Lessons and best practice from the Stratego Project Work Package 4:

Lessons for creating productive dialogue between local and national authorities
The project "Multi level actions for enhanced Heating and Cooling plans – STRATEGO" (IEE/13/650/SI2.675851) is co-funded by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Union.
Project website: www.stratego-project.eu

STRATEGO (Multi-level actions for enhanced Heating & Cooling plans) is an Intelligent Energy Europe project which aims to support national authorities to draft their National Heating and Cooling Plans (NHCP), alongside developing the capacities at the local level to put these plans into practice.

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Part 2: Lessons for creating productive dialogue between local and national authorities

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**About this report**

This report focuses on lessons for creating productive dialogue between local and national authorities. This section gives a summary of the four national/local authority meetings which took place in each partner country. Challenges experienced during this process are discussed, followed by advice and lessons for practitioners wishing to develop greater national/local authority dialogue in their own contexts.

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**Best practice on national-local dialogue for effective delivery of heating and cooling plans**

A key challenge of putting national heating and cooling plans into practice is ensuring that the national plans take into account the realities of the local contexts. Conversely, activities for local delivery and local plans should support with the visions set out in the national plans.

Therefore, an important part of the Stratego project activities focused on developing dialogue between national authorities and local authorities. This was done through a series of formal meetings which aimed to ensure that the local and regional plans developed through the coaching process were designed with national plans in mind, and vice versa.

Four meetings were held throughout the duration of the project in each learning country. The objectives of each of these meetings are summarised in Table 2.

Table 1: Overview of the four national authority meetings conducted by each Stratego partner during the project.

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<tr>
<th>Meeting 1 – Building a relationship with the national authority</th>
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<tr>
<td>This first meeting provided an opportunity for project partners to introduce the Stratego project and relevant activities to representatives from the national authority. It also provided an introductory platform to identify the relevant national authority officials who were taking forward the National Comprehensive Assessment of the potential for combined heat and power and district heating and cooling (required under Article 14 of the EU Energy Efficiency Directive).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Meeting 2 – Discussion of identified project opportunities and mapping analysis</th>
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<td>This meeting focused on outputs from research and mapping analysis conducted within work package 2 of the Stratego project. The research was used as a stimulus for discussion of the national authority’s progress on national heating and cooling planning.</td>
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<th>Meeting 3 – Developing guidance on integration of national and local/regional plans</th>
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<td>An update was provided on progress with local activities in the Stratego project, including local heating and cooling mapping and feedback from coaching session activities. In some cases data from local mapping exercises were provided to the national authority to inform the national mapping exercise. Where possible, this was used as a basis...</td>
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Meeting 4 – Review and refinement of the project outputs
The final meeting was used to share lessons and impacts from the local project activities. Where possible, opportunities for embedding some of these lessons into wider activities were identified in partnership with the national authority.

Challenges of establishing national – local dialogue

- Local authorities often did not have an established role informing the national heating and cooling planning process.
- It was difficult to find the right government departments and officials to engage with since it was not always clearly defined where responsibility for national heating and cooling planning sat within Government departments.
- The governance set-up of national, regional and local authorities needs to be considered when establishing a process for dialogue. For example, Spain has approximately 8,000 local authorities, which are separated from the national authority by provincial and regional governments. It is therefore necessary to establish a means for collating experiences and perspectives at the local level in a manageable form to inform national government planning processes.

Advice for developing national – local dialogue

- If possible establish a long-term platform that can continue to facilitate discussion between local and national authorities. This issue requires long-term dialogue and development.
- Involve representatives from national authorities in coaching sessions, study visits, and stakeholder engagement sessions where possible. This enables them to interact directly with local authorities and understand the complex challenges of project delivery.
- During engagement with local stakeholders (e.g. coaching sessions, stakeholder engagement, technical advice), note down ideas and challenges that cannot be dealt with at the local level. Where possible, share a summary of these comments to the relevant national government representatives to inform their policy development.
- Establish political agreement and recognition of the roles of local, regional and national authorities in the process of heating and cooling planning
  - Heat mapping is not the only important element of a heating and cooling plan. Other aspects including local and national policy support, regulations, consumer engagement and behaviour change, stakeholder holder engagement, supply chain development and capacity building are needed to be able to realise opportunities.
  - At present the energy efficiency directive does not make it clear that a strategy is needed to support delivery of the national comprehensive assessments.
  - Establish a commitment to develop the skills and resource of local authorities to enable them to take on relevant responsibilities.

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