

Welcome to the Final Edition of the 3DIVERSE Newsletter!

After three and a half years of work, the 3DIVERSE project has reached its conclusion. This final newsletter marks the end of a journey, but also the beginning of something more lasting. The insights, tools, and relationships built through 3DIVERSE are designed to continue contributing to the energy transition in the Šaleška Valley and far beyond.

In this edition, we look back at what we achieved, what we learned along the way, and how the results can be carried forward by regions, utilities, and policymakers across Europe.



The 3DIVERSE Final Event: A Round Table on the Future of District Heating

On 12 February 2026, the project consortium held the 3DIVERSE Final Event at Vila Bianca in Velenje. At the heart of the event was a **round table bringing together voices from across the region**: Klemen Kosovinc ([Kolektor sETup](#)), dr. Andrej Kitanovski ([Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Ljubljana](#)), Uršula Menih Dokl (Šaleško EKO gibanje), Gregor Rome ([Care4Climate](#) and the [Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy](#)), Boštjan Krajnc (Director, [KSSENA](#)) and Ana Šuperger (Šaleški študentski klub).

The discussion touched on the challenges of heat price stability, system digitalisation, diversification of energy sources, and the role of citizens and local communities in embracing change. The liveliest debate centred on shifting user habits, communication strategies, and earning the trust of local residents, a reminder that the human side of the transition is just as important as the technical one.

Participants agreed that citizens play a key role: adopting new habits, **adapting to smart solutions, and engaging in building renovation all contribute to the success of the transition**. Transparency, inclusive decision-making, and open dialogue were highlighted as essential for building community trust. The message was clear: change must be built on listening, to concerns, to wishes, to the voices of young people, so that the shift to a new system becomes an opportunity, not a threat.

The event was also addressed by **Marta Presmanes, representative of the European Commission** ([CINEA](#)), who described 3DIVERSE as an exemplary model of European ambition for the energy transition.



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What has 3DIVERSE achieved?

Running from October 2022 to March 2026 with a total budget of **€1,450,513**, 3DIVERSE demonstrated how integrated, cross-sector energy planning can support a just and effective transition away from coal. Here are the core results:

Integrated energy planning across sectors. 3DIVERSE developed a coordinated planning approach covering district heating, buildings, electricity and mobility, revealing interdependencies and helping avoid fragmented investments.

Approximately 300 energy analyses of buildings were carried out, resulting in digital models that thoroughly analyse district heating systems, helping to monitor decarbonisation, assess efficiency after renovation, and guide system management. These models also help stakeholders compare district heating with alternatives such as heat pumps, supporting fair and informed decisions.

Open-access digital tools. Two tools are now freely available for utilities and municipalities across Europe: [DHNpype](#) for rapid heat-loss screening and network analysis, and [DisCoNetHeat](#) for assessing consumer disconnection risks, both designed to work even where data is incomplete.

Investment-ready documentation. Pre-feasibility studies, investment concepts and technical documentation were developed to help bridge the gap between analysis and implementation.

Stakeholder engagement that builds trust. Municipalities, the district heating operator, regional agencies and citizens were engaged throughout. A citizen brochure was distributed to approximately 16,000 residents across the pilot municipalities.

A replicable model for Europe. District heating currently covers around 12% of Europe's heating needs, and with the right investments, that share could reach 50% by 2050. The Šaleška Valley's experience, now fully documented, is ready to support other coal-dependent regions on a similar path.



Lessons from a region in transition

3DIVERSE was, above all, a learning project. Here are the lessons that stood out most:

Start with stakeholders, not technology. Engaging utilities, municipalities and local institutions early, before the technical answers are clear, builds the trust and alignment needed to turn plans into action. Without early involvement, even technically sound solutions can stall at the investment decision stage.

Treat planning as a living process. Energy transition cannot be designed once and filed away. The most effective approach is iterative: using modelling results to guide discussion, adjusting plans as new data or constraints emerge, and reviewing priorities regularly.

Plan across sectors from day one. District heating, buildings, electricity and mobility are deeply connected. Starting cross-sector coordination early prevents costly rework and reveals investment opportunities that single-sector planning misses.

Don't wait for perfect data. Legacy energy systems often lack detailed, up-to-date datasets. Flexible, data-light tools can still generate actionable insights, as long as limitations are communicated transparently.

The hardest step is turning analysis into investment. Technical studies alone are not enough. Preparing documentation, aligning procurement processes and standardising templates takes significant time and capacity, and must be planned for from the start.

Local messengers matter. Communication works best when carried by trusted local actors who can translate technical content into messages that resonate with communities experiencing the real pressures of transition.



Open Access and Replication

3DIVERSE was designed to have impact beyond its lifetime. All key outputs are available in open access:

- **DHNpype** and **DisCoNetHeat** are available via the project website and can be used by utilities and planners in other regions.
- Five scientific publications are archived in the [3DIVERSE Zenodo Community](#).
- The Lessons Learnt document and the Replication Guide are all publicly available at www.3diverse.eu.



DHNpype ◊ Heat-loss screening and visualisation for rapid analysis of district heating networks



DisCoNetHeat ◊ Disconnection risk mapping for understanding vulnerabilities in the customer base



Energy System Digital Twin ◊ Scenario-based modeling of full energy configurations



Mobility Digital Twin ◊ Planning of fleet electrification and local grid interactions

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Coming Soon: A New Look for 3Diverse

In the coming months, the 3DIVERSE website will be relaunched with a **refreshed design** and improved structure, making it easier to navigate the project's final results. The updated site will provide clearer **access to lessons learnt, recommendations, open-access tools and all key project materials**, ensuring that the work of 3DIVERSE remains visible and useful long after the project's formal close.

Stay tuned!



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Thank You!

The 3DIVERSE project was made possible by the **commitment of all partners: KSENA as project coordinator, the University of Ljubljana (Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Faculty of Electrical Engineering), Kolektor sETup, and Komunalno podjetje Velenje**, alongside project-associated partners the Municipality of Velenje, the **Municipality of Šoštanj, the Municipality of Slovenj Gradec, the Municipality of Celje and Elektro Celje**, as well as regional agencies, citizens and peer regions who contributed throughout.

3DIVERSE was co-funded by the European Union's LIFE programme under grant agreement No. 101077343. The results belong to everyone working toward a just energy transition.

We hope the work of 3DIVERSE proves useful, and that the Šaleška Valley's experience helps light the path for regions across Europe.



Stay connected with us through our social media for the latest project updates.



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