DELIVERABLE D2.5 REPORT

'Confirmed composition of learning groups established'

Lead Beneficiary: UGLA – University of Glasgow

Dissemination level: Public

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1   Description

Confirmed composition of learning groups established.

1.1   Description Detail

Based on the results of mPower's mixed methodological approach—comprising an online survey, interviews with 30 potential participants, ranked collection of stated learning needs by participants, and the designation of participants into 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' categories—this deliverable confirms the composition of the learning groups (or learning streams) for the WP3 peer-to-peer exchange programme.

2   Methodology

A mixed methodological approach was applied to obtain our final results in terms of group composition and matching. This approach involved: (1) an online survey; (2) interviews; (3) selection of learning stream preferences based on four key learning themes; (4) designation of 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' categories for each participant based on the results of the online survey and interviews with respect to municipalities progress in energy transition.

In what follows we explain how each method provided data for an informed decision on group matching and the composition of the learning groups.

(1) Online survey

The online survey provided mPower with a substantial tranche of qualitative and quantitative data from 100+ participating municipal authorities across Europe. A fuller outline of the survey ranking framework is given in the Annexe and Appendix to the Annexe in the D.2.2 report. For the explanatory purposes of *this* report the three main categories in the survey were as follows (incorporating sub-categories in brackets): *1) Local context* (motivations, constraints, democracy and participation); *2) Experience with RE* (local experience, sum of types of RE involved, experience with non-local RE); *3) Energy reduction/efficiency, supply and organization* (energy efficiency, retrofit and demand reduction; smart and decentralized grids; sum of innovative finance types used; local finance initiatives). Crucially, the online survey was the main data source for ranking cities in a point system and so designating municipal authorities according to 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' categories, and this designation was an important part of the process of matching groups in learning streams so that the best practice of 'Leading' authorities could inform useful replication pathways across the spectrum of participating authorities.

(2) Interviews

Thirty different municipal authorities were interviewed by mPower partners as part of the mapping and identification process as being of interest for subsequent learning groups. These interviews formed a basis for analysing the main drivers and models of municipal energy governance and assessing common problems, successes, constraints and blockages. As such, the interview data has helped establish what municipal energy systems look like in different places, what resources and infrastructures are included, which actors are affecting change and how municipal energy efforts are being financed. This mapping process also built on the survey results to provide a more fine-grained energy typology of cities and regions, according to their status ('Leading', 'Following', 'Aspiring') in relation to each of the project's key learning themes. The interviews also gave us an indication of the personal willingness of authority representatives and the capacity of municipalities to fully engage and commit to the project.

(3) Selection of learning stream preferences based on four key learning themes

In order to establish the learning needs of municipal authorities in broad terms, and to match them effectively with other authorities in the peer-to-peer learning process, we devised four provisional 'learning

streams' for participating authorities to choose from, allowing authorities to rank each stream in order of preference. This took the simple form of a list of the four themes/streams which we passed on by e-mail when contacting the authorities for interview. Authorities were asked to rank from 1 to 4 in order of preference.

- RES: Expansion and roll out of renewables (including financing)
- EE: Energy efficiency (including housing, public buildings and estates management)
- DE: Citizen engagement and democratic participation
- LEC: Local Energy Communities (including public energy companies, smart grids)

This simple process provided a very useful general short-hand indication of the learning needs of each authority. Compiling the results in a colour coded matching table (with each colour matching order of learning stream preference from 1st to 4th) gave us a general indication of how groups might provisionally be composed according to their learning needs, e.g.:

- 1st Preference
- 2nd Preference
- 3rd Preference
- 4th Preference

For reference, the full colour coded matching table with colour coding for each preference can be found in the D.2.4 report (pp.5-6).

<u>(4) Designation of 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' categories for each participant based on the results of the online survey and the interviews</u>

As noted, the designation of 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' municipal authorities has been very important for group composition and matching in the peer-to-peer learning process. The online survey gave us a quantitative data to designate authorities in each category (on the basis of a point-scoring system explained in the Annex and Appendix to the Annex in D.2.2) and the interviews gave us a more qualitative understanding of the ways in which each authority practices the transition. At this stage, however, we had a more general understanding of 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' municipal authorities based on *overall scoring across all our themes*. Once we established the learning preferences in relation to our key learning streams, we were then able to assess how municipal authorities ranked according to the specific learning streams each authority preferred to engage with and match authorities appropriately for enhanced learning outcomes and replication pathways

3 Results

The main result obtained in this deliverable is the confirmed composition of learning groups, organized into five main themed groups (or learning streams) as represented in the table below.

Please note that this final composition of the learning groups is provisional at this stage since 3 municipal authorities have still to confirm their definite involvement in the process. We have identified potential substitute candidates in case this is necessary.

