



# European Construction Sector Observatory

Policy measure fact sheet

**Germany**

House Turnaround (Hauswende)

Thematic Objective 3

February 2018



# In a nutshell

<b>Implementing body:</b>	German Energy Agency (Deutsche Energie Agentur - DENA); German Ministry of Economy and Energy (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie)
<b>Key features &amp; objectives:</b>	A communication and marketing campaign, an online information resource and a range of events, involving a broad range of building renovation stakeholders, to raise awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency and to encourage and assist homeowners to carry out improvements.
<b>Implementation date:</b>	2014-2016 (33 months)
<b>Targeted beneficiaries:</b>	Owners of one- and two-family houses
<b>Targeted sub-sectors:</b>	Residential, energy saving renovations
<b>Budget (EUR):</b>	3 million: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.7 million funded by the Alliance for Energy Efficient Buildings (GEEA);</li> <li>• 1.3 million funded by the Federal Government.</li> </ul>

In 2013, there were over 15 million one- and two-family houses in Germany, making up 83% of the total number of residential buildings (>18 million). In terms of total building energy consumption in Germany, one- and two-family houses are the highest energy consumers, accounting for 41% of total consumption, followed by non-residential buildings (35%) and multi-family residential buildings (24%)<sup>1</sup>. According to data from the German Energy Agency (DENA), published by the German Alliance for Energy Efficient Buildings (GEEA), a significant percentage of one- and two-family houses are in need of energy efficient upgrades. Data on this building category shows that in 2013, approximately 65% of exterior walls and 35% of roofs were not insulated, and 60% of windows were poorly insulated<sup>2</sup>. One-

and two-family houses are therefore the main priority for energy efficiency measures, not least because they have the potential to significantly reduce overall building energy use.

As part of the 'Energy Transition' (Energiewende<sup>3</sup>) initiative, the Federal Government's energy efficiency goals foresee an 80% reduction of primary energy consumption in residential and non-residential buildings by 2050. Although achieving the current energy efficient building objectives requires a renovation rate of at least 2.5%, the current rate only lies at approximately 1%<sup>4</sup>. In order to promote energy efficient renovation, the German government has therefore launched a series of marketing campaigns. As an example, the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development ran a campaign that placed wool hats on residential buildings; however, the campaign was not very successful.

Although there are many organisations and sectors/sub-sectors involved in delivering energy efficient building renovation works, a joined-up cross-sector approach to communication has been missing. Interested parties and groups have typically run communication or marketing campaigns on their own behalf. This kind of individual approach can often cause confusion for customers, because it can be hard to comprehend the realistic energy saving potential of a combination of complementary measures involving different suppliers. If one supplier (e.g. an energy efficient window supplier) claims that their products can deliver 30% savings and other suppliers (e.g. insulation, heating systems, etc.) also claim that their products can deliver similar savings, the combined potential savings, if literally added together, can amount to over 100%, which clearly lacks credibility in the eyes of the customer. A joined-up approach is needed to give customers a more holistic understanding of the potential savings that can be achieved when combining different solutions<sup>5</sup>.

With a view to providing homeowners with consistent and reliable information on energy saving renovations, 'House Turnaround' was launched as the first national cross-sector communication campaign. In addition to providing comprehensive information on energy efficiency renovations and access to an expert database, the initiative included a fully-fledged marketing campaign, which included digital, print and face-to-face actions.

The campaign was officially launched as a Public-Private Partnership initiative in March 2014. It was coordinated by the Alliance for Energy Efficient Buildings (GEEA) in cooperation with two Federal Ministries and a wide network of cross-sectoral associations of private companies that are involved in areas linked to energy efficiency and building renovations. Over half (EUR 1.7 million) of the campaign's budget (EUR 3 million) was provided by the members of the Alliance. Federal Government funding provided the remaining EUR 1.3 million. In terms of impact, House Turnaround has proved to be very successful, reaching a very wide audience through a large number of communication channels. The campaign's website has attracted over half a million visitors, including 18,000 consultations of the energy renovation expert database it has provided, and the social media campaign has reached in excess of 1 million people.

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## 1

# General description

The German Energy Agency (DENA) implemented the 'House Turnaround' measure in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). Some of the private sector partners that were involved, from a range of related sectors, included: the German Federal Association of German Household, Energy and Environmental Technology e.V. (BDH); the Association of the Insulation Material Industry (GDI); and the Association of Windows and Facades (VFF).

The main objective of the campaign was to motivate single-family and two-family homeowners to carry out energy saving renovations on their houses.

