



More one-stop shops to boost home energy renovation

How to set up a supportive national framework for local one-stop shops?



**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR EU MEMBER STATES**



Policy recommendations for EU Member States

According to the European Climate Neutrality Observatory, “progress on buildings has been far too slow” and achieving the zero-emission building stock by 2050 target means **Member States have no time to lose**. The recent adoption of two major directives for the European Green Deal (the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive) has given Member States a framework for reducing emissions and energy use in buildings across the EU, together with new targets, policies and tools. Among other things, both Directives recognise **one-stop shops (OSS) as a major tool for boosting home energy renovation**. OSS offer an integrated service package that makes the complex renovation process more attractive, **simpler and accessible** to all homeowners. They all pursue a common objective: **boost home energy renovation by supporting homeowners in their renovation journey**.

More specifically, Article 22 § 3 of the Energy Efficiency Directive urges **Member States to create a “supportive framework [...] in particular for the creation of one-stop shops.”**

Building on the experience and lessons learned ‘in the field’ by the five French Third-Party Financing companies (a specific local OSS model), below are key recommendations for Member States wishing to create a dream country for OSS.

Here is what Member States should do.

1. Ensure the coherence and long-term stability of public home energy renovation policies

- ▶ Public policies should favour a **holistic approach** to home improvements and comply with the “Energy Efficiency First” principle by focusing on energy-efficient renovations as well as adapting the building stock to climate change (summer comfort, greening, etc.) and residents’ needs (aging population, health issues, etc.)
- ▶ **Bring clarity and long-term visibility.** A big NO should be given to the ‘Stop and go’ approach to policy implementation. The market needs a clear horizon to grow and successful one-stop shop economic models require stable regulatory and financial frameworks.

2. Make the provision of advice and support to households on home energy renovation a public service

- ▶ This will ensure that first-level advice is accessible to everyone everywhere through a national public service network.
- ▶ In addition to first-level advice, public support should also include tailor-made support (audit, project definition, work completion and monitoring) as a public service, thus bringing visibility and confidence to homeowners.

3. Support local and regional authorities with setting up local one-stop shops

- ▶ One-stop shops (co-)created by local and regional authorities have the trust of homeowners and ensure that the general interest is taken into account. By organising physical meetings with homeowners, they give a more human face to the whole process.
- ▶ Because of their local profile and knowledge of the local area, OSS know best what people need. They can also create local partnerships and ensure that local schemes and policies are implemented (training, jobs, urban planning, etc.)

4. Make stable, clear and simple public funding schemes for deep renovation and the creation and operation of local one-stop shops accessible to all

- ▶ Advising and supporting homeowners are costly activities. Given their importance in the renovation journey, advice and support to homeowners should be subsidised through a stable long-term scheme accessible to all stakeholders.
- ▶ Public subsidies should be directed towards deep renovation. The instability of funding schemes makes it difficult for both OSS and homeowners to understand them.

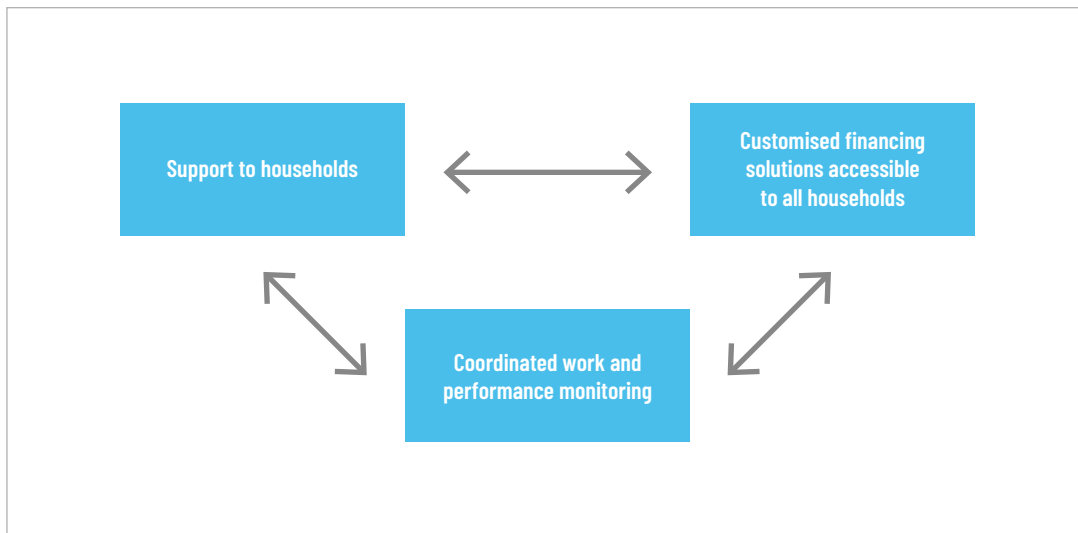
5. Make sure every citizen has access to long-term financing

- ▶ Encourage banks and financing institutions into offering tailor-made, long-term (zero) **low-interest rate** loans accessible to all.
- ▶ Support financial instruments facilitating loan management and alleviating financial risks. Establish a guarantee fund for low-income households covering assets and associated risks.