Confirmed Composition of Learning Groups				
Renewables	Energy Efficiency (Big: above 150,000)	Energy Efficiency (Small: below 150,000)	Local Energy Communities (Big: above 150,000)	Local Energy Communities (Small: below 150,000)

Group facilitator: Jo	Group facilitator: Laura	Group facilitator: Vedran	Group facilitator: Britt	Group facilitator: Zoran
Frankfurt, Germany	Plymouth, UK	Frederikshavn, Denmark	Tampere, Finland	Krizevci, Croatia
Vienna, Austria	Dobrich, Bulgaria	Hoorst aan de Maas, Netherlands	Nottingham, UK	Vaxjo, Sweden
Metz, France	Dublin, Ireland	Mizil, Romania	Burgas, Bulgaria	Komotini, Greece
Pamplona, Spain	Nis, Serbia	Rijeka, Croatia	Porto, Portugal	Litomerice, Czech Republic
Barcelona. Spain	Donostia-San Sebastiane, Spain	Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Manchester, UK	Cadiz, Spain
		Aradippou, Cyprus	Amsterdam, Netherlands	

4   Conclusions

mPower is very pleased to have not only reached our target of 24 participating municipal authorities in the WP3 exchange programme, but to have exceeded this number with a final tally of 27. We are also very pleased to have a strong presence of Central Eastern European (CEE) countries involved and from the responses to the survey and interviews it is clear that there is a strong desire from these representative CEE municipal authorities to engage with peer learning around transition and move from 'Aspiring' and 'Following' to 'Leading' status in terms of transition expertise. On the other hand, we are also very pleased to involve key 'Leading' authorities in the European transition, especially since such authorities have often already engaged with numerous co-learning projects and otherwise have numerous resource issues to contend with. Overall, based on interview responses and personal communication, the 'Leading' municipal authorities in terms of transition were perhaps more difficult to get on board in terms of engaging with the project and we are grateful for their commitment. We are also heartened that those in the 'Aspiring' category are clearly very willing to commit to transition pathways, with the aim of ultimately becoming 'Leading' authorities in their own right and incubators of transition best practice for other authorities in their own country, neighboring regions and elsewhere in Europe.

5   Outputs and Future Directions

The main output of this deliverable is the table with the confirmed composition of learning groups. This table forms the central matching document in terms of the learning groups for the WP3 exchange programme and can be seen as a summation of the mapping, identification, matching and analysis process of WP2. Moreover, the process leading towards the confirmed conformation of learning groups—including the online survey, interviews, stated learning needs of participants and categorisation of 'Leading', 'Following' and 'Aspiring' cities—provides mPower with an extensive quantitative and qualitative data base from which to understand both how the transition is currently being undertaken across Europe and what themes might be developed

in further research, in particular for research outcomes in Deliverable D.5.8, which requires an output of six peer-reviewed academic publications.

6   Deviations

There are two primary deviations from the original deliverable:

(1) Firstly, the learning group themes (or learning streams) were altered twice from the four requirements stated in the deliverable. Initially, we planned to convene the learning groups around five themes:

- Renewable energy generation
- Distribution networks
- Supply companies
- Leveraging investment
- Citizen participation

However, it was always the intention that the final selection would be iterative and related to the learning needs expressed by participating authorities in the online survey initially and latterly the interview process. Based on the results of the online survey, the initial five requirements were broadly incorporated into the interview schedule and within the four provisional learning themes we proposed for ranking by potential participants:

1) RES: Expansion and roll out of renewables (including financing)
2) EE: Energy efficiency (including housing, public buildings and estates management)
3) DE: Citizen engagement and democratic participation
4) LEC: Local Energy Communities (including public energy companies, smart grids)

After our research activities and inquiries were completed for WP2, WP2 and WP3 leaders met to discuss the results based on the provisional matching of groups completed by WP2. It was decided that democracy and participation underpinned all the learning themes and thus there was no need to have this category as a separate theme. Instead, each learning group facilitator will ensure that all learning streams encompass democracy and participation centrally within each learning stream. This left three main learning groups:

1) RES: Expansion and roll out of renewables (including financing)
2) EE: Energy efficiency (including housing, public buildings and estates management)
3) LEC: Local Energy Communities (including public energy companies, smart grids)

Further discussions within the consortium raised a concern about matching municipal authorities of different size and it was decided that the energy efficiency and local energy community groups would be split into large city groups (above 150,000 population size) and small city groups (below 150,000 population size). The rationale for this was to ensure, as much as possible, more effective matching of groups with the aim of generating more productive dialogue and interaction between different municipal authorities of comparable size, experiencing comparable blockages, constraints and possibilities for transition.

With renewables, there was no need to split the learning stream into larger and smaller groups since all of the participating municipal authorities were large (above 150,000 population size). As a result, the final learning group theme are as follows:

1) RES: Expansion and roll out of renewables (including financing)
2) EE: Energy efficiency (including housing, public buildings and estates management) [*Large group: above 150,000 population size*]
3) EE: Energy efficiency (including housing, public buildings and estates management) [*Small group: below 150,000 population size*]
4) LEC: Local Energy Communities (including public energy companies, smart grids) [*Large group: above 150,000 population size*]

5) LEC: Local Energy Communities (including public energy companies, smart grids) [*Small group: below 150,000 population size*]

Based on our extensive mapping and analysis, these confirmed learning group themes in our view provide the greatest potential for effective peer learning in the WP3 exchange programme.

(2) Secondly, the number of participants was increased from 24 to 27. Here, we retained the initial plan of five separate learning groups. However, the consortium was keen to engage as many authorities as possible in the WP3 peer-to-peer exchange programme. It was deemed that there was sufficient budgetary flexibility to incorporate three more participants in WP3, thus raising the final list of participants from 24 to 27 participants. This means that the impact of the project will have greater resonance for more authorities than we initially conceived. As noted in Section 3, this 'final' list is still provisional at this stage since 2-3 authorities have yet to definitively confirm their involvement in WP3.