The main objective of the campaign was to motivate single-family and two-family homeowners to carry out energy saving renovations on their houses. In order to achieve this, the House Turnaround implemented the following activities:

- The House Turnaround (Hauswende) website ([www.die-hauswende.de](http://www.die-hauswende.de)) is an online resource that provides homeowners with comprehensive information on energy saving renovations. The resource also features a calendar of relevant events and information on funding and financing options;
- National advertising campaign targeting one-and two-family house owners to communicate the benefits of energy saving renovations;
- A pool of qualified energy renovation experts – using a list of experts that have registered with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy<sup>6</sup> – to assist with the installation of energy saving renovations. Interested homeowners can use the website to search for qualified experts in their area

via a post code search function;

- Organisation of 100 information events in many regions of Germany to provide consumers with first-hand information. Local energy experts, regional energy agencies and the craft industry were involved in the events;
- Open home events: homeowners opening their houses to show and demonstrate the benefits of energy saving renovations that they have implemented and are using;
- Participation in trade fairs on energy efficient construction;
- Information evenings with Members of the German Parliament;
- Renovation champions: Multimedia stories that focus on citizens that have successfully installed energy saving solutions in their homes ([www.sanierungshelden.de](http://www.sanierungshelden.de));
- Intensive public relations work to communicate the benefits of energy efficient building renovations, using digital and printed media channels.

The implementation of the initiative followed a multi-step process. At first, the logo and brand were developed before online and print advertising activities began. As the campaign progressed, an increasing focus was given to events, as this proved to be the most effective means to reach homeowners<sup>7</sup>.

The initiative was established as a Public Private Partnership with a view to facilitate the continuation of the online portal beyond the initiative's 33-month duration. It is due to the PPP approach that the portal is still running today and continues to be updated, despite the redirection of Federal Government funds to the new "Germany makes it efficiently" campaign<sup>8</sup>.

## 2

## Achieved or expected results

The results achieved by the House Turnaround project are documented by the German Energy Agency (DENA) in a final presentation of the campaign's results<sup>9</sup>.

In summary, the campaign has received significant attention with more than half a million webpage views from approximately 270,000 visitors and more than 1,100 Twitter and 500 Facebook followers. Consumers visiting the website also showed significant interest in the energy renovation expert search facility, with around 18,000 visitors having consulted the expert database. Moreover, the campaign was widely covered in national media with more than 1,500 articles and 20 national press releases.

In addition to the visitors attracted to the website, a large number of visitors were reached through the comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign in digital and print media. However, it was regional events that proved to be the communication channel that was most effective in convincing consumers about the benefits of energy saving renovations.

The print and live advertisement campaigns produced equally significant outputs. More than 10 million readers were reached through advertisements in traditional media, and online advertisements resulted in more than 32.7 million clicks. Since the regional information events proved to be a success, the initiative organised more than double the number it had originally foreseen. The regional events managed to reach a total of around 8,200 citizens, and the open home events attracted an additional 1,000 visitors. Moreover, participation in trade fairs and information evenings with Members of German Parliament served as additional means to reach and engage with more homeowners.

Table 1: Outputs of the Housing Turn's portal

Component of the campaign	Output
Online portal	570,000 'page views'
	270,000 website visitors
	57,000 direct visits (i.e. not via search engine or links)
	50,000 'page views' via search engines
	18,000 visitor consultations of the energy renovation expert database
	>1 million views on the campaign's Facebook and Twitter pages
Renovation Champions	100 applications received
	170 media reports
	15,000 views of multimedia stories
	19 live video streams of different events (e.g. award ceremony, homeowners' info evening, DENA congress) reached >500 viewers
Social media	>500 followers on Facebook and >1,100 followers on twitter
	Combined social media posts reached approx. 1 million people
Print and radio media	>1500 articles
	10 insert advertisements in printed media
	20 national press releases
	8 advertorials
	173 radio broadcasts

Source: German Energy Agency (DENA)<sup>9</sup>

In summary, the House Turnaround project proved to be a successful marketing campaign which has received significant attention in digital and print media. The Campaign has also exceeded (by over 100%) expectations in terms of the number of regional events organised.

Table 2: Outputs of print advertisement and regional events

Component of the campaign	Output
Advertising campaign	>10 million printed media readers reached
	>32.7 million clicks on online advertisements
Regional events	216 information events
	8,200 visitors in 15 federal states
	40 open home events with around 1,000 visitors
	37 trade fairs participated in (>150 trade fair days)
	5 information evenings with Members of the German Parliament

Source: German Energy Agency (DENA)<sup>11</sup>

In summary, the House Turnaround project proved to be a successful marketing campaign which has received significant attention in digital and print media. The Campaign has also exceeded (by over 100%) expectations in terms of the number of regional events organised. Overall, feedback from stakeholders involved in the initiative has been very positive.

## 3

## Perspectives and lessons learned

From a **government perspective**, the German Energy Agency (DENA) says that the strong regional focus of the House Turnaround campaign was a key factor in its success.

Instead of running a more traditional campaign, DENA chose to adopt a more customised and personal approach for the House Turnaround campaign, in order to reach and convince consumers/homeowners of the benefits of energy saving renovations. DENA took the view that home renovations are individual, personal measures which require a more face-to-face approach<sup>12</sup>.