What are Third-Party Financing companies?

Third-Party Financing (TPF) companies are operators established by local authorities (metropolitan and regional councils). They offer a **comprehensive range of customised technical and financial support services to individuals and condominiums** with an energy-efficient home renovation project (i.e. delivering energy savings of at least 40%). One of their unique features is the provision of **direct or indirect financing** with multiple benefits: no upfront investment, pre-financing of public subsidies, and an interest-free loan of up to €50,000 repayable after work completion and integrating expected energy savings.

TPF companies have demonstrated that the success of a renovation project depends on three factors.



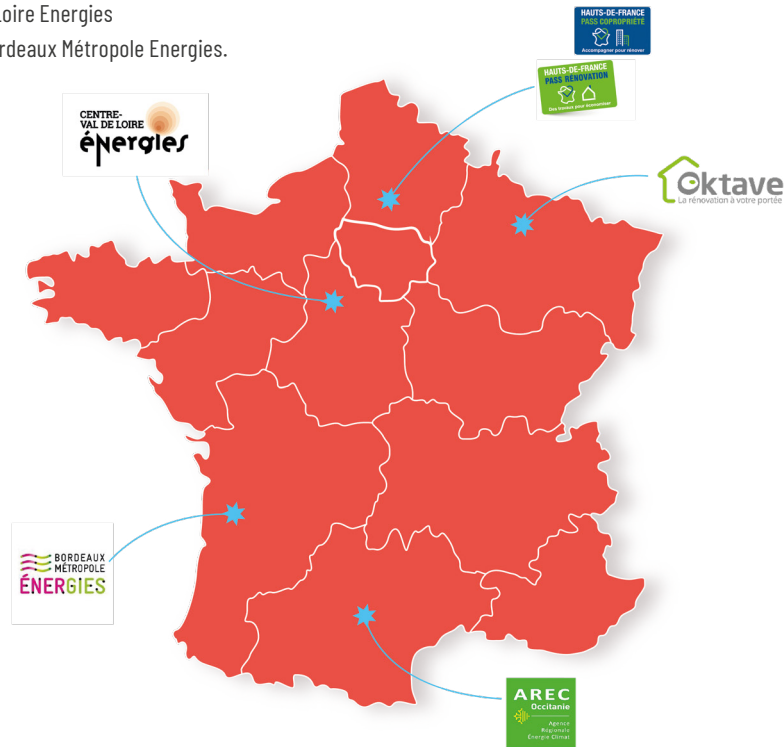
What is their added value?

- ▶ A comprehensive range of services integrating technical and financial support.
- ▶ Control by local or regional authorities ensures that the general interest is taken into account.
- ▶ The model can be adapted to a variety of situations.
- ▶ The company's local profile means that partnerships can be forged with local partners and similar schemes.
- ▶ The services provided meet the needs of local residents.
- ▶ This instrument addresses the main barriers to energy renovation, namely the complexity of managing a renovation project and lack of access to financing.



Five Third-Party Financing companies are currently active in France:

- ▶ Régie régionale du Service Public de l'Efficacité Energétique, Hauts-de-France region
- ▶ Oktave, Grand Est region
- ▶ AREC Occitanie
- ▶ Centre-Val-de-Loire Energies
- ▶ Facirénov by Bordeaux Métropole Energies.

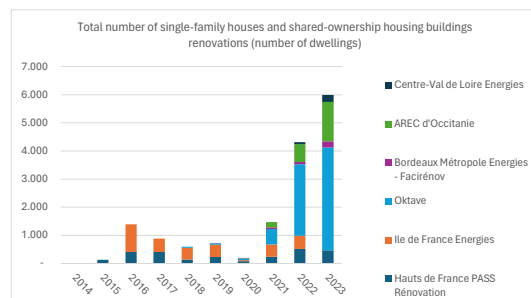
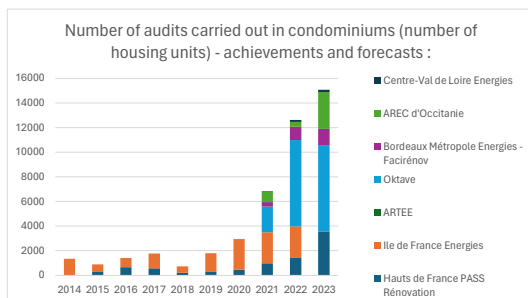


Their economic model is based on charging a fee to homeowners for the services provided and selling energy savings certificates, while also benefiting from the ELENA technical assistance during their first 3 years of activity.

Key figures for 2023:

- ▶ **18,000 energy audits.**
- ▶ **6160 energy renovations projects** representing an investment of €173.2 million.
- ▶ **1,300 loans** for a total amount of **€40 million.**
- ▶ Average renovation cost for a single-family home: **€42,500**
- ▶ Average renovation cost per condominium unit: **€23,400**

Number of audits and renovation projects carried out by TPF companies (single-family homes and condominiums):





Go the extra mile!

