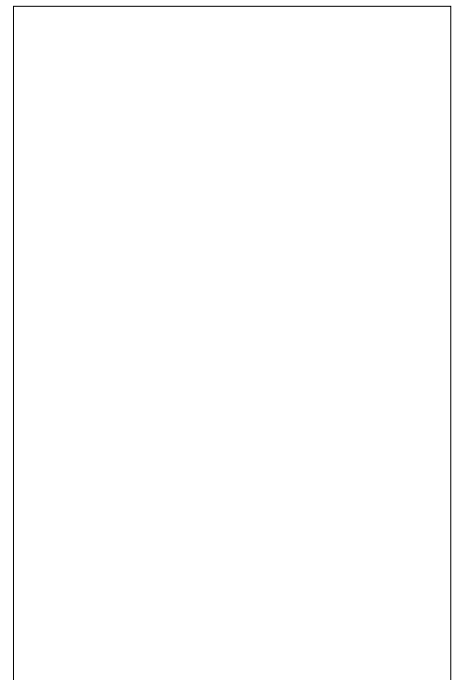
One such strategy concerns the energy performance of buildings which is of increasing relevance for Housing Europe members. European legislation requires that all new buildings are adhering to nearly- Zero Energy principles within a few years. Such buildings will have to be much better insulated than is current building practice, will have to use much more efficient heating and potentially cooling systems and will have to integrate renewable energy systems. This may be perceived by many in the industry as requiring investments which are unaffordable. Adding to this, experience with and knowledge about nearly-Zero Energy Buildings (nZEBs) may simply not be common. It is therefore not surprising that scepticism about the feasibility of nZEBs in the Public, Cooperative and Social Housing sector still prevails.

Within this context, Housing Europe, with the support of the Intelligent Energy-Europe programme, kicked off the 'POWER HOUSE nearly-Zero Energy Challenge!' initiative, to provide a structure for a pan-EU knowledge exchange between housing practitioners to learn from each other about the practical implications and costs of ambitious energy performance codes and to inform Policy Makers of the outcomes of this exchange.

Partners of this initiative decided to work together according to the climate zones they were operating in, also by taking into account the different types of tenure and an issue of common interest...how to finance energy retrofitting and new-build to nearly-Zero Energy standards!

The work was therefore carried out in 4 thematic inter-European TaskForces:

- nearly-Zero energy housing experiences in Warm/Mediterranean climates;
- nearly-Zero energy housing experiences in Cold/Continental climates;
- nearly-Zero energy housing in regions characterised by Divided/Cooperative ownership;
- financing of nearly-Zero energy housing renovation and new-build.



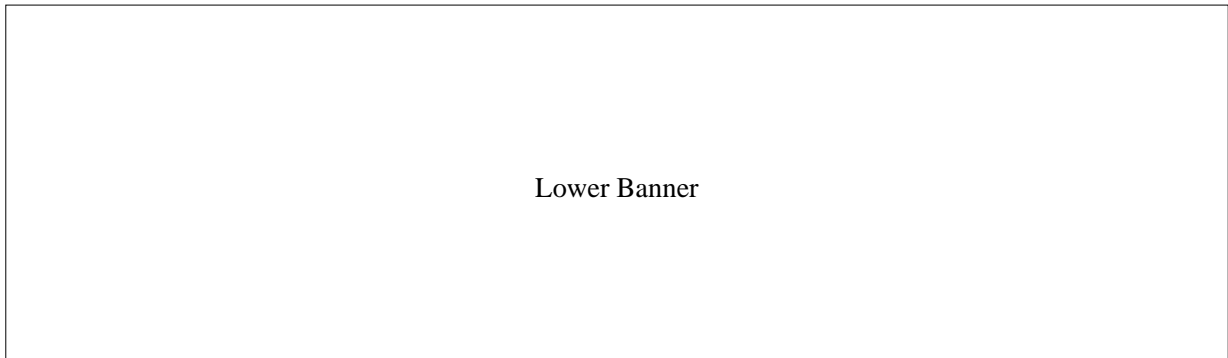
Each TaskForce, co-led by forerunner Housing Federations, identified obstacles and challenges that local housing organisations are facing in reaching nZEB targets for existing housing stock and new build and implemented a tailor-made work programme with the aim of paving the way for a fair and inclusive energy

transition.



Last but not least, to get actual and reliable data to feed the debate on cost-optimality and the considered use of financial resources at policy level, some thirty test cases of low and nearly-Zero Energy Buildings in different climate zones and types of tenure are being monitored in order to determine the real energy performance, rather than the values estimated by designers in the planning phase. Monitoring covers heating and cooling, the production of hot water and technical services such as ventilation and lighting as well as the production of in-situ renewable energy systems.

All data (in an aggregated form to protect data privacy) are publicly accessible and available online on the HIVE Project Database!



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Source: http://www.powerhouseeurope.eu/nearly_zero_taskforces/