The personal approach consisted in organising information evenings, opening private homes to interested individuals and promoting the renovation champion stories. The close cooperation with regional energy agencies and consumer organisations which provided their regional networks greatly facilitated the organisation of these events. According to DENA, the federal energy renovation expert list played an important role in creating links with local energy renovation experts<sup>13</sup>.

One weak point however, was the lack of sufficient resources to organise more regional events and make a greater difference in convincing home owners to invest in energy efficiency renovation work. An additional difficulty related to the regional events lay in the strong regional differences in Germany with relatively different demands for renovation. For example, there was less demand for energy efficiency renovation work in the newer federal states, compared to the older states. This is because a higher percentage of renovation work was carried out in the 1990s in the newer states than was the case in the older states<sup>14</sup>.

From an **industry perspective**, the Federation of the German Heating Industry (BDH<sup>15</sup>) says that the House Turnaround campaign has illustrated the importance of using a personal approach in order to communicate effectively with homeowners.

Although traditional communication campaigns (e.g. poster campaigns) can increase general consumer awareness of the benefits of energy saving renovations, they need to be done in coordination with relevant local trade industries in order to convince homeowners. In addition, the BDH sees a particular value in the renovation champions campaign, because it provided tangible stories of motivated homeowners<sup>16</sup>.

Furthermore, the BDH stresses the importance and value of the vendor-neutral information and communication materials that were created throughout the campaign. An additional value is seen in the creation of the Alliance's network which has continued to collaborate reliably even after the end of the campaign. According to the BDH, the House Turnaround project is a good example of how PPP models can be successfully implemented in campaigns. Despite the fact that the Alliance members are continuing to collaborate and are maintaining the online portal, the BDH says that it is unfortunate that the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy is no longer supporting the campaign financially. Instead, it is now funding the "Germany makes it efficiently"<sup>17</sup> initiative, which although important, is lacking a regional focus<sup>18</sup>.

From the **perspective of homeowners**, the Homeowners Association says that the House Turnaround online portal is a very useful and comprehensive information portal.

This is important, given the complexity of the topic which many homeowners find difficult to master. However, despite the participation of different industries in the Campaign, including construction, renovation and financial product and service suppliers, the Association says that it did not involve the participation of consumer organisations or housing associations. The Homeowners Association says that the interests of consumers and homeowners were not properly represented in the membership of the Alliance for Energy Efficient Buildings (GEEA) which had designed and implemented the Campaign, which led it to question whether the Campaign was providing fully independent and impartial information and advice<sup>19</sup>.

# Endnotes

- 1 Alliance for Energy Efficient Buildings (Allianz für Gebäude-Energie-Effizienz - GEEA), House Turnaround (Die Hauswende): [http://www.die-hauswende.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/14-03-11\\_Hintergrundtext\\_Kampagne\\_Die\\_Hauswende.pdf](http://www.die-hauswende.de/fileadmin/user_upload/14-03-11_Hintergrundtext_Kampagne_Die_Hauswende.pdf)
- 2 Ibid
- 3 Federal Government's Energiewende (Energy Transition) initiative: [https://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Themen/Energiewende/\\_node.html](https://www.bundesregierung.de/Webs/Breg/DE/Themen/Energiewende/_node.html)
- 4 Alliance for Energy Efficient Buildings (Allianz für Gebäude-Energie-Effizienz - GEEA), House Turnaround (Die Hauswende): [http://www.die-hauswende.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/14-03-11\\_Hintergrundtext\\_Kampagne\\_Die\\_Hauswende.pdf](http://www.die-hauswende.de/fileadmin/user_upload/14-03-11_Hintergrundtext_Kampagne_Die_Hauswende.pdf)
- 5 Interview with a representative from the German Energy Agency (DENA).
- 6 Qualified renovation experts can register with the Ministry in order to be added to the expert list: <https://www.energie-effizienz-experten.de/fuer-experten/>
- 7 Ibid
- 8 Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie), Germany Makes It Efficient (Deutschland Macht's Effizient): <http://www.deutschland-machts-effizient.de/KAENEF/Navigation/DE/Home/home.html>
- 9 The results of House Turnaround are sourced from an internal German Energy Agency (DENA) presentation, which DENA provided to assist the development of this Fact Sheet. The presentation is not available online and therefore cannot be linked here.
- 10 Ibid
- 11 Ibid
- 12 Ibid
- 13 Ibid
- 14 Ibid
- 15 Federation of the German Heating Industry, BDH: <http://www.bdh-koeln.de/en.html>
- 16 Information exchange with representative from the Federal Association of the Heating Industry.
- 17 Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie), Germany Makes It Efficient (Deutschland Macht's Effizient): <http://www.deutschland-machts-effizient.de/KAENEF/Navigation/DE/Home/home.html>
- 18 Ibid
- 19 Association of Homeowners (Verband Wohneigentum), Comment on the "House Turnaround" Campaign (Kommentar zu Kampagne "Die Hauswende": <https://www.verband-wohneigentum.de/bv/on206020>