Take a deeper dive into the French context for OSS:
what works well and what could be improved

Advice and support services to homeowners: bringing multiple networks under a national brand

The activity of advising households on home energy renovation was defined as a **public service** in 2013. Since 2022, the law has made a distinction between two activities:

- ▶ **General “first-level advice”** provided free of charge by a network of [local information and advice centres](#) (“Espaces Conseil - France Rénov’”). The network consists of more than 570 France Rénov’ information centres employing over 2,500 advisers, co-financed by local authorities.
- ▶ **Tailor-made “support service”** to owners of single-family homes against the payment of a fee. These services are provided by a network of certified one-stop shops called “[Mon Accompagnateur Rénov’](#)” (My Renovation Assistant - MAR), which started to be deployed in 2023. Homeowners are required to use this support service to qualify for subsidies for energy-efficient renovations.

In parallel with the evolution of the legislative definition of this public service and its organisation, a number of regional and local authorities set up operators which prefigured “Mon Accompagnateur Rénov’”. These so-called **Third-Party Financing companies** were also given a legal definition in the French Construction and Housing Code.

What works well :

- ▶ France Rénov’ is a nation-wide brand bringing visibility, legitimacy and recognition.
- ▶ The distinction between advice and support has been formalised in the public service definition: first-level advice is free-of-charge while support services are a competitive sector activity which involves taking responsibility for the advice and support provided.
- ▶ The cost of first-level advice is fully supported by national and local authorities. This first phase, which can be very time-consuming, is essential and results in greater lead quality for the operators (MAR, TPF companies) providing support services.

What could be improved:

- ▶ This is a new scheme but consideration is already being given to changing some rules in the allocation of subsidies.
- ▶ Co-financing by national and local authorities is not stable.
- ▶ The level of autonomy enjoyed by local authorities when organising and controlling first-level advice is not sufficient. They should have full control over how these local players are organised and be able to choose the positioning of their own operators.

A local authority initiative supported by the State

Some pioneering local authorities have played a major role in the emergence of the TPF model. Two regional councils initiated preliminary studies that have led to the definition of a brand-new technical and financial engineering offer. Their subsequent efforts also resulted in the national recognition and inclusion of this new model in French legislation.

Originally tested by two regional councils (Hauts-de-France and Ile-de-France), a national zero-interest loan for home energy renovation can now be granted by all TPF companies.

What works well :

- ▶ Openness of the State to innovative concepts experimented and tested by local and regional authorities.
- ▶ A clear legal definition of Third-Party Financing companies allowing them to grant loans earmarked for home renovation.
- ▶ Possibility for Third-Party Financing companies to grant interest-free loans to their clients.

What could be improved:

- ▶ Third-party financing companies are highly dependent on public incentives and coercive measures in favour of deep renovation.
- ▶ The time required to consider feedback from the field and adapt incentives and regulatory mechanisms should be shortened.

A simpler and clearer national subsidy scheme for home energy renovation

MaPrimeRénov' is a State aid that helps homeowners finance their home energy renovation project. Launched in January 2020, it was modified in 2024 to combine a previous tax credit and other subsidies into a single scheme.

What works well :

- ▶ The willingness to make different support programmes and funding mechanisms simpler and clearer for homeowners.
- ▶ Aid for energy-efficient renovations is based on the obligation to get support from an OSS.

What could be improved:

- ▶ Lack of stability in subsidy schemes makes it difficult for households to understand them and use them.
- ▶ Subsidies should be directed towards energy-efficient renovations delivering significant energy savings and not wasted on single upgrades.
- ▶ Including mixed-use buildings (tertiary & residential) in the subsidy schemes would ensure that buildings in city centres (which are often mixed-use) are also renovated.
- ▶ Subsidies for renovation work also have drawbacks. One of them is that they contribute to increasing market prices. One-stop shops managing renovation work on behalf of their clients can however obtain realistic quotes from contractors because they know the market.

Financing the 'remaining cost' with adapted offers

In 2009, an interest-free loan subsidised via a tax credit was introduced. Despite this, banks were reluctant to get involved in the energy renovation market. Like their clients, they faced uncertainty about the quality of renovation works and the energy performance supposedly achieved. Additionally, some homeowners (low-income households, elderly people) have little access to long-term loans.

To remediate this situation, TPFC companies have developed loan-granting criteria integrating future energy savings and the net value of the property and offer direct financing accessible to all. However, they are facing limitations in their development as their increasing portfolio means they need more equity. Another limiting factor is the difficulty in finding and recruiting trained tradespeople. When direct loans from Third-Party Financing companies are not available, homeowners have to pay for the 'remaining cost' (remaining cost = total cost of the renovation work - subsidies) with their own savings or a bank loan. This is why Member States should also ensure that every homeowner has access to bank financing.

The policy recommendations have been developed by [Energy Cities](#) and [Energies Demain](#), with the support of [SERAFIN association](#) as part of [ORFEE](#), a project funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 programme.

**Do you want to know more about
Third-Party Financing Companies in France?**

[Visit the SERAFIN Association website!](#)

**Are you a region who wants to learn
how to set up a local One-Stop Shop?**

Read this detailed [technical guide](#) based on the 10 year-experience of five French Third-Party Financing companies!

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May 2024



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 894478



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