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Covenant of Companies

for Climate and Energy



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In the spotlight

A busy end of year

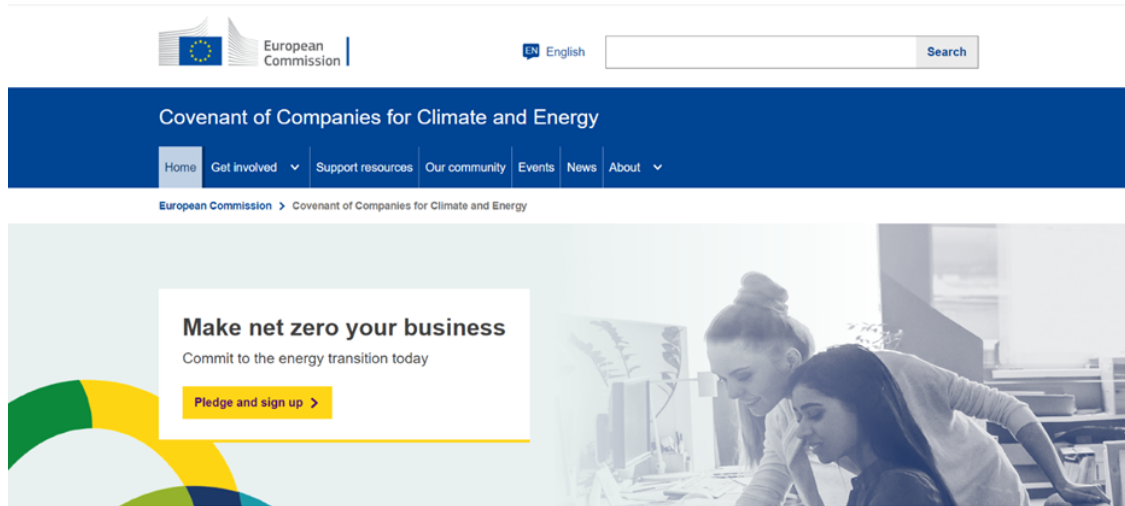
Dear readers, welcome to the third edition of the Covenant of Companies for Climate and Energy newsletter. Today is the last day of 2022, meaning we have 9863 days until 2050 – when our net zero future must begin.

Winter is now upon us and the only “hot” thing around are discussions on how to optimise energy consumption and save on energy bills.

Until the recently-announced ground-breaking [nuclear fusion reaction](#) starts generating large-scale, unlimited amounts of clean energy for everybody, supporting the gradual transition of businesses to green energy is the only practical way to go.

Read on to find out how we, at the CCCE, have been busy over the past few months supporting businesses across Europe to minimise their carbon footprint and reduce their energy costs at the same time.

Excited? Join our movement too! Find all relevant information on our brand new website <https://covenant-of-companies.ec.europa.eu> or via info@covenant-of-companies.eu.



The newly-launched website of the CCCE

As Margot Wallström, former Vice-President of the European Commission, said: *"There can be no sustainable development without sustainable energy development."*

Happy reading and happy New Year!

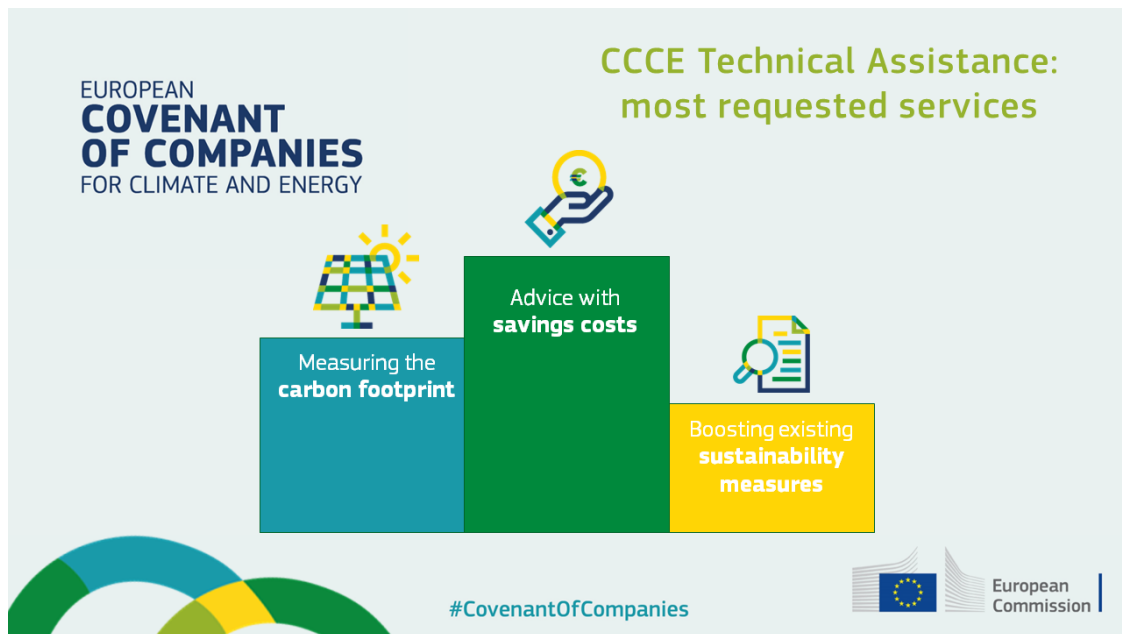
Technical Assistance: European SMEs on the pathway to decarbonisation

