

These municipalities did it, when will you?



Renovem els Barris, a public pioneering initiative in Santa Coloma de Gramenet

Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Barcelona, Spain

120 000 inhabitants - Buildings built before 1980 where more than 50% of the owners are not residents (of these, 70% have rented their flats and 30% are financial entities whose buildings are empty

Timeframe: was launched in 2013

“ The problem with the neighbourhood is that it has become quite degraded. If everything that is being done now would have been carried out 20 years ago, things would not have gone so badly ”

Rosa Giménez, neighbour of the Carrer els Pirineus.

+ Quick tour: what's in it for you?



The municipality of Santa Coloma de Gramenet near Barcelona has launched an energy retrofitting programme called *Renovem Barris* in the south and central-south neighbourhoods of the city. This plan is still in deployment and involves a population of approximately 60 000 inhabitants.

Within the Spanish Law 8/2013 of Urban Rehabilitation, Regeneration and Renovation, this project aims to overcome the social and economic barriers in order to implement energy retrofitting initiatives to deal with the existing building deficiencies.

In this case study, you will learn about the strategic approach developed by the Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet through the Pilot Phase in the Street of Pirineus, that can be used as an inspiring example by other cities that want to launch or further their energy retrofitting programmes.

+ Accelerating Condominium Energy Retrofitting: how Santa Coloma ACEd it

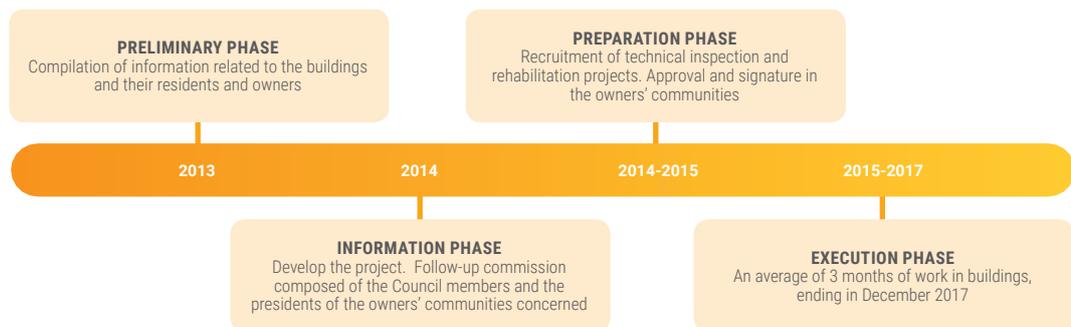
The project started with a Pilot Phase in the Street of Pirineus, a neighbourhood declared as an Area of Conservation and Rehabilitation, in order to replicate its methodology later in other districts such as Fondo, Santa Rosa, Raval, Safaretjos, Can Mariner and Llatí.



Area of Conservation and Rehabilitation in the Street of Pirineus.

(© Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet)

+ Planning scheme



The energy building retrofitting in the Street of Pirineus took place in 32 private buildings (26 condominiums and 6 single family houses) involving 1 100 inhabitants and 649 owners. Among the flats, 360 were destined for habitation and 26 (the ground floor) were commercial.

The project consisted of the renovation of the thermal envelope (with facades, dividing walls and roofs) and the incorporation of thermal insulation in the facades.

“ At first, the neighbours did not believe it. They said it would be as always... But not now. Everybody is becoming aware that this is the best for the neighbourhood ”

Carlos Gracia,
President
Neighbours’
Association in
Fondo-Pirineu

The **political commitment** from the beginning meant, that the City Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet led the whole process and acted as a mediator with the owners and residents to achieve a consensus on how the energy building retrofitting would take place. Also it was responsible for carrying out the technical interventions and works, advancing the payments and controlling the correct execution of the works. The Council assumed the initial costs of the technical interventions, so the first steps were free of charge for the owners.

The interventions were managed by a variety of the council departments. A municipal architect was in charge of the urban management services, mediation, treasury and economic resources. This architect also worked in the local housing office of Santa Coloma de Gramenet, which is a public service in charge of giving information and advice to each resident affected.

Social consensus and residents and owners’ participation was essential to get them involved in the energy retrofit. They played an active role from the outset. Before starting any intervention, and in order to ensure support, the project proposal was submitted and explained through a process of extended circles: Fondo Alto-Pirineus Neighbours’ Association (composed of neighbours who are also residents or/and owners, and neighbours who are not residents or/and owners), presidents of each community (in jointly assembly) and each community separately.

These circles organised **interactive meetings** where residents, owners, and also neighbours, had the opportunity to meet and discuss with the technical and political side of the project. The first meetings took place in the previous phase, when the Pilot Phase was explained by the mayor of Santa Coloma de Gramenet to the Neighbours’ Association. Next, during the informative phase, the meetings were organised in three levels:

- + **General level:** The Council approved the establishment of a follow-up commission composed of representatives of both sides (owners and residents and Council). Through this commission, the development of the project, its advancements and the technicians hired to work on it were communicated to all the representatives, and general doubts were solved.
- + **Communitarian level:** meetings with each community of residents and owners to deal with their concerns and explain the technical and financial aspects of the project. Each community signed an agreement to join the project.
- + **Individual level:** meetings with the owners to clarify their concrete questions.

