

# EE4HORECA NEWS

FEBRUARY 2026



EnergyEfficiency4HORECA  
Co-funded by the  
European Union



## Sustainable Business Models for HORECA Sector

This training module helps HORECA SMEs integrate energy efficiency and sustainability into their core business models. By adopting a value-chain and life-cycle perspective, it shows where improvements create both economic and environmental benefits.

### Top News

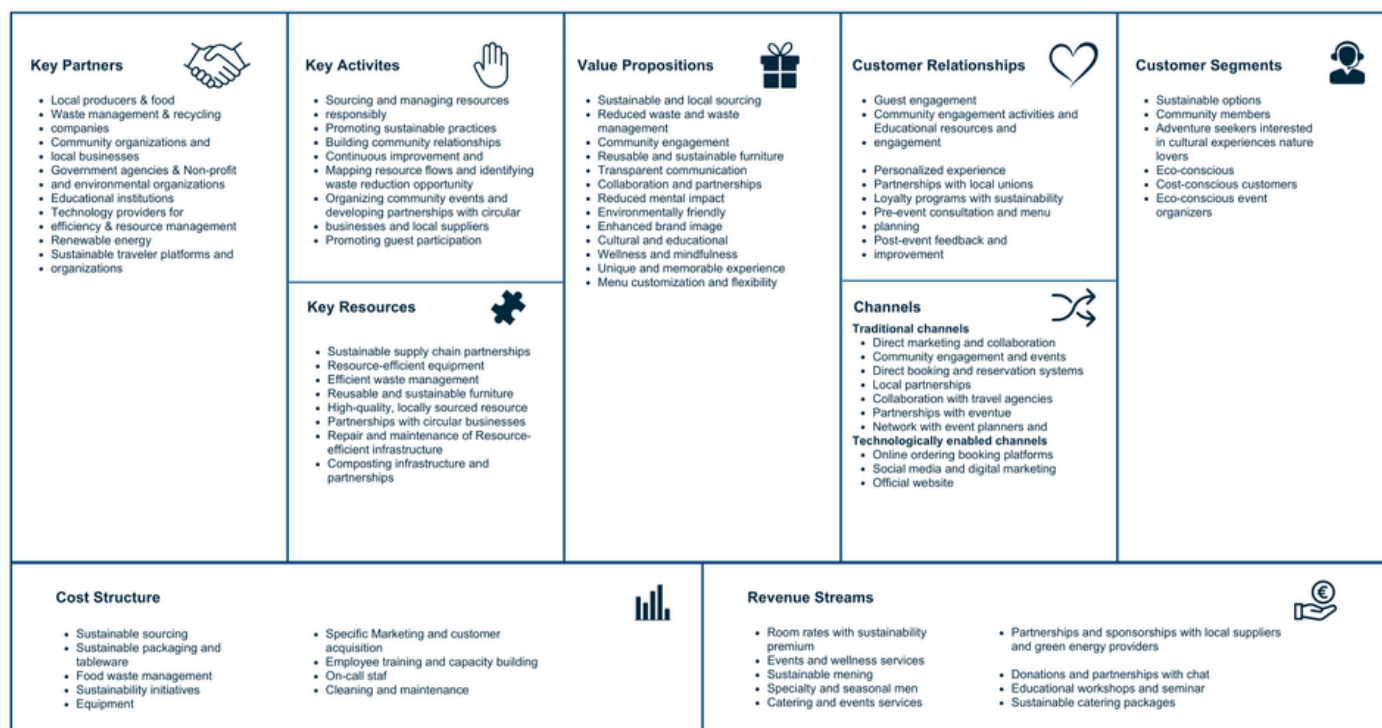
Energy Efficiency  
training for over 200  
businesses

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Smart Strategies for  
Sustainable  
Management



UPCOMING



# Embedding Energy Efficiency into HORECA Business Models

How can energy efficiency and sustainability become part of everyday business decisions in the HORECA sector, not just technical add-ons, but real drivers of value and competitiveness? This is the core question addressed by the EE4HORECA Sustainable [Business Model](#), developed within the EnergyEfficiency4HORECA project.

