



Community of Practice (CoP) Summary Report
5th Semester (January – June 2019)

VIOLET Interreg Project



Brief Introduction

The Community of Practice (CoP) meetings occurred in the 5th semester of the VIOLET Interreg Project and dealt extensively with the work related to the development of the Action Plan. Each partner has taken advantage of different tools in order to receive adequate feedback for its development.

Examples, from Cyprus Energy Agency (CEA) with roundtable discussions and bilateral/individual meetings with relevant participants - presentations on specific topics as in the case of Local Energy and Climate Agency (ALEC) - bilateral CoP meetings with similar Interreg projects and reliance on external expertise, from Junta de Andalusia (AVRA) and the South-East Regional Development Agency (Romania).

South-East Regional Development Agency (Romania)

The CoP meeting correspondent to the 5th semester took place on the 29th March 2019 at SE RDA premises, in Braila. This meeting was held as a joint (bilateral) stakeholders meeting with representatives of Interreg Projects VIOLET and REBUS - *Renovation for Energy Efficient Buildings* (project also implemented by SE RDA), who exchanged the experience from REBUS (the project is already at advanced stage) for the development of the VIOLET Action Plan.

During the CoP meeting, the following regional needs were identified and discussed:

- lack of instruments linking energy efficiency and cultural heritage
- poor management of heritage buildings
- poor financing capacity and resource of local authorities
- lack of monitoring activities to evaluate the impact of energy efficiency measures applied in heritage buildings

Within the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020, SE RDA is responsible for proposing energy efficiency interventions in heritage buildings. The following good practices, stemming from the VIOLET experience, were emphasised:

1. collaboration between different authorities/departments as in the case of Andalusia (Spain)
2. the model “Sustainable Monument”, promoted by the Municipality of Middelburg (Netherlands)

During the 5th semester further activities were carried out, and the VIOLET Project objectives and results were disseminated at local level; this included publishing a press article in a local newspaper. A new collaboration agreement was concluded with the County Directorate on Culture from Braila, involved in preserving, rehabilitating and valorizing cultural heritage. A new stakeholder was identified, that is the Municipality of Buzau, also active in the implementation of energy efficiency measures in the context of the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020. Relevant stakeholders have been invited to participate in the exchange events organised by the Municipality of Middelburg in May 2019.

Cyprus Energy Agency (Cyprus)

The 4th aggregate CoP meeting was organised on the 28th of June at Cyprus Energy Agency's (CEA) premises. Relevant participants from both the field of energy and culture heritage attended the event. The idea was to share the preliminary results of the VIOLET Project, with a special emphasis on the experience in Cyprus, and to present the drafted Action Plan with its future steps.

A major topic was the calling for tenders for the issuance of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) for 15 heritage buildings. This initiative was promoted by CEA, which is convinced that the EPCs will contribute significantly to the actions to be included in the Action Plan. In addition, the call for EPCs will help to create a database upon which others can build on for the adoption of energy efficiency measures in heritage buildings.

To conclude this first part of the meeting, suggestions based on regional needs were presented. Examples are the preparation of interdisciplinary seminars and of a technical guidebook for energy upgrading in heritage buildings, the introduction of a 'Monument Passport' for the residents of such buildings and the promotion of research on the properties of traditional building materials.

In the second part of the meeting, three Action Plan proposals were presented with the relative policy measures and costs. However, the timeframe was at that moment too tight to implement any of the proposed options as the Programming Period was closed, and the budget was already been absorbed. The Managing Authority confirmed that these proposals could instead be included during the design of the next Programming Period.

The last phase of the meeting consisted in a roundtable discussion, with major outputs that included the following:

- EPCs are of utmost importance in the next steps
- the Action Plan and the Policy Measures need to be targeted
- there is a positive response in addressing energy efficiency in heritage buildings (but it is not easy to take initiatives because of complex procedures, wide redistribution of competences and lack of dual expertise)
- the interventions are not always economically viable

During the 5th semester, various activities were carried out. Bilateral/individual meetings between CEA's and CoP's members took place in order to introduce targeted proposals to each competent department and to receive their feedback. An important part of the last semester was also the participation to the public consultation on the bill entitled "The Regulation on the Energy Performance of Buildings (Amendment) Law of 2019", in the perspective of the recasting of the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). Based on the activities of the VIOLET Project, it was proposed that heritage buildings, while exempted from minimum energy standards, should not be exempted from the issuance of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). Also, when no energy upgrading is adopted during restoration works, one should justify why this was not feasible.

Junta de Andalusia (AVRA) (Spain)

The CoP meeting correspondent to the 5th semester has been held on the 9th July 2019. A bilateral CoP meeting took place on the 24th May 2019 between the Andalusian Energy Agency (AEA) and AVRA, with the objective of presenting two Action Plans (for the BUILD2LC Interreg Project, in which AEA is a partner, and for the VIOLET Project) and of exchanging opinions. In order to develop its Action Plan, AVRA is also collaborating with a research team from the University of Seville, as external experts. In order to set the guidelines of the Action Plan, a Committee of Experts on Rehabilitation, Heritage and Energy Efficiency must be established, whose composition has not yet been decided.

