

SME+ Project: Improving policy instruments to increase the energy efficiency in industrial SMEs



Project summary

SMEPlus project, financed by the Interreg Europe Programme, will increase energy efficiency in SMEs. The partner regions will compare & rethink their energy policies, liaise with important stakeholders, exchange solutions and improve their instruments towards SMEs. As industrial SMEs represent 95% of the companies, their impact on economies is immense.

The Ministry for the Economic Development contributes to the project with the National Operational Programme Enterprises and Competitiveness 2014-2020 (NOP EC). In details with its axis 4 that addressed only to South Italy, and sets out a specific Action, "4.2.1" with a financial allocation of 153 million euro, stimulating energy efficiency and the reduction of energy consumption and climate-changing gas emissions from enterprises and production areas.

The European Parliament set a binding target of increasing, by a minimum of 32,5%, the energy efficiency by 2030 compared to the 2005 level, in all Member States. Therefore, the project partners are sharing their good practices to find the best solutions to contribute to the achievement of the target set. Engaging in discussions and exchanging experiences with relevant actors is the best way to find solutions to increase the involvement of the industrial SMEs in energy efficiency improvement. Common barriers to overcome in the regions are the low interest of industrial SMEs participating in energy efficiency policy programmes as well as low number of industrial SME energy efficiency policy programmes.

SMEPlus partners will identify major regional stakeholders involved in energy efficiency in SMEs in their regions. To be able to use their experience, expertise and networks, a series of regional stakeholder meetings will take place. The first stakeholder meetings will be organised in Austria (March 2020) and Romania (May 2020).

The project partners will:

- a) improve the energy policies by 2020 by exchanging and comparing the regional policy instruments in the eight regions;
- b) jointly develop regional policy action plans supporting the implementation of energy efficiency programmes and thus utilize the potential in the industrial SME sector;
- c) exchange information and experience and by this help the stakeholders supporting the regional action plans set to overcome the barriers.

Therefore, our actions will:

- a) increase the interest of industrial SMEs in participating in the energy efficiency policy programmes;
- b) support starting-up effective industrial SMEs' energy efficiency policy programmes;
- c) help integrate energy-related policy measures from other sectors in the industrial SME sector.

The exchange of experience, workshops and study visits with the stakeholders will help us achieve project's objectives. The jointly developed regional action plans will also influence the policies for the next Regional Operational Programme period 2021-2027.