In addition, to increase the neighbourhood identity to accelerate the rehabilitation of the buildings, the owners, residents and neighbours could choose the design of the facades through an **urban landscape competition**. As a result, the buildings have been painted with bright colours.



Urban landscape competition.

(© Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet)

+ How much does it cost?

Street of Pirineus experience

The total cost has been €2 080 600, with a grant of €510 000 from the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. Of which, €130 964 was used for the contract of services, €1 806 986 for the contract of works, €136 000 for human resources and €6 650 for others.

During the period of 2015, 7% of the total cost was spent. In 2016 and 2017, 46,5% was used each year.

Financial support available

Depending on the scope of the intervention in each building, the cost that each owner had to pay varied.

The Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet offered financial support to owners through three payment modalities adapted to each situation:

- + 60 monthly instalments during 5 years without interest (average monthly payment for house around €60).
- + 50-50 payment without interests: payment of 50% at the beginning of the works and 50% at the end.
- + Registration of the debt in the property register: The Council advanced the money as a reimbursable subsidy and it was addressed to flat owners with annual revenues of less than €20 000. The owners will pay the money back when the property is transmitted in inheritance or purchase and sale.

The Council also financed other resources such as energy efficiency certificates, the urban landscape competition and human resources (employees of the Council who were involved in the project).

+ And how is the project organised?

There is a **public-private collaboration** among the Council of Santa Coloma, owners and residents' communities, Fondo Alto-Pirineus Neighbours' Association, research institutes and construction companies.

The City Council acted as a project manager coordinating, intervening and providing financing resources in all the phases of the project.

The owners' communities only carried out the implementation of the works and the Fondo Alto-Pirineus Neighbours' Association and Barcelona Regional Association were present as participants in several steps of the project.

Barcelona Superior Technical School of Architecture (UPC) and Catalonia Institute for Energy Research (IREC), as a research institutes, collaborated in carrying out the energy audit of the buildings.

Concurs Idees Studio Allegro Architects company was collaborator in the design phase and Contracte Serveis PCG Arquitectura e Ingeniería company and Contratista Obres REHACSA both were collaborators in the implementation phase.

Finally, the Barcelona Metropolitan Housing Consortium provided financial resources in the implementation phase and the Catalonia Architects School association (COAC) collaborated in the evaluation phase.

+ Key figures



Buildings of Street of Pirineus before rehabilitation works.

(© Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet)

Improvement of the Energy efficiency certificate after the buildings retrofit			
Number of buildings	Non-renewable average energy saving	CO ₂ emissions average savings	Energy efficiency category of CO ₂ emissions
2	41%	42%	From F to E
2	44%	45%	From G to E
11	37%	36%	From E to D
8	36%	37%	No qualification improvement
9	-	-	No energetic improvement in efficiency

Of the 32 building retrofitted, 28 rehabilitated the exterior facade, 23 the interior facade, 24 the roof, 22 the patios and 17 the walls.

The cost paid by each flat owner depended on the scope of the intervention. Investment in energy retrofitting: 53% of the neighbours invested between €3 000 and 5 000, 25,1% between €9 000 and 11 000, 12,7% up to €3 000 and 9,2% between €5 000 and 7 000.

Here is some advice if you'd like to do it in your city

It is crucial to consider simultaneously different aspects to promote an energy retrofitting dynamic in your city. Here is a list of the most relevant features that were taken into account by *Renovem els Barris* in the Street of Pirineus:

- + City Council's initiative to lead the energy retrofitting programme.
- + Market analysis of the target districts on the characteristics of the buildings and the profile of neighbours' communities.
- + Management, mediation and permanent communication with the owners and residents' communities to reach an agreement on energy retrofitting before any intervention and to determine the obligations of each actor involved.
- + Offering attractive, clear and flexible financing systems adapted to the socioeconomic reality of each owner to overcome the barriers for them to invest in energy retrofitting.
- + Word of mouth effect to attract more residents to join the initiative.

Any question?



Joan Manel Gonzalez Duran, *Renovem els Barris* Project Manager,
Council of Santa Coloma de Gramenet, Barcelona
(+34) 934624000
gonzalezdjm@gramenet.cat

Information



Renovem els Barris project website:
www.gramenet.cat/ajuntament/arees-municipals/renovem-els-barris/el-projepte/

You too are facing the challenge of the energy retrofitting of privately-owned condominiums in your city?

The ACE-Retrofitting project aims to develop a governance model facilitated by cities linking owners and building professionals to accelerate condominium energy retrofitting. The French CoachCopro tool will be upgraded and adapted to other countries.

The consortium is composed of Agence Parisienne du Climat (France), Maastricht University (the Netherlands), Energy House Antwerp (Belgium), the City of Liège (Belgium), Aberdeen City Council (UK), Frankfurt Energy Agency (Germany), the City of Maastricht (the Netherlands), Changeworks (UK) and Energy Cities (coordinator). Study visits are organised in the partner cities of the consortium.

www.nweurope.eu/ace-retrofitting


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