

The Value in the EEFIG MS-level Process in France

1. Engagement of a leading group of experts on financing energy efficiency

Around 20 French experts from private banks, the building sector, government and local authorities who met 3 times in 7 months to pool their knowledge through the EEFIG methodology to produce a final report. This process deepened proposals on the critical areas identified through the EEFIG methodology including the quality and performance of energy renovations and long term financing instruments required to deliver the works. The results provided a strong platform for engagement with sector decision-makers.

2. Making the EEFIG process work at the MS-level

Implementing the EEFIG process at the MS-level in France has been an ideal way to apply theoretic principles and a common language created in Brussels on practical and local issues. It was important to differentiate between the drivers of supply and demand for energy efficiency retrofits on one hand and the key tools for financing for the residential sector on the other hand in the context of nationally relevant case studies and approaches.

3. Benchmarking the French results in the European context

When comparing French results of the EEFIG survey with the European results, we saw that control of the retrofit energy performance, quality assurance, a stable legal environment, financing expertise and technical assistance are all key aspects for households wishing to renovate their homes.

4. Accelerating new and innovative programs for energy efficiency renovation financing

The engagement initiated in France through the dynamics of the EEFIG process and with the support of its tools and partners has allowed for the acceleration and bringing to consensus initiatives developed by several French regions by promoting an expert dialogue at the national level. This approach has led to short term experimentation programs supported by the ministries concerned in order to implement concrete proposals by the group.

Value in the EEFIG Results

1. Strong Analysis of barriers and levers required to develop and promote energy efficiency retrofits:

Barriers and levers were identified through the EEFIG MS-level process and in this report which came directly from field experience in France and thereby of critical relevance to the sector's development locally.

2. Development of concrete proposals and their implementation pathways

While the EEFIG report at European level defines general proposals which can be universally applied to every country within the European Union, proposals in the French report constitute an action plan of directly operational measures in the local context. They shed light on "what to do", but also on "how to do it in France" and this is its strength.

Key Learnings

Key learnings are based on the conclusions from the report of the Working Group on financing of energy efficient retrofits of private residential homes in France and were derived from the initial survey work using the EEFIG method:

1. Key Levers

The levers required to promote and develop energy efficiency retrofit market are:

- Giving more confidence to consumers on the performance and quality of the renovation work (a clear "value proposition");
- Creating optimal conditions for banks and real estate professionals to engage them in the marketing and promotion of energy efficiency retrofit finance product offers;
- Giving tools and building capacity among middle income home owners to implement renovation work.

2. A call for political commitment

The local EEFIG survey generated a call for more determined action from political decision-makers to support deep renovations, and the better coordination of public institutions and support instruments at the national, regional and local levels, to respond to the findings:

- There is a lack of trust between households and building professionals, making it necessary to establish a national accreditation brand and performance standards;
- Greater consistency is required among the public incentives and support for renovations, and a greater degree of control of the quality of the works carried out;
- More consistent development of assistance instruments that match the rate that individuals and condominiums take to mature and develop their projects; and
- Regulated loans which are more closely tailored to homeowner demand and better adapted to the constraints of banks.