The second part of the meeting focused on the critical assessment of the Action Plan to be developed by AVRA. Based on the BUILD2LC Interreg Project's experience, AEA recommended AVRA to limit the number of actions so that they can be realistically implemented and to always separate two actions if the stakeholders, source of funds or timelines are different. AEA also indicated to pay a particular attention to the following aspects:

- clearly justify that actions should be capable of influencing policy.
- argue the need to implement the new methodology included in ACTION 1, based on the experience of one of the partners, the experience of Middelburg, which has generated an analysis tool (SUMO, "Sustainable Monument") which was presented in Seville at the October 2018 .
- carry out as many bilateral meetings between partners as necessary (these meetings can be virtual), in order to clarify doubts and outline proposals.

Municipality of Middelburg (Netherlands)

During the 5th semester, four CoP meetings took place, from January through to May 2019. The CoP meetings gathered together participants from the area of heritage preservation and of energy efficiency to develop adequate solutions. The major activities carried out in the 5th semester were:

- i) improving communication with buildings owners
- ii) exchanging knowledge between professionals
- iii) improving the policy scenario

Improving communication with owners was considered essential to increase awareness through knowledge sharing activities, such as training courses and handbooks. Communication was perceived important also for increasing the sense of urgency for interventions. In this regard, heat scans of facades had already been made to create a sense of urgency among owners. This has created a need for heat scans of roofs. A plan is therefore being devised to make heat scans with a drone.

Innovative techniques and good/bad practices were discussed. First, a local glass company developed a solution to reuse historic glass in new double layered insulation glass. The Municipality of Middelburg pointed out its desire to reuse the little amount of authentic historical glass still available. For this purpose, consultation with the monuments committee was carried out. Second, the “warm building” method was also introduced, which is characterized by no thermal bridges, therefore very suitable for monuments. However, due to technical issues, this solution could not be applied in Middelburg. Third, the particular application of insulating foil for single glass was presented as a good practice, which revealed to be relatively inexpensive and not damaging for monuments. Examples of bad practices were instead identified as installing insulating glass in the wrong way (which could rot away the window) or as making a monument airtight (with adverse impacts for the monuments and for the health of the residents).

The improvement of the policy framework was a central topic of the CoP meetings. The goal is to simplify the process for carrying out efficiency interventions in monuments. One proposal is to abolish the fees for permits for these sustainability measures. This will be implemented within the initiative Sustainable Monument (SuMo), which helps owners with the complete process of energy renovation. A test with about five owners is being developed. Also, the Municipality of Middelburg wants to offer the sustainable monument passport as cheaply as possible. An idea would be to implement a digital passport. During the 5th semester, thanks to the VIOLET Project, a solar panel park has been installed on a business park. Owners of listed buildings can “buy” solar panels there if their own roof surface is not suitable for solar panels.

Further activities were carried out during the 5th semester. First, the HZ University of Applied Sciences conducted a blower-through test at monuments. A follow-up study will be carried out to see what measures have an effect on the results of the blower door test. Second, VIOLET Project’s partners visited Middelburg in May 2019. A few CoP members were present and owners showed their own monument building to the partners. Third, the project team has been asked from churches whether it would be possible to make churches more sustainable. Despite the difficulties in applying energy efficiency measures in this context, this could perhaps be picked up in a future project.

Local Energy and Climate Agency (France)

The 5th semester's CoP meeting took place on the 19th June 2019 in Bordeaux. The main objective of this event was to work on the Action Plan by presenting two major topics. These were the three regional calls for projects on building refurbishment (already discussed in the previous CoP meeting) and the new national certification label for heritage buildings in France.

The three regional calls for projects on buildings refurbishment aim at improving energy efficiency on three types of buildings, with a 1000 € bonus for traditional buildings. The regional authority has already received around ten answers and it presented the two following cases:

- The refurbishment of a 19th century's school to create a social residence is expected to reduce energy consumptions from 812 to 53 kWh/m²/year.
- The refurbishment of a traditional house in social housing, which will achieve a 90% reduction in energy consumptions.

Concerning the adoption of a new national certification label for heritage buildings, the working group "Effinergie Heritage" started this task in 2017. The working group is promoted by the French association Effinergie and includes around 20 people from different organisations, such as ministries, local authorities and professional associations. The objective was to develop a new certification label for efficient renovated old buildings, with "efficient" meaning low energy consumption, heritage preservation and comfort improvements. The testing of this new certification label is in progress. The New Aquitaine Region could use this tool as a criterion in its future financial support schemes, especially in the PREE (Regional Program for Energy Efficiency), which will be deployed in 2020.

During this 5th semester of the VIOLET Project, Local Energy and Climate Agency (ALEC) continued to work closely with CoP members and local partners, for example CAUE (Architecture, Urbanism and Environment Council). Together with CAUE, ALEC worked on a local heritage building and presented a workshop to elaborate proposals to be considered in the PREE (Regional Program for Energy Efficiency), which is expected to be finalised in December 2019.