

EEW4 External Event Report

Title of the event:

<i>Date & location:</i>	Energy Efficiency Watch – ENC RDV, Live Chat webinar 25 th June 2020, on Zoom
<i>Organiser(s):</i>	Energy Cities
<i>Summary of the event</i>	This webinar, organised in the framework of EEW4 was part of an ‘online chat’ series standing for Energy Cities’ annual Rendez-Vous during the pandemic lockdown. Would ‘business as usual’ continue after the lockdown or is there a chance to move towards a real circular economy? How the declared climate urgency and related energy transition policies are affected? Our online chat was exploring views of two capitals’: Budapest and Paris. Their climate chiefs were telling us what challenges and opportunities they encounter and what practical solutions and actions they undertake and what new narratives are needed in this unprecedented context.
<i>Objective & main programme point</i>	This session was seeking successful municipal narratives and stories on how to keep up with energy efficiency investments and moving on with the energy transition in the unprecedented context of the pandemic. Our panellists discussed challenges and opportunities of the current pandemic situation and shared their views on the momentum to change business models towards a circular economy, the need of direct EU support for cities and engaging citizens for a lasting change.
<i>Conclusions</i>	A key concern for Budapest, also addressed through a planned wide-scale building renovation programme, is air pollution. The importance of <i>air quality</i> has been even more important during the pandemic and cutting air pollution must be in the centre of any green recovery – she said. The pandemic has changed both priorities and autonomy of the city; the government – ruling by decree in the declared emergency – has suspended some local taxes; thus hampering municipal autonomy. Budapest – in line with 3 other Central European capitals – sees the most important potential support by the EU is to earmark and raise direct EU funding for cities – who are not only in the front line in the fight against COVID, but also in climate change and energy



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efficiency.

Priorities of Paris has also changed with the pandemic. Their efforts implementing a circular economy in Paris and creating ('la ville du quart d'heure'), are seen even more critical to reduce inner-city emissions and *limit air pollution*. However, proximity is in opposition with the pandemic and it is observed a serious *cut in public transport* (also in Budapest), while individual traffic (both cars and bikes) are on the rise. This rebound effect – after a drop in traffic related emissions during the first lockdown period – generates even more emission in the city.

Both Yann and Ada remained dedicated to engage citizens for a long-term change. This pandemic has to create urgency and not moving back to business as usual.

Programme

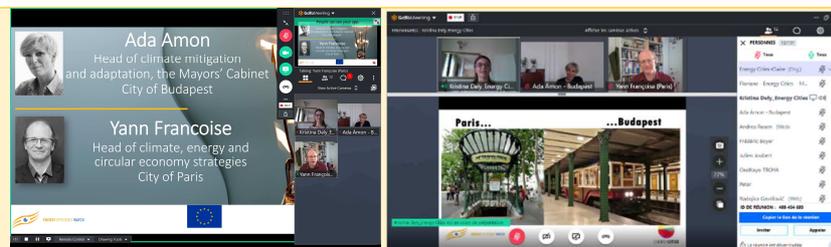
Welcome and setting the scene – *Kristina Dely*, Energy Cities

Moderated discussion with:

- *Ada Amon*, Head of Climate Mitigation and Adaptation, the Mayors' Cabinet, City of Budapest
- *Yann Francoise*, Head of climate, energy and circular economy strategies at City of Paris

Q&A, interactive discussion with the audience

Pictures



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