

EU Project LEONARDO supports the clean energy transition of European businesses

September 25, 2025

Coordinated by Fondazione Bruno Kessler, the LIFE funded European project with around €1.75 million LEONARDO will boost collaborative energy demand flexibility in neighboring industries.

On September 24th and 25th the **LEONARDO** partners' consortium met at Fondazione Bruno Kessler, in Trento for the **official project kick-off**. Over 20 representatives of 11 project partners from Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Spain, Greece and Portugal came together for the first time. With the project kick-off they sealed the official start of their ambitious undertaking. The main topic of the first day was to get to know one other, agree on a common understanding of all project aspects, co-create first elements of a project identity and get an insight in every work package.

The second day was dedicated to visit two relevant examples of **renewable energy production and industrial clean energy transition** in the Province of Trento: the **Riva del Garda hydroelectric power plant and the Suanfarma Italia industry in Rovereto**. The Province of Trento will be a key player in the LEONARDO project thanks to the Italian Pilot Site located in the industrial area of ??Storo and led by the partner CEDIS as local DSO.

Luigi Crema, Director of the Center for Sustainable Energy of FBK, underlines the impact of the project: *"LEONARDO will contribute to create a higher flexibility of the energy system, supporting novel instruments available at the level of grid operators. This is an ideal initiative for designing innovative tools and applying them in local-regional environments, breaking the silos between bottom-up and top-down approaches and integrating the two for achieving a higher benefit in local communities."*

LEONARDO at a glance

*“The LIFE funded project LEONARDO – started this September 2025 – aspires to **support the aggregation of diverse Energy Management Systems (EMSs) with the aim of optimizing collaborative demand flexibility from industries** in physical proximity. This project also aims to overcome interoperability challenges, enhance EMS functionalities, and analyse the value of its flexibility solutions in several real-life environments. LEONARDO emphasizes on the optimal coordination among Transmission System Operators (TSOs) / Distribution System Operators (DSOs) including active engagement with relevant projects and initiatives”* explains **LEONARDO Coordinator Diego Viesi, Senior Researcher and Advisor in the Sustainable Territories Area at FBK’s Centre for Sustainable Energy.**

LEONARDO solutions will be analysed and supported in **three Pilot Sites**, one in Italy, one in Austria and a transboundary between Bulgaria and Greece – setting a cornerstone for future utilization of aggregated industrial EMSs for grid flexibility services.

Overall, LEONARDO will carry out activities aiming at:

- triggering interest, awareness, knowledge and know-how on the multiple benefits achievable from collaborative approaches;
- identifying, investigating and validating economically viable business models;
- engaging businesses in energy cooperation activities, including the involvement of additional relevant stakeholders;
- supporting a high degree of replicability, including a clear action plan to communicate;
- fostering benchmarking and monitoring mechanisms, to support the formulation of policy/regulatory recommendations.

In the end, **the Industrial Flexibility Knowledge Hub will serve as a One Stop Shop for a wide range of information and resources**, including the FlexifyMyIndustry-Assistant, an industry-first approach for assessing industries’ flexibility potential and performing an initial validation of their accessibility within various flexibility markets, through a standardized metric.

LEONARDO background

Engaging businesses in the clean energy transition and reducing their domestic footprint is central for the European Green Deal and to deliver on the Fit-for-55 package and the REPowerEU Plan to phase-out EU dependence on Russian fossil fuel imports.

The European daily energy flexibility **needs will increase by 133% between 2021 and 2030 and up to 250% between 2030 and 2050**. This surge is mainly driven by the rise of uncontrollable weather-dependent Renewable Energy Sources and the concurrent decline of traditional dispatchable flexible generation sources.

Given the current **climate and energy crisis**, the need for alternative flexibility resources with low marginal costs, such as Demand-Side Flexibility, is placed in the spotlight more than ever

before. Despite being the EU's third-largest energy consumer, the industrial sector remains a largely untapped flexibility resource. **Industrial processes present a significant opportunity for offering Demand-Side Flexibility** through which the EU energy systems could achieve substantial reductions in between 4.7% and 7.1% in peak load. This not only can contribute to grid stability and security of supply, but can as well position industries as active participants in shaping a sustainable energy future. However, current progress ranges from low-to non-existent due to several economic, regulatory, technological, organizational, behavioural, informational, and competence barriers.

LEONARDO profile

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Project coordination: FONDAZIONE BRUNO KESSLER, Italy, <https://www.fbk.eu/en> through the Centre for Sustainable Energy (<https://energy.fbk.eu>)

Project partners:

EVON GMBH (Austria)

EUROPÄISCHES ZENTRUM FÜR ERNEUERBARE ENERGIE GÜSSING GMBH (Austria)

STOMANA INDUSTRY SA (Bulgaria)

FUNDACION CARTIF (Spain)

HELLENiQ PETROLEUM S.A. (Greece)

PANEPISTIMIO PATRON (Greece)

CONSORZIO ELETTRICO DI STORO, SOCIETA COOPERATIVA (Italy)

RINA CONSULTING SPA (Italy)

SINLOC-SISTEMA INIZIATIVE LOCALI SPA (Italy)

CNET CENTRE FOR NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES SA (Portugal)

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<https://magazine.fbk.eu/en/news/eu-project-leonardo-supports-the-clean-energy-transition-of-european-businesses/>

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