Developed by the University of Brescia, the model helps HORECA SMEs look at their business through a new lens: one that connects energy use, resource flows and sustainability with value creation, delivery and capture. Rather than focusing on energy consumption in isolation, it adopts a value-chain and life-cycle perspective, showing how choices made by suppliers, service providers and businesses themselves influence costs, performance and long-term resilience.

Building on data gathered directly from companies across the HORECA value chain, the project identifies untapped potential for energy efficiency and renewable energy at each stage: from sourcing and operations to service delivery. This enables businesses to understand where improvements are possible and how these can translate into tangible benefits, such as cost savings, improved comfort, reduced risks and stronger competitiveness.

The training module introduces a practical and flexible framework that SMEs can adapt to their own size, maturity and context. It combines strategic reflection with concrete assessment tools, supporting businesses in identifying priorities, evaluating investment options and recognising the wider non-energy benefits of sustainability measures.

By bringing together strategy, performance analysis and value creation, the EE4HORECA Sustainable Business Model supports HORECA businesses in making informed, balanced and future-oriented decisions, turning energy efficiency into a real business opportunity rather than a constraint.

Click [here to understand](#) the model better.

More info: Beatrice Marchi, Researcher ([beatrice.marchi@unibs.it](mailto:beatrice.marchi@unibs.it))

# Understanding energy consumption in the HORECA sector



Within the EnergyEfficiency4HORECA (EE4HORECA), the [Fondazione Fenice](#) has mapped how energy is used across the HORECA value chain, revealing where the biggest opportunities for savings lie especially in hotels and restaurants.

In hotels, energy demand is dominated by heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), which typically represents around 50% of total energy use, followed by sanitary hot water, lighting and kitchen operations. In restaurants, energy intensity is even higher per service delivered, driven mainly by cooking equipment, kitchen ventilation and refrigeration.

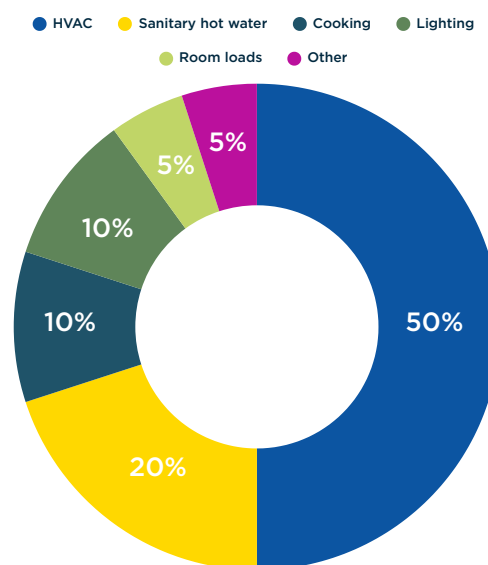
The analysis goes beyond individual buildings, highlighting how suppliers and services, such as laundry, food and beverage cold chains, transport and energy providers, also contribute significantly to the sector's overall energy footprint.

In restaurants, energy demand patterns differ from other HORECA subsectors. The report shows that the largest share of direct energy use comes from cooking, closely followed by HVAC and ventilation systems and refrigeration. Sanitary hot water and lighting make up the remainder of internal consumption. This breakdown highlights how kitchen operations and associated systems drive energy intensity in restaurants.

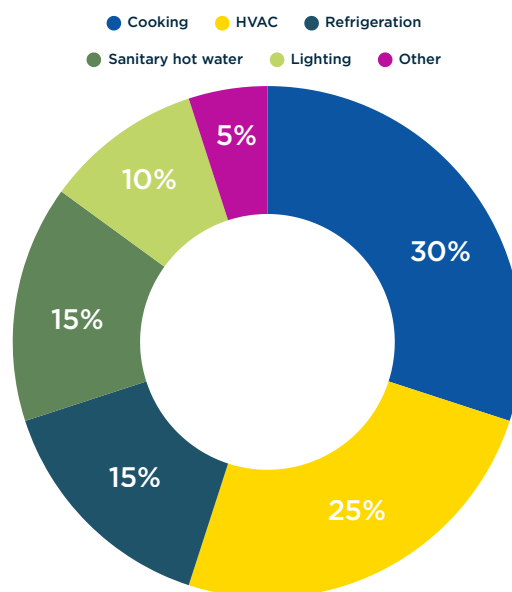
The report goes further by mapping indirect energy use across suppliers and services (food cold chains, transport logistics, etc.), offering restaurants practical insight into their upstream energy footprint and collaborative ways to reduce environmental impact across the value chain. It also provides more information on the situation for catering businesses.

