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## MODERATOR'S CONCLUSIONS

# Polish-German cooperation for low-emission economy in cities

### Consultation meeting # 1

7- 10 December 2015 – Herten, Germany

*The Consultation meeting #1, which took place from 7-10 December 2015 in Herten, Germany, brought together high level representatives from German and Polish municipalities to discuss integrated approaches to a low-emission economy at district level, and particularly energy efficiency in buildings. The meeting was held in a participatory manner to encourage knowledge exchange among participants and concentrated around the coordinated process of building retrofits.*

**Before addressing the topic of energy efficiency in buildings, participants first delved into the concept of integrated low-emission strategies**, which is going to be the golden thread of this cooperation project. Discussions during the workshop demonstrated that the strategical approach to every aspect of energy efficiency in the city together with a proper stakeholders engagement allow to achieve maximum effects with limited resources. To develop a common understanding of those interactions, Franziska Schreiber (adelphi) gave an introductory presentation on the concept of the holistic approach to low-emission strategy. This was followed by the case study of Herten presented by Babette Nieder, who showcased how low carbon economy helped create 17.000 new jobs in the city. This discussion set the ground for the first group exercise for which participants were

divided into 3 groups. Each had to deliver an action plan to decrease the city emissions by 20% until 2020 in one of the following areas: urban planning, mobility, building retrofitting. The action plan designed by each group highlighted the interlinkages between the sectors, raised questions about necessary coordination between departments, the scale of investments in relation to expected outcomes in the emission reduction, and proved that a coordinated effort might bring much higher results than the implementation of separated projects.

One of such examples was presented by the "mobility group" realizing that before tendering for energy efficient buses the municipality should have a good mobility plan. The Deputy Mayor of Białystok shared a good practice from his city. To fight morning traffics the municipality negotiated with private factories



located in the same street to differentiate the working hours by only 15 minutes. Such solution decreased morning traffic and encouraged citizens to use public transportations.



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Participants agreed that although budget constrains are a major challenge in both the Polish and German contexts, the coordination of various stakeholders is a strategical aspect allowing economic efficiency and higher environmental impact that is worth it.

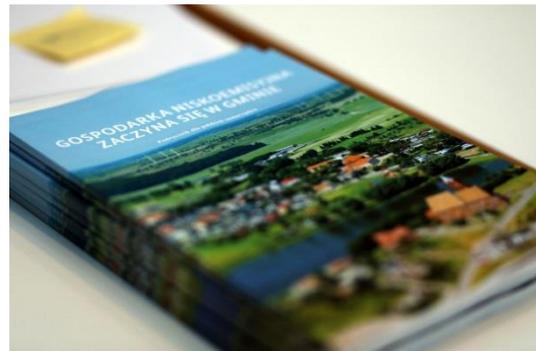
### **Financing the transition to low-emission economy**

The second thematic block of the meeting provided an overview of the financial opportunities in Poland, with a special focus on energy efficiency improvements in buildings. The first presentation delivered by Joanna Wis-Bielewicz (adelphi) took stock of already implemented projects and funds used by the participants of the meeting, as well as provided an overview of the funds available at the EU, national and local level in the 2014-2020 timeframe. Special attention was given to regional structural funds for the low emission economy in general but also energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transportation and innovative economy, available for municipalities from 2016.

An important part of that workshop was the knowledge exchange in the area of public-private cooperation for low-emission economy. The representative of Czestochowa, Bożena Herbuś, presented the case study of a successful ESCO cooperation between the municipality and Tauron (a Polish energy utility company) in the area of energy efficient lighting. Large energy savings were achieved and they were - after professional audit - awarded with white certificates, a type of securities that can be traded on the capital market. The city of Czestochowa, as a pioneer in Poland, placed these white certificates on the Polish Power Exchange and brought

around 660.000 PLN (165.000 Euro) to the city budget. The city also started a new public-private partnership in the area of efficient water management, called Drop to Drop (*Kropla do kropli*).

Kai Lipsius from the city of Essen added another interesting example of public-private cooperation: a renewable energy cooperative owned by its inhabitants. The municipality provided city-owned rooves for free, on which the cooperative installed and now operates the solar power plant. This type of funding model is attractive for municipalities that have limited budget available, while encouraging participation of the local community in the economic benefits of a low-emission economy. As a result, decentralized power generation is enabled and more citizens feel personally committed to fighting climate change. The cooperative finances itself through feed-in tariffs for solar power generation set at national level. Therefore, the level of the feed-in tariff impacts the economic viability of such projects.



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### **An integrated approach to energy-efficiency in buildings**

The third part of the consultation meeting was dedicated to a theoretical and practical overview of energy efficiency in buildings. Camille Serre (adelphi) first laid the foundation for the discussion by presenting on the co-benefits related to energy-related refurbishment and highlighting the interconnection of energy, economic, social and environmental aspects of refurbishment. She also advanced first arguments in favor of approaching energy efficient refurbishment at district level. This was then further illustrated by two case studies from Bottrop and Herten. Both cases demonstrated that the most important starting point for any planned intervention is energy auditing.

Mrs. Dickmann, representative of Bottrop, showcased the complex analysis undertaken in

the Battenbrock-Nord district in preparation for the refurbishment. The municipality collected information about the existing energy infrastructure, type of buildings, socio-economic profile of their inhabitants and owner structure. They identified the energy savings potential at the scale of building blocks, while taking into account the financial capacity of the population. The goal of the municipality's master plan is to reduce the energy consumption and develop renewable energies. The major challenge of the implementation of such projects is citizen involvement. The city of Bottrop therefore identified specific target groups and developed new communication strategies responding to the local population's situation, e.g. regarding income, age or education.

Community engagement in the context of energy efficiency projects is also an important challenge for the City of Herten and Gelsenkirchen, which plan to retrofit many historical buildings located in the former miners districts of Hassel/Westerholt/Bertlich. The aim of the planners is threefold: reduce the energy

consumption in these districts; strengthen the historic appearance of the former miners settlements referring to Sir Ebenezer Howard's vision of garden city, and promote joint refurbishments.

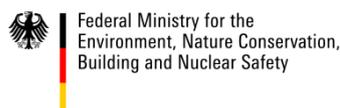
To that end, the district office provides individual advices to community members, designing economically feasible and energy efficient retrofitting for the historical building. To boost the CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction at the local level the City of Herten had introduced a unique and innovative financial scheme for its citizens. The owners might receive back part of their investment reflecting actual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction, gained through implemented refurbishment.

A common lesson learned from both projects is the need for a good communication concept: it is important for the municipality implementing the refurbishment project to explain their endeavors, while listening to the inhabitants and ideally creating a network of engaged actors. Community involvement is paramount to fully reach the energy savings potential.



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Information on the first project can be found here: <http://low-emission-project.pl/pl/home/dok/24.php>