



The **ESCALATE Project**, funded by the EU LIFE Programme, is designed to accelerate the clean energy transition across European cities. Its primary mission is to help municipalities with over 45,000 inhabitants to develop effective heating and cooling (H&C) plans, in compliance with Article 25 of the EU's Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) Recast.

Many cities lack the technical expertise, financial resources, and institutional capacity to draft such plans. To bridge this gap, ESCALATE creates a training programme, template, and guideline to develop H&C plans and trains six regional energy agencies to become effective H&C planners (in Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Slovenia). These develop 12 pilot H&C plans with nearby municipalities, receiving technical assistance from the ESCALATE team and providing feedback on the capacity-building offer. All capacity-building materials will be publicly available. The trained agencies then train other energy agencies in their countries and the ESCALATE team will activate a wide network of stakeholders to disseminate results, raise awareness of the capacity-building offer and scale up adoption all over the EU. Two more countries (Austria and Germany) are engaged in a local-national policy dialogue and in assessing the role of energy communities and consumer-led initiatives.

ESCALATE therefore enables municipalities to plan for cleaner, more energy-efficient heating and cooling.



ESCALATE creates a unified methodology and a comprehensive training program to build the capacity of regional energy agencies in developing H&C plans in accordance with Art. 25 of the EED Recast.

ESCALATE will accelerate the clean energy transition by supporting the development of sustainable H&C plans in cities and regions across Europe.

Figure 1: ESCALATE accelerates the energy transition by a guideline, template and a training

## » ESCALATE'S OBJECTIVES AND SUPPORT FOR MUNICIPALITIES:

- 1. Methodology & tools development:** ESCALATE provides a modular methodology along with ready-to-use tools - including a **guideline**, **ready-to-fill template**, and **video training course** - to support municipalities in developing Heating & Cooling (H&C) plans efficiently and with reduced complexity.
- 2. Capacity building & expert support:** an open-access platform offers targeted training and resources for municipalities, energy agencies, and other stakeholders. Six regional energy agencies are trained and supported to act as local hubs, assisting municipalities with technical topics such as data collection and stakeholder engagement.
- 3. Pilot implementation & practical application:** ESCALATE works directly with 12 pilot cities to draft and submit H&C plans that meet Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) requirements, providing real-world application and feedback to refine the methodology.
- 4. Communication & policy alignment:** through a coordinated information campaign, ESCALATE raises awareness of H&C planning and ensures its effective integration across different levels, promoting policy alignment at local, regional, and national levels. Policy briefs and stakeholder workshops foster visibility and integration into broader energy strategies.
- 5. Sustainability & long-term impact:** project outputs are designed to be reusable, scalable, and embedded in policy frameworks. This creates lasting value and enables replication beyond the project's lifetime.
- 6. Contribution to climate goals:** by empowering municipalities to implement effective H&C plans, ESCALATE supports significant reductions in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in the building sector.