By clearly identifying energy hotspots across services and processes, the [report provides HORECA businesses](#) with a practical basis for self-assessment and encourages collaborative action along the value chain to reduce energy consumption and environmental impact across Europe.

Hotel total direct energy consumption by end use



Restaurant total direct energy consumption by end use



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## Interested in benchmarking your energy performance? Explore the project's tools and resources

As part of its work to support energy efficiency across the HORECA sector, the EE4HORECA project has developed and tested sector-specific benchmarking tools for hotels, restaurants, and catering businesses. These tools help companies better understand their energy performance and identify where improvements can deliver the greatest impact.

Benchmarking goes beyond measuring total energy consumption. It enables businesses to compare their performance against reference values and best practices, revealing gaps that are not always immediately visible. In some cases, activities with relatively low overall energy use may still be performing well below their potential, making them cost-effective and easy targets for improvement.

The project's benchmarking approach helps businesses prioritise actions by assessing performance gaps in comparison with sector benchmarks, cost-effectiveness in terms of potential savings and payback periods, feasibility based on technical and operational constraints, and alignment with the company's broader energy strategy.

Using real-life case studies from hotels, restaurants and catering companies, the project demonstrated how benchmarking supports informed decision-making. The tools helped businesses identify practical measures, ranging from optimising heating and cooling systems to improving kitchen operations or organisational practices that reduce energy use without compromising service quality.

Importantly, the benchmarking tools are designed to be accessible and pragmatic, allowing HORECA managers to carry out an initial self-assessment without the need for complex audits.

The EE4HORECA project encourages HORECA businesses, intermediaries and energy advisors to use benchmarking as a starting point for their energy efficiency journey, turning data into targeted action, cost savings and long-term resilience.

All the tools can be accessed directly from the EE4HORECA website or through the links below:

[EE4HORECA Model Catering Service](#)  
[EE4HORECA Model Hotel](#)  
[EE4HORECA Model Restaurant](#)

More info: Beatrice Marchi, Researcher  
([beatrice.marchi@unibs.it](mailto:beatrice.marchi@unibs.it))



## EE4HORECA accelerates energy efficiency training for over 200 businesses

The EE4HORECA project is entering its final phase, empowering hotels, restaurants, catering companies, and other HORECA businesses to build a more sustainable, resilient, and energy-efficient future.

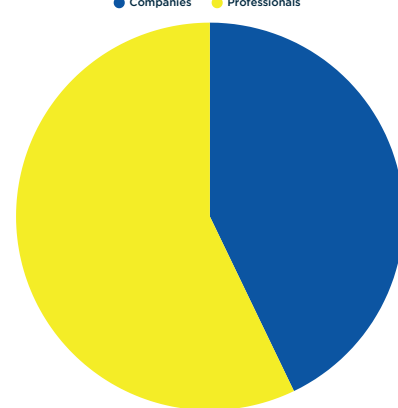
So far, 202 companies and 256 professionals have benefited from tailored training sessions, covering practical strategies to reduce energy use, embrace circular economy practices, and advance digitalisation across the sector.

In Spain, thanks to the support of the Cámara Valencia, Cámara de Comercio de Mallorca, Cámara de Comercio de Málaga, Cámara de Comercio de Granada, and Cámara de Comercio, Industria y Servicios de Zaragoza, 102 companies and 136 professionals have completed the training, demonstrating strong local engagement and commitment to change. Latvia has trained 100 companies and 120 professionals. In France and Italy, training sessions are still in place until the end of February.