In June 2022, the Covenant of Companies for Climate and Energy (CCCE) launched its first call for Technical Assistance.

The main goal of [the call](#) was to pilot a range of direct advisory services that the CCCE could provide to entities from four different target groups.

The types of applicants included small and medium enterprises (SMEs), groups of companies, authorities, and enablers (any entity that provides support to decarbonise SMEs, such as local energy agencies or business associations and networks). It focused on Croatia, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland.

In their applications, companies expressed their needs for support in a variety of actions. The most important need, unsurprisingly, was saving costs and measuring the carbon footprint of one's company and products. Moreover, we have noticed that many SMEs who have already been working on sustainability for years and have implemented "low-hanging fruit actions" are looking for support to do even more (mainly those companies coming from Finland). A few other SMEs are feeling their clients' pressure to lower their footprint and asked for support in how to achieve this objective.



Here are three selected companies who will receive technical assistance from our pool of experts: Plastic Farb, CNA Siena and GRAVITA.

Plastic Farb is a Polish manufacturing plastic packaging company founded in 1987 with around 200 employees. They already use recycled material in their packaging, but asked for the CCCE to help them measure the actual footprint of their products (safety, biodegradable and courier envelopes) and of the company itself. As this was the first time, they had measured their footprint, we advised them to start with at plant level which was most feasible.

CNA Siena is an association representing businesses in Italy. They decided to apply for the CCCE's technical assistance because they wanted to learn best practice in helping their companies make the green transition.

GRAVITA Diagnostyka i Leczenie Niepłodności Wojciech is a private clinic in Poland and has not received much financial support to absorb the rising energy costs. For this reason, its main focus is to save costs during the greening process and decarbonisation of their building (800 square meters built in 2008). Many aspects were taken into consideration during the assistance: presence of photovoltaic panels and their coverage of electricity demand, as well as plastic waste produced.

We will keep monitoring the progress of all selected companies over the next months and report on their achievements in reducing their carbon-emission goals.

If you are a European company or business-support organisation and you also want to receive technical assistance, don't miss our next call which will be announced in the Spring of 2023!

Hints and tips...

Country-specific guides to energy-support schemes

Companies and business organisations which were not eligible for the CCCE's first Call for Technical Assistance can still benefit from insightful information on how to optimise their energy consumption in their country.

Six country-specific Guides focusing on [Croatia](#), [Finland](#), [Germany](#), [Italy](#), [The Netherlands](#) and [Poland](#) are available on the CCCE website and provide an overview of the financial support schemes, the financing tools for research and innovation and available capacity building materials (non-financial support) at the national and European level. They also offer insights in the national context within which the support is provided.



More Guides covering additional EU countries will be developed in the coming months and will be available [on the CCCE website](#).

Policy news

RePowerEU: additional funding to speed up renewable energy projects

The EU is facing unprecedented challenges in our economy and energy supply. The RePowerEU plan is a response to the hardships and global energy market disruptions caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Launched in May 2022, the plan aims to save and produce clean energy and diversify EU energy supplies.

[The European Investment Bank Group \(EIB group\) decided in October 2022](#) to support the REPowerEU Plan with an additional €30 billion in loans and equity financing over the next five years. These new additional funds will be directed to renewables, energy efficiency, grids and storage, electric-vehicle charging infrastructure, and breakthrough technologies, such as low-carbon hydrogen. It is essential to bridge the difficult time of transition for SMEs and industries towards cheaper and renewable energy all across the EU. *"RePowerEU will massively speed up the permitting process for renewable energy projects,"* [said President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen](#).



