



ENCHANT: Behavioural change for energy efficiency

Viken County, Norway

IN A NUTSHELL

The county of Viken in Norway is determined to implement the necessary cuts in energy use and CO2 emissions by 2030. To achieve these cuts, Viken has chosen to work with its citizens through ENCHANT, a Horizon Europe project that has allowed it to find the perfect strategy to change the behaviour of local actors.

Raising awareness for carbon reduction

The county of Viken in Norway is determined to implement the necessary cuts in energy use and CO2 emissions by 2035. The urgent times the world is experiencing added extra pressure to achieve the energy transition and make this CO2 reduction a reality. For this reason, the county chose to work with its citizens through ENCHANT. This Horizon project allowed Viken to focus on making the necessary cuts in energy use by using behavioural science to change habits in society. The result of this work was the creation and implementation of an awareness-raising campaign that ran from January to July 2023. The campaign targeted all the actors involved in energy consumption in Viken County – homeowners, businesses and organisations. A total of 51 municipalities, in collaboration with NGOs, politicians and associations, were involved in the implementation of the campaign.

Through Horizon Europe, Viken received funding for planning and communication around the campaign activities. Viken Council provided an additional amount from the county's climate budget to cover local campaigns. The total amount granted was divided among the different sectors of society. Residents received €300,000, while housing associations and businesses were granted €100,000 and €200,000 respectively. The funding provided to residents was split evenly between the 51 municipalities. This allowed them to offer a free energy advice service to households. Some municipalities even used the additional funding to implement local SECAPs.

Municipalities' role in the campaign

All 51 municipalities in Viken County participated in the campaign. While their level of involvement varied, their main role was to act as communicators and providers of information to residents. Due to a lack of knowledge among households, it was imperative to provide detailed and reliable information to empower citizens to make the necessary investments to reduce their energy



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VIKEN FYLKESKOMMUNE

ENCHANT

Enchant Project ©Viken County

VIKEN COUNTY



Halden's inner harbour and fortress seen from Sauøya ©Henrik D. Meyer

Population:

1,252,384

Area:

22,768 km²

**Signatory to the
Covenant of Mayors
since:**

2020

**Overall CO₂
emission reduction
target:**

80% GHG emission
reduction by 2030
Climate neutrality
enhanced by CCUS

consumption. Municipalities, being perceived as a trustworthy source of independent information and advice, took on the role of messengers.

Different municipalities took different types of actions to inform the population. While some posted information on their websites, others made use of social media. Hosting events to promote the campaign was another common practice. Some local councils, such as Asker municipal council, even had a specific budget to spend on the campaign. While the variety of actions was broad, Viken County and its municipalities acknowledged that one of the key decisions they made was the specific phrasing of the messages. Communications always referred to "X municipality and Viken County". This wording ensured that citizens felt part of the project. The local councils believe that this was a factor in achieving a higher level of involvement by their citizens.

Testing methods to change behaviour

A total of 889 residents participated in the campaign through ENCHANT. Six groups were formed, with each being used to test a specific communication tool. The different methods tried were: (1) giving tips for energy savings; (2) sharing other people's success stories; (3) providing information on how electricity consumption evolves over time; (4) asking participants to commit; (5) introducing a competition between participants; (6) changing from an individual to a collective perspective.

At the end of the campaign, it was proven that the most effective tool for reducing energy consumption was providing information on how much energy people's peers had saved. Following this process, savings increased to 11.3kWh per person per week. The other intervention tools had no discernible impact in Viken.

Key success factors

Asker, a municipality in Viken County, realised that the most impactful communication actions were the visits from energy advisers to households. These actions, which were funded by the ENCHANT project, enabled homeowners to understand the energy standards of their homes and the options available for them to start saving energy. The energy advisers developed customised recommendations that ranked the best investment options and reduced the risks of inefficient measures. The advisers provided households with realistic expectations of the impact of various measures and offered the detailed and reliable information required to make the necessary investments. At the same time, practical support and small subsidy programmes will be provided to help residents proceed with renovations. The personalised treatment given to Asker's residents was one of the main success factors in this campaign.

Overall, the ENCHANT project enabled Viken County to save 13,510,970 kWh of energy and 1,811,482 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year. These gains are attributable to the motivation expressed by homeowners and housing associations to work specifically on energy and the climate. Encouraging these actors to use energy more efficiently and reduce greenhouse gas emissions was one of the main goals achieved in the campaign and has proven to be a successful strategy. This has been replicated by other counties in the country. Østfold County will continue the campaign in the years ahead and will offer the services to different municipalities.

KEY FIGURES

Project duration: April 2023 – July 2023

51 municipalities participated

889 people involved

Estimated savings: **13,510,970** kWh per year

Estimated CO₂ reduction: **1,811,482** tonnes per year



FINANCING THE PROJECT

- + **Horizon Europe:** funding for planning and communication
- + **Local campaigns financed from the climate budget of Viken County Council:**
EUR 300,000 targeting residents, EUR 100,000 targeting housing associations and EUR 200,000 targeting businesses

USEFUL LINKS

- » www.energiportalen.no
- » www.klimasmart.no
- » <https://enchant-project.eu>
- » <https://shorturl.at/gCEGV>



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