

JOURNAL

PROJECT

EPIU - Energy Poverty Intelligence Unit

📍 Getafe, Spain

TOPIC

Urban poverty

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Strategic Committee as a governance tool to ensure a committed leadership: the case of EPIU project

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Implementing an Urban Innovation Action implies a degree of risk for local authorities and a committed leadership is a requisite for municipal led innovation. In general, projects design a structure of governance with different elements that lower this risk. Energy Poverty Intelligent Unit (EPIU) in Getafe, counts on different structures and procedures such as committees and working groups to solve complexities during the implementation. One of the key structures is the Strategic Committee that meets twice a year. EPIU's Strategic Committee is the body in charge of validating core activities of EPIU, approving possible mayor changes of the project and responsible of validating the effective horizontal integration of departments. The Committee also intercedes in possible conflicts and decides on possible major implementation issues.

Since the beginning of the project the Strategic Committee has met three times: twice in 2020 and last May 7th. The last meeting of EPIU's Strategic Committee has been proved as a really powerful and an effective governance tool at this stage of the project for different reasons:

The importance of the participation of the Mayor of Getafe and the Municipal Management team as part of the Strategic Committee

The session counted on the whole EPIU team, the Mayor of Getafe Sara Hernández Barroso, the local councilors Herminio Vico Algaba –Treasury and Neighborhoods' coordination-, Nieves Sevilla Urbán – Social services-, Jorge Juan Rodríguez Conejo -Urbanism, Modernization and Transparency-, Ángel Muñoz González –Housing and Sustainability- and Elisabeth Melo Suárez – Human Resources and Security.

To count on the attendance and active participation of the city hall and the different areas linked to EPIU show a commitment to guarantee the horizontal integration of departments. Furthermore, the Mayor was aware of all aspects of the projects. Her implication and knowledge on the project was evidenced from the beginning of the meeting, as she brought positive leadership and accurate interventions during the whole session.

As stated on [EPIU's first Journal](#) top-level political leadership is evident and very positive for the project. Although the right and acceptance of a leadership needs to be validated at all levels and all statements of the city it is essential to maintain the interest and participation of the highest political level too.

The Strategic Committee as a thermometer of the status of EPIU's innovations

All partners are working tirelessly on their specific tasks in order to offer solutions to the different complexities that appear during the implementation of the project. Although regular update meetings are held, the compromise of informing the Strategic Committee too, forces the team to analyse the status of the project differently. The organization of the Strategic Committee sessions represent a moment to evaluate the status of the project. In this case, EPIU's team presented the status of the implementation at different levels:

Energy Information point and Healthy Households Office

EPIU will launch a municipal horizontal multidisciplinary public service to identify, prevent manage, control and monitor solutions to tackle energy poverty in Getafe at three levels: households, dwelling and neighbourhood. This complex service will be ready by November 2021 and Khora Urban Thinkers is shaping the office design at this stage. In order to feed and improve the design of the "Healthy Households Office", a pilot "Energy Information point" (PI-OHS) is going to be offered to citizens from June to September 2021 by Asociación de Ciencias Ambientales (ACA). PI-OHS will collect information, give energy advice to citizens, register users and potential participants on the project.

This strategy, understood as a minimum viable service will allow EPIU's team to collect the maximum amount of validated learning about Getafe's community in order to design a better public service. Three months of having an operative office is the most efficient way to learn quickly from the experience.

Tailored solutions to mitigate energy poverty

The project aims to prescribe tailored solutions to mitigate energy poverty at three scales: household, dwelling and neighborhood. During the Strategic Committee, an increase on the initial planning number of measures was presented by EMSV. At this moment EPIU's team is working on 33 measures at household level and 6 at a building scale: 18 of those are passive measures, 13 are soft measures, 2 focused on renewable energies and 5 represent an improvement on equipment.

Energy poverty diagnosis in Getafe

One of the first actions of EPIU's Project was to identify until what extend Getafe was affected by energy poverty. Although an initial diagnosis was presented months ago, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) continues analyzing data. During the Strategic Committee an updated version of the study was presented including mapping on energy use patterns in Getafe and especially on Margaritas and Alhóndiga-Fátima

Energy Poverty Predictive Tool

One of the main innovations on EPIU is the set-up of an interactive tool that will allow to improve the identification of situations of energy poverty. Machine learning will allow detecting better, efficiently and proactively energy poverty situations in both neighborhoods: Margaritas and Alhóndiga-Fátima. During the Strategic Committee, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M) presented the visuals of the tool. At this moment, the team is focused on collecting indirect data from external sources and direct data through surveys and building analysis gathering information on energy consumption, income and other factors determining energy poverty in order to feed the tool. Only when the tool has enough data, it will be ready to predict and start its operation within EPIU.

The Strategic Committee: a moment to evaluate risks

One of the most interesting objectives of the Strategic Committee is to lower the aversion to risk. EPIU is at a decisive moment where all last month's efforts will need to be contrasted with an effective public service feed by a useful predictive and interactive tool. Besides, the project needs to ensure the participation and involvement of Getafe's citizens and communities and analyze the sustainability once the UIA ends.

Different challenges that the Strategic Committee accompanies too and motivates the team to look for better solutions in order to minimize complexities during the implementation period.

More on EPIU

More on EPIU

The project will be running until 2023 so stay tuned to know how it is progressing on EPIU's website

<https://hogaressaludables.getafe.es/en/>

Or social media channels:

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaE9esoYPZng6jW3bXk7yng?>

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