In addition, Eiffel Investment Group (Eiffel) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) announced the [launch of Eiffel Transition infrastructure](#). This will provide equity bridge financing for renewable energy infrastructure assets all over Europe. The EIF central mission is to support Europe's micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by helping them access finance. This newly launched fund is targeting up to €500 million and the agreement is supported by InvestEU, which brings together all EU financial tools to support investment. It wants to make project financing simpler, more efficient, and more flexible. The [InvestEU programme](#) also generates additional investments in line with key EU priorities, such as the European Green Deal, the digital transition and especially support for SMEs. The new fund expects to complete two inaugural investments before the end of the year, and it will enable renewable energy developers to accelerate development assets. This is good news for SMEs.

Meanwhile in...

Eco-friendly hostel in Estonia

With energy bills are rising all over Europe, companies are putting in place measures to reduce their ecological footprint, both to cut costs and save the planet at the same time.

This is what [Looming](#), an eco-friendly hostel located in Tartu, Estonia, has been doing for quite a while, making the environment an integral part of its identity.



The hotel management has implemented a property-wide policy to minimise the impact of all operations on the environment through its commitment to reusing and recycling resources, training and awareness raising, offering eco-friendly services, and renovating facilities.

Here are some energy-saving measures rooted in circular economy principles from Looming:

- regular training of employees
- eco-friendly mobility (hostel bike rental, walking tours)
- saving on resources with signs around the hostel gently reminding guests to save water and electricity
- better waste handling and green cleaning using eco-labelled products

Learn more about [this Estonian hostel](#) and discover other best practices at the [European Resource Efficiency Knowledge Centre](#).

Featured

First CCCE Steering Committee meeting!

The Steering Committee of the European Covenant of Companies for Climate and Energy met for the very first time in a hybrid format in Brussels on the 26 October 2022. It gathered a total of 31 participants with one mission: to keep encouraging and supporting European companies to step up their contribution to a clean energy transition and climate action.



The discussion focused on past and future CCCE initiatives, new announcements and how to improve the next call for technical assistance to support SMEs.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 2023.

Meet all the members of the CCCE Steering Committee [here](#).

More photos of the first CCCE Steering Committee meeting are available [here](#).

Watch again

Covenant of Companies goes to Prague

The Covenant of Companies was officially presented on 29 November in Prague, Czech Republic, during a session entitled "No Net Zero without SMEs: launching practical support for energy transition".

It was held in the framework of the [SME Assembly](#), the most significant event for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and those that support them.



The session outlined how SMEs have a fundamental responsibility in driving the energy transition and climate action, and ultimately need to take immediate action to become less carbon intensive. The session also included inputs from [NIVISS](#), a Polish SME who has benefitted from the pilot scheme over its first months.

"Europe's economy is built on the hard graft of SMEs. 23 million SMEs employ over 80 million people and account for half of the EU's GDP. But they also account for 64% of industrial pollution in Europe, which is why it is crucial that this key pillar of our society steps up its preparations for the net zero economy of the future. The Covenant of Companies for Climate and Energy's assistance programme aims to induce behavioural change among European businesses, by assisting companies to find ways to reduce their energy consumption, switch to cleaner ways of operating and ultimately save money, too," said Georg Houben, Policy Officer at DG ENER, European Commission.

The audience warmly welcomed the Covenant of Companies, particularly the free technical support and a validated European recognition scheme.

[Watch again the Session "No Net Zero Without SMEs" here](#)

[Link to article on Promoting Enterprise portal](#)

[Photos of the Net Zero session](#)

[Video interview with Georg Houben, presenting the CCCE](#)

CCCE at COP27

From 6-20 November, leaders and representatives from all over the world met in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, to take part at COP27 and to discuss the next actions towards achieving the world's collective climate goals as agreed under the Paris Agreement.



The EU confirmed its commitment to supporting the most vulnerable on our planet through a first contribution on loss and damage, agreed together with the United States. However, the low commitment of some countries has put the global goal to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius under discussion. This is particularly dangerous considering that we are on a very tight timeline.

During COP27 the CCCE had the chance to take part in a pavilion focused on climate neutral and smart cities with and for citizens on Thursday, 17 November. Representatives from the institutions and academia joined the debate and discussed the main challenges and big successes achieved in 2022. Paolo Bertoldi, Senior Expert at the Joint Research Centre, highlighted that becoming climate neutral at the latest in 2050 is an EU-wide goal, and all EU Member States are committed to achieving this objective. According to the JRC's analysis, cities are monitoring their goals each year and most of them are making sure they actually deliver on them. The next big challenge is adaptation, and all non-state actors should complement EU and global efforts to achieve these objectives. Eero Ailio from DG ENER, European Commission, stressed the fact that in the EU and beyond we do not have the experience of living in an energy crisis. For this reason, the habit to cut consumption is relatively new but it is essential to be fostered in the current crisis context that we are living in.



More information on the COP27 Session "Climate neutral and smart cities with and for citizens" is available [here](#).

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