

COVID 19 Impact on Regional Action Plan Implementation February 2021

The [Southern Regional Assembly](#) is currently in the process of implementing our Regional Action Plan developed as part of the [EMPOWER](#) project and validated by the Interreg Europe Union Technical Secretariat. Our plan was to work with [Cork City Council](#) to install energy monitoring equipment into social housing units in in Cork City to measure the energy usage before and after a deep retrofit of these units.

However, COVID 19 arrived in Ireland and a lockdown followed soon thereafter. Like many energy efficiency projects, this led to a significant delay in the installation of our energy monitoring equipment at a time when more people are working from home as building contractors were not permitted physical access to these properties. This is in line with the [International Energy Agency report, Energy Efficiency 2020](#) that indicated that global progress on using more efficiency sources of energy would slow down as a result of the economic impact of COVID 19. More importantly, they advised that electricity use in residential buildings in the first half of 2020 grew by 20% in some countries because of COVID 19, coupled with social distancing and teleworking. Given the potential increase in energy usage in Irish homes because of COVID 19, we are delighted that we have now managed to install the energy monitoring equipment into the social housing units in Cork City and can commence monitoring the energy usage.



The weather station will measure a number of parameters including wind speed, wind directions, temperature, humidity, air pressure, and rainfall.

Inside the house gas consumption, electricity consumption, energy generated by the boiler, air temperature, air pressure and humidity will be measured. We will

collect data before and after the deep retrofit of these social housing units to identify the deep retrofit features that have created the most benefits to reducing energy consumption and energy costs.

EMPOWER is a five-year, inter-regional project which commenced January 2017. The project aims to reduce carbon output by dynamically monitoring energy efficiency in buildings, with a special focus on innovative methods of financing. Consisting of 9-partners: from Ireland, Slovenia, Portugal, Italy, France, Sweden, Poland, Germany and Spain. The project was approved for a grant of € 1.90 m by the Interreg Europe Programme, through the European Regional Development Fund.

For more about the EMPOWER project you can read here www.interregeurope.eu/empower or <https://www.southernassembly.ie/eu-programmes/eu-projects> or follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/interregempower> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Empower0/>

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