



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



COUNTRY CASE STUDY

COUNTRY	POPULATION	MITIGATION TARGET	EMISSIONS IN 2019
THE NETHERLANDS	17,280,000	-49% IN 2030 (BASE YEAR 1990); -95% IN 2050	181 MTCO <sub>2</sub> E (-18% SINCE 1990)

# Long-term strategies of local authorities in the Netherlands to phase out fossil fuel use in heating

The important role of local authorities in increasing building renovation rates in Europe is getting more widely acknowledged, whereby long term renovation strategies are [key instruments](#) to guide local action. This is illustrated in the Netherlands, where local authorities play an essential role in strategic planning for the decarbonisation of the built environment.<sup>1</sup> Increasing earthquake intensity in the natural-gas rich province of Groningen, and signing the Paris Agreement were main reasons for the Dutch Government to commit to heating all buildings without fossil fuels by 2050. The Dutch government has also [committed](#) to the intermediary target to decarbonise 1.5 million buildings before 2030.

## The Heat Transition Vision strategies

To achieve these goals, all Dutch municipalities are [required](#) to write a long term strategy describing how they intend to decarbonize the complete building stock in their jurisdiction and send these strategies to the government. Similar to [national long term renovation strategies](#)<sup>2</sup>, these 'Heat Transition Vision' (HTV) strategies describe how buildings will be heated without fossil fuels, but focus on the municipal level. Moreover, the HTV must contain a roadmap describing how each district will be decarbonised, for example by connecting buildings to renewable district heating or renovating buildings to go all-electric. Once these strategies are completed, district implementation plans will be written in 2022 in collaboration with involved building owners and local stakeholders. In practice this means all [352](#) municipalities will draft an HTV by the end of 2021. As of March 2021, 50% of the municipalities responded to [a survey](#) about the status of their HTV ([figure](#)).

20 of them had already approved their HTVs, completely (16) or conceptually (4), planning to renovate or decarbonise more than 100,000 residential buildings and 5,000 non-residential buildings. The other 332 municipalities were still working on

their HTVs in preparation for the late 2021 deadline. If the combined plans do not achieve the 1.5 million buildings target by 2030, the national government has certain [additional measures](#) it could take.

## A multilevel governance framework to speed up the fossil-heating phase-out

The HTVs are written in parallel to '[regional energy strategies](#)', which divide the available potential renewable electricity and heat sources among municipalities, and the '[natural gas-free districts programme](#)', where selected municipalities have already started decarbonising districts to generate lessons that will help to accelerate the transition in the rest of the country. Thus, together with these two strategic processes, the HTVs should result in a feasible and concrete strategy to decarbonise the Dutch building stock while facilitating tailored local solutions and the participation of stakeholders. A digital

interactive [map](#) shows all municipalities from which an HTV has been accepted and links to the strategies themselves, such as the HTV from the city of [Utrecht](#).

The implementation of these long-term decarbonisation and renovation policies also faces certain challenges. Critical reviews of the [National Audit Chamber](#) and the Economic Institute for Construction and Housing ([EIB](#)) highlight technical challenges, the complexity of public-private partnerships, and a lack of public support faced in pilot districts, which increase the financial burden and delay the implementation of envisioned renovation projects. Although significant delays are occurring, the first residential buildings have already been disconnected from the gas grid in the municipality of [Purmerend](#).

1 In the Netherlands, decarbonisation relates to fuel switching from the [predominant natural gas heating](#) to renewable sources.

2 Which all European Member States are required to write under article 2A of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.

NUMBER OF BUILDINGS TO BE DECARBONIZED OR RENOVATED BEFORE 2030 IN THE 16 APPROVED PLANS (MARCH 2021)

