



Embedding sufficiency into long-term climate and energy planning

Grenoble, France

IN A NUTSHELL

In response to the energy crisis, Grenoble has implemented a comprehensive sufficiency plan to cut energy consumption. Building on its longstanding commitment to consumption reduction, the city has used the crisis as an opportunity to expand sufficiency into a key element of its long-term strategy for becoming a low-carbon and resilient city.

📌 A long-standing commitment to reducing energy consumption

Grenoble, EU Green Capital 2022, has long been at the forefront of the sustainability movement aiming to reduce energy consumption and transform itself into a low-carbon and resilient city. With its “Air Energy and Climate Action Plan 2023–2027” adopted in 2023 by the municipality, Grenoble has set itself a new target: reducing energy consumption by 50% between 2012 and 2040. As part of this effort, the city introduced its “Plan Lumière” in 2015, encompassing both energy efficiency and sufficiency measures, and succeeded in halving consumption from public lighting.

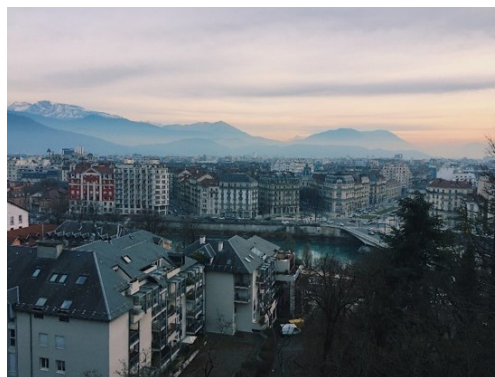
📌 Increasing sufficiency efforts in response to the energy crisis

The steps Grenoble had already taken helped to cushion the effects of the energy crisis triggered by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022. On top of its existing plans, the city adopted a comprehensive energy sufficiency plan in September 2022, establishing 25 new energy-saving measures to limit soaring energy bills and the risk of supply disruptions. The measures encompass a range of areas, from reducing temperatures in municipal buildings to public lighting, and include optimisation of the city’s vehicle fleet, with an increase in bicycle use. The modification of heating programmes, the adjustment of temperatures in various buildings and the reprogramming of lighting systems represented a major challenge for the city. However, the city reduced the energy consumed across all city infrastructure (buildings, public lighting, cars) by 15% in a single year (including the winter of 2022). These measures translated into savings of one million euros on the city’s energy bill.



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GRENOBLE



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Population:
158,240 (2020)

Area:
18.1 km²

Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since:
2008

Overall CO₂ emission reduction target:
65% GHG emissions reduction by 2030
75% GHG emissions reduction by 2050

Looking ahead: from sectoral to structural sufficiency

The energy crisis provided an opportunity for Grenoble to move from sectoral to structural sufficiency. First, in addition to these measures, the Grenoble City Council created new interdisciplinary roles to enact and assess sufficiency policies, promote innovation in this area and assist community organisations. Municipal staff members are actively engaged, and a “Coordination, Anticipation and Response to the Energy Crisis” (CARE) commission has been formed, comprising the Director-General of Services and deputies overseeing human resources and finance, as well as sports and culture, depending on the agenda. This ensures that oversight and evaluation of sufficiency policies are conducted at the highest administrative level within the municipality.

Since 2021, the city has been actively involved in a process known as “[Grenoble 2040](#)”, outlining a possible vision of a desirable and “sufficient” city. This collaborative initiative involves engaging with citizens to discuss changes to public services. The approach is particularly influenced by the Doughnut model, developed by Kate Raworth, which aims to establish a safe and equitable space for humanity by respecting environmental limits, planetary boundaries and a social foundation. To chart new paths, the city has organised “ecological redirection workshops” in partnership with randomly selected citizens. The outcome of these workshops is a roadmap that specifies certain aspects to abandon, retain, modify or initiate in various areas such as transportation, green spaces and consumption. Currently, this roadmap serves as a guiding framework for Grenoble’s ecological realignment.

The increased focus on sufficiency has prompted Grenoble to re-evaluate its priorities. For example, the municipal administration opted to consolidate two neighbouring initiatives: the construction of a new school and a community centre. The city constructed the school while incorporating dedicated rooms and spaces for community centre activities. Applying the sufficiency concept to their land use strategy, the committee responsible for allocating premises to associations consistently seeks to maximise land use. One feature that sets Grenoble apart is its dedicated energy transition department, which analyses weekly readings of heating consumption in each building. This enables staff to be alerted to any deviation and take swift action. In addition to this management, they have set up an energy-saving mission, which consists of two staff members dedicated to saving energy and raising awareness among municipal building users.

KEY FIGURES

40% decrease in energy consumption between 2005 and 2023

“Plan Lumiere” adopted in 2015, responsible for halving energy consumption from lighting

11.5% energy savings in winter 2022

EU Green Capital 2022

FINANCING THE PROJECT

+ €140,000 (€120,000 human resources, €20,000 furniture)

USEFUL LINKS

- » <https://shorturl.at/mAFL2>
- » <https://shorturl.at/bpLR2>
- » <https://shorturl.at/djyBG>



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