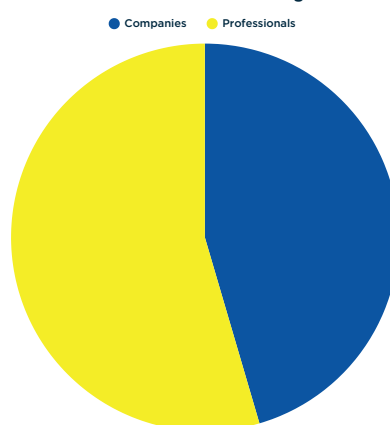
In the coming months, participating businesses will complete a consumption assessment survey to measure the real impact of these initiatives and track progress towards energy reduction and sustainable operations.

More info: Julia Arango, Project Officer, ([julia.arango@camara.es](mailto:julia.arango@camara.es))

Overview of EE4HORECA trainings in Spain



Overview of EE4HORECA trainings in Latvia





## Leading the way in Energy Efficiency training for HORECA SMEs

The Italian hospitality and catering sector is facing an unprecedented challenge: turning energy management from an operating cost into a competitive advantage. Through the EE4HORECA webinar series on 13, 21 January and 2 February, SMEs in Veneto have explored practical strategies to achieve this transition, adopting a systemic supply chain approach.

Organised by [Unioncamere del Veneto](#) in collaboration with the [University of Brescia](#), the trainings helped SMES map their consumption and understand that a business's energy footprint is the first step towards reduce energy consumption.

The project's data reveal that in hotels, hot water alone accounts for 24% of consumption, followed by air conditioning. In restaurants and catering, kitchens dominate energy use, with professional equipment consuming up to 60% of total energy.

One of the main outputs of the training was the the called: "zero-cost strategy", as energy efficiency doesn't always require large investments and significant savings can come from management practices and behavioral changes, such as, monitoring bill data and indicators to understand whether there are anomalies without expensive sensors. Through EE4HORECA, businesses in Veneto can access free preliminary consumption analysis based on historical bill data. This is a crucial first step to map energy hotspots and prepare for regional and national funding opportunities.

Participants also learnt how to benefit from the IMPAWATT platform, transforming Excel-based benchmarking models into useful visuals that help businesses compare consumption against industry standards and identify priorities.

**Economic sustainability and financing: how to act in 2026:** Beatrice Marchi from the University of Brescia, highlighted how Sustainable Business Model Canvas can help companies integrate eco-friendly services (such as km 0 and waste reduction) to attract the growing segment of eco-tourists. To overcome the initial investment barrier, several funding paths have been outlined:

- Transition Plan 5.0: Tax credits for digitalisation and efficiency.
- Thermal Account 3.0: Direct contributions up to 65% for interventions on heat pumps and photovoltaic systems.
- Renewable Energy Communities (RECs): Collective self-consumption models that allow energy to be shared between local partners, reducing burdens, and obtaining incentives.

More info: Chiara Bianchini, Project Manager ([chiara.bianchini@ven.camcom.it](mailto:chiara.bianchini@ven.camcom.it))



# ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY TRANSITION IN BUSINESSES IN THE HORECA SECTOR

Training via TEAMS 

On March 02 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM

On March 04 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM

## UPCOMING

### Turning sustainability into daily practice in HORECA businesses

For many HORECA professionals, sustainability is no longer about defining objectives, but about making the right decisions daily: where to invest, which actions to prioritise, and how to balance environmental performance with economic constraints.

Within the EE4HORECA project, [CCI France](#) continues to support this shift from strategy to practice by offering new opportunities for professionals to strengthen their operational approach to energy, water and waste management.

In March, French SMEs will have the opportunity to join 2 trainings that will help companies to turn sustainability into daily practice. Scheduled for 2 and 4 March 2026, the sessions are based on a structured programme combining context-setting, regulatory insights and concrete operational examples relevant to the realities of the HORECA sector.

2026

MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

The training will cover:

- Key challenges of the ecological transition for hotels, cafés and restaurants, considering economic and operational constraints.
- Optimisation of water management in a context of rising prices, resource scarcity and evolving regulation.
- Waste prevention and management, including regulatory obligations and the development of adapted action plans.
- Optimisation of energy management through the identification of consumption hotspots, action levers and available financing and support schemes.
- Presentation of the project results and the IMPAWATT platform, a post-training support tool for businesses.

To attend the trainings, please [register here](#).

More info: Julia Giudicelli, Training Assistant,  
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