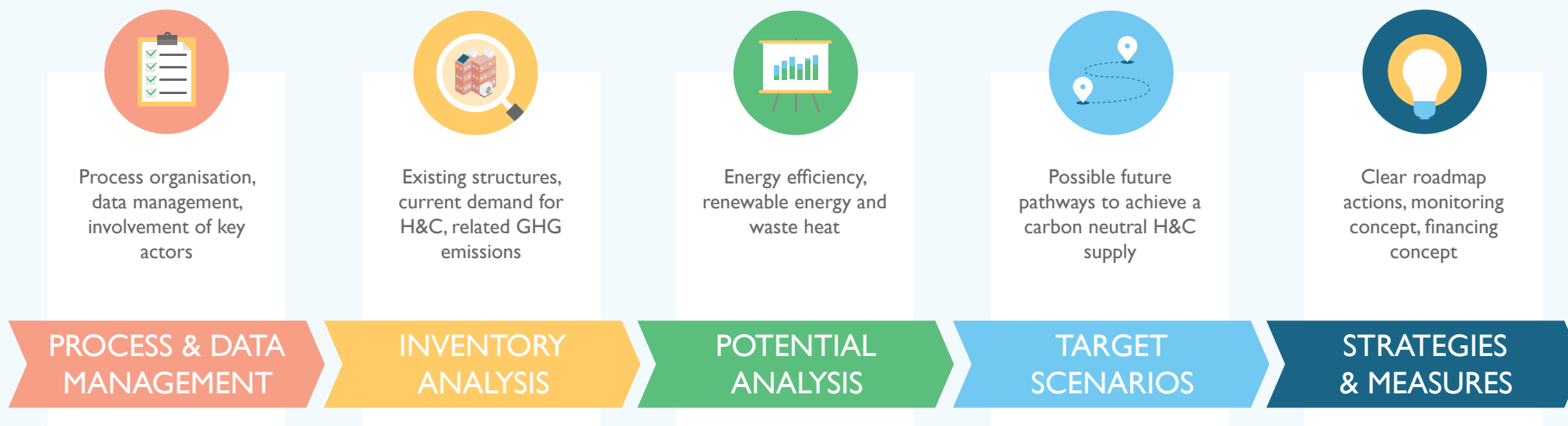
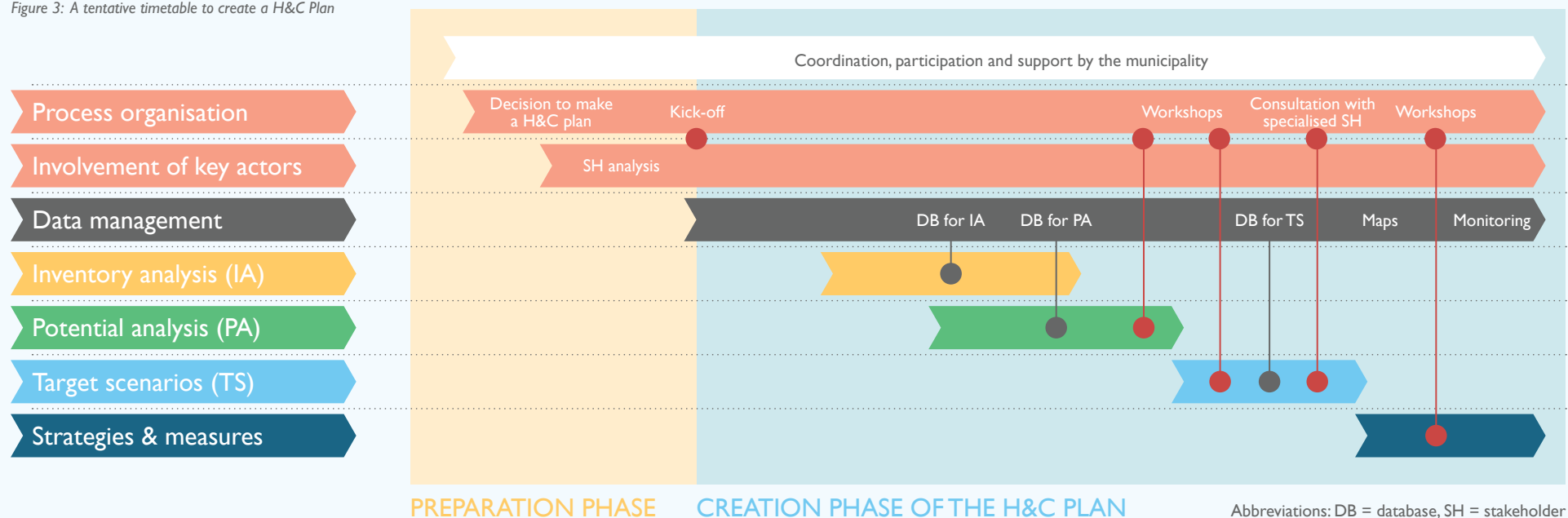


Figure 2: The five steps to create a H&C Plan

Figure 3: A tentative timetable to create a H&C Plan



## »» HOW A HEATING AND COOLING (H&C) PLAN IS USUALLY SET UP

There are usually five steps in setting up a H&C plan, as shown in figure 2. From the start and decision to initiate the H&C process to the very end to the final document, you should calculate with around one to two years. However, this duration is highly dependent on your specific situation.

ESCALATE started in September 2024 and will run until August 2027. It is led by IREES (Institute for Resource Efficiency & Energy Strategies in Karlsruhe, Germany), with regional energy agencies, IEECP, e-think, Energy Cities, AESS, REVOLVE, AURA EE, ENERGAP, MAE, REGEA and SCN.



Visit [escalate-project.eu](https://escalate-project.eu) to learn more!

- > Budget: € 1,749,231.84
- > Countries involved: 10
- > Number of partners: 11
- > Duration: 36 months

For more details about the Partners and Budget, please visit the [LIFE Public Database](https://lifelife.eu/public-database)

**More questions? Contact